

Sound Healing for Pets and Animals

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for the Sound Healing Certificate Program

Date of Submission: April 27, 2015

Healing with sound has been a common and important practice among many indigenous and ancient cultures around the world, including among others, Egyptians, Greeks, Tibetans, American Indians, Aborigines in Australia and the Dogon tribe in Africa. In fact many cultures continue to use such healing practices to this day. These sound practices including toning and harmonics created with instruments, voice, drums, rattles, bowls, cymbals, bells and tuning forks to name a few. In addition, the use of sound for healing has been used in many ancient cultures to attain higher states of consciousness, including among others, the ancient Vedic tradition in India, the Egyptians and the shamanic Bön tradition in Tibet.

Today, sound therapy techniques are not only used on people for general and specific healing, but also on their pets and animals. The focus of this paper is to briefly review some of the applications of sound therapy being used on pets and animals and the results reported by the healers. An immediate search of the internet provides ample evidence that sound therapy techniques are being used on pets and animals to support their health and wellness.

For example, a massage therapist in Snohomish, Washington stated that she began integrating sound therapy into her practice in 1999 and immediately found that her pets enjoyed it and were able to attain deep levels of relaxation. She stated that sound therapy was soothing and relaxing for tense and nervous animals and also helped to build trust. For flighty animals it helped to ground them and for old and tired animals it brought new energy to their bodies. As she continued her practice with sound healing, she has witnessed the enthusiasm of many cats for becoming involved in the Acutonics sessions that she performs on people. Subsequently this practitioner has expanded her practice to include sound healing for dogs, cats, horses and other animals, saying “The soothing vibrations of an Acutonics treatment can create both overall relaxation and a decrease in the pain and swelling in and around a sore area of the body.”¹

A San Diego based Tibetan bowl sound healer, has also been working with animals and teaching pet owners how to use sound to reduce stress and increase well being in their animals. In October 2006, this practitioner and a veterinarian hosted an event entitled “Sound Healing for People and the Animals they Love.” Attending were 25 people and 42 dogs that pulled, fidgeted, sniffed and barked until the practitioner began to play her bowls. About 10 minutes later she realized that the entire group had quieted down. The owners had closed their eyes and the dogs were lying still. She noted that the energy in the room had become peaceful and quiet. She observes that “animals are extremely sound sensitive and can hear more layers of sound and more notes than humans. They respond well to bowls with lower tones that are played in a soothing manner.”

In a recent workshop she invited a dog recovering from surgery into a room for a sound treatment. She softly played a large low frequency bowl directly in front of this dog. At first the dog was pensive but after a while the dog relaxed and was quiet throughout the rest of the workshop. The veterinarian at this event reported, "I have a friend that is a dog owner that has a pit-bull, lab cross with these aggressive bouts. He is 3 years old and she has been working 3 years to modify, and mitigate his aggression. The net success frankly was insignificant - until the singing bowls. After 3 sessions with the singing bowls, the outbursts were less frequent and the time to return to present very much shorter."²

Another healing practitioner located in Phoenicia, New York uses sound healing and Reiki on animals. She says, depending on their needs, both modalities are effective, and "Without any mental programming to get in the way, animals are able to stay in the moment, receive, and assimilate the vibrational shifts with ease."³

A licensed behavioral medicine psychotherapist and sound therapist located in Walland, Tennessee creates sound healing CDs to help calm and heal dogs, cats and other pets. She states that "the body of research clearly demonstrates that anxious animals like slow, classical music, i.e., music that is 60-72 beats per minute, with simple melodies and harmonies. The most recent research from California adds one other element: piano. Dogs prefer their classical music played on the piano." Her company, called Inner Harmony, just produced a classical music CD called "Music to Mellow Your Mutt" for pets (and humans).⁴

In the United Kingdom, the College of Sound Healing reports positive anecdotal evidence that supports the premise that sound healing is not only useful for healing but also for calming animals that might otherwise become aggressively protective. As one gentleman shared his experience with farm animals, "I've discovered that the best way to avoid needless panic racing through a flock of sheep is ...Vocalising achieves this. Two syllables, two notes descending, using an interval of a 4th works well, as do the major 3rd and the 5th. Tone and intent are most important but the words too have a further effect: "there now" and "ea-sy" are for some reason less effective than "good girl."

Another farm animal handler reported that her lambs often were born with "sway back" which resulted in being put down. She reports that using sound healing now results in "sway back" lambs recovering well. "I use the power of sound intuitively. I concentrated on its base chakra and spine. I even sang a beautiful melody to [a] lamb at one stage in the healing.... He was the first of many to be healed with sound and all sway back lambs are healed now. There are also other animals on the farm that are sung to with amazing effects. What a beautiful thing it is, the power of sound."⁵

My own experience using sound healing on my pet cat began recently when I put on my headphones and played a CD of healing theta binaural beat music while I layed on the couch. My kitty immediately crawled on to my chest and slept there through the entire CD. She has done this on several occasions! Now I often touch an A# 68Hz tuning fork on the back of her neck and she remains still and purrs. See photograph below.



Picture of Baby Kitty by Marta Macbeth

Overall, in my review of healing practitioners found on the web, I find that, generally, a range of sound healing techniques are used successfully to do one or more of the following: reduce stress, and pain, balance energy and create vitality and spontaneous healing in pets and animals.

SOURCES

1. From Sara Light-Waller's website: www.sacredtouchhealing.com.
2. From Diane Mandel's website: www.soundenergyhealing.com/pages/articles_pets_link.html.
3. From Ricarda O'Conner's website: www.ricardahealing.com/pets.html.
4. www.soundsforhealth.blogspot.com/2008/11/healing-music-and-sounds-for-pets.html and www.InnerHarmonyHealthCenter.com.
5. www.collegeofsoundhealing.co.uk/pages/animals.html.