

## Recovery Coaching

### Sound as a de-stressor for the client and the Coach

**The alchemy of sound is that it takes that which is congealed, congested, compressed, and crystallized and changes its material to a more pliable, resilient, liquid form. The innate function and power of Sound is that it changes all form that it touches; it can re-arrange and create shape and form.**

\*\*\*\*\*

Working with clients that never know what they want, don't want what they have, can't remember what they've lost.... although they do recall the jail cell they ended up in and the mistreatment that occurred while incarcerated.... and what hell it is to be in those dark dank holding tanks crowded with 20 other men or women and one toilet... the stories go on and the content and degree of 'bottoms' vary greatly; but, anyone who has suffered from the disease of alcoholism knows soul sickness. And those of us that work with alcoholics and addicts have heard many forms of imprisonment.

And as the therapist, counselor, or coach.... how do we fare after awhile? I recall a therapist client whose primary clientele for over ten years were with women who had been sexually assaulted. She said after awhile every man she saw she viewed as a perpetrator. The term 'burn out' really is an apt description as the stress 'fries' are nervous system. Listening to the stories of pain and wreckage can stress our own system ...distort and dim our range of color and light. Studies show that nearly three-fourths of today's illnesses stem from stress. Stress affects our emotional health, which in turn affects our physical health. From personal experience and millions of others alcoholism is a most stressful dis-ease.

The alcoholic is nearly always stressed. Physically the chemistry that takes place keeps the body in a constant state of flight or fight or fright. The alcoholic nearly always suffers from adrenal exhaustion. The pancreas keeps shooting off adrenalin trying to manage the overload of sugar.

Some of us have worked with addicts and alcoholic women in jails and prisons. Some were there for life. It was often easier to work with the women who were in prison as they had a rested, secure knowing of their environment, (so to say).

Working with the women in jail was sometimes more difficult. My time of meeting was often at the time the 'drug man' came around. Like the old blues song 'candy man'. These women could hardly sit in their seats as their eyes and ears were glued to the door waiting for it to open and for their name to be called. Once they got their drug of the day, maintenance therapy, they could sit and we could talk. *I'm not here to judge the method or means only to describe the stress behavior.*

How does a coach take care of him or herself? Of course there are many tools. Meditation, prayer, exercise, lots of water, life nurturing diet, peer supervision, someone

else to empty and clear with, (sounding boards) and learning many forms of detachment. Each coach or therapist I have known is knowledgeable in a variety of self-care tools.

The self-care I want to suggest is the use of sound, using one's voice. Sound is one of the fastest forms of release and emptying and clearing of excess energies, (that which is not ours.) We are human beings and boundaries may be in place but energetics often penetrates the tissue, membranes and triggers our own 'stuff'.

All spiritual disciplines speak of a daily practice of emptying, releasing to make room for spiritual Source or inspiration to come into their being. Sound is such a tool.

The use of Sound as a de-stressor, either learning to utilize your own voice or listening to intentional healing music will often slow down the pulse rate, and help the person center themselves, to relax and balance the emotional/mental terrain. We are speaking of the mind body connection throughout this paper. When we are able to relax, we are often shown what is at the heart of the problem that is bothering us. For the newly sober, it can assist them in being able to sit in a chair and start trusting that the feelings they are having will not kill them. Or they can purposefully start quieting their mind.

There is also a very helpful tool that coaches and therapists use called Voice Dialog. I have used this to have people give sounds of their scared places, of their sober place, of their drunk place, of the place they want to occupy, of their Connected place to their Higher Power. There are endless creative and safe ways of using Sound.....Of course first would be assisting them to 'sound' their safe wise one, or healthy awareness parent one. The experience of working with sound is that it helps a unification to take place on an unconscious level. Immediately with sound, a person expands their breathing. More breath, more relaxation possible, more rest is possible in the organism.

The main attribute of 'sounding' is that it helps quiet our mind. An interview with Tibetan monks in the early 90's said that the use of mantras (chants) were used to quiet the mind. There is much evidence that chant, prayer, vocalization has been used for eons to quiet our restless minds. Sounding the noise, emptying ourselves of the noise allows for moments of quiet.

Dr. Peter Guy Manners developed the Cymatic Instrument several decades ago in England, using five distinct frequencies applied as sound waves to problem areas. In his experiments he found that wounds heal in two-thirds the normal time when administering this process.

Harvard University Business School has used sound for stress reduction and the Princeton NJ school system has used sound to quiet hyperactive children. Clinics all over the world are using sound to relieve stress.

We can easily teach each other to HUM or AH. If I am feeling well, "I am in tune", if I am not well, "I am out of tune"

Literally using our voices to tune ourselves, we develop a listening, a noticing of our tuning. We can play our bodies as if they were many instruments in an orchestra. If I hear some string out of tune, I can actually use my voice to tune myself.

Now is the time to describe the physical terrain of our bodies and what may be some of the symptoms of "taking on that which is not ours." Our body is approximately 80% fluid. Our bones contain fluid. Our connective tissue is fluid. These tissues are fibers that surround all of our musculature. The head and brain tissue is primarily fluid. We know that our environment, our physical dwellings, our emotional mood, and the level of stress, directly affect the liquid system in our body including blood and plasma. What happens within this fluid system when stressed, injured, and physically ill? It congeals, congests, crystallizes, gets constricted, and becomes thick or more viscous. These are components that are nearly always present in any dis-ease or dysfunction within our body, impeding the flow that assists the movement of pollutants absorbed through the environment, dietary toxic medications, and undigested emotional material.

Here are some examples of life situations that can easily affect our fluidity and create the possibility of taking on 'stuff' that may not be ours to host:

- Airplane travel, recycled air, hundreds of people
- Accidents/ shocks
- Fights/emotional upsets
- Working therapeutically with others
- Bereavement or loss of a loved one
- A very busy, stressful lifestyle
- A diet of processed foods

Emotional and physical distress impedes circulation of ALL fluid systems. The physical environment becomes vulnerable and attracts more congestion. When there is a great deal of lactic acid (stress) build up in the fluid of the musculature, often the result of too much stress, circulation is impeded in that area, and as the body is trying to remove excess toxicity through the blood, the toxicity will often get stopped in the area that has the lactic acid buildup. It becomes very much like a beaver dam. All things floating through the fluid have the opportunity to get stuck.

**Possible symptoms of an abundance of stress, and/or holding on to 'that which is not ours':**

- Don't have enough time, agitated, impatient
- Don't know how we feel
- Can't rest deeply or enough: often creates insomnia
- Touching the body has the feeling of not being present.
- Processing same material over and over
- Energetic co-dependency. Can't stay out of others business

Sound is a Nutrient. Sound is a Food

We use sound, at-random sounding, unpredictable sounding, gibberish sounding, whining, moaning grunting, laughing sounds, sounds that have the essence of aerobics about them, sounds that require breathing and an inner movement of being touched, effected by sound, stimulating sounds that gets the body vibrating. It is like hoeing, shoveling, masticating, chopping, getting our earth body terrain more workable, moving some of the stones that rolled into the path of listening. Working our soil to a texture to receive and release.

Our hum, humming is an integrative, liquefying sound that communicates to our varied systems. It creates a palate that is 'humming', palatable, attentive, alive, awake, intelligent, teachable, reachable, pulsating. We use our hum to soothe and caress our body, and we hum to neutralize and feed our nervous system. We watch and observe our breath and our feelings and let ourselves give thanks for having a body.

The Hum sound activates a wave in our liquid body. The Hum acts as a pulsation - it ignites the fire that sets up a wave movement throughout our body.

Take a moment and begin to Hum in a natural,  
comfortable speaking voice range.

Let yourself HUMMMMMHUMMMHUMM  
for 10-30 seconds.

Gently breathing, not forcing the breath;  
when your exhale is complete, relax,  
inhale and begin again.

Allow your hands to touch and shape your head and HUMMMMMMM.

Feel the resonance in your head?

Let your hands touch and shape your neck  
and continue your HUMMMMMMM.

Pause. Listen. Breathe.

Notice how you feel or what and where you are feeling.

Notice any sensations.

Bring your awareness and your hands onto your chest cavity,  
the home of the lungs, the Heart center,  
HUMMMMMMMMMHUMMMMMMMMM.

Rest, pause and breathe and notice how that feels to you.

Continue your HUM exploration  
to your solar plexus, abdomen, lower back

A reflection of body and sound influence:

- Body is fluid
- Body is a resonating chamber
- Sound helps the body dissolve coagulated, congested situations.
- Sound helps the body maintain a more fluid state
- Sounding dissolves/helps the body relieve itself of 'functional holding patterns'
- Sound helps the cardio-vascular system
- Sound nourishes and feeds the nervous system
- Sound can help the body rest and balance more into the Para-sympathetic NS
- Sound helps to quiet the mind

Just as we prepare a garden, we prepare our body consciously before coming to receive or give a session.

Example of a SimpleSound guideline for daily care.

1<sup>st</sup> The HUM. Sound signature

2<sup>nd</sup> Gibberish, at-random, unpredictable sound. Aerobic sounding, stimulation

3<sup>rd</sup> Returning to the hum

4<sup>th</sup> Sit or lay comfortably and listen and feel how you feel

5<sup>th</sup> Give thanks and be in a state of gratitude for the opportunity to slow down enough to listen

6<sup>th</sup> In a state of gratitude and honesty...sound/sing a 'loving song' to oneself.

7<sup>th</sup> Rest and listen

"We can say: Every muscular rigidity contains the history and the meaning of its origin. It is thus not necessary to deduce from dreams or associations the way in which the muscular armor developed; rather, the armor itself is the form in which the infantile experience continues to exist as a harmful agent. The neurosis is by no means only the expression of a disturbed psychic equilibrium; much more correctly and significantly, it is the expression of a chronic disturbance of the vegetative equilibrium and of natural motility."

Wilhelm Reich, *The Function of the organism*, p.267. Noonday Press, 1968.

Hunt, Valerie v. *Infinite Mind*. Malibu Publishing Co. Ca. 1995

*Adaptive growth and Body Rhythm*, Reich and Rolf, Peter Levine 1975

Swami Samatananda, *The secret of Mantra, Siddha Path*. India 1982

*Cymatics*, Hans Jenny cc. 1974 German Edition

*Molecules of Emotion*, Candace Pert, 1997

*Sound health*, Steven Halpern, Harper and Rowe, 1985

*Sounding the Inner Landscape*, Kay Gardner, 1990

*Energy Medicine*, James Oschman, 2000

