

DEEP HEALING WITH

vibration

SOUND MASSAGE





By Lisabeth Fauble

For centuries, philosophers, healers, and historians have documented music's ability to influence our mood and emotion. Today, scientists, physicians, and psychologists are using technology to measure how specific music and sound frequencies affect us somatically too. While studies show that certain music has the power to reduce stress and anxiety, improve mood, and help with focus and concentration,¹ other research shows that music can also reduce the quantity of anesthesia needed during surgery, help speed recovery afterward, and even reduce pain.² In fact, patients who listen to soothing music after surgery often need less pain medication and discontinue its use sooner than those who do not listen to relaxing music.³

Some hospitals and clinics, like the Mayo Clinic, are using sound frequencies to address specific cancers. In a minimally invasive procedure called radiofrequency ablation (RFA), doctors expose cancer cells to the same frequency at which they naturally vibrate.⁴ Cancer cells vibrate at a different frequency than healthy cells, and when exposed to their own frequency, they literally explode—the same thing that happens when an opera singer hits a high note and shatters a wine glass.

Sound Therapy: Vibrational Sound Massage

Sound therapy is an energy healing modality that distills the essence of music into harmonic tones that promote deep healing and cellular regeneration. Sound therapy uses a specific range of physically audible sound frequencies to subtly entrain the physical and energetic bodies to their prime resonant frequency (PRF). PRF is the frequency at which physical cells vibrate when they are in their healthiest state.

Vibrational sound massage (VSM) embraces that energetic premise and creates observable changes on the physiological, mental, and emotional states of clients. It incorporates both tangible and etheric mechanisms to soothe and balance clients' physical bodies and mental and emotional states.

A typical VSM session begins with the client lying facedown, fully clothed, usually on a massage table, but any flat, comfortable surface will do. A bolster can be placed beneath the shins for more comfort. The practitioner will begin the session by ringing a bell, *tingsha*, or gong three times to open space. The sound massage usually begins with a Tibetan or Himalayan bowl placed on the right foot. The practitioner strikes the bowl with the padded felt head of a wooden mallet. As the mallet strikes the bowl, vibrations travel into the foot and up the leg into the hip. The vibrations can be made stronger or gentler according to the client's comfort level. After a minute or two, the bowl is removed from the right foot and the process is repeated on the left foot.

Bowls are placed on primary pressure points along the rest of the body, singly or in pairs. The practitioner may also place bowls around the body. If the receiver has an injury or surgical site, bowls will be placed in a triangular pattern around it, rather than directly on it. After about 20 minutes, the practitioner will quietly ask the client to turn onto their back and the bowls will be applied to the front of the body.

A complete session usually lasts between 45 minutes and one hour, depending on the intensity requested by the client.





Benefits of VSM

VSM alleviates the symptoms of many conditions. VSM can provide immediate results and can reduce physical pain, anxiety, stress, muscular tension, emotional resistance, mental confusion, energetic blocks, spiritual stagnation, and more. Unlike the pain medications we see clients struggle with, VSM has no unhealthy side effects or drug interactions, has long-lasting effects, and is not regimented.

The effects of VSM can be measured in real time and compared over the course of a number of sessions to show improvements in the long term. To measure physiological response to VSM, I use emWave Pro electroencephalogram (EEG) software, created by the Heartmath Institute, to monitor the body's response to treatment. The EEG tracks breath rate, pulse, blood oxygen level, and heart rate with an unobtrusive earlobe clip. After a session, clients and practitioners can see the physiological changes that occurred throughout the treatment. This information can provide a more comprehensive map for intuitive healers to follow as they work with each individual client.

There are no contraindications for VSM, but for some clients, deeply hidden emotions may surface. Typically, it is a beneficial release and clients experience a feeling of emotional and mental relief afterward, which may last for hours or days.

Singing Bowls

Tibetan or Himalayan singing bowls are the core tool in VSM. Practitioners may incorporate gong baths, aromatherapy, or crystals into the session, but the bowls will be doing the real work.

The bowls emit physically palpable vibrations that entrain cells to their PRF. There are about 200 types of cells in the body. Those 200 types of cells fall into 20 types of structures,⁵ each of which vibrate at specific and different frequencies. There are many sizes of Tibetan singing bowls, and the size and weight of each is crafted to vibrate at the same rate as the cells in a section of the body. When the bowls are placed on the body in the correct manner, the vibration is felt throughout the body, and the cells begin to entrain to the bowl's resonance.

The bowls also emit sound waves that contain many harmonic layers. The resonance of the bowls sounds pleasing and automatically induces meditative alpha and theta brain wave states, soothing the mind and emotions. Alpha and theta states can be quite difficult for some people to achieve, especially those unpracticed with meditation techniques or prone to anxiety and depression. Some VSM clients experience a deeply restful delta brain wave state, and VSM can be particularly helpful for people who struggle with insomnia.

Purchasing Singing Bowls: The Basics

When purchasing bowls, you should ideally select them in person. Because therapeutic bowls are handmade, the tone and harmonics of each one will be slightly different. Choose bowls that sound warm and comforting to you.

The Bowls of Ancients

Himalayan and Tibetan monks have used singing bowls for various purposes for at least 5,000 years. The bowls themselves are made from 7 to 12 different metals. Generational craftsmen hand-pound each bowl using traditional techniques passed down through families for thousands of years. The bowls are made from seven metals: brass, copper, nickel, silver, zinc, mercury, and gold. The 12-metal bowls include the first seven metals plus meteoric iron, lead, tin, bismuth, and pyrite. Make sure to use high-quality, therapeutic-grade bowls in your practice for best results.

Anecdotal reports show vibrational sound massage has helped clients with:

- behavioral problems
- carpal tunnel and rheumatoid arthritis
- chronic pain and sciatica
- cognitive impairment
- insomnia
- mood disorders (depression, grief, anger, anxiety)
- neurological disorders (PTSD, ADD/ADHD, migraines)
- PMS and pregnancy symptoms
- presurgery anxiety and postsurgery pain/immobility

Handcrafted bowls have minor but energetically significant differences.

As a practitioner of energy work, you must attune with the resonance of the bowls. It must feel and sound good to you if you want it to feel and sound good to your clients. It doesn't really matter if you're musically proficient when choosing your set of bowls. Just pay attention to the way the sound makes you feel. If you get an "Ahhh" moment, that's a good tool for you. If it makes you cringe, walk away. If you order them online, you don't really know what you're getting; however, some online stores do have sound clips you can listen to before ordering the bowls.

I recommend beginning with a set of three bowls—the root, heart, and universal bowls. You can effectively do a full basic sound massage using only the universal bowl, but you and your client will be missing out on the fulfillment that two or three bowls can bring when rung in harmony. I use a handpicked, harmonic set of therapeutic-quality Himalayan singing bowls that have been hand-pounded from 12 metals by generational craftsmen in Nepal.

Treatment

Some conditions require more frequent VSM treatment, while milder symptoms and temporary situations can be helped with one or more sessions. For serious or persistent conditions, the client may want to do some self-therapy at home by sitting in a quiet place and playing a bowl each day.

In my practice, I've seen many clients benefit tremendously from VSM.

- One client received a series of three VSM sessions within two weeks after hip replacement surgery. VSM immediately helped reduce the amount of OxyContin needed to manage his pain, and shortly after the third session, he no longer took any OxyContin.

- After another client's leg surgery to repair his war wounds, he received a series of 10 weekly 30-minute VSM sessions as a complement to both physical therapy and psychological therapy for his PTSD. After the vibrational work, this client reported feeling more capable of handling daily stressors, experienced less anxiety, and had improved mobility.
- An elderly client recovering from a three-week induced coma due to pneumonia-related sepsis reported significant relief from pain, fatigue, muscular weakness, and anxiety after just one VSM session. More than a year later, this patient still believes the treatment saved his life.

Clients say VSM boosts their ability to enjoy everyday life. VSM naturally strokes the pleasure centers of the brain and makes the body more malleable. Taken during a vacation, weekend, or work week, a VSM session can enhance the senses and increase the ability to appreciate the simplest of pleasures. It will most likely cause common, everyday irritations to melt away and improve patience, social skills, and relationships. VSM simultaneously brings you more fully into your body and closer to spirit.

VSM benefits not only clients, but also practitioners, who experience the soothing effects of a therapeutic session as well. I often find myself in a naturally occurring flow state when conducting a session for a client. Afterward, I feel relaxed and content.

If "everything in life is vibration," as Albert Einstein professed, then why not use that knowledge to bring more resonance to your clients through vibrational sound massage? **m&b**

Notes

1. Wendy E. J. Knight and Nikki S. Rickard, "Relaxing Music Prevents Stress-Induced Increases in Subjective Anxiety, Systolic Blood Pressure, and Heart Rate in Healthy Males and Females," *Journal of Music Therapy* 38, no. 4 (December 2001): 254–72, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jmt/38.4.254>.
2. C. Lepage et al., "Music Decreases Sedative Requirements During Spinal Anesthesia." *Anesthesia & Analgesia* 93 (2001): 912–6.
3. Marc E. Koch et al., "The Sedative and Analgesic Sparing Effect of Music," *Anesthesia* 89, no. 2 (August 1998): 300–06, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-5347\(01\)61734-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-5347(01)61734-8).
4. Debra A. Gervais et al., "Renal Cell Carcinoma: Clinical Experience and Technical Success with Radio-Frequency Ablation of 42 Tumors," *Radiology* 226, no. 2 (February 2003): 417–24, <https://doi.org/10.1148/radiol.2262012062>.
5. Arizona State University, "How Many Types of Cells Are in the Human Body?," ASU Ask A Biologist, accessed June 2019, <https://askabiologist.asu.edu/questions/human-cell-types>.

6 Lisabeth Fauble is an experienced author, researcher, and practitioner of sound therapy. She holds a master's degree in musicology and a fine arts degree in music theory and performance, and is a member of Jonathan Goldman's International Sound Therapy Association and the International Association of Professional Writers and Editors (IAPWE). Fauble uses various modes of sound therapy to help humans and pets cope with PTSD, pain, surgery, addiction, physical disabilities, grief, Alzheimer's, dementia, bipolar, borderline personality, ADD and ADHD, autism, Asperger's, and general anxiety. She has published more than 600 articles and essays, and her book, *Music Therapy: Understanding the Science of Sound*, was released in 2016. She can be reached at lisabethfauble@gmail.com.

For more information, visit the Vibrational Sound Association at www.vibrationsoundassociation.com or the International Sound Therapy Association at <https://istasounds.org>.