



# Healing Touch and Toning for Self-Care

by Ginny Thorndike, Ph.D., HTCP

**D**id you realize that all of us Healing Touch practitioners are sound healers and that Healing Touch is a form of sound healing? If not, you have plenty of company.

We are sound healers because whenever we do Healing Touch we tune into and intend to direct the complex and innumerable inaudible vibrations of the biofield. When we follow the energy in HT, we are relying on inner listening to improvise. Healing Touch is an inaudible vibratory improvised duet between client and practitioner. Know it or not, you are an accomplished improvisational musician.

James Oschman, one of our best spokespersons for energy medicine, helps us understand why this is so. *"In terms of vibrations, the human body can be compared to a symphony orchestra. Each molecule corresponds to a particular instrument. Each bend, rotation or stretch of a chemical bond has a certain resonant frequency, and will give off certain 'notes' if it is energized."* **Energy Medicine: The Scientific Basis.** (Churchill Livingstone, Harcourt Publishers Limited, 2000, p. 123) The energy spectrum covers some 90 octaves. Only a small portion of this is audible to humans - 16 to about 18,000 pulses (cycles) per second.

Hazrat Inayat Khan, the great Sufi mystic and teacher, brings an ancient spiritual perspective to the primacy of vibration. *"The Vedanta speaks of **Nada Brahma**, the Sound-God, the sound that is God, of which all things are made... Before this world was, all was in sound, God was sound, we are made of sound."* **The Mysticism of Sound and Music** (Shambala Publications,

Inc., Boston, MA, 1991, p. 24. This book is a compilation of lectures and addresses delivered in the 1920s.)

Both the ancient wisdom of many spiritual traditions and the cutting edge of modern physics posit that we are made of sound. We Healing Touch practitioners work in a vibratory universe that we literally cannot hear. Expanding our awareness and professional capabilities into the audible spectrum is a natural extension. We can enrich our vibratory impact by expanding our healing repertoire into the audible range through toning.

Why make the case for toning to Healing Touch practitioners? Because toning is the sound healing modality most closely related to Healing Touch.

Toning is self-generated improvisational vocal sound used with the intent of clearing, balancing and energizing the biofield.

- Just as we center and attune in Healing Touch, so we center and attune and trust the process moment by moment, sound by sound, in toning.
- Just as we follow the energy in Healing Touch, so we follow the energy in toning.
- Just as Healing Touch is an inaudible, vibratory, improvised duet between client and practitioner, so toning is an improvised duet where our audible voice partners with our own or our client's biofield or part of it.

Have I convinced you yet that you are already doing inaudible toning? that you are already accomplished at a form of musical

improvisation? Have I piqued your interest in experimenting with the audible range?

If so, the place to start exploring audible toning is through self-care. Why?

Toning is powerful. It is appropriate to become well acquainted with this power first in our own field. In this process, we discover our personal relationship to making audible sound. In this exploration, many of us make transformative (re)discoveries, clearing important blocks to vocal expression that we never addressed before. The wounded healer grows.

There are endless ways to practice toning. Here are some basic sonic elements you can use to clear, balance, connect, and charge your energy field.

It is the intention more than the technique that determines the outcome of toning. Each of the elements below can clear, balance, connect, and charge the energy field depending upon our intention.

I encourage you to focus first on basic elements of human sound, the precursors of language, because they are the most familiar sounds to us: vowels, consonants, syllables, nasals.

Vowels -- in English these are "Eee [wheel], Ih [if], Eh [wet], Ah [papa], Oh [go], Ooo [do]" This list is in the order in which we produce the sound in our vocal tract, from the front of our palette to the back of our throat.

Consonants -- [e.g. bbbbbbbb, kkkkkkkk, mmmmm, rrrrrrrrrr, ssssssssss, zzzzzzzzzz]

Syllables -- Combine a consonant and vowel [e.g. ba, ma, ta, di, si, lo, ro, du, nu]

Nasals -- Hold your nose and tone any syllable.

Tone your name to yourself. Follow your name to places in your body wishing to hear it, and then to places not wishing to hear it.

Now let us add several tools:

Drone is the repetition of one or very few elongated tones. Droning is a gentle way to clear, balance, connect, and/or

charge the energy field.

Repeating a tone or tones at any speed can strengthen the tone/s, enhance it/them. Repeating can also clear blocks or congestion.

Opposition such as high/low, fast/slow, loud/soft has many uses. One can sound a low tone for grounding when in the upper part of the body/field. One can sound slow tones to slow a rapid pulse.

Intervals (the sound space between two different pitches e.g. octaves, fifths, thirds) can connect chakras, organs, tissues that are separated in the body/field.

As Kay Gardner, composer and sound healing pioneer so aptly noted: "*The human voice is the most powerful and effective musical instrument, or tool, for holistic healing of the human organism.*" **Sounding the Inner Landscape** (Stonington, Maine, Caduceus Publications, 1990.).

Laurel Elizabeth Keyes, whose book **Toning: The Creative Power of the Voice** (DeVorss & Co., P.O. Box 550, Marina del Rey, CA, 90294, 1973, p. 12.) introduced Americans to this ancient practice, captures the power of toning for self care. "*Each time that I Toned, my body felt exhilarated, alive as it had never felt before; a feeling of wholeness and extreme well-being... When I let [the Tone] pass out, freely, with no attempt to control it, it appeared to cleanse the entire body, releasing tensions and congested areas.*"

Don Campbell, sound healing pioneer and educator, and toning enthusiast created two excellent resources for us. They are **Healing Yourself With Your Own Voice**, a CD from Sounds True, original audiotope 1994, and **The Roar of Silence: Healing Powers of Breath, Tone & Music** (Wheaton, IL, The Theosophical Publishing House, 1989.)

Keep in mind that chanting mantras, using chakra seed syllables, making Tao sounds is not toning because the sounds are given from the outside and have a preexisting sonic structure. They do not arise spontaneously from inner listening.

Ask to receive and transmit the perfect sounds, the perfect tones, for yourself. There are no wrong tones. Follow the energy and trust the process. Experiment, explore.

### About the Author



Ginny Thorndike's journey into healing work began in 1982 with sound healing, using vocal and instrumental improvisation to open hearts. She led workshops on musical improvisation and on leadership development for educational institutions, nonprofits, government, and interested individuals and groups during the 1980s. She trained with such pioneers of sound healing as David Darling, Don Campbell, and Jonathan Goldman. In 1996 a sound healer friend introduced her to Maureen McCracken. She took Healing Touch Level 1 and 2 with Maureen and became hooked on Healing Touch. Ginny has a part-time private practice in Monkton, MD, near Baltimore, as an Integrative Wellness Educator. She works with individuals, couples, and small groups. Her primary modalities are Healing Touch and toning. She has a number of distance clients and can teach toning using Skype and Gmail video chat.