

Sound: Source of Inner Strength



Peter Hess® Sound Massage and Sound Methods
Health · Therapy · Care

Practical tips and information
Singing bowls & **PETER HESS®** Sound Methods



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*The Board of Directors (from right):
Peter Hess, Dr. Christina Koller, Ulrich Krause*

Dear readers!

The social changes of the last few years are leaving their mark. Increasing stress, media overstimulation and anxiety about the future lead to physical and psychological symptoms. When body, mind, and soul are out of balance, illnesses emerge. In a cognitively driven world, it is becoming increasingly important to integrate body awareness and positive emotions in order to holistically promote health and healing processes.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has classified stress as one of the greatest health risks in the western world. Against this background, relaxation methods such as Peter Hess® Sound Massage and Sound Methods are gaining increasing importance. This is because they can effectively enhance prevention, therapy, medicine and nursing as a complementary or independent treatment.

The philosophy of Peter Hess® Sound Work is based on the principles of Salutogenesis and Humanistic Psychology. It is always focused on a healthy state and aims to activate self-healing powers and unused resources. The audible and tangible sounds help to reinforce these powers and promote well-being.

Sound treatments complement traditional therapies and are used in fields such as prevention, occupational therapy, physical therapy, pain management, psychotherapy and palliative care. A significant advantage is that the sounds not only have a positive effect on patients, but also on practitioners, and can be integrated into occupational health management.

This booklet demonstrates how you can apply the Peter Hess® Sound Methods in a targeted manner. You will find valuable information, case studies and suggestions in order to personally experience the beneficial effects of singing bowl sounds - whether for yourself or for your patients.

Yours, Peter Hess, Dr. Christina Koller and Ulrich Krause
Board of directors of the International Association of Sound Massage Therapy

The Peter Hess® Sound Massage and Sound Methods



The Peter Hess® Sound Massage and Sound Methods

In 1984, Peter Hess developed the holistic relaxation method of Sound Massage with singing bowls, which is now taught worldwide. It is the foundation of Sound Methods, which are successfully applied in numerous fields, and are presented in this booklet.



The Sound Massage – pure relaxation!

Put very simply, a Sound Massage involves placing singing bowls on the clothed body according to a specific system and gently striking them.

The harmonious sounds have a calming effect on the mind. The gentle sound vibrations relax the body. This leads to relaxation and a feeling of well-being. Regeneration on all levels can occur.

"I never thought I would be able to let go so easily"

*"The bowls are simply amazing, so different and long-lasting.
It's as if they make everything right."*

"After the Sound Massage, I was finally able to sleep through the night again!"

The Peter Hess® Sound Massage

- is a holistic method that stimulates body, mind and soul
- elicits deep and beneficial relaxation
- reinforces people's basic trust
- facilitates letting go of worries, fears and doubts
- enhances and improves body and self-awareness
- promotes regeneration and self-healing processes
- enables access and use of own resources
- boosts self-confidence, creativity, productivity and motivation

Diverse Sound Methods offer a wide range of application possibilities

Over the course of four decades, numerous Sound Methods based on Sound Massage have been developed in close collaboration with professionals, which can also be used in a medical-therapeutic, psychotherapeutic and nursing context. These include:

Sound Massages for specific areas of the body

Classic sound massage is primarily intended as a holistic relaxation treatment. Sound massages for specific body parts, e.g. for the back (see p. 27-29), also enable targeted treatment of specific areas. For instance, they can be easily integrated into physical or occupational therapy treatments.

Sound settings and sound exercises

Even brief sound settings and sound exercises lasting only 2-5 minutes can produce positive effects. Many of these short treatments, such as those described in this booklet, can be used alongside therapy. Furthermore, self-applied sound exercises can contribute to the success of therapy.

Sound journeys, imaginary journeys or visualisations

Sound journeys and visualisations accompanied by sound have proven to be particularly useful for working with groups, in counselling, therapy, and occupational health management. The sounds gently lead into a subtle trance state, during which the unconscious is highly receptive to verbal content. This results in a wonderful synthesis of sound and speech, whereby targeted content can be offered, such as 'The inner helper' (see p. 34).

A distinctive characteristic of sound treatments is that everyone involved profits from the beneficial sounds. This creates a win-win situation for patients, professionals and carers.

Treat yourself to a soothing Sound Massage!

For sound massage offers in your area,

please contact your local Peter Hess® Academy (p. 86).

You can also find contact details of sound professionals (Providers) at:

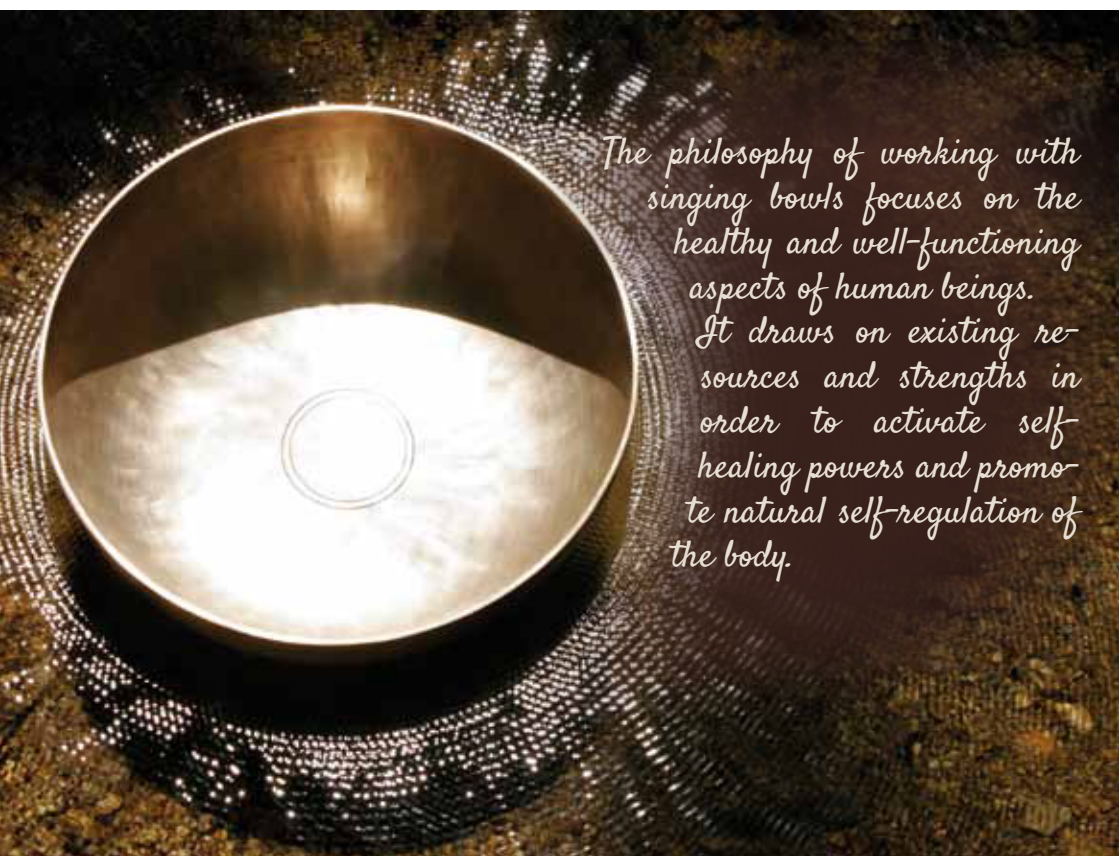
www.fachverband-klang.de/en/

Using the effect of sound treatments in a targeted manner

Sound treatments belong to the biofield therapies

The Peter Hess® Sound Methods can be classified as biofield therapies, which assume that all living beings are vibrating systems. Each person has their own vibrational patterns. If we lose our balance, we can use the soothing sounds and vibrations of the singing bowls to harmonise body, mind and soul in order to attune the entire organism to the harmonious, relaxing vibration frequency, which can be recalled as a memory trace by the body cells. Consequently, relaxation is always the focus of sound treatments.

The Peter Hess® Sound Methods are based on the model of Salutogenesis and on the image of humanity of Humanistic Psychology.



The philosophy of working with singing bowls focuses on the healthy and well-functioning aspects of human beings. It draws on existing resources and strengths in order to activate self-healing powers and promote natural self-regulation of the body.

Targeted use of holistic sound treatments

The sound treatments with singing bowls always address the person as a whole. Nevertheless, concrete objectives can be defined based on the specific effects and depending on the field of application.

On a psycho-emotional level, sound treatments can target cognitive and emotional components such as:

- Well-being and relaxation
- Bringing thoughts to rest
- Reducing stress levels
- Cultivating mindfulness
- Allowing emotions
- Unblocking fixed thinking patterns
- Purification of the mental sphere
- Encouraging positive feelings such as trust, security and confidence
- Minimising unpleasant feelings such as fears, worries and doubts
- Improving the quality of sleep

On a physical level, sound treatments can target:

- Improvement of body awareness (basal stimulation)
- Relaxation of muscular tension i.e. stress regulation
- Stimulation of blood circulation and lymphatic flow
- Loosening of the fascial tissue
- Improvement of diaphragmatic breathing
- Loosening of secretions in the bronchi
- Improvement of intestinal motility
- Sensitisation of bladder function
- Alleviation of pain

Sound work from a neuropsychological perspective

The audible sounds during sound treatments calm the mind, whereby attention is focused more and more on the inner experience. The gentle, rhythmic sound vibrations stimulate the body and have a relaxing effect. If we look at this process from a neuropsychological point of view 17, it becomes clear that multiple resonance processes can be activated and purposefully utilised.

Sounds such as those produced during Sound Massage and Sound Methods stimulate receptors in the ear, on the surface of the body and inside the body, triggering neuronal activity patterns in various regions of the brain, including the auditory and somatosensory cortex, the anterior insula and the limbic system. These activity patterns generate a relaxation response and secondarily affect the amygdala, anterior cingulate cortex, hippocampus, hypothalamus and midbrain.

Mechanoreceptors detect tissue relaxation and thermoreceptors detect the heat of relaxed and perfused tissue, which reinforces positive emotional effects via the limbic system. Some people perceive areas with stress-related neuro-muscular blockages for the very first time through Sound Massage. This can be an important starting point to achieve and maintain a healthy balance between tension and relaxation.

At the brain physiological level, somatosensory nerve cell networks for tension and relaxation may interact and lead to neuronal reorganisation, including the formation of new or reactivation of old synaptic connections. This facilitates not only physical relaxation, but also psychological reorganisation and change. Sound Massage and sound treatments therefore promote both relaxation and the improvement of body and self-awareness by training your interoception.



Sound and consciousness

In his article "Klang und Transzendenz" ("Sound and Transcendence") [Fachzeitschrift Klang-Massage-Therapie (Journal of Sound Massage Therapy) 12/2017, p. 6–11], the consciousness scientist and physicist Dr Thilo Hinterberger focuses on the transcending power that can be found in sounds. One of the reasons for this is the very long decay time of singing bowls or gongs, which requires us to constantly hear and listen, whereby we have to become increasingly attentive in order to be able to listen to the fading sound. This process of listening changes our state of consciousness:

"First of all, the most important thing is that a sound leads us into this silence, or at least puts us in that wide-open, undefined state of floating from which the unexpected can happen. [...] Then listening to a sound changes our consciousness, our self-perception and our mood. [...] Depending on the intensity and quality of a sound, it may even dissolve otherwise very stable states of mind and consciousness, and recombine them. The sound can then transcend us by leading us to a new experience. [...] What is needed from our side is openness, a listening inner silence and the readiness to expand our perception."

The sounds can connect us with our existence beyond ordinary consciousness, as he explains:

"And since everyday life is usually adorned with thoughts and ideas behind which our deeper feelings are hidden and disguised, one could argue that hearing offers us a special opportunity of perception. A perception that is able to "see" behind the surface and thus perceive that which exceeds the obvious. This is exactly what the concept of transcendence describes. Transcendental experiences thus have the quality of an expanded perception, the feeling of greater connectedness, recognising broader contexts and the accompanying feelings of freedom, lightness and emotional contact. [...] What is needed from our side is openness, a receptive inner silence and the readiness to expand our perception. [...] Then listening to a sound changes our consciousness, our sense of self and our mood."

The effect of sounds – an interaction of various aspects

The sounds of singing bowls do not have an effect per se. Rather, the beneficial effect of **Peter Hess® Sound Massage and Sound Methods** is based on the interaction between the specially developed **Peter Hess® Therapy Singing Bowls Premium** and the **principles underlying Peter Hess® Sound Work** (see p. 92). When combined in this way, they can become a valuable therapeutic instrument in the hands of a professional.



Tip

You can find lots of further information, such as experience reports, specialist articles, research and projects, in the web-infothek www.fachverband-klang.de/en/



Practice suggestions and (self-) application tips



Stress management with sounds

Stress is a natural part of our biology and in moderation it can motivate us. Long-term stress, however, harms the body and the mind, and increases the risk of illness and addiction. Nowadays, stressors are mostly of psychosocial nature such as heavy workload, constant availability or mental strain in the family or at work.

It has been proven that stress influences the course of an illness, which is why it is important to monitor stress levels alongside medical care. Every person experiences stress differently and has to develop individual coping strategies. It is important to find a balance between challenges and the ability to relax.

Dealing with stress in a healthy way requires knowledge about stress and techniques such as sound treatments that help to prevent, reduce or relieve stress. Thus, stress management plays a decisive role in terms of health and especially in the process of recovery.

Various starting points for stress management with sounds

For 40 years, Peter Hess® Sound Methods have shown to be an effective way of dealing with stress in a healthy way. They:

- promote relaxation
- simultaneously enhance body awareness and mindfulness
- sensitise you to deal with stressors consciously
- in order to enable a healthy approach to stress



Moreover, sound exercises can wonderfully support change and development processes, and thus make a long-term contribution to maintaining a healthy lifestyle (see p. 30).

Relaxation is so incredibly easy with sounds!

Compared to practice-based techniques such as meditation, autogenic training or yoga, relaxation with sounds usually sets in within a few minutes 20, 22. This is also emphasised by the consciousness scientist and physicist Dr Thilo Hinterberger from Regensburg University in the foreword to the book 'Die transformierende Kraft der Klangschaalen' ["The Transforming Power of Singing Bowls" (Publisher: Irisiana Verlag 2024)]:

"The most remarkable thing, however, is that it is possible to reach a state of calmness, tranquillity, inner neutrality and openness within minutes, sometimes even seconds, without extensive practice. This is reflected in the electrical activity through a steady reduction of all brain frequencies. Just as in meditation, where the simplification of mental activity leads us to serenity and higher awareness, listening to simple sounds has a unique power to lead us into such meditative states. [...] Thus, the sound of singing bowls is a kind of meditation booster. However, in order to integrate the transforming properties of the sound experience into life, regular practice is required."

Regular sound exercises and sound massages can help to alleviate typical stress symptoms, such as:

- Inner restlessness and tension
- Difficulty falling asleep and staying asleep
- Irritability
- Difficulty concentrating
- Fatigue and reduced productivity
- Lack of motivation
- Neck and shoulder tension
- Headache and back pain
- Gastrointestinal problems
- High blood pressure
- Reduced libido and erectile dysfunction
- Increased susceptibility to infections

Sound massage for stress management – a glance at the research:

Stress management and improved body image

A study conducted by the International Association of Sound Massage Therapy in collaboration with the Dr Tanja Grotz Institute ¹² found that regular sound massages noticeably improve stress management and the sense of well-being in one's own body (body image). It was observed that stress-related symptoms such as tension or inner restlessness were alleviated naturally. Two typical case examples from the study, in which the participants received five sound massages, demonstrate these positive effects.

At the beginning, a 27-year-old participant complained of severe tension-related pain in the shoulder area. After the first sound massage, he observed: "Everything is tingling." Before the third session, he already reported a change: "I notice some improvement in my shoulder." By the end of the sessions, the pain had completely disappeared and he described his shoulder as feeling relaxed.

A 52-year-old participant, who suffered from difficulty sleeping through the night during stressful periods, said that she was able to sleep well after every sound massage throughout the week. After the fifth sound massage, she said: "Just thinking about the sound massage makes me feel relaxed."



Stress management for hypertension

A pilot study by Dr Jens Gramann at the Herzzinstitut Berlin¹⁰ investigated the effect of sound massages compared to progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) in the treatment of high blood pressure. The study showed that sound massages were more effective at lowering blood pressure (-10 mmHg) than PMR (-4.8 mmHg). Despite the small sample size and the lack of statistical significance, the results suggest that sound massage can be an effective complementary method for stress management in hypertension.

Sound exercises for relaxation and stress prevention

*Even a small sound ritual of 2-5 minutes a day
is enough to effectively strengthen
your physical and mental health.*

Coming to rest with the harmonious sounds, being completely with yourself for a little while, sensing what you are feeling at that moment. By listening to the sounds and perceiving their delicate vibrations, immerse yourself completely in your own experience, forget everyday life for a few moments, simply be – completely in the moment. In the silence that follows each sound and that gradually settles within me, experiencing that all is well, that I am perfectly fine just the way I am. These are experiences that even short sound exercises can offer!⁵

Sound exercises can be applied in a variety of ways, for example with the aim to

- do something beneficial for yourself
- take a relaxing break from work or everyday life
- prevent or relieve stress
- enhance body awareness
- relax specific parts of the body
- activate self-healing powers
- tame circling thoughts
- sense security and clarity

The exercise „Hearing – Listening – Perceiving“ from the book „Klangschalen – Mein praktischer Begleiter“ [„Singing Bowls – My Practical Companion (Publisher: Peter Hess Verlag, 2023) by Peter Hess has proven to be an ideal introduction to the world of sounds. In just a few minutes, it helps you calm down and fully connect with yourself. This exercise can also be excellently integrated into counselling, therapeutic, medical or nursing treatments.



A close-up photograph of a woman with long, wavy brown hair. She has her eyes closed and a gentle smile on her face. She is holding a large, polished brass bowl in front of her. The background is softly blurred, showing warm, golden light. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

*The most important
moments of the day
are those in which
we are completely
with ourselves!*

Peter Hess

Exercise **Hearing – Listening – Perceiving**

- Make yourself comfortable and place the singing bowl directly in front of you on a cushion or other vibration-capable surface.
- Gently strike the bowl and listen to its sound. You may want to close your eyes so that you can fully absorb the sounds.
- Can you hear the different nuances of sound? There are high tones, low tones, many different tones, which together produce a wonderful soundscape rich in overtones.
- Listen to the sound with your entire body – your whole attention should be focused on the sound. You become one with the sound, so to speak. You may feel that your body is touched by the sound vibrations and that you can feel them more and more.
- After a while, strike the bowl again.
- As you listen to the sounds rising and falling, your breathing becomes calmer, deeper and more relaxed.
- If you like, you can consciously take a few deep breaths.
- The silence after each sound evokes a pleasant calmness within you.
- Enjoy the sounds for as long as you like.
- Feel the relaxing, harmonising effect.
- Now put the singing bowl and mallet aside and reflect for a moment with your eyes closed.
- You may still feel the sounds even though they have faded away – they continue to vibrate within you.
- Be completely with yourself: how are you feeling, what is going on within you, how do you perceive your body? Take some time to give space to everything that is going on without judging it – just observe.
- Then, take a few more deep breaths, stretch yourself and come back to everyday life at your own pace.



Practice tip

Enjoy these and many more exercises as a guided sound meditation on YouTube: Peter Hess® Klang-TV.



Sounds enhance self-healing and self-regulation

The sounds of singing bowls can facilitate a variety of self-regulation and self-healing processes. For example, they can create pleasant feelings that strengthen the immune system, promote peaceful sleep, and have a positive effect on digestion. The principles of Peter Hess® Sound Work, which have healing properties in themselves, take on an important role here.

Principles of Peter Hess® Sound Massage and Sound Methods:

- **Mindfulness:** Presence in the moment and non-judgemental observation of what is going on – both for the client and for oneself.
- **Appreciation:** A loving attitude characterised by respect, consideration, kindness and acceptance of the other person.
- **Holistic approach:** The sounds always address body, mind and soul. It is also about being aware of the bigger picture, and seeing and understanding yourself as part of a whole.
- **A focus on solutions and resources:** The emphasis is on strengthening what is healthy, what functions well, and on resources.
- **Less-is-more principle:** A gentle, step-by-step approach – completely at the client's own pace. The simplicity of the sounds leads to minimisation, to the essence.
- **Dialogue-based interaction:** Communication at "eye level" – from one person to another.



Positive feelings and self-healing powers

During sound treatments, anxiety and worries often fade into the background and feelings of relaxation, inner peace and security emerge. These positive emotions stimulate the release of happy hormones such as dopamine and serotonin, which strengthen the immune system and increase mental resilience. Sounds help to shift the focus away from negative thoughts and towards an empowering mindset, which activates the body's self-healing powers.

"The sounds made me feel safe and secure."

"I felt deep tranquillity and peace during the sound journey."

"It was as if I were the ocean."

Sleep – The source of regeneration

Restful sleep is crucial for health and well-being, as it strengthens the production of defence cells and therefore the immune system. Sound massages can help to alleviate sleep problems and improve the quality of sleep. Studies have shown that regular sound massages have positive effects on sleep quality, anxiety and depression¹⁸.

Good digestion – an important component of health

Healthy digestion is vital for general wellbeing. Sound treatments can stimulate bowel activity and promote digestion by creating gentle vibrations that resonate deep within the body. These can be particularly helpful after operations or in old age, when other forms of exercise are no longer possible. Sound exercises are being used successfully in nursing to aid digestion and reduce the need for laxatives.

The significance of sound treatments for health promotion

Through their relaxing and regenerative effect, sounds help to alleviate widespread health problems such as cardiovascular disease, chronic illnesses, mental disorders, and thus improve quality of life. They can therefore offer valuable benefits in terms of prevention, treatment and secondary prevention.

Sound rituals before sleep

Relaxation and mental hygiene

An evening sound ritual is a wonderful way to end the day. Many people feel tension in the solar plexus area, i.e. the centre of the abdomen below the ribcage. Sound relaxation for this area can thus be especially beneficial. As it can be performed while lying down, it is ideal just before going to sleep. This allows the mind and body to consciously calm down and prepare for a restful sleep.

The deep, earthy sounds of a "Pelvic Bowl" (see p. 93) are the perfect choice for this evening ritual. With their long-lasting vibrations, they quickly induce pleasant relaxation. Of course you can also use a different singing bowl – the important thing is that you find the sounds pleasant and calming.



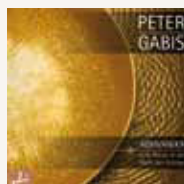
Exercise

Sound relaxation in the evening

- Make yourself comfortable in bed and place the singing bowl on your belly.
- Make sure that the bowl can still vibrate and sound properly.
- If you like, close your eyes.
- Now gently strike the singing bowl with a soft felt mallet.
- Listen to the harmonious sounds and feel the gentle vibrations.
- Imagine the burden of everyday life gradually drifting away from you - naturally and effortlessly. If you like, you can say to yourself: "I am becoming more and more free and feel my body vibrating pleasantly."
- Like a neutral observer, let the images of the day pass before your inner eye without holding on to them or judging them. While doing this, strike the singing bowl again and again in a slow and steady rhythm.
- If you like, you could also ask yourself the following questions. Always start with the positive aspect, which will strengthen you:
 - What was nice today, what went well?
 - What was less pleasant and what would I like to do differently next time?
 - And what am I looking forward to now?
- Let the images pass by. Gradually, your thoughts will calm down.
- Your body will also relax more and more.
- If it feels right for you, let the singing bowl fade out completely before removing it from your body.

Practice tip

If you lie awake at night ruminating, listening to a sound meditation can help to calm your thoughts and get you back to sleep. You can find sound meditations on the YouTube channel: Peter Hess® Klang-TV or on the album "Adhvanika - A journey into the world of sounds" (www.verlag-peter-hess.de).





Sound treatments for pain

According to Statista, 65% of Germans suffer from pain, especially headaches and back pain. A major factor that exacerbates pain is stress. Sound methods offer an effective way to reduce stress and alleviate the sensation of pain. However, any pain should always be medically assessed before beginning sound therapy.

“The body is the translator of the soul into the visible.”

Christian Morgenstern

Pain is a complex issue

Pain is a multi-layered phenomenon, which is influenced by biological, psychological and social factors. Besides physical sensations, stress, anxiety and past experiences play a significant role. Different cultures have different ways of coping with pain, which adds to the complexity. This diversity requires a holistic approach to pain therapy, one that incorporates physical, emotional and social aspects.

Sound treatments for pain relief

Relaxation techniques are essential for managing pain, as they reduce stress and anxiety, and thereby decrease the perception of pain. The Peter Hess® Sound Methods target the autonomic nervous system, promote deep relaxation, relieve muscle tension and improve blood circulation. These methods can be particularly helpful for chronic pain, which is often accompanied by persistent muscle tension and stress. Achieving deep relaxation can create a completely new, de-stressed and highly pleasant body sensation. This can alleviate pain and restore mental, physical and spiritual balance. Individual healing resources are stimulated and self-healing powers are activated.

Shifting focus and activating resources

The model of Salutogenesis views health and illness as poles of a continuum. Our perception is often centred on pain, which pushes healthy elements of the body into the background and impairs quality of life. Sound methods, on the other hand, focus on and strengthen healthy aspects first, treat the body holistically, and promote

well-being rather than just treating symptoms. They strengthen individual resources and encourage the affected person to actively participate in the healing process and develop effective coping strategies.

Example: Sound massage for fibromyalgia

From practice:

A fibromyalgia patient describes how she experiences the relaxing and calming effect of sound treatments:



"I'm in constant pain – from my cervical vertebrae to my lumbar vertebrae. When I held the singing bowl in my hand, it was very calming for me. Yes, it was absolutely relaxing, I have to say, which I don't feel with other things. The sounds of the bowl were especially calming for me; they flowed through my entire body as if I had been flooded with new energy. I also have sensory disturbances and Raynaud's syndrome. It's a type of circulatory disorder and it was really good for my hands. I feel as if I have a renewed blood supply. I can sense everything a lot better. My fingertips are a bit numb and this has given me a renewed surge of energy."



Tip

For further practical insights, watch the film "Peter Hess® Klang-massage im Klinikum Westfalen" („Peter Hess® Sound Massage at Klinikum Westfalen") on YouTube: Peter Hess® Klang-TV



From research:

A study with 100 fibromyalgia patients at HELIOS Seehospital Sahlenburg² showed that the combination of Multimodal Pain Therapy (MMPT) and singing bowl relaxation resulted in significant improvements. Patients who received sound relaxation in addition to MMPT reported less pain and better sleep. This indicates that singing bowl relaxation can be a valuable addition to pain therapy. It is easy to perform and can also be continued on an outpatient basis.

"The Sound Massage has given me back my quality of life."

Margit Willems, fibromyalgia patient

*Nothing is
permanent
except for
change*



Back pain – relaxation with sound

Around three quarters of the population occasionally suffer from back pain, neck pain or slipped disc, which often become chronic and can significantly impair quality of life. Such pain increases the risk of mental illness and sleep disorders. Medical assessment and treatment is required for persistent symptoms. Since relaxation plays a central role in treatment, sound therapy is increasingly being integrated into physiotherapy and orthopaedic practices. Especially in the case of "non-specific" back pain, which is often triggered by stress and psychological strain, sound massages can help to release emotional blockages and encourage readiness for self-reflection and therapy.

Relaxing sound sessions such as the following exercise are also excellent for preventing back pain.

Partner exercise: sound relaxation for the back

The following sound massage is a wonderful way to relax the back. In case of acute or chronic back problems, you should first consult your doctor or therapist.

This sound massage lasts about 20 minutes, with each position lasting about 2–4 minutes. Due to its broad frequency spectrum, a "Universal Bowl" (see p. 93) is a great choice for this exercise. Different felt mallets (a large, soft one and a small, harder one) can generate different frequencies that are particularly effective for specific areas of the body. Both participants should be in a comfortable position and the sounds should completely fade away before the bowl is struck again. Keep in mind that the vibration is often felt longer than it is heard.



Practical tip

Enjoy a relaxing sound journey for the back, as guided by sound massage instructor and occupational therapist Zeljko Vlahovic in the video "Klangabend zum Thema Klang für den Rücken" ("Sound evening on the topic of sound for the back") on YouTube: Peter Hess® Klang-TV.



Exercise Sound relaxation for the back

This exercise is designed to relax the back muscles as well as for general relaxation.



Notes:

sciat

sciatica, herniated disc, or metal in the spine!

pleas

pleasant and should immediately request changes if desired.

- The person receiving the sound treatment gets comfortable in a prone position. A thin blanket may be comfortable.
- The person giving the sound treatment places the singing bowl on the middle of the back at the level of the lower thoracic spine / solar plexus.
- Gently strike the singing bowl with the large felt mallet so that the deep sounds are predominant.
- The sounds slowly spread from the base of the bowl and gradually flow through the entire body.
- The audible and perceptible sounds, and the spreading of the vibrations that can be sensed throughout the body, usually quickly lead to a feeling of pleasant relaxation.
- Strike the bowl gently and slowly several times and then let it fade out. Then move the singing bowl from the lower thoracic spine to the lumbar spine. Once again, the large felt mallet will produce particularly deep tones for this area.
- The steady vibrations spread gently. You can picture it this way: the cells that are still "trapped" in muscle stiffness and blockages are gradually made to vibrate.
- During relaxation, mental problems such as doubts, insecurity or anxiety fade into the background and thoughts can calm down.
- After a while, let the bowl fade out and then position it on the centre of the buttocks and strike it with the large felt mallet.
- Your partner enjoys the sound vibrations in this area, which gradually becomes more relaxed and free. Order and harmony emerge.

- Then place the singing bowl back in its original position and strike it three more times.

At this point, the sound treatment may be sufficient and can be stopped. If desired, you can continue striking the bowl on the shoulder girdle to relax that area.

- Place the bowl in the centre of the shoulder girdle (note: the singing bowl must not be positioned on the neck!). Strike the bowl very gently, calmly and only a few times with the small, soft felt mallet so that the higher frequencies of the singing bowl delicately emerge.
- The sound vibrations spread gently, also reaching the neck muscles. Please proceed very carefully as the singing bowl is close to the head.
- Then place the singing bowl first on the right shoulder area and strike it slowly and at regular intervals.
- After a few strikes, let the singing bowl fade out and repeat the procedure on the left shoulder area. Strike the bowl a few times with the small felt mallet.
- Finally, position the singing bowl back on the centre of the back at the level of the lower thoracic spine / solar plexus and strike it a few more times with the large felt mallet.

Conclusion:

- Let the singing bowl fade out completely and then gently remove it from the body. Important: give your partner a few minutes to reflect.
- Meanwhile, stay fully present with your attention and wait until the other person opens their eyes.
- If your partner has fallen asleep, a soft voice or light touch could help them to gradually and gently return to the here and now.

It can be nice to discuss how you both felt during the sound relaxation session. It is a good idea for the person who enjoyed the sound massage to start.

Facilitating transformation processes with sounds

Cultivating a healthy lifestyle

Pain or illness sometimes force us to rethink our lives and our lifestyle. But changing deeply ingrained habits is tough. We know that smoking, fast food and lack of exercise are harmful to our health, but lasting changes can be difficult to achieve. The initial enthusiasm quickly gives way to old habits and our "weaker self" takes over.

To successfully implement change, it requires more than just good intentions – it requires a vision and support. Targeted sound exercises and sound rituals can be extremely useful here. Peter Hess, the founder of Sound Massage, has experienced this himself and has observed it in his seminar participants for over 40 years. He knows: Sounds give you the power to change!

"Just 5 minutes of sound exercises a day are enough to actively and consciously shape our lives. This corresponds to 0.37% of our daily life. We deserve this!"

Peter Hess

It is the path that changes us!

Sound rituals give us the opportunity to let go of the old and to embrace the new. Change is achieved in small steps and short daily sound exercises help us to keep our goal in sight. A "sound diary" can accompany this process. Every small change brings new quality of life, motivates, and reinforces the courage to continue. Even when obstacles arise, the sounds give us the confidence to overcome them and to achieve our goal.

To specifically accompany change and development processes with sound, Peter Hess developed the concept of "Sound Transformation", which he presents as a 7-week course in the book "Die transformierende Kraft der Klangschalen" ["The Transforming Power of Singing Bowls" (Publisher: Irisiana Verlag 2024)]. In a slightly modified form, this concept can also be excellently applied in counselling,

coaching and psychotherapy. In principle, Sound Transformation unfolds its power in 7 stages, each of which addresses significant aspects of the transformation process. Special sound meditations and selected sound exercises make the aspects tangible and facilitate a sustainable process of change.

Peter Hess emphasises: Nothing is compulsory - everything is possible!



The 7 Stages of Sound Transformation

1. **Feeling Good with Sounds:** Relaxing and (re)feeling.
2. **Acceptance and Change of Perspective:** Looking at life from a distanced and loving perspective, developing acceptance for what is happening right now.
3. **Goal Development:** Recognising from a meta-level what we truly need and implementing this step by step.
4. **Wholeness and Polarity:** Experiencing wholeness of body, mind and soul, understanding and using the life principle of polarity.
5. **Obstacles as Opportunities:** Recognising challenges and obstacles as opportunities for growth.
6. **The Principle of Resonance:** That which is internalised has an impact on the external world - with a focus on the elements that strengthen and support.
7. **Long-lasting Change:** Cultivating a new, healthy life pattern.

The following feedback from a participant in his online course "Sound Transformation" describes very aptly what is meant by this:

"Whenever things get tricky and tense, and I get into this kind of 'thinking whirlwind', the singing bowl was very helpful in stopping this. By concentrating on the fade-out in the sound space, I can also let thoughts fade out and let things take their course. In this process, something often resolved itself in a way I could never have imagined."

Sound and visualisation – a powerful connection

"The power of inner images"

In modern body-mind medicine, imagery plays an important role in promoting health and well-being. It builds on the knowledge that our physical health is closely related to our emotional and mental state.

Through the targeted combination of sound and speech, these inner images, which are evoked for example through imaginary journeys, can be brought to life, allowing them to unfold their beneficial effects on a deep level.

"When we help patients to listen to the voice of their inner wisdom, we encourage their self-healing powers and the free flow of these often hidden resources."

Luise Reddemann

What are imagery exercises?

Imagery exercises are used in various therapeutic approaches. The goal is to activate resources through the conscious and guided visualisation of inner images, which help to cope with a problem or release an inner blockage.

By getting to know your "inner" images, you achieve an improved perception of your body and feelings. Through imagery, you can learn to distinguish physical sensations from feelings and thoughts, while becoming increasingly better at controlling them.

What are resources in psychology?

Resources are potentials or competencies that a person has at their disposal and which can be used to overcome crises or reduce negative impacts.

Applications and exercises are intended to help you mentally visit a place where you truly feel calm, secure and at ease. This helps to step out of everyday life, reduce stress and burdens, and focus on calm, relaxation and positive sensations. In this way, hidden experiences, be they physical experiences or inner images, can be uncovered and thus promote the healing process. This can be achieved

through body sound journeys (perception of the body) and, above all, through sound-accompanied imaginary journeys. It is important to involve as many senses as possible.

Is imagination good for the brain?

Imagination enhances cognitive, creative and social abilities to explore thoughts and feelings more deeply, and to learn to solve problems creatively.

What emotional resources are there?

Knowledge, experiences, memories, strategies, proven solutions, positive experiences, self-confidence and personal strengths are among the emotional resources.

What do resources have to do with resilience?

Resources are not only the driving force for change, but also the cornerstone of resilience. Because if you are aware of your strengths, abilities and support, you are more self-confident and will be able to rely on yourself even in crisis situations.

Which comes first, the thought or the imagination?

The process of imagination takes place in two distinct ways. Firstly, we use our mind to think and then link ideas with memories to create an image.

We can use the power of imagination to reprogramme our subconscious. This is important in order to actively shape our lives according to our own desires. Because only what we truly believe in and what we are convinced of can become reality. In this process, the sounds act as a kind of "meditation booster".



Sound imagery: The inner helper

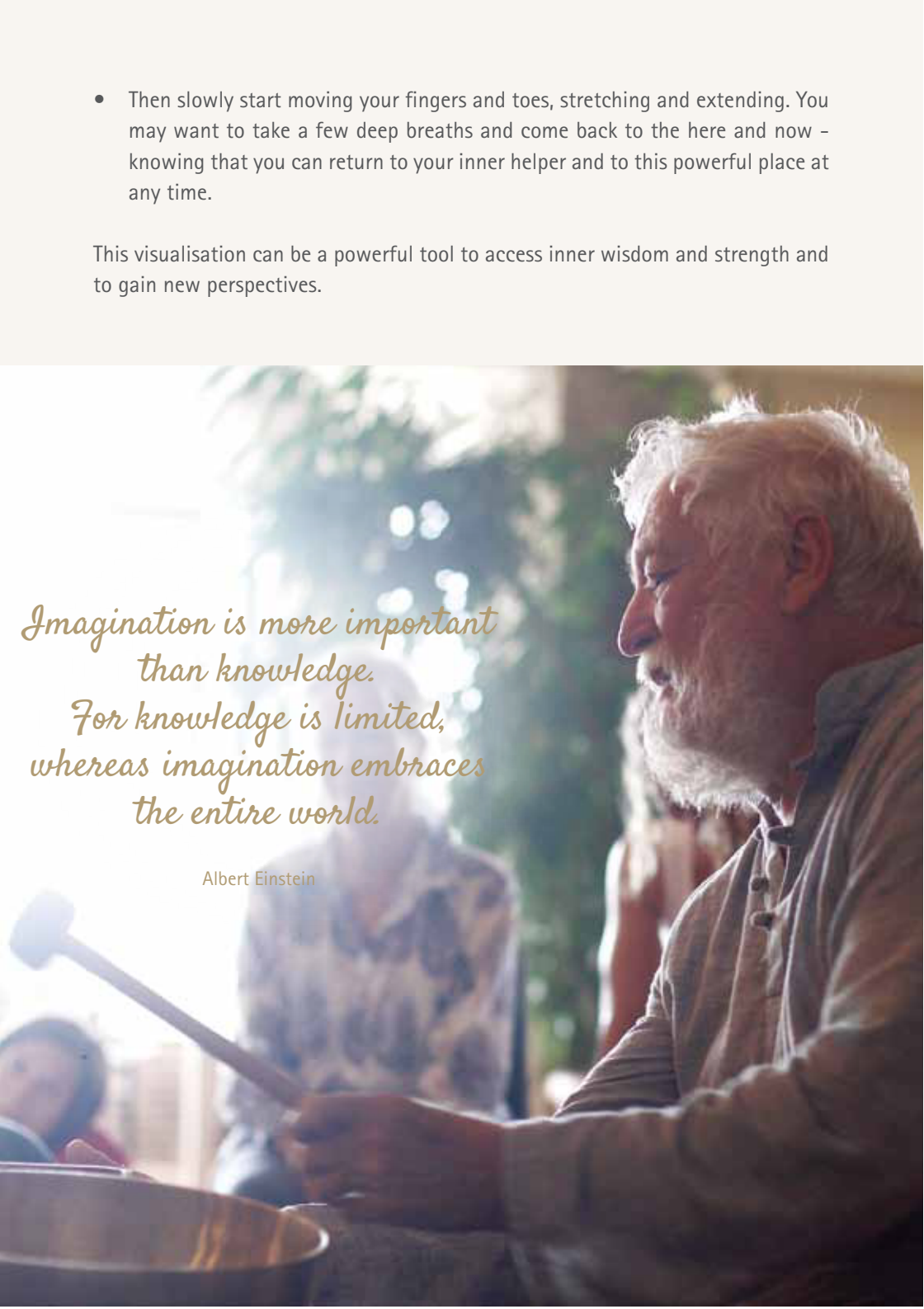
Guidelines for the procedure

The first step in this visualisation is relaxation, which can be achieved quickly and effectively by listening to the sounds.

- Sit in a relaxed position and consciously notice that your body is in contact with the seat and that your feet are firmly on the floor.
- Place a singing bowl between your feet (perhaps on a pillow, see p. 97) and strike it repeatedly. Close your eyes after striking it. Perceive yourself as a whole. Listen to the sounds.
- Breathe evenly and take long breaths. Follow your breathing until you have found a comfortable rhythm of inhaling and exhaling. As you exhale, release some of the tension and relax. Let go of thoughts, feel the emptiness. Embrace openness to new ideas.
- Expand your senses and simply perceive. Enjoy the soothing relaxation and the pleasant silence that gradually spreads within you.
- Mentally "travel" to a place where you feel comfortable and safe. Experience this place with all your senses. Be curious and open to who or what would be welcome in this place.
- Invite someone or something to be your inner helper. Who could that be? What could that be? What would this figure say or do? How would you establish contact with each other?
- Now, side by side with your helper, look at the place you have chosen in your imagination as a safe place. Give yourself time to be together with your helper.
- Feel the power that arises when you are in contact with your inner wisdom i.e. your inner helper. Enjoy the comforting feeling of being able to rely on these supportive forces and connect with them at any time.
- When you are ready, thank your inner helper for the support and wisdom, and say goodbye. You now know that you can return to this place at any time.
- To conclude, focus once again on your body's contact with the seat and on your feet being firmly on the floor. Accompany yourself again with the singing bowl as you did in the beginning.
- Feel within yourself and enjoy this moment. Take some time to reflect on how you feel now.

- Then slowly start moving your fingers and toes, stretching and extending. You may want to take a few deep breaths and come back to the here and now – knowing that you can return to your inner helper and to this powerful place at any time.

This visualisation can be a powerful tool to access inner wisdom and strength and to gain new perspectives.



*Imagination is more important
than knowledge.
For knowledge is limited,
whereas imagination embraces
the entire world.*

Albert Einstein



Lectures & Workshops around the Peter Hess® Sound Massage

VIDEOS-ON-DEMAND

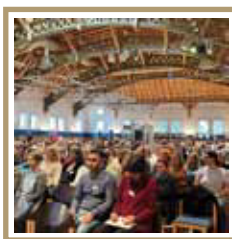
- Do you own a singing bowl and don't know what to do with it?
- Would you like to know how to use singing bowls effectively in your professional life?
- Or do you want to do something good for yourself and your family?

Then you've come to the right place!

Whether you are an experienced sound professional or a curious sound enthusiast, the exclusive video-on-demand content from past online/sound conferences offers you a wealth of practical ideas, exciting expert knowledge and soothing sound meditations for your self-care and professional life!

Discover sound as a source of strength – for yourself or your profession

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Sound methods in various fields of work



Supporting patients with sounds – a beneficial counterbalance

Today we know that an effective healing process takes place not only on a physical level, but above all on a psychological level. Therefore, it is ideal if conventional treatment is complemented by mental and emotional support. Sound treatments can offer valuable support in all stages of an illness and often serve as a beneficial counterbalance.

Stage of disease diagnosis

Long waiting times for an appointment at a specialist practice often make the stage from suspected illness to diagnosis a mental ordeal, full of anxiety and worry. What a relief it is to strengthen confidence with the sounds and thus counteract the uncertainty, or even just to temporarily forget the difficult situation.

Stage of outpatient and inpatient treatment and care

The actual treatment of an illness can also be stressful, e.g. in the case of painful interventions or severe side effects from medication.

In the case of inpatient treatment, there are additional stressors. The unfamiliar surroundings and the work schedule at the hospital or rehabilitation centre are often perceived as stressful and can lead to insecurity, restlessness, sleep problems or digestive issues. Relaxing and calming sounds can be a valuable counterpoint in these situations. Daily care routines can also be made easier with the help of short sound interventions, making them more pleasant and usually more effective for everyone involved.

Stage of post-treatment and secondary prevention

After conditions such as a heart attack or stroke, it is extremely important to address the issue of stress in order to cultivate a healthy lifestyle in the long term and thus reduce the risk of a recurrence. This is where the motivational and transformational effect of sound can play an important and valuable role (see p. 30).

Supporting chronically ill people

In terms of quality of life, chronically ill people in particular can benefit from relaxing sound therapy, be it in individual treatment or as part of self-help groups. Of course, time is very limited during medical consultations, treatment and care. However, there is good evidence that sound settings lasting just 2-5 minutes can be beneficial. Experience shows that this also promotes the formation of a trusting relationship. And as placebo and nocebo research has shown, this in turn has a positive effect on treatment success.

Alternatively, sound treatments can of course also be provided by external staff in clinics, rehabilitation centres or surgeries – both as individual and group sessions.

Palliative care and end-of-life care

Sound treatments can be perfectly integrated into the interdisciplinary concept of palliative care (see p. 75). They help to maintain, and sometimes even improve, the quality of life of people suffering from severe and incurable illnesses. Experience shows that they are particularly beneficial and helpful in the last phase of life.

The application of sound always benefits everyone who is involved. In a professional world that can be very challenging and stressful, this is an incredible added value!



Practice tip: How to create a soothing sound treatment

Whether it's a sound massage, a short sound setting or a sound exercise – the context in which the sounds are presented is important. We would therefore like to give you a few tips on how to create a soothing sound treatment.

Principles for pleasant sound treatments

The sounds should always be offered on a voluntary basis.

Create an environment of trust, safety and security. Avoid judgement or pressure.

Ensure a relaxed position that is adapted to the person's needs. If necessary, use positioning aids (see p. 97).

Minimise disturbances such as telephones ringing. Hang a "Do not disturb" sign outside the room.

The sound of the singing bowl should be perceived as pleasant and harmonious by the listener. When playing several singing bowls together, e.g. during an imaginary journey, choose bowls that produce a harmonious overall sound.

Make sure that the singing bowl can vibrate properly and that its sound is not "absorbed", for example, by a surface that is too soft. Allow pauses between striking the bowl so that the sound can fade away. The vibration is usually felt for a longer time than the sound is heard.

Start with short sessions of 2-5 minutes and adjust the duration individually.



Important note

In the case of an illness, the Peter Hess® Sound Methods follow the principle of "working at a distance from the problem". Only in exceptional cases and with appropriate expertise can it be useful to place singing bowls directly on affected parts of the body.

Using equipment


Especially when structuring sound sessions for people with limited mobility, various equipment, such as that described on p. 96/97, can enable relaxed positioning and good perception of the sounds.

Sound relaxation for the feet with the sound cushion

For this treatment, you will need a Universal or a Pelvic Bowl with a suitable mallet, as well as a cushion measuring approximately 80x80 cm filled with styrofoam beads that transmit vibrations well.

- Place the cushion under the feet of the individual so that both feet can comfortably rest on it.
- Place the singing bowl in front of the feet on the cushion or, if possible, between the feet. Make sure that the bowl is safe and stable, and that the legs are not touching the edge of the singing bowl.
- Gently strike the bowl from the outside so that the harmonious sounds fill the room and the sound vibrations stimulate the feet via the cushion.
- The gentle, steady vibrations spread from the soles of the feet through the foot reflex zones. Strike the bowl several times in a slow but steady rhythm for 5-10 minutes, allowing the other person to consciously perceive and enjoy it.
- Then let the singing bowl fade out completely and gently remove it from the cushion. Give the other person time to reflect on what they experienced – this is an important stage of the session!
- Afterwards, you can discuss the experience in order to consciously integrate it.



A woman with dark, curly hair and her eyes closed is shown from the chest up. She is wearing a green short-sleeved crop top and a blue and white striped skirt. Her right hand is placed over her heart, and her left hand holds a large, shallow, golden bowl. The background is a textured, light brown wall.

*It is not in the stars
to hold our destiny
but in ourselves.*

William Shakespeare

Enhancing self-efficacy – Actively participating in the recovery process

Believing in one's own ability to overcome challenges is crucial for life satisfaction and health. This is particularly relevant in the case of illness, when feelings of powerlessness and loss of control can take over, putting additional strain on the overall system. This is where the concept of self-efficacy, developed by psychologist Albert Bandura, comes into play.

Self-efficacy describes the belief that one can overcome difficult situations through one's own efforts. This belief significantly influences our thoughts, actions and feelings. Studies have shown that people with positive self-efficacy expectations are healthier and happier, regardless of their objective abilities. Therefore, it is extremely important to strengthen the sense of self-efficacy in the event of illness.

The Sound Methods are simple and effective to use and can be applied independently by patients or their relatives, thereby expanding their ability to act

The opportunity to do something beneficial for oneself with the sounds and thus actively participate in the recovery process strengthens the sense of self-efficacy. Sound treatments therefore establish a valuable link between therapy and self-help. Relatives can also take action with the help of sound exercises, which gives them a sense of empowerment and confidence, and can provide relief within the psychosocial structure.

*"I realise that I can do something for myself,
which makes me more independent."*

Participant of a sound seminar

A remarkable aspect is the rapid internalisation of relaxation through the sounds. After some practice, simply listening to the sounds of the singing bowls, for example via an audio file, is often enough to induce a relaxed state. This effect can be so powerful that even the memory of the sounds can produce positive effects.

Sound treatments in occupational therapy

In collaboration with Angelika Rieckmann (occupational therapist in private practice and trainer in Peter Hess® Sound Massage and Sound Methods)

The use of Peter Hess® Sound Methods has successfully enriched various occupational therapy interventions for many years. The sound settings work on different levels: from the cellular level to body physiology, neurophysiology and psychology 15/11/9/22.

By combining sound with standard occupational therapy methods, e.g. manual mobilisation, a greater and more comprehensive therapeutic effect can be achieved. This primarily contributes to the improvement of everyday activity and independence, and thus to a better quality of life and well-being of the patient's body, mind and soul.

Therapeutic goals for the use of sound in occupational therapy:

- **Physiological movement and posture patterns:**
promoting mobility, muscle relaxation, pain relief, and improving circulation and metabolic processes, as well as deeper breathing.
- **Neurophysiological control patterns and perceptual processing:**
Improving autonomic regulation (including tone, pain relief, activity and relaxation quality), sensitivity and body awareness, and sensory integration.
- **Emotional and cognitive adaptation:**
enhancing emotional and mental stress regulation, self-perception as well as psychomotor control and neuropsychological interactions.
- **Holistic health promotion:**
Strengthening homeostasis and self-healing through sound as an integrative element for harmonising the body-mind-soul component..

Diagnoses and areas of application

Motor functional disorders

Singing bowls can be used to alleviate motor and functional limitations that occur in orthopaedic and rheumatological disorders, as well as after hand surgery. This includes disorders caused by injuries, fractures, strain / wear and tear (e.g. contractures, slipped discs, frozen shoulder, Sudeck's disease / CRPS, amputations) and rheumatic disorders (e.g. fibromyalgia, Bechterew's disease). The goal here is to (re)gain the ability to perform everyday activities by establishing and maintaining physiological movement and posture patterns and metabolic functions.

Sensorimotor and perceptual disorders

In the case of conditions affecting the nervous system and sensory perception, singing bowls can be used to improve neurophysiological movement control, sensory processing and perceptual processing for sensory integration. This is particularly useful for neurological and geriatric diagnoses with paresthesia or paralysis such as polyneuropathy, stroke, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, as well as (neuro-)paediatric diagnoses such as developmental disorders and ADD/ADHD. Targeted sound treatments can balance autonomic regulation, stimulate and promote sensory perception, particularly in the tactile-kinesthetic, vibratory and auditory areas, and improve motor control and tone regulation.

Psychological and Functional Disorders

Singing bowls can also be used to treat psychological and psychosomatic disorders, including depression, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, bipolar disorders, and psychoses. In this area, the focus is on emotional and cognitive adjustment, stress regulation, improvement of self-perception and self-regulation as well as enhancing self-efficacy and the capacity to act.

Brain disorders

In the case of brain disorders caused by brain damage (e.g. oxygen deficiency, cerebral infarction, traumatic brain injury), sound treatments promote cognitive and psychological self-regulation. This includes the improvement of concentration, attention, memory, orientation, daily structuring and action planning.

*Take good care of your body.
It's the only place you have to live.*

Jim Rohn



Sound treatments in physiotherapy

In collaboration with Victoria Britz (B.A. Medical Education, physiotherapist, physiotherapy instructor)

Whether in a practice or clinic, in outpatient or inpatient rehabilitation, during home visits, at workshops and schools for the physically disabled, or in palliative care – the soothing sounds of singing bowls help in a wide variety of physiotherapeutic settings and support body, mind and soul in the self-healing process.

At the structural and functional level, the vibrations stimulate the body's own perception, regulate tone and can reduce (chronic) pain. At the activity and participation level, it contributes to a better quality of life by enabling and facilitating patients' Activities of Daily Living (ADL), by strengthening patients' mental and emotional well-being, and can thus be used in accordance with the ICF.

Consequently, the sound treatments offer holistic support by preparing for integration with conventional physiotherapy techniques such as manual lymphatic drainage, physical therapy (also on a neurophysiological basis such as Bobath/Vojta), manual therapy and respiratory therapy.

Effects of sound treatments with singing bowls:

- Regulation of muscle tone (reducing tone)
- Promotion of proprioception and depth perception
- Enhancement of perception and pain relief
- Deepening of breathing and mobilisation of secretions
- Promotion of the ability to relax
- Stimulation and promotion of lymph transport
- Stimulation of the fascial tissue
- Affect regulation and stabilisation of emotional state

Potential areas of application of sounds in physiotherapy

(Neuro-)paediatric areas of application

The acoustic tones and vibro-tactile vibrations of the singing bowls can support children with infantile cerebral palsy (and adults after cerebral infarction or haemorrhage) by decreasing spastic muscle tone, reducing contractures, and by promoting body awareness/proprioception in hemi-/tetraparesis (and thus subsequently improving muscle activation). Infants and premature babies can also benefit from the sounds, which they already know from the intrauterine period in the womb, strengthening both the bond between caregiver and child, as well as the development of the body schema.

Trauma-related areas of application

Both on a structural and on a psychologically therapeutic level, sounds can support patients who have suffered traumatic brain injury, persistent vegetative state, Locked-in syndrome, fractures, amputations or paraplegia, by stimulating plasticity for the regeneration of synaptic functions.

Orthopedic and rheumatological applications

The use of singing bowls is beneficial for musculoskeletal disorders such as restricted mobility and pain caused by chronic inflammatory processes, e.g. rheumatoid arthritis. It also helps with degenerative signs of wear and tear, such as osteoarthritis, with structural changes in pectus excavatum, and with scoliotic changes in the spine, which also limit the patient's vital capacity. By loosening the connective tissue and fascial structures, and by mobilising the scar tissue, a great deal of relief can be achieved.





Cardiopulmonary areas of application

Patients with respiratory conditions such as bronchial asthma, COPD, cystic fibrosis or long Covid also greatly benefit from the effect of sounds, as the vibration of the singing bowls stimulates secretions, deepens the respiratory tract, relaxes the muscles and mobilises the thorax. It also lowers blood pressure, stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system, and thus has a stress-reducing effect.

Geriatric areas of application

The vibrations of the singing bowls can enhance geriatric patients' body awareness and sensory perception, which can improve gait instability and thus reduce falls. Singing bowls also promote general mobility and restore mental clarity, which is why they can also be used in the treatment of dementia patients. Bedridden and long-term immobile patients also benefit from sound vibrations, which prevent pressure sores, contractures and pneumonia..

Oncological areas of application and palliative care

Singing bowls have been used in both paediatric and adult cancer treatment (in consultation with doctors) to relieve pain, focus attention, and promote relaxation and well-being. Especially sensory disturbances caused by chemotherapy-induced polyneuropathies can be well supported by the sounds and their vibrations. Even on the last journey, trusted sounds can help people to let go and be a faithful companion (also for relatives).

"I'm no longer afraid of chemotherapy."

(Oncology patient after a sound massage)

A glimpse into occupational and physiotherapy practice

In collaboration with Victoria Britz (B.A. Medical Education, physiotherapist, physiotherapy instructor) and Kerstin Strümpel (physiotherapist, alternative practitioner for psychotherapy, and Peter Hess® Sound Therapist for physiotherapy), Angelika Rieckmann (see p. 44) and Cordula Tolkmitt (occupational therapist in private practice and Peter Hess® Sound Therapist).

Physiotherapist and medical educator Victoria Britz can barely imagine her work without the sounds and considers them a great enrichment for her patients – regardless of their age. In the following three case studies, she provides insights into how sound can complement and support conventional physiotherapy techniques.



Sound-assisted physiotherapy for spastic cerebral palsy

A 7-year-old boy with spastic cerebral palsy was treated with singing bowls, in addition to physiotherapy according to Bobath, to promote proprioception, depth perception and tone reduction.

Through improved body awareness and elasticity of the muscle fibres, as well as a reduction in spasticity, the antagonistic muscles could be better controlled and strengthened, and existing contractures were reduced. By improving the sensation of the foot sole and achieving heel contact for foot movement when walking, the boy's gait pattern became significantly more efficient and easier.

Sound-assisted physiotherapy in geriatrics

A multimorbid patient aged over 70 was treated in her home for 7 years with physiotherapy according to Bobath and sound. During this period, the patient developed breast carcinoma, Parkinson's disease, a brain stem abscess, a humeral head fracture after a fall, which caused additional anxiety and insecurity, and suffered chemotherapy-induced polyneuropathy. A seemingly vicious circle that had to be broken by improving mobility, relieving pain, reinforcing self-efficacy (reducing

anxiety) and strengthening the muscles. By stimulating proprioception through sound settings, sensation in the palms of the hands and soles of the feet improved, thus reducing the risk of falls and allowing the patient to remain independent in her own home for a long time..

Sound-assisted physiotherapy for trauma

An 11-year-old boy, who was admitted to the children's hospital following a violent incident, completely traumatised, with paraplegia and various other internal injuries, refused to be touched or mobilised for several weeks. The memory of his trauma kept catapulting him back to a state of fear and helplessness. Only through the use of singing bowls was it possible to establish a connection in the intensive care unit and later in hospital, enabling the boy to trust the hospital staff, to regain his ability to sense and control body parts, to reduce contractures and, after a long time, to sleep through the night again.

Treatment example: Stroke

Very successful results have also been achieved in the treatment and secondary prevention of stroke victims 14. There are repeated cases in which paralyses and blockages seem to resolve "as if by themselves" through sound massages. "It is as if the cells remember their original function through the sound vibrations", describes the experienced occupational therapist and sound massage instructor Angelika Rieckmann, who imparts her extensive knowledge of sound methods in seminars for medical and therapeutic professionals. The effect of the sound interventions goes far beyond pure relaxation and can trigger a chain reaction that includes aspects such as stress reduction, pain relief and increased body sensitivity.

Physiotherapist Kerstin Strümpel reports on a patient who could no longer feel or move her arm after a stroke. In her mind, her left arm was no longer integrated into her body schema. The experienced sound therapist used a special sound setting in the physiotherapy treatment of the limp arm (left), which aims to stimulate tactile stimulus perception and improve the body schema.



The oscillations of the singing bowls, as a gentle vibration impulse, were able to improve self-perception of the left arm and positively influence the therapeutic initiation of function. After the sound massage, the patient reported that she felt life in her arm again, it felt like it belonged to her again. Previously it had been merely a foreign appendage.

Kerstin Strümpel, who works at the BDH-Klinik Vallendar (Germany), summarises her experience with the sound methods as follows:

"The Peter Hess® Sound Methods can support and complement the interdisciplinary and therapeutic work of the severely affected patients in our neurological rehabilitation clinic in numerous ways. During a sound massage, the patients can let go of their worries and fears and escape the daily routine of the clinic for a little while. Some patients need fewer sleeping pills and painkillers, while others are able to better perceive less present body parts, or experience improved body awareness. Monitored intensive care patients who are not able to communicate become calmer and more relaxed during an individualised sound massage. They show fewer stress symptoms such as motor restlessness and their heart rate may be regulated. Breathing becomes deeper and more regular, while recovery and healing processes are stimulated. Patients who are disconnected from the outside world, e.g. those in a vegetative state, can be "lured" into wakefulness more easily by the sound vibrations on the body and the acoustic stimuli. The sound methods therefore work precisely in those areas in which the patient needs to be helped to recover. And this happens in a soothing and relaxing manner and is a blessing for our patients."

Sound intervention for diabetic polyneuropathy

In diabetic polyneuropathy (damage to multiple nerves), a common complication of diabetes, patients suffer from sensory disturbances in the feet and lower legs. These sensory disturbances can lead to dangerous injuries. In this case, sound methods can introduce a new dimension of body awareness. The sounds help both doctors and patients to experience the body in a new way, enriching the understanding and treatment of this disease.

Perceiving the body beyond pain

Cordula Tolkmitt, an occupational therapist and Peter Hess® Sound Therapist who integrates sound settings into her work in her private practice, particularly appreciates the relieving effect of sound treatments, which patients often experience as actual "moments of bliss"²¹:

"Clients benefit from the experience of a positive body image. The experience of feeling well in their organism, in their own body, comes to the forefront of their perception. It is experienced as enriching. Some clients report moments of bliss, of spending time in their body without pain, or feeling that areas of the body irritated by paraesthesia are once again part of them. The sound interventions increase the clients' activity and independence, and thus lead to an expansion of their capacity to act."

Solidifying therapeutic success through self-application of sounds

As already described, sound interventions can support patients both before and after treatment, and can be self-applied.

This is particularly relevant for people with chronic pain conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, back pain and neurological disorders. In these cases, for example, the therapeutic use of singing bowls in warm water or exercise pools is very effective and beneficial for improving mobility and relieving pain.

In self-help groups or for personal self-care, sound methods offer valuable support in minimising risk factors such as high blood pressure, smoking or stress, thereby cultivating a healthier lifestyle and reducing the risk of another heart attack, for example.



Sound treatments in speech therapy

The integration of singing bowls in speech therapy creates holistic therapy options and can therefore successfully complement the conventional treatment of speech, language, voice and swallowing functions. By promoting relaxation, body awareness and well-being, speech therapy treatments can be made easier and more effective.

Therapy preparation with sounds for speech and swallowing disorders

Sound treatments can be used to promote relaxation in patients with speech and swallowing disorders. For example, a short sound massage can be performed at the beginning of a treatment, where the goal is to simply listen to the sounds and feel the vibrations. This helps patients to quickly relax, making the subsequent therapy exercises easier and less painful. Through targeted sound settings, swallowing muscles can be stimulated and relaxed, which can facilitate the swallowing process and the coordination of breathing and swallowing. Specific sound settings can also be effective in relaxing the respiratory muscles and thus positively influence vocalisation. In the case of speech disorders, the subtle vibrational impulses can help to relax the articulatory muscles and facilitate speech production.



If specific areas of the body, such as the jaw, are tense, the sounds can be offered around the area in order to shift the focus, which corresponds to the principle of "working at a distance from the problem", as taught at the Peter Hess® Institute. Sometimes, however, it can also be appropriate to position the "Head Bowl" directly on the forehead or jaw and gently

strike it. The sound vibrations spread through the sinuses and via bone conduction they gently reach the temporomandibular joint. This application, though, requires special care and should only be performed by appropriately trained professionals.

Case study:

A speech therapy patient receiving treatment for swallowing difficulties caused by an underlying rheumatic disease describes his experience with sounds as follows: *„What is incredibly pleasant for me is that this sound calms me down. This is really, really pleasant: I can let go and I've noticed that the sound also loosens the mucus much, much better, especially when swallowing. That was absolutely great for me! I feel freer, more relaxed, I don't walk so hunched over anymore because the pain is gone and I now have a different quality of life.“*

Sound-assisted speech therapy for voice disorders

Sound methods can also be a valuable tool in voice therapy. Especially when working with singers, the use of singing bowls offers an intensive experience of the vocal differences between a relaxed and a tense state. In some practices, a large "XXL Singing Bowl" is used as a welcome instrument in which patients can stand. After the bowl is struck, they fully concentrate on its sound and on what they are experiencing. This short mindfulness exercise enables them to arrive quickly yet effectively in the here and now, and to begin the session feeling relaxed and focused, making the vocal exercises more effective and pleasant¹⁶.

Sound-assisted speech therapy for neurological diseases

In neurological treatment, especially for patients with strokes, locked-in syndrome, comatose states, progressive diseases such as ALS or MS and dementia, singing bowls facilitate perception, muscle relaxation and emotional safety.

A striking example of this is the case of Mrs S., an ALS patient. Despite her advanced illness, the sound work enabled Mrs S. to achieve more profound body awareness and relaxation. The vibrations of the singing bowls helped her to release muscular tension and feel a deeper connection to her own body. This led to a better quality of life and a more positive attitude towards treatment.

Sound treatments in counselling, coaching and psychotherapy

In collaboration with Simone Westholt-Smith (alternative practitioner for psychotherapy, sound and hypnosis therapist, coach, supervisor and instructor of Peter Hess® Sound Methods) and Connie Henning (alternative practitioner for psychotherapy, systemic therapist and supervisor, music and body therapist, instructor of Peter Hess® Sound Massage and Sound Methods).

Sound treatments are an especially valuable enrichment for counselling, coaching and therapy. The Peter Hess® Sound Methods offer a wide range of potential combinations with body therapy, Gestalt therapy and counselling therapy approaches in both outpatient and inpatient care. Sound treatments by an appropriately trained specialist can also serve as an independent therapy option.

Prior to therapeutic sessions, a sound treatment can be used for a stabilising and bridging effect. It can enhance and complement various forms of psychotherapy, and subsequently promote sustainability and implementation in everyday life by facilitating self-efficacy. Treatments can be developed for individuals, couples or groups, as well as for supervision and self-help groups.



Examples of sound treatment objectives:

Sound treatments always focus on

- Building relationships / enhancing the therapeutic working relationship
- Supporting task clarification and goal definition
- Activating resources / strengthening patient competence

Furthermore, the sound methods can be used as follows:

Sound as an introduction

Welcoming, creating resonance, building trust, providing security...

Sound as a transition

Transition from everyday life to the therapeutic setting (from everyday life to a place of tranquillity and safety, from the outside to the inside)

Sound for relaxation and energisation

- In case of overstrain, anxiety, insecurity, stress: relaxation, stabilisation, calming
- In case of underchallenge, lack of drive, depression, lack of energy: energisation

Sound as part of the process of:

- Strengthening self-awareness
- Realising your own needs
- Finding a balance between tension and relaxation
- Stimulating inner images and ideas
- Encouraging change
- Developing coping strategies
- Exploring / realising new paths

Sound for reorientation on a physical, psychological and mental level

- Change of self-image through differentiated sensory and body perception
- Expansion of experiences through reorganisation of thoughts and feelings
- Strengthening emotional competence / regulation competence
- Achieving self-efficacy / secondary prophylaxis

Accompanying conversations with sounds

There are various options when it comes to using sound in therapy or coaching.

- to establish contact, as an opening / initial support
- to reflect, to allow/invite additional dimensions
- to take action

Sometimes the focus is more on the conversation, sometimes it is more on the sound setting, sometimes both occur simultaneously or in alternation.

Sound for reducing pressure

Example 1:

The session begins with a sound activity, which is then followed by the conversation: Intention: Clients are not immediately expected to do something. They are not required to explain their concerns right away. They can initially relax with the sound. They can either focus on the matter at hand or their thoughts and feelings may shift in a different direction. This can then be followed by a conversation with more specific content.

Example 2:

The session begins with the conversation, which is then followed by a sound activity: Intention: Clients can experience relief during the conversation and, for example, identify emotions such as anger, rage, etc. and then, during the sound setting they can gain inner distance from the distressing experience.



Sound can provide security

With a sound space, we provide a safe space,

- in which clients can create positive thoughts and feelings (e.g. through visualisations), which can support them in the future.
- in which they can accept difficult thoughts and feelings that were previously repressed or hidden.
- in which they can translate their experiences into speech
- in which we can also encourage them verbally, e.g. with hypnotherapeutic language patterns and repetitions in their own language

In her practice for sound therapy and hypnotherapy, Simone Westholt-Smith often uses sound settings to complement talk therapy or coaching, whereby the sound often has a "liquefying" effect. Here is a typical situation presented in a highly summarised form:

A client presents her issue/problem/concern almost "ready for press". She has obviously done this several times with other therapists without getting the feeling of having found a solution or experienced relief. Even though she has thought everything through so carefully from every perspective... I suggest she lies down in a sound setting to let her words sink in, tap into her senses, and enjoy the sounds ...

In this way, she can perhaps integrate other levels, utilise body awareness so as to reach a different experience ... to create other images that open up new possibilities for reflection.

In the subsequent conversation, she expressed her astonishment that the sound relaxation triggered feelings that touched her deeply and encouraged her to look at further aspects of her issue together.

In the stillness of sound,

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At her work at the Medical Park Chiemseeblick psychosomatic clinic, music and sound therapist Bärbel Kirst also frequently experiences the potential of the relaxing effect of sound to create a space for change. She explains:

"You can never predict what will happen during a sound massage – it's not foreseeable and always varies greatly depending on the individual and the situation. But from discussions with psychologists, it is evident that the sound experience can lead to a turning point in the therapeutic process. The gentle sounds enable a feeling of being "touched", which leads to a sense of openness – a willingness to face things, define new goals and embrace change. [...] The various effects are reflected in the therapeutic process in different ways. For some patients, the experience of being able to relax is like a small miracle, especially when they experience that the relaxation is intensified each

time. During the sound massage, they realise that change can be achieved without pain or pressure. This experience can be a pivotal moment and bring about the aforementioned shift in focus. People get an idea of "This is how it could be, this is where I want to go". They experience self-efficacy and realise that they can actively shape things themselves. Some find peace or change their thinking as a result of the sound massage. And for others, it is as if they are shaken awake by the sound vibrations. In any case, the sounds enable patients to get in touch with themselves – both physically and emotionally."

Supportive sounds for anxiety and depression

In a world that is increasingly characterised by a hectic pace, stress and insecurity, depression and anxiety are increasing and sometimes significantly restrict the quality of life of those affected. Traditional therapeutic approaches such as psychotherapy and medication may be necessary, depending on the severity. In addition, it can be helpful to use complementary relaxation methods such as the Peter Hess® Sound Methods to alleviate feelings of inner tension and restlessness and thus calm the nervous system.

As with all therapeutic approaches, it is important to discuss the use of sound settings with the treating therapist or doctor in order to ensure the best possible individualised care. Depending on the severity, the sound intervention should only be carried out by a suitably trained specialist or in a clinical context.

Sound treatments can offer a wide range of support:

Promotion of deep relaxation

The soothing sounds of the bowls help to calm the nervous system and achieve deep states of relaxation. This relaxation is important; it can help to reduce the constant mental and emotional tension that often accompanies depression and anxiety.

Reduction of stress hormones

Sound interventions can help to reduce cortisol levels (stress hormone). This helps to decrease the general level of arousal and to promote a feeling of safety and security.

Strengthening perception and body awareness

Many people who suffer from depression or anxiety feel alienated from their own body. Sound treatments can help to improve body awareness by gently focusing attention on one's own body. The vibrations enable those affected to feel their body more intensely and perceive it as "alive".

Increasing mindfulness

The sounds help to calm the mind and consciously perceive the moment. They encourage you to dwell in the "here and now" and help to bring circling thoughts to rest. Stopping the negative thought spiral can be an important step in opening up to the therapeutic process and to potential solutions.

Emotional processing

The sounds lead to a state of inner tranquillity and vastness. This is the ideal basis for entering a meta-level and broadening your perspective again – towards resources and solutions. This can provide valuable impulses that can be addressed, for example, in psychotherapeutic conversations.

Sleep promotion

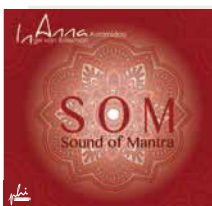
Psychological stress is frequently accompanied by sleep problems. Regular sound exercises or sound meditation before bedtime can help to prepare the body for rest and promote sleep, which in turn helps to stabilise the mental state.



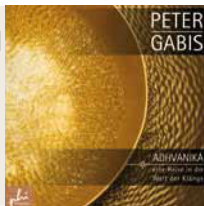
*The sounds of the singing bowls remind us
that our innermost core has always been healthy
and will always be healthy.
The sounds connect us to our basic trust!*



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Trauma-sensitive sound work

Supporting people with PTSD with sound

In collaboration with Stefanie Margarete Glocke (certified religious educator, trained in systemic trauma therapy and pastoral care, and Peter Hess® Sound Massage Practitioner) and Angelika Rieckmann (see p. 44).

Trauma therapy as such may only be practised by specialist therapists, that is, psychotherapists and psychiatrists trained in professional trauma therapy.

However, **trauma-sensitive sound work can be a valuable addition** to the psychotherapeutic process in trauma therapy. This is because sound can provide additional support to the person in their stabilisation process. Such additional support through and with sound should be coordinated in advance with the therapist (see above).

Sound for supportive stabilisation in the context of trauma therapy

In the hands of a professionally trained specialist such as a Peter Hess® Sound Massage Practitioner or Sound Therapist, sound can be used to provide meaningful support and guidance for an overwhelmed person suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

In line with systemic therapy and salutogenesis, which we advocate, we no longer speak of a disorder, but view the symptoms as adaptations. The term "post-traumatic adaptation" (PTA) is also increasingly being used among professionals. After all, the strategy used by the psyche during the potentially overwhelming experience has preserved the person's life and functionality. At the same time, however, the experience has also wrecked the person. Thus, a PTA is a NORMAL reaction to an ABNORMAL event.

Basic conditions for a sound treatment

As sound can be a trigger, a highly individualised approach is essential. The preliminary discussion is extremely important, as are agreements and feedback procedures.

Sound that is delivered individually, harmoniously and with permission has a stabilising effect in itself. From their training, Peter Hess® Sound Massage practitioners

are already familiar with stabilising, grounding, centering, reassuring sound elements with the corresponding singing bowls. The ideal sounds are low tones that vibrate slowly, decelerating and calming.

The specific application in a trauma-sensitive context builds on all the principles of the Peter Hess® Sound Methods (see p. 20) and refines them according to the motto: "Less and even less is more". This means that a complete sound setting could, if appropriate, consist of only a few or even just a single sound.

The principles of self-determination, self-efficacy and dialogue are particularly important. The client leads! They are allowed to make decisions and thus effectively influence their own well-being. Everything that has a stabilising effect for this person on this day, at this moment, is the greatest help, the best support, the best foundation for continuing to shape everyday life. The sound settings designed for the individual offer a space for practising self-care. However, the self-care of the person delivering the sound is equally important. Because only if the person delivering the sound feels safe, grounded and centered can these elements be received accordingly by the client. Co-regulation is always a holistic interplay.

These are just a few of the aspects that characterise trauma-sensitive sound work. Much more needs to be considered and is addressed in detail in the seminar "Trauma-sensitive sound work".

*Healing through sound is not loud or sudden –
it is the tender art of remembering trust.*



Sound treatments in geriatric psychiatry

In collaboration with Dr Claudia Glöckner, specialist in psychiatry/psychotherapy/palliative medicine, senior physician at AWO Fachkrankenhaus Jerichow (Germany) and Peter Hess® Sound Massage Practitioner.

Especially in geriatric psychiatry, singing bowls are a valuable addition. They can be systematically used to improve the quality of life of older people with mental illnesses and to facilitate positive therapeutic experiences, e.g. for those affected by dementia 6. Sound treatments for individuals or groups provide new opportunities for holistic care and support well-being in a particularly gentle and innovative way. As one patient put it: *"This is a key".*



Objectives of sound treatments in geriatric psychiatry:

- **Reducing stress and anxiety**

Older people, and especially those with mental illness, often experience high levels of stress and anxiety. The calming effect of the sounds of singing bowls helps to reduce the production of stress hormones such as cortisol and to restore a relaxed state of mind.

- **Promoting emotional stability**

The calming sounds reinforce well-being and thus feelings of trust, inner peace and balance. This promotes emotional stability and therefore health.

- **Accessing forgotten memories**

The sounds and the scents of essential oils can release blockages to hidden memories and associated emotions by activating the limbic system. The combination of sound and fragrance is particularly effective.

- **Improving body awareness**

The singing bowls stimulate body perception and awareness of one's own body. This is of particular value for people suffering from dementia, for example, who have difficulty perceiving their physical sensations. The vibrations allow them to develop a better sense of their body and centre themselves in the present moment.

Promoting social cohesion

Sound interventions are ideal for group settings to promote social interaction and cohesion. Listening to the sounds and an imaginary journey together with others – this can also include relatives – creates a sense of community and exchange, which is extremely important for older people who may suffer from loneliness.

The heart does not become demented.

Udo Baer

A practical example: sound treatments for people with dementia

People with dementia are very sensitive to sensory stimuli from their immediate surroundings. However, as the disease progresses, they are increasingly unable to respond adequately. Unfortunately, the ability to communicate verbally is lost very quickly. Patients lack the words to express their feelings. But they do react in their own way: with anxiety, restlessness, behavioural disorders, and sleep disorders.

The geriatric psychiatric ward of our clinic, the AWO Jerichow Specialist Hospital for Psychiatry, Psychosomatic Medicine and Pain Therapy, mainly treats patients with dementia of varying severity.

Several members of our staff have completed training in Peter Hess® Sound Massage and apply it effectively, as the following case studies demonstrate.

Sound offers a way to regain access to the patient, access to their feelings. In this way, communication can be re-established. An emotional exchange with people suffering from dementia can be achieved, which is further enhanced by the relaxing effect of the sound massage. Sound can thus reach people with dementia on a level that the disease has not yet blocked.

Mrs B. is lying in bed on her side. She is very restless again, making her complaining, creaking noises. I take her right hand in my hands. She pulls it away and pulls the duvet up a little higher. Initially I hold the universal bowl next to her body, I strike it, and can then place it next to Mrs B. in the bed. I continue striking it and then place the bowl on her right thorax, next to her shoulder. A different position for the bowl is not possible given the patient's current position.

Mrs B. focuses her attention on the sound. She does not call out during this time. With each strike, I notice how Mrs B.'s attention follows the sound. She seems to enjoy it. When the bowl fades out, she becomes restless again. At least during the short treatment, Mrs B. can relax a little.

A photograph showing a person lying down, partially covered by a dark purple blanket. In the foreground, there are several white daisies with yellow centers. The person's hand is visible on the right side of the frame.

*Where words are lost,
sound becomes the language of the heart.*

The sounds can significantly improve the condition of dementia patients. They can create a sense of well-being. This positive emotional experience is stored in memory and can be recalled in the future.

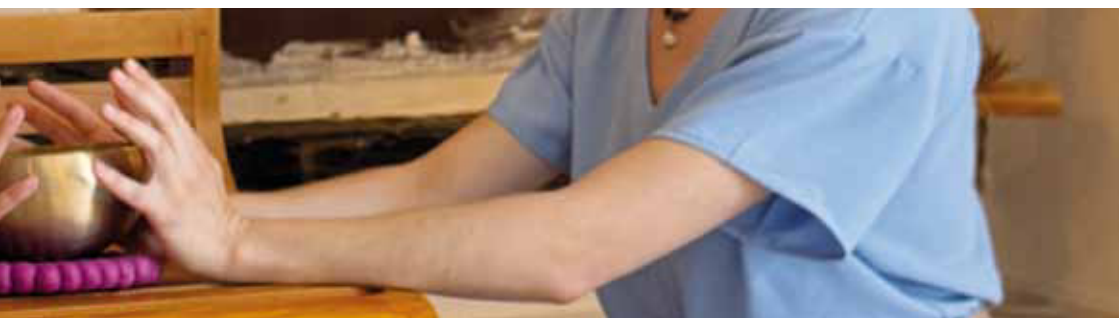
Mrs H. is lying in bed, again complaining of dizziness and "music in her head". I start by introducing her to the bowls: the Pelvic Bowl and the Universal Bowl. "This is a bowl". She finds the sounds pleasant. I position the Universal Bowl on her right hand. She reports a tingling sensation all the way up her arm. I place the Pelvic Bowl on the solar plexus and Mrs H. also reports tingling in her stomach. She becomes noticeably calmer and no longer comments on the treatment. Mrs H. then falls asleep. A few days later, she is already expecting me in the ward corridor before her treatment. Mrs H. has been transferred to the open ward today.

Today she needs it, she says. She is finding it difficult to cope in the new ward and seems nervous, restless and insecure.

As I take the singing bowls out of their cases, she touches the pelvic bowl, "beautiful".

Once again I start with the Universal Bowl next to her feet. I already know that Mrs H. has a hard time calming down and closing her eyes at the beginning. I therefore explicitly invite her to close her eyes. I then place the Universal Bowl on her right hand, then on her left hand, and later I include the Pelvic Bowl. When Mrs H. is nervous, her mouth is very restless. This was also the case at the beginning, but the movements become slower and a sense of calm sets in throughout her body. After the Universal Bowl has faded out, I can also involve the Pelvic Bowl again. After a while Mrs H. startles, saying that she didn't know what was going on. I reassure her. She must have fallen asleep, as she had during the other treatments.

The emotional exchange with dementia patients made possible through the sounds can be relieving in many ways. As patients on the ward can frequently be "infected" by restlessness, the sounds can also help to calm everyday life on the ward.



Sound treatments in nursing

In collaboration with Daniela Abel (care assistant and Peter Hess® Sound Massage Practitioner) and Michaela Lutter (nurse and Peter Hess® Sound Massage Expert for guiding recovery processes)

The term "nursing care" covers a broad spectrum: from home care to care in retirement homes and intensive care units. This includes people of all ages. Despite the differences in requirements and circumstances, there is one constant: loving attention, active listening, respect and attentiveness are essential in every situation.

A wide range of possible applications for sound treatments in nursing care:

- Preparation for a relaxed care routine
- Support with preventive care
- Basal stimulation
- Improvement of sleep patterns
- Respiratory support
- Stimulation of digestion
- Reduction of medication
- Dementia support
- Self-care for family caregivers and professionals
- Occupational health management in care facilities

Sound treatments in elderly care

Singing bowls offer a simple but effective way to relax during the daily care routine despite time pressure and demands. The gentle sounds and vibrations enable emotional and sensory access that works beyond words. Singing bowls are particularly helpful for anxiety and insecurity that can develop, for example, as a result of moving into a retirement home, or conditions such as dementia and Parkinson's disease. When used regularly, they offer security and support, promoting a sense of "allowing yourself to be" in a simple, effective way.

Sound treatments can be flexibly integrated into individual and group care, and can be applied beyond daily care to promote relaxation for residents, relatives and staff.

Practical examples: Sound treatments in Senior Living

At Senior Living K pferlingen in Rosenheim, Peter Hess® Sound Methods have been successfully used in various ways since 2011.

The sound treatments offered in the retirement home include

- Short activation sessions by care assistants
- Group and individual sessions for residents, including those with dementia
- Support for bedridden residents
- Palliative care, including family members
- Regular sessions for employees
- Sound massages for family members

From research: Documentation of key figures

Rosemarie Bleil, a professional carer and gerontologist, achieved significant results in a study on sound treatments in nursing care. Using key performance indicators, she was able to show that sound treatments:

- contribute to relaxation
- improve quality of life
- lead to a reduction in painkillers, sleeping pills and psychotropic medication
- have positive effects on prophylaxis: prevention of pneumonia, constipation, contractures and falls
- reduce the number of sick days among employees

Overall, both residents and nursing staff benefited from the positive effects of the sound treatments, which make the care environment more pleasant and productive.



Singing bowls in intensive care units

Singing bowls can also be used in an effective way in clinical settings. Even in intensive care units, singing bowls can provide valuable assistance¹⁹. By means of a questionnaire, intensive care nurse and Peter Hess® Sound Massage practitioner Gabriele Seidenath documented the vital signs of patients in the intensive care unit of the HELIOS Amper Clinic in Dachau before and after sound relaxation. Positive effects were recorded in approximately 70% of the patients with regard to:

- respiratory rate
- breathing volume (CPAP)
- blood pressure
- heart rate
- oxygen saturation
- patient rest
- sleep behaviour
- tolerance of care measures

„As a sound session with intensive care patients has to be integrated into the time frame of the intensive care programme, it normally doesn't last very long, usually between 5 and 15 minutes. However, after just a few strikes of the bowl, a change can often be observed both in the patient and on the monitor,“ explains Gabriele Seidenath.



From the field:

Sound settings to support breathing and expectoration

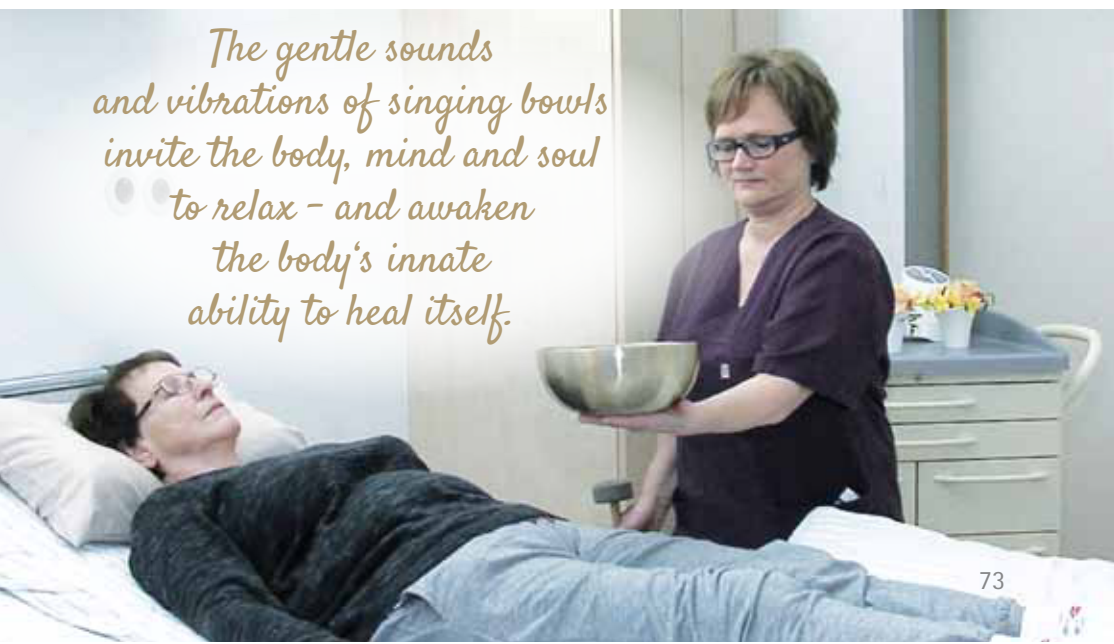
Michaela Lutter, nurse and Peter Hess® Sound Massage Expert for guiding recovery processes, likes to use the stimulating effect of singing bowl sounds for respiratory problems because they are so gentle and yet effective. For this purpose, she incorporates special sound settings into sound massages. These are aimed at stimulating deeper breathing and loosening mucus trapped in the lungs.

As with the "tapping massage", which is also used in this area, the effect of sound treatments is based on vibrations. The gentle sound vibrations spread well via bone conduction, muscle tissue/cells and body fluids, activating the lung tissue, thereby supporting blood circulation and self-cleansing of the respiratory tract. Stuck mucus is gently loosened, begins to flow and can be gradually coughed up.

Feedback from the client

During the sound massage, the client reported improved breathing as a result of the sound element. She stated that when the element was applied she felt that her lungs expanded and the mucus loosened. She described it as if a wave was flowing through her thorax, setting the stuck mucus in motion so that she could cough it up. This allowed her to breathe deeply again, at least for a while, which reduced her anxiety. This condition lasted for several days.

*The gentle sounds
and vibrations of singing bowls
invite the body, mind and soul
to relax - and awaken
the body's innate
ability to heal itself.*





*You are important simply because you are you.
You are important
until the very last moment of your life,
and we will do everything
we can to ensure that you not only die in peace,
but also live to the very end.*

Dr. Dr. Cicely Saunders – opened the 1st hospice in London in 1967

Sound treatments in palliative care

In collaboration with Eva Anastasia Nерger (Peter Hess® Sound Educator and Sound Massage Practitioner since 2006)

Especially in palliative care and hospice care, sound treatments are highly valued and can offer a wide range of support.

*„Everything was in harmony. The deep sounds were like a caress.“
(quote from a patient)*

Eva Anastasia Nерger has been supporting patients and their relatives in the palliative care unit of a hospital in Hildesheim since 2018. The Peter Hess® Sound Methods form an integral part of palliative care within the framework and collaboration of a multidisciplinary team consisting of doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, psycho-oncologists, spiritual counsellors, hospice service staff, etc. She also works as a Peter Hess® Sound Educator on the oncology ward, in nursing homes and in institutions for people with disabilities.

What is palliative care?

Palliative care is a comprehensive and interdisciplinary concept for the support, counselling and care of seriously ill and dying people, as well as their relatives (spouses and family) and loved ones (friends and caregivers).

If a disease can no longer be cured with conventional medical therapies, palliative care is provided. Every person in Germany has a legal right to this. The purpose of palliative care is to alleviate pain and other distressing symptoms, to maintain or improve quality of life, and to support those affected and those around them during the course of the illness and the dying process.

The term "pallium" comes from Latin and means "cloak". The symbol of the cloak stands for a caring, nurturing and protective environment in which a person can live, be, and die with dignity.

Holistic sound treatments in palliative care

Palliative care is holistic and encompasses four levels:

- **Physical level:** to alleviate pain and severe symptoms such as nausea, shortness of breath or insomnia through medicinal and non-medicinal interventions
- **Psychological level:** to provide support in dealing with anxiety, depression, inner turmoil and other psychological stress through counselling and therapy
- **Spiritual level:** to provide support with spiritual and existential matters – regardless of religious beliefs
- **Social level:** to provide support with social, family and financial challenges and to promote social contacts and family ties

Sound treatments can provide individualised support

The effects of sound can be particularly helpful in palliative care and can be used on an individual basis. After all, every person is unique and has individual and sometimes changing needs based on their personal history and the course of their illness.

Some patients initially benefit primarily from the calming effect of sounds on the mind. Building on this state of inner peace, spiritual questions can then arise and be answered.

Other patients initially experience the positive effect of sounds on a physical level. This allows the person to relax and regain strength. The newfound inner peace can encourage them to reconnect with parents, siblings or children and to address previously avoided topics. Even if someone is walking their last path without loved ones, the sounds can provide a new perspective on life, their own journey through life, and past relationships with deceased family members. In retrospect, a negative experience can be re-evaluated and ultimately lead to inner peace.



The use of Peter Hess® Sound Methods in palliative care can:

- stimulate sensory abilities (e.g. in cases of stroke or diabetes)
- promote digestive activity (in cases of constipation as a side effect of therapies)
- alleviate muscular pain and reduce tension
- induce deep mental relaxation
- positively influence sleep
- strengthen basic trust and reduce anxiety
- help to let go and find inner peace
- enable people to consciously realise their own needs
- contribute to the activation of inner resources
- promote inner clarity and self-determination
- increase quality of life and courage to face life
- empower people to go their own way



Tips

On the YouTube channel: Peter Hess® Klang-TV you will find the following videos on the topics of nursing, palliative care and end-of-life care:



Quotes from patients

Eva Anastasia Nerger has collected a few quotes from her patients' feedback:

„It calms me down, it picks me up. This is a great thing. When will you come back?“
(Mr W., 67 years old, appendix cancer)

„This one bowl..... that was my sound. When I heard it, I was in St Mark's Basilica in Venice. When I was twelve, I was there with my parents during a holiday in Italy. The atmosphere there was so special and beautiful. You see, I have tears in my eyes and am absolutely touched. I want to go there again. When you came in, my first thought was 'What good will that do?' I'm so glad I went along with it. It did me so much good. I feel empowered and secure. (...) The nausea is gone.“
(Mrs G., 63 years old, ovarian cancer)

„I should have met you earlier. It was like getting rid of a bag of burdens, the heaviness flowed out.“ At one of the follow-up appointments: „This sounds totally strange now: everything was in harmony. The deep sounds were like a caress.“
(Mrs M., 44 years old, colon cancer)

„I was in seventh heaven! I felt so light and floating. And I could breathe easily without shortness of breath or pain. Oh, that was lovely. Thank you so much! That I was able to experience something like this at the age of 81.“
(Mrs J., 81 years old, esophageal cancer)

„Wonderful! I was able to feel a tingling sensation in my lifeless arm.“
(Mrs U., 55 years old, glioblastoma/brain tumour with paralysis in her right arm)

„I fell asleep. Was I snoring? All the stress from this morning's procedure is gone.“
(Mrs M., 75 years old, bone cancer)

„The sounds took me to a different place – away from my stomach and the pain.“
(Mr R., 66 years old, bile duct carcinoma)

„It flows through me. I sleep better, I'm relaxed. I can move better again.“
(Mrs G., 63 years old, leukaemia)

From the field: Sound treatments in a hospice

The alternative practitioner Beatrix Wehle B.Sc. supports families in an outpatient children's hospice in Berlin with the sounds of singing bowls. What is special about this is that the whole family can participate in the sound sessions: the seriously ill child, the siblings and the parents. The experienced Peter Hess® Sound Therapist explains:

„Sensitivity towards people and flexibility with the singing bowls are essential in my sound therapy. The variety of sound settings and the background knowledge that I learnt at the Peter Hess® Institute are therefore an important foundation for me when I accompany people in challenging phases of life.“

A look at the research

As part of her bachelor's thesis (Complementary Methods / Sound Resonance Method programme, Steinbeis University Berlin 2019), Beatrix Wehle examined the effect of the so-called "Basic Trust Sound Massage" from Basic Trust Coaching by Emily Hess® on grief. Eight mourners who had experienced the death of a loved one in the last four years received five of these special sound massages. These helped to foster feelings of security and safety, strengthen well-being, promote balance and confidence, thus enabling hope and new perspectives. One participant stated: *"I have hope that I will soon be able to take control of my own life again."*

Note: More at www.fachverband-klang.de (Infothek: Forschung & Projekte) [Information centre: (Research & Projects)]



Sound treatments for workplace health promotion

In collaboration with Alexandra Nernosi (psychological counsellor, communication trainer, mediator, team coach / executive coach and Peter Hess® Sound Massage Practitioner)

Workplace health promotion (WHP) is an essential aspect for companies to promote the well-being and productivity of their employees. The Peter Hess® Sound Method offers companies an effective way to improve occupational health care and promote the well-being of their employees. By providing sound meditation sessions and sound relaxation courses, companies can reduce stress, improve mental health and positively influence the work environment. Ultimately, both employees and employers benefit from holistic occupational health care, such as that provided by Peter Hess® Sound Methods.

Workplace health promotion with sounds can be organised in various ways:

- Sound sessions for individuals:
Mobile sound relaxation or sound massages
- Sound sessions for groups:
 - Regular sound meditation for relaxation
 - Sound relaxation course – Learn how to practise by yourself
- Integration into meetings to strengthen team spirit



Sound treatments offer benefits for employees and employers

Benefits for employees:

The use of sound methods in occupational health care offers numerous benefits for employees. These include:

Stress reduction:

The harmonious sounds of the singing bowls can help to reduce stress and achieve deep relaxation.

Promotion of mental health:

The sound methods can help to enhance the mental health of employees by promoting calmness and serenity.

Increased productivity:

Relaxed and stress-free employees are generally more productive and can perform their tasks more efficiently.

Improvement of work atmosphere:

Participating in sound meditation sessions together can improve the working atmosphere and strengthen team spirit.

Benefits for employers:

Implementing the Peter Hess® Sound Method in occupational health care also offers employers numerous benefits, including:

Reduction in sickness absence:

By promoting employee health and wellbeing, sickness absence can be reduced.

Increased employee retention:

Employees who take care of their health and wellbeing tend to be loyal to their employer and stay with the company longer.

Improved image:

Companies that take care of their employees' well-being tend to enjoy a positive public image and can thereby strengthen their employer branding.

Increased employee satisfaction:

Providing health measures such as the Peter Hess® Sound Methods can increase employee satisfaction and thus enhance the company's desirability as an employer.

From clinical practice:

Sound sessions for nursing and hospital staff

Social manager and Peter Hess® Sound Educator Rosemarie Bleil was able to demonstrate in various reports using key figures from nursing homes that not only patients, but also the sound-providing professionals and carers benefit from the soothing sounds. In addition to the beneficial effect on the patients, these figures demonstrated a reduction in staff sickness rates, a decrease in staff turnover, and a more respectful and friendly working atmosphere.

These results show that:

*The use of singing bowls and sound methods
is a win-win situation for patients, professionals and organisations!*

Inspired by the positive feedback from patients, Dr Claudia Glöckner carried out a sound project on occupational health management for employees at the AWO Specialist Hospital for Psychiatry, Psychosomatic Medicine and Pain Therapy, based on the motto **"You care for others – why not do the same for yourself?"**

The senior consultant came to similar conclusions as Rosemarie Bleil. Here is some feedback from the course participants:

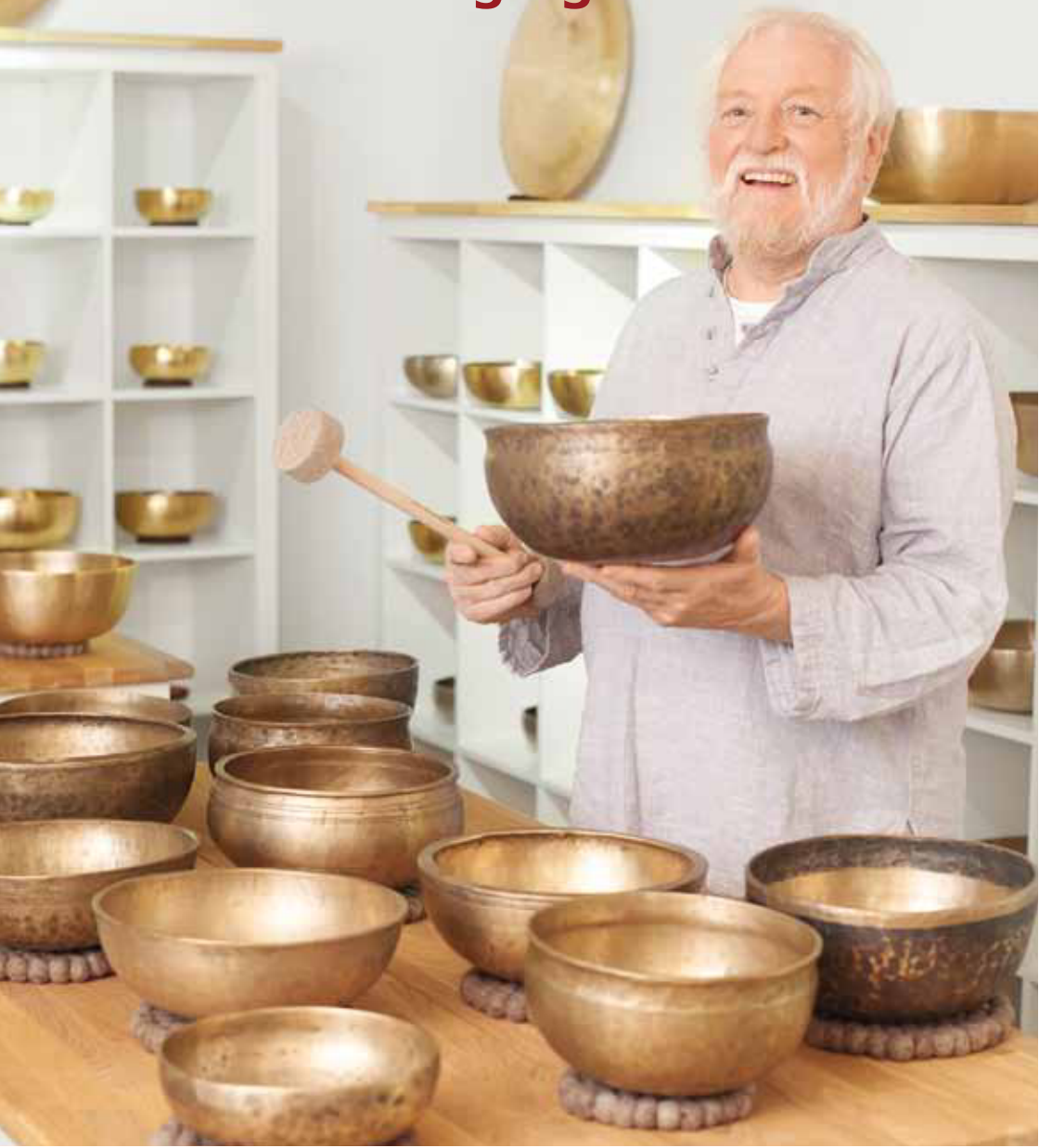
*„I felt very good in this course, ..., I was able to let go and let myself go.
Everything felt much lighter and nicer.
Negative thoughts and problems faded into the background.“*

*"I can integrate the singing bowl very well into everyday life
and thus consciously create/take time for myself."*

*"Regular practice with the singing bowl leads to a pleasant relaxation of the body,
creating moments of tranquillity and security."*

"Sound is meditation and healing."

Interesting facts about Peter Hess® Sound Work and Singing Bowls



Learning Peter Hess® Sound Massage and Sound Methods by yourself

– important aspects of solid training

Getting to know singing bowls and sound methods

In addition to books, sound massages or sound/imaginary journeys, the following workshops are very popular for exploring the world of sound:

- Workshop: Relaxing with singing bowls
- Workshop: Singing bowls – play and learn with all your senses

If you want to offer sound methods professionally, you should have a solid education. After all, personal experience, well-founded knowledge and reflective practice are essential in order to offer sound treatments in a responsible, targeted and harmonious way while benefiting others.

Sound Massage training – a solid foundation

Sound Massage is the core of Peter Hess® Sound Work. It is based on over 40 years of experience, expertise and research, and is now taught worldwide according to a



standardised curriculum. The International Association of Sound Massage Therapy recommends the following seminars as an introduction to sound work – regardless of whether you wish to offer sound massages yourself or integrate sound elements into your own profession:

- **Sound Massage I – Strengthening your centre**
- **Peter Hess® Sound Massage Intensive Training**

These seminars not only teach the **basic principles** of the various singing bowls, playing techniques and the effects of the sounds, but also offer **intensive opportunities for experience**.

A significant factor is the group experience: in the reflection sessions, surprisingly different perceptions of the sounds are often revealed. The own sensitisation by the sounds – what does it do to me – can be compared. The professional reflection on one's own experiences and practice under expert guidance results in a deep and comprehensive understanding of the complex effects of the sounds. This understanding forms the basis for subsequently developing individual, customised and targeted sound treatments.

As described on p. 12, Peter Hess® Sound Massage and Sound Methods are based on three cornerstones: method, equipment and approach. They therefore go far beyond pure techniques. In the sound massage training programme, principles such as "mindfulness" and "less is more" are explicitly addressed and made directly tangible. In this way, trainees internalise them on a deep, holistic level – a significant step towards developing holistic sound treatments from the learned techniques.

Various further training opportunities in Peter Hess® Sound Methods

Over the course of four decades, the PHI has developed a unique range of seminars that enable individual qualification and competence development. Many of the seminars build on (parts of) the sound massage training programme.



Peter Hess® Institute and Academies worldwide

Professional training in sound massage and sound methods – for over 40 years

The Peter Hess® Institute in Germany and the international Peter Hess® Academies stand for sound, practical training in sound massage and a wide range of further training opportunities in sound methods – backed by 40 years of practice, teaching and research.

Our seminars and training courses are aimed at anyone who

- wants to strengthen their self-awareness and do something good for themselves,
- wants to expand their professional skills,
- wants to open up a new field of activity with a future.

Peter Hess® Sound Massage – the original:

- Over 40 years of experience in practice, teaching and research
- Globally uniform, proven training standard
- Basis for numerous sound methods and further training courses
- Flexible training paths: block seminars, intensive training or modular system

Your advantages:

- Learn from the original – the Peter Hess® brand is protected worldwide
- Everything from a single source:
workshops, training, further education, degree programmes
- Quality materials: specially developed Peter Hess® therapy singing bowls
- Strong partners: International Professional Association for Sound Massage Therapy e.V. and university cooperations

A wide range of applications:

Whether wellness ☐☐☐ prevention, therapy ☐☐☐ healing, care, education, counselling ☐☐☐ coaching, sound yoga or gong work – our more than 80 seminars open up individual paths of specialisation for you.

Every seminar you attend is an investment in your health, joie de vivre and personal development!

www.peter-hess-institut.de/peter-hess-academies/

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The International Association of Sound Massage Therapy

Peter Hess developed Sound Massage in 1984, on the basis of which numerous Sound Methods were created. These are taught at the Peter Hess® Institute (PHI) in Germany and at over 30 Peter Hess® Academies worldwide. With the growing number of people using these methods professionally or incorporating them into their own work, the desire for a representative organisation emerged. The International Association of Sound Massage Therapy (IA) was founded in 1999.

Objectives of the International Association of Sound Massage Therapy

- To promote the Peter Hess® Sound Methods worldwide
- To provide professional guidance to members through expert knowledge, networking and mentoring
- To further develop Peter Hess® Sound Work through projects, research and collaborations
- To promote professionalisation through quality standards and certifications

Co-operation with the Peter Hess® Institute and Hess Sound

The first joint presentation by the IA, PHI and Hess Sound took place at the 1st Sound Congress in Dortmund in 2000. Since then, numerous congresses and conferences have been organised at which experts such as Dr. Rolf Verres, Dr. Manfred Spitzer, Dr. Thilo Hinterberger and Dorothee Remmler-Bellen have elaborated on the theoretical foundations of sound methods. Videos of these congresses are available at www.klangkongress.de.

Quality assurance and focus on practice

In close cooperation with the Peter Hess® Institute, the Peter Hess® Academies and Hess Sound, the IA promotes the further development and professionalisation of Sound Methods. With the motto "From practice for practice", it offers a platform for the worldwide exchange of sound massage practitioners, e.g. through regional group meetings, online forums or the annual association conference. In 2005, Peter Hess also founded a publishing house, which has published numerous publications on sound methods and cooperates closely with the IA.



Scientific foundations and studies

A significant step was the introduction of comprehensive training materials at the PHI in 2007 and the development of a globally standardised curriculum for sound massage. In the same year, the IA conducted its first scientific study with over 200 participants, which demonstrated the positive effect of sound massage on stress management and body awareness. This and other research has formed the basis for the scientific recognition of Peter Hess® Sound Methods.

Political representation and certification

In 2012, the IA joined the "Dachverband für freie beratende und Gesundheit fördernde Berufe e.V." (Umbrella organisation for independent counselling and health-promoting professions). This led to the equalisation of Sound Massage training with other complementary methods. Since then, the Peter Hess® Sound Methods have also been politically represented.

The IA awards its own certifications, including:

- "Certified Peter Hess® Sound Massage Practitioner"
- "Certified Peter Hess® Sound Massage Practice"

Looking to the future

The IA remains committed to making the Peter Hess® Sound Methods known worldwide and further establishing them among professionals. The aim is to make the beneficial effects of sound accessible to even more people through research and projects – in line with Peter Hess' motto:

*There is nothing good,
unless you do it!*

(Erich Kästner)



www.fachverband-klang.de/en





The little ABC of singing bowls

Origin

Singing bowls originated in East Asia, predominantly in China, Japan and Burma. Their predecessors, the so-called standing bells, have been known for over 5,000 years. These bronze bells would stand with the opening facing upwards and were struck with a wooden mallet. Depending on the region, various types of singing bowls evolved, some of which differ greatly in terms of sound, vibration and quality. Today, most singing bowls available in Europe come from India, Nepal, Tibet, Japan or China.

Original use

The original use of singing bowls is not entirely clear. They served as signalling devices and everyday objects, for example to store food and liquids in order to enrich them with minerals such as iron or copper. In monasteries, metal bowls were used as sacrificial vessels or by mendicant monks. However, these are often not singing bowls in the modern sense. Some types, such as Japanese singing bowls, were and still are used as musical instruments or in Zen Buddhism. However, there is no evidence that singing bowls were used for ritual or healing purposes in ancient times.

Singing bowls conquer the West

The popularity of singing bowls in the western culture began in the late 1960s with the hippie movement. Travellers discovered the "bowls that sing" in India and Nepal and brought them to Europe. The hypnotic sounds soon found their way into the New Age music scene. In the 1980s, personalities such as Joachim-Ernst Berendt and Alfred Tomatis contributed to the widespread use and research of sound work. Singing bowls achieved their current popularity particularly through Peter Hess. Starting in 1984, he introduced sound massage – as a new, western relaxation method – and developed it into a comprehensive method for wellness, prevention, education, therapy and other fields.



Different types of singing bowls

With the growing interest in singing bowls, a large market developed with instruments of varying shapes, sizes, sound and vibration quality. Only a few are suitable for sound work on the body, as performed in Peter Hess® Sound Work.

There are two basic types of singing bowls: cast bowls and traditionally forged bowls. Both are made of a bronze alloy, which means they are mainly made of tin and copper. The best known and most widely used is the so-called Tibetan singing bowl, which is often referred to as the classic singing bowl due to its expansive shape and overtone-rich, spherical sound. Other singing bowl types include the Puri singing bowl with a high rim and clear tone; the Bengal singing bowl with an antique look and a sound that is a blend of singing bowl and gong; and the Japanese Rin singing bowl, which has a clear, high tone and is twisted from a piece of metal. The Japanese or Chinese temple bell is another variant that stands out because of its bell-like sound.

A modern development is the crystal or glass singing bowl, which is made of silica or quartz sand. These delicate and often expensive bowls produce a clear, intense sound.

For sound work on the body, generally only the classic singing bowl is suitable. However, even in this case, there are only a few types that are actually suitable for bodywork. Therefore, Peter Hess began producing his own singing bowls in 1989 in order to fulfil the high standards of his sound methods.

The Peter Hess® Therapy Singing Bowls – developed for professional Sound Work



The effect of a sound treatment is of course largely dependent on the sound and vibration quality of the singing bowls used. Over decades of research, Peter Hess has developed the Peter Hess® Therapy Singing Bowls, which are optimally tailored to the needs of the practice. They have been manufactured and distributed worldwide by Hess Sound since 1989 – today under the direction of his daughter Jana Hess.

What distinguishes Peter Hess® Therapy singing bowls?

Selection of raw materials

Only high-quality and pure metals are selected for the Peter Hess® Singing Bowls. The bronze alloy consists mainly of copper and tin. The use of pure metals guarantees optimal sound and vibration quality, which does increase the manufacturing costs, but is essential for the desired quality.

Traditional manufacturing process

The forging process of the singing bowls originates from the traditional craftsmanship of Nepal. The metals are first melted into a bronze alloy and cast into lenticular blanks. These blanks are then shaped by several forging units, with four to six experienced blacksmiths forging the blank into its final form. Different forging techniques give the singing bowl its final characteristics in terms of shape, sound and vibration. After the bowl has been roughly cleaned, it is scraped and polished by hand to give it its characteristic shiny surface.

Upon request, Peter Hess® Singing Bowls are also available with a permanent coating that protects the surface even when frequently cleaned or disinfected.

Standardised types of singing bowls

Thanks to continuous development and research, there are now standardised types of singing bowls, which stimulate certain areas of the body particularly well with their specific sound and vibration properties, and are used by professionals in a correspondingly targeted manner. For example, the following types of singing bowl are used in a classic sound massage:

- Universal Bowl
- Large Pelvic Bowl
- Large Heart Bowl



The standardisation of Peter Hess® Singing Bowls enables uniform application and scientific research of the sound methods. If relaxation is the main focus, then the type of singing bowl plays a less significant role. What is more important is that the sound and vibration of a bowl are emotionally appealing, so that you enjoy using it.

Quality controls and classification

Peter Hess® Therapy singing bowls undergo strict quality controls in the country of manufacture and in Germany. Only the best of these bowls get the "Peter Hess® Therapy" label, which stands for singing bowls of the highest quality.

The Peter Hess® Therapy Singing Bowls Premium, which fulfil all quality criteria down to the last detail, are typically used in professional sound work.

