

Tuning Fork Opportunities in a Sound Healing Therapy Sessions
by Liz Thorpe (January 31, 2012)

Research Topic and Initial Findings:

I am fascinated by the effect reflexology massage applied to the hands, feet, ears and face has on the human body. If massage has this effect, then I would imagine the addition of sound would have an equal or greater affect on the body at these points. I began my research hoping to find ways of using the sound created by tuning forks on reflexology points – specifically on the facial points – and the results of this procedure. My reasoning for choosing the facial reflexology points is purely based on location. Since the facial points are close to the ears, tuning forks would not only give the benefit of vibration through the bones of the skull and the body, but it would also allow the one receiving the treatment to more easily hear the frequency emitted from the tuning fork.

This method of receiving the sound and vibration at once seemed like a plausible method to me. However, the information I was able to find did not address the facial points; in fact, very little addressed using tuning forks on reflexology points at all. Therefore, this paper will briefly explore the basics of tuning forks, several methods currently being used by practitioners, and the benefits and precautions of using the forks.

The Basics:

There are several things to consider when choosing which tuning fork to use in a sound therapy session: the material from which the tuning fork is made, the weight of the fork, and finally the frequency and method you wish to use for the intended purpose.ⁱ There are two basic materials for tuning forks – aluminum or steel. Aluminum forks appear to be more popular with practitioners because the lighter weight is easier to hold onto for an extended period of time. In addition to the material, there are two basic types of tuning forks – weighted and unweighted. The weighted tuning fork is better for doing body work that involves placing the fork stem on the body. This can be done with the unweighted fork, however, the tone does not sustain as long and the vibration is not as strong. Both weighted and unweighted tuning forks are suitable for above and around the body work and for holding the forks close to the client's ears.ⁱⁱ

The tuning forks can be purchased individually or in sets. The sets are based on various tuning systems such as Solfeggio, Fibonacci, Solar Harmonics, Chakras, Om, and many others. I found tuning forks ranging in frequency from 32 Hz to 4225 Hz. The lower frequency forks are called Otto tuners in the frequencies of 32, 48, 64, and 128 Hz. Otto is short for Osteophonic meaning “Osteo for bone” and “phonic for sound.” Therefore an osteophonic treatment would be applying sound vibrations to the bones and joints.ⁱⁱⁱ The higher frequency forks are called Angel tuners and have frequencies of 4096, 4160, and 4225 Hz. Angel tuners are commonly used to help someone reach the higher spiritual realms.

Current Methods:

There are numerous methods for using tuning forks, but I will focus on the four methods I found most popular during my research process: using the forks above and around the body, using the forks on acupuncture/acupressure points and meridians, using them on the vertebra of the spine, and using them with crystals. The easiest method is placing the tuning forks beside the client's head about 3 to 6 inches from the ears. It is suggested not to remove the forks until the sound completely fades. The silence in between the sound is just as important as the sound itself.^{iv} In fact, Harry van Dalen, a founder of *Spirit Connection*, writes, “To really reach a higher level of consciousness, you have to achieve inner silence. And, paradoxically enough, you achieve that silence the fastest through sound.”^v This concurs with many sources I've encountered with sound healing talking about the still points within the sound. You can focus better on the sound when there is silence in between them.

There was an abundance of information on using tuning forks on the acupuncture/acupressure points of the body. This appears to be the most common method for applying tuning forks to the body. When using tuning

forks the precise location of the fork does not have to be as exact as it would be if you were inserting acupuncture needles. The sound spreads outward from the tuning fork allowing it to reach the intended location and surrounding locations. Michael Kopel states, that the “acupuncture points and meridians are just markers or guideposts” while conducting tuning fork therapy.^{vi} He recommends purchasing a good acupuncture chart which shows the front, back and side views of the body that have the points and meridians clearly marked.^{vii} When working with the meridians and acupuncture points, it is best to begin at the starting point of the meridian line. From there you can move up and down the body about 3 inches being sure to stay with the flow of the meridian. Another option for use on the meridians is using the tuning fork above the body and tracing the meridian flow from starting point to ending point. This can be done with each meridian during a session, or select meridians depending on the client’s needs.^{viii}

Using tuning forks on or near the vertebra of the spine is another method for treatment. There are 4 regions to the spinal column: Cervical, Thoracic, Lumbar and Sacral. There are 12 vertebra in the Thoracic region and 12 vertebra between the Cervical and Lumbar regions which equals 24 moveable vertebra in the spine. An interesting observation by June Leslie Wieder, a massage therapist, is that the spine itself resembles a sound wave, and the bones themselves are excellent conductors for sound and vibration.^{ix} When working with the spine, tuning forks can be placed on the spinous processes of the spine (the bumpy part that you feel when you touch your back). This is the area where the muscles connect to the spine. Ms. Wieder also notes that “the connection between vertebra also extends to the chakras, so if you work with chakras, you can definitely connect your energy healing with physically healing the spine.”^x Another option for spinal work is to use two tuning forks simultaneously near the spine – one fork placed on either side of the spinal column next to the bone. Majorie de Muynck from *Ohm Therapeutics* recommends using two Ohm tuning forks for this method. Start at the top of the spine and work downward one vertebra at a time.^{xi}

If you already work with crystals, you can enhance the crystal work by adding tuning forks. Place the crystals on or above the body. Strike the tuning fork and place the stem of the fork on the crystal. Tuning forks are also valuable in “clearing and rebalancing of [the crystal’s] physical body and the energetic field surrounding it.”^{xii}

Benefits and Precautions with Using Tuning Forks:

There are many benefits from using tuning forks in a sound healing therapy session. Most therapists agree that the tuning forks can induce a state of deep relaxation, increase energy flow throughout the body, provide mental clarity, relieve stress and anxiety, clear blockages, and bring the nervous system and other systems within the body in balance. June Leslie Wieder combines tuning fork therapy with her massage therapy sessions to enhance the healing qualities of the session. She highly recommends using the interval of the perfect fifth because it mirrors many of the bodily systems and functions that are based on the 3:2 ratio. She gives the example of the optimal blood pressure being 120/80 which is a 3:2 ratio.^{xiii}

Along with the benefits of using tuning forks, there are precautions that should be heeded as well. First and foremost, if the tuning fork session becomes uncomfortable or painful for the client, STOP the treatment. Sound healing should not to be a painful thing.^{xiv} There may be times that tuning forks create a dissonant sound due to the interval or pitch of the fork. This may be undesirable to the client for the short amount of time it is played, but it should never cause them pain. In the words of Joshua Leeds, author of *The Power of Sound*, “Be aware of the power of sound, use it consciously. There can be positive and negative applications. It all comes down to frequency and dosage.”^{xv} Do not expose your client to extended periods of dissonance that will leave them unbalanced, or loud sounds (such as holding the tuning forks too closely to the ears) that could cause ear damage.

A final note of caution...if a client has recently experienced a back injury, begin the tuning fork treatment at the farthest point away from the injury. Or if the client has recently had back surgery, they should check with their doctor prior to receiving a tuning fork treatment.^{xvi}

Closing Comments:

Tuning fork therapy is not something to fear. It can be very beneficial for self-tuning and for tuning clients. There are many resources available for learning the proper techniques, treatment methods, and schools of thought on which frequencies to use. It is my intention to experiment with myself and others using tuning forks in the above mentioned methods as well as exploring my initial thought of using them on reflexology points.

ⁱ How to Select a Tuning Fork, 2 min. 5 sec., Omnivos Therapeutics, 2011, online video.

ⁱⁱ *ibid*

ⁱⁱⁱ Michael Kopel. "Weighted Tuning Forks Part 2: Working with the Spine." (posted on 12 May 2011) Omnivos Therapeutics, <<http://blog.omnivos.com/weighted-tuning-forks-pt-2-working-with-the-spine/>> (accessed on 3 January 2012).

^{iv} Michael Kopel. "Getting Started with Tuning Forks and the Solfeggio." (posted on 26 July 2011) Omnivos Therapeutics, <<http://blog.omnivos.com/getting-started-with-tuning-forks-and-the-solfeggio/>> (accessed on 3 January 2012).

^v Marieke Verhoeven. "Sonic Boon: A Search for the Healing Power of Sound," Ode Magazine, (September 2011 issue) <<http://www.odemagazine.com/doc/77/sonic-boon/>> (accessed 5 January 2012).

^{vi} Michael Kopel. "Weighted Tuning Forks Using Acupuncture Meridians." (posted on May 9, 2011) Omnivos Therapeutics, <<http://blog.omnivos.com/weighted-tuning-forks-using-acupuncture-meridians/>> (accessed on 3 January 2012).

^{vii} *ibid*

^{viii} Walter Last. "Acupressure and Meridian Therapy." Health – Science – Spirit, <<http://www.health-science-spirit.com/meridians.html>> (accessed on 6 January 2012).

^{ix} June Leslie Wieder. "Resonant Frequencies of the Spine." massagetherapy.com, (Originally published in Massage & Bodywork magazine, October/November 2006) <http://www.massagetherapy.com/articles/index.php/article_id/1254/Resonant-Frequencies-of-the-Spine> (accessed on 6 January 2012).

^x *ibid*

^{xi} Marjorie de Muynck. "Spinal Treatment." Ohm Therapeutics, <<http://www.soundhealingtools.com/site.php?p=healthcare&sp=acupuncturists>> (accessed on 6 January 2012).

^{xii} *ibid*

^{xiii} June Leslie Wieder. "Resonant Frequencies of the Spine." massagetherapy.com, (Originally published in Massage & Bodywork magazine, October/November 2006) <http://www.massagetherapy.com/articles/index.php/article_id/1254/Resonant-Frequencies-of-the-Spine> (accessed on 6 January 2012).

^{xiv} Michael Kopel. "Weighted Tuning Forks Part 2: Working with the Spine." (posted on 12 May 2011) Omnivos Therapeutics, <<http://blog.omnivos.com/weighted-tuning-forks-pt-2-working-with-the-spine/>> (accessed on 3 January 2012).

^{xv} June Leslie Wieder. "Resonant Frequencies of the Spine." massagetherapy.com, (Originally published in Massage & Bodywork magazine, October/November 2006) <http://www.massagetherapy.com/articles/index.php/article_id/1254/Resonant-Frequencies-of-the-Spine> (accessed on 6 January 2012).

^{xvi} Michael Kopel. "Weighted Tuning Forks Part 2: Working with the Spine." (posted on 12 May 2011) Omnivos Therapeutics, <<http://blog.omnivos.com/weighted-tuning-forks-pt-2-working-with-the-spine/>> (accessed on 3 January 2012).

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