



Now Hear This!

Sound therapy could
be exactly what your
body and mind need

BY JANET REYNOLDS

Heidi Davis remembers being more than a little skeptical before her first sound bowl healing experience.

"I was cynical, really," she says of the event that was part of a daylong retreat at Kripalu in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. "I didn't expect to be moved by it, but within the first minute or so, it has an effect on your nervous system. The next thing you know you're coming out of it and it's been an hour and a half. It's tough to describe until you experience it, and then you know exactly."

Davis, a registered nurse in Westfield, Massachusetts, became an immediate convert and took classes to better understand how to use sound healing both on herself and others.

"Since doing sound healing with friends and family, people come and ask for help with spot areas," she says. "People think it's mumbo jumbo until they experience it, and then they realize it can help."

Put simply, the idea is that vibrations, produced by everything from Tibetan or crystal singing bowls to tuning forks, gongs and even drums, create specific frequencies that resonate with and then potentially heal various mental and physical ailments, proponents say. Sound therapy can reduce stress and promote relaxation, they say, promoting changes that even Western medicine recognizes as having physical benefits. It's a form of healing that has been around and used by various cultures since the Egyptians and Greeks.

Elise Manzo of Pathways to Healing in Albany explains the

science of sound healing this way: Just as nature abhors a vacuum, so, too, can similar objects sync their movements to fill empty space. Place two metronomes or pendulum clocks near each other, for instance, and soon they will begin swinging in unison of their own accord. Called entrainment, it's the science behind sound therapy, she says. Under this theory, by using appropriate sounds, she can help people align or realign frequencies that can, at the very least, bring renewed relaxation and stasis, and, at best, help heal challenging health issues.

Manzo uses certified Tibetan singing bowls in a variety of sizes to help people with everything from getting back into balance to specific health complaints. "In the world today there is a lot of chaos. This is really good for overwhelm, to help you get back into yourself and get grounded," she says. "That's what I find the regulars come for — to get back into balance."

Even our organs have a frequency. "Each is different," she continues. "So think of yourself as an instrument getting tuned up. If something doesn't sound right, if a bowl is not sounding the way it's supposed to, it means that area needs work. When they play the way they're supposed to, then you're in tune."

Manzo, who also teaches sound bowl healing and Reiki (another energy healing practice) in her Albany studio, says that each bowl has a specific healing purpose and that there are various levels of learning. ►



“I didn’t expect to be moved by it.”

— Heidi Davis

ELISE MANZO of Pathways to Healing in Albany demonstrates how the vibrations of Tibetan singing bowls are used to promote relaxation and help restore balance. ►

In her first class level, for instance, she focuses on singing bowl therapies for cold/flu, neck and shoulder pain, back pain, digestion and migraines, to name a few. Level two training helps students learn how to treat PTSD and other chronic conditions affecting kidney function, blood sugar and heart rhythm.

Manzo knows lying in a room while someone gently strikes a bowl can seem a bit woo-woo for many. She suggests trying a group sound bath first and seeing if that — literally — resonates. If it does, a private session may be in order.

The list of ailments Manzo has helped using singing bowls is long and varied. “During COVID, I found that people got their taste and smell back quickly with sound,” she says, noting she’s had success with long COVID symptoms such as fatigue. As an asthmatic, she finds placing a bowl on her chest can help alleviate symptoms.

Nicholee Froese, who runs Carols of the Heart in the Capital Region, focuses more on the emotional and relaxation benefits of sound healing. A registered nurse, she began using crystal bowls around the time of the pandemic as a way to get through a difficult period in her life: the death of her mother. “It helped me find a space where it was OK to process the emotions and find a way to access some things that felt better than the grief,” she says. She had heard a crystal singing bowl at a yoga retreat a few years earlier. “As soon as I started to play the instruments, they started to call to me, and I wanted to do more and more with them.”

Today she uses a full array of instruments — everything from crystal bowls and chimes to rainsticks and drums — to create her soothing soundscapes. These soundscapes, she says, “are not just a random collection of sounds.” Instead, they tell a story of sorts.

iStockphoto.com/simon2579



Froese often starts with the lowest sounds “to help people settle into the moment and be in a different headspace than when they walked through the door.” From there, she moves into more melodic sounds with crystal bowls, Native American flutes and stringed instruments. “It’s very heart soothing,” she says. And she ends with high tinkly chimes and bells. “Those are outer-spacey,” she says. “People are now in the deepest part of their relaxation and can connect to that universal energy because they’re so relaxed.”

Froese, who used sound healing when working at the VA, says she is “extremely careful about the kinds of things I promise people that sound can heal. What I do believe wholeheartedly is that the sounds bring people and their nervous system into a place of coherence, a place of relaxation and place of calm where the body’s healing mechanisms can do what they’re designed to do. I don’t put a bowl on a broken body part and it’s going to heal your problem.”

Froese says she uses guided imagery in sessions to help people envision the healing they’re looking for. “We know the power of the mind to activate healing,” she says. “Getting people into a relaxed receptive state and helping them activate that healing energy with guided meditation and imagery can be helpful in their healing process.”

While there is no official license or certification for sound healing, Froese, like Manzo, has done extensive energetic training to learn how sound can help people heal. “In modern life we tend to pretend that emotions don’t exist, so they get bottled up or we allow ourselves to wallow in them and we get stuck in that emotional space,” Froese says. “A lot of work with mindfulness and being present for noticing those things is allowing them to pass through and getting to the other side of the wave.” ■



Concepts of Health Care, Inc.

**Licensed Agency Providing Quality In-Home
Aide Services since 1985 for 11 Counties**

CONCEPTSOFHEALTHCARE.COM

*Reliable Care in the
Comfort of
Your Own
Home!*



- Keep your loved one in the comfort of their own home & familiar environment with a reliable and personalized certified aide.
- Hourly shifts or our specialty of 24/7 uninterrupted live-in care options are available.
- Continuity of care is arranged and staffed by our nursing supervisors.
- Our agency is committed to providing quality service in a professional manner.

CONTACT US TODAY:

(518) 885-2020

healthconcepts@nycap.rr.com
conceptsofhealthcare.com

**Moving is
stressful.
We make it
manageable.**



Providing compassionate, hands-on move management
for seniors and families navigating life's next chapter.



**DOWNSIZING
& SORTING**
Guidance to
decide what
stays, what
goes, and what
matters most.



**PACKING &
UNPACKING**
Careful packing,
organized
setup, and a
smoother move
experience.



**DONATION
COORDINATION**
We handle
drop-offs and
ensure your items
go to good homes
and causes.



**ESTATE
CLEANOUTS**
Respectful,
efficient
cleanouts with
compassion and
discretion.



Call Sheilah!
MOVE MANAGEMENT & SENIOR
TRANSITION SPECIALISTS

**SCHEDULE YOUR FREE
CONSULTATION**

Mention this ad for a 55+ discount

518-937-7908 CallSheilah.com

LOCAL. TRUSTED. COMPASSIONATE.
12+ YEARS OF EXPERIENCE | SERVING THE CAPITAL REGION AND BEYOND