

SOUND: For healing or to harm?

Sound is energy. Sound is vibration. But what is this thing called sound, and how do we use it or even think about it? Is it a source for healing or just random noise or music? Can it help us or harm us? Can we cure disease with it? These are all questions to be asked and pondered. We can look at this information and come to our own conclusions.

First, let's look at what sound is. From a book called, *Healing Sounds*, Jonathan Goldman gives us his definition. "Sound is a vibrational energy that takes the form as waves." "These waves are scientifically measured in units called hertz ('Hz') which measures the cycles per second which this energy creates." (*Healing Sounds*, Jonathan Goldman, p. 23)

From a healing prospective we know that sound has a profound effect on us on a physical, mental, emotional and spiritual level. Let us look at each one on an individual basis to see how sound contributes to healing.

Physically, there is a great deal of information from science (physics) that states that sound has an effect on us in many ways. We know that everything vibrates at its own resonate frequency. When we find the resonate frequency of that object and play a sound that matches it, we are actually giving it energy. (*The Complete Guide to Sound Healing*, Gibson, D., p.13) Also, we can use activating sound (odd harmonics) in order to break up stuck energy or blockages in the body. We can also explode an object by finding its frequency, turning up the volume and exploding it.

Emotionally, even though there is a great deal of research on how music has an effect on us emotionally the data is not real clear. What we can say is that most if not all of us have had positive experiences with music. It can bring us joy, elevate our mood, raise our consciousness, and even soothe our soul. In the world of emotions the key is to get them flowing-just as music flows. (*The Complete Guide to Sound Healing*, Gibson, D., p.13)

Mentally, stated briefly, certain sound frequencies can create brainwave states (ex. alpha, beta, theta and delta) by us being exposed to them for a short period of time. This can be measured by hooking up an EEG unit to a person's brain.

Spiritually, sound/music can help us to connect to that higher part of our self, - Spirit, Source, Higher Power, God. When we do this we can go far beyond where we ever thought possible, for healing and our spiritual growth.

Instead of looking at the body from a physical standpoint (systems) we can also look at it in another way. Some healers work with the emotional bodies or the Chakras. There are 7 Chakras- Root, Sacral, Solar plexus, Heart, Throat, 3rd eye, and Crown. There are certain

frequencies that have an effect on each Chakra. The scale we use most common is the C to B musical scale, going from Root to Crown. Each Chakra also has an endocrine gland that is most associated with it. The Root has none (some say it is the earth). The Sacral chakra is the sexual organs; solar plexus-adrenal glands; heart-thymus gland; throat-thyroid gland; Third eye-hypothalamus and pituitary glands; and the Crown-pineal gland. When the Chakra is affected by sound it in turn has a subsequent effect on the endocrine gland, which in turn releases a hormone which affects our mood. This in turn affects our organs and continues to the cellular level. The endocrine glands also affect us on an energetic level also. We can best say then that by working with our Chakras we are affected both physical and emotionally.

When looking at Sound Healing the former information is true, but there is much more and can better be explained by David Gibson in his book *The Complete Guide to Sound Healing*. "Sound Healing is only a small part of how sound can be used, or how it affects us. Sound does much more than heal. Sound can soothe, sound can raise our consciousness, and sound can take us into other realms of reality. Sounds can entrain our brains into a full range of states of consciousness. Healing is often thought of fixing something that is wrong. Sound can harmonize everything that is right-beauty, harmony, love, and Spirit." (*The Complete Guide to Sound Healing*, David Gibson, 2013)

As in many things in our world sound can have dualistic effects, both positive and negative. Before looking at the negative effects or damaging effects sound can have we must first look at the anatomy of the structure that is affected; the ear. (hearing)

The ear is made up of three sections- external, middle & inner. The external part is made up of the pinna (cartilage & skin) and the auditory canal. The middle ear is comprised of the tympanic membrane (eardrum) and the three bones-malleus (hammer), incus (anvil) & stapes (stirrup). One section that damage can occur from sound trauma is at the tympanic membrane. We have all hear of people who have suffered this severe trauma (ruptured eardrum), from explosions or massive bursts of sound. This trauma or damage can also be caused by physical injury or even medication use. The inner ear is made up of the cochlea, semicircular canals and the Eustachian tube. The cochlea is a part of the ear which contains thousands of hair-like structures called stereocilla. There are 4 rows of these hairs which run the length of the cochlea and move with vibrations received from the middle ear changing them to electrical impulses. These hair-like structures enable us to have an audible range of 20Hz. to 20,000Hz. The damage to these hairs can be both partial, which can be damaged but not destroyed or severely damaged or wiped out. Also, you can have certain groups of stereocilla damaged or destroyed; an example could be either high or low frequencies or both. Sounds that are damaging would be sudden loud bursts or explosions or moderate sounds over a long period of time. The other structures of the inner ear are the semicircular canals which

are used for balance and the Eustachian tube which has two functions. First, it regulates normal environmental air pressure and second it drains any accumulated secretions, infection, and debris from the middle ear.

The fact is not that there are damaging sounds in our environment but is sound being used in ways that can harm? We can now look at some ways that this might be true.

The one new thing that is now being used by both the military and some police forces are sound (sonic) weapons. These can be called different names some of which include: sonic bullets, sonic grenades, sonic mines, or sonic cannons. The question to be raised is that is this instrument being used for good or harm? I guess it really depends on how or in what situation you are looking at it. From a militaristic or a control side you would say yes. From an opposing view it could be different. Let us in more detail see what these instruments are and how they are being used.

One internet article describes how these devices are used by a police force in Missouri to deter work zone speeding by motorists. It describes that “the device emits a targeted, deafening siren that “easily penetrates the windshield and well insulated cab of the car, even overriding the vehicles engine sounds and a radio turned up loud enough to jam to tunes at highway speeds.” (Missouri will Fire deafening sound cannons at drivers to deter work zone speeding, Chris Welch, U.S. & World), (internet). These devices can reach up to 153 decibels, more than enough to potentially cause hearing damage. This new technology is also being used by police departments for crowd control situations.

The military’s use of this technology is primarily as a weapon. These weapons are of different types: infrasonic-below human hearing range, ultrasonic-above human hearing range, and audible range. They are known to produce both psychological and/or physical effects. These can range from slight to fatalistic.

In addition, sound (sonic) cannons have also been approved by our government for use in exploration for finding new oil and gas reserves. They are already in use in the western Gulf of Mexico, off Alaska and other offshore oil operations around the world. There is little, if any research concerning the danger or harm to aquatic sea life. Some environmental groups are raising many concerns for harm to whales, fish and some sea turtles.

In conclusion, sound is a very powerful form of energy. If used properly it can do many things, some of which include make us feel good (soothe), raise our consciousness, heal disease, and break up emotional blockages. Like other energy forms in our environment its dualistic nature also can make it harmful, if used in the wrong way. But the question is not If or how it is used but I believe what we really need to focus on is what is our intention. Good or Harm.

Bibliography

1. Healing Sounds, The Power of Harmonics, Jonathan Goldman, Healing Arts Press, Rochester, Vermont, Copyright 1992, 1996, 2002.
2. The Complete Guide to Sound Healing, David Gibson, 2013
3. Sacred Sounds, Magic & Healing through Words & Music, Ted Andrews, Llewellyn Publications, Copyright 2011
4. Sonic Weapons-Wikipedia, (internet), The Free encyclopedia
5. Missouri will Fire deafening sound cannons at drivers to deter work zone speeding, Chris Welch, U.S. & World, (internet)
6. New World War: Sonic Weapons, Mark Rich, (internet), 2011

