

The Healing Power of the Voice

By Joanna Sullivan

Every instrument has a certain quality, a texture or timbre, volume, pitch, and resonance that give it a unique signature. Even between similar instruments, two drums will vary in sound slightly, though many of the qualities may be the same. But there is no instrument that has a more varied individual signature than the voice. Every voice carries a blueprint for the person for whom it occupies, and as soon as someone speaks, listeners are translating that blueprint at the subconscious level. We can tell if someone is tired, excited, feeling ill, cautious or a range of other emotions, even without knowing them very well. There are messages and intentions behind the actual words being spoken that we are able to interpret just from the quality of the voice.

The voice has been used throughout human history as a tool beyond just simple communication. When used for singing, this already powerful instrument becomes magnified in power. In churches, nurseries, political arenas, musical theatre, weddings and funerals, the power of the singing voice catapults the audience into waves of somatic and emotional sensations. When singing together in groups, these feelings are even more potent. The group experiences a range of sensations, from that of unification, empowerment, comfort, relief from stress and becoming present in the moment.

What happens when we speak or sing that makes the voice capable of such transcendental experiences? We breathe air in through our airways using the diaphragm, and when we push the air through the vocal cords, the two walls of the mucous membranes vibrate together to create sound. The vibrations are measured as frequencies, or numbers of waves per second, and can be felt throughout the entire body.

The language of nature is vibratory in nature. Plants and trees have been proven to react to vibrations. Animals react to pulsations felt through the ground that signal a predator is nearby. When we speak, sing, or tone elongated vowels such as “Om”, the vibrations are felt throughout the body through a nerve known as

the Vagus Nerve. This sensory nerve originates in the Medullas region of the brain, the region of the brain that is responsible for heart rate, respiration and blood pressure. It sits just above the brainstem and below the pineal gland (known as the third eye) and is regarded as the “primordial brain” for it’s basic requisite functions. The Vagus Nerve travels, or “wanders” as the name suggests, via branches to every organ in the body. This sensory nerve then communicates the state of the entire bodies’ organs back to the brain after passing directly through the larynx, lungs and abdomen. It is through this nerve we feel sound first, before actually hearing it with our auditory senses.

When we speak, the tongue, lips and teeth are the agents of transformation that take the vocal cord’s vibrations and shape them into sounds. We interpret this as language in the region of the brain known as the prefrontal cortex. When tones and sounds are used instead of words, the prefrontal cortex that is usually busy planning, judging and interpreting can take a seat on the sidelines. The vibrational frequency of the tone transmits vibrations throughout the body of the toner and anyone present. Toning in groups amplifies the effect, as seen within circles of Buddhist monks chanting together.

There is a huge difference between toning and singing. Over the years, singing has received the societal stigmas of “good singing” or “bad singing”, and many more people feel that they fall into the later category than the former. With toning, however, there is no context of “good toning” or “bad toning”, and any tone that is created is simply a tone. Over time, the more one tones, the vocal cords will gain more versatility and one will have greater confidence with toning, increased lung capacity, and, if desired, be able to improve into what may be considered a pleasant singing voice.

Vocal toning is a means for an individual to use their own voice to create a particular frequency to the body. When one puts their attention to a particular area of the body and holds an intention, for example healing or balancing, then tones the corresponding sound, the effects can be felt quickly and can be very profound. Although toning may seem to be reserved to the realms of New Age eccentrics, it has been used in many cultures around the world throughout the history of time.

Ancient Egyptians, Greeks, Hindus, Sufis, and indigenous tribes all knew the benefits of using sound and vocal toning to heal. We are now at an exciting time when much of this knowledge is re-emerging; scientists are studying the effects which is bridging the gap between science and metaphysics. Research has discovered that toning provides increased oxygen in the cells, lowered blood pressure and heart rate, increased lymphatic circulation, increased levels of melatonin, reduced levels of stress related hormones, release of endorphins (natural pain relievers), boosted production of blood protein interleukin-1, increased levels of nitric oxide (molecule associated with the promotion of healing and vascular dilation), and a release of oxytocin, known as the “trust hormone”. After toning, participants report feeling relaxed, a deeper connection with their body, and has empowered people to be more confident about using their voice, not only while toning but also in day-to-day life.

The tone itself profoundly affects the body, however it is in the intention that the healing happens. All of humanity is connected by an invisible force known as the Zero Point Field, a web of energy that responds to emotions (from the route emotes-energy in motion). Information and energy within the Field work together- information has energy, and energy has information. Energy is the power in the information and information is the purpose of the energy.

Information and energy work through coherent waves, wavelengths in which the troughs and the crests are consistently the same height and size. When wavelengths meet, they can create one of three scenarios. A constructive interference occurs when symmetrical interfacing waves overlap and result in harmony, amplifying the energy of both frequencies. A destructive interference is an incoherent wave, when two opposite waves crash into one another and result in a flat line. The third interaction, the harmonic interaction, occurs when a beat frequency is slightly higher, resulting in a brand new frequency altogether, like music being created. All of the photons play their individual parts like an orchestra, yet you experience the composite of the whole. Within this composite, all elementary particles exchange energy through other quantum particles, creating an enormous amount of energy throughout the universe. Science refers to this as the

vacuum, which is boundless and contains all possibilities. Scientifically, this is the Zero Point Energy Field and through this field we are all connected. It is the bridge between the un-manifest and the manifest.

The field is everywhere, there is no out and there is no in, you are always within the Field and the Field is always within you. Everything that happens in one area of the Field affects every other part of the field; it is interdependent. Everything you think, feel or do affects the whole. And since our cells are comprised of 99.9% space, it is the Field that fills that space. It is your perception or belief within this field that controls the behavior of the cells and DNA. Since your emotions move you through the Field, your emotions and feelings create the experience. It is the significance placed upon these feelings that create the reality of your experience. Feelings of appreciation, love, compassion and well being create highly ordered, coherent wave patterns to which your cells respond accordingly. So by carrying the intention of healing to a certain area of cells in the body, the cells in the body will react harmoniously.

We are reaching a time in human evolution where science and spirit are merging, leveling the playing field and bringing logic and emotion into balance. We have always subconsciously felt the tremendous amount of energy contained within the voice, and known positive intention is an important element of life. Combining the two, we are able to see just how we can be active agents in our own healing process using our voice. There are many mysteries that are yet to be uncovered in this world, the healing power of the voice is no longer one of them.