

MUSIC TO IMPROVE PHYSICAL HEALTH (ON THE EXAMPLE OF SINGING BOWLS MEDITATION)

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Abstract. *the article deals with the problems of the use of music to improve physical health on the example of the method of vibro-acoustic massage "singing bowls". The article proposed a methodological solution for the prevention and correction of stress states based on the «singing bowls» method. The author pays attention to the conceptual essence of the method, its fundamental nature within the framework of ancient traditions, strengthened by modern scientific research.*

Keywords: *music psychotherapy, the method of «singing bowls», health, prevention of stress, modern concepts.*

Studies of the influence of music on physical health

People used music throughout history in different cultures as a modifier of their senses and as an ability to feel their body [5]. Today, modern science makes it possible for people of all ages to regulate their energy levels in everyday life with the help of the energy, skill and tranquility of music.

Our bodies respond to music consciously and unconsciously [2]. Although we can take the influence of music for granted, there are complicated interactions in our brain and body that affect our movements, thoughts, and feelings. When we listen to music, our body automatically responds to it [1]. We breathe in time, we move in time, and our hearts can even beat in time [6].

The geography of the research on the effects of music therapy on a human being is rather extensive. Thus, the March issue of the journal «Voices» published an article by Katrina MakFerran entitled “Global Perspectives on Music Therapy” [4], which provides an overview of the tendencies and global trends in the development of music therapy, and the geography of research.

The article describes the work of Canadian researchers in the field of ethnomusicology, conducted with adolescents. With the help of ethnic music, the scientists carried out work to level the relationship between young people and employees of the institution.

The Polish researcher Sara Knapik-Szweda works in the field of the influence of music therapy on people with disabilities to understand how individual music therapy influences the improvement of their social and communicative functioning.

Danish researchers, under the guidance of Niels Hannibal describe clients who have undergone more than 40 sessions of analytically-oriented music psychotherapy and mentalization-based treatment as part of hospital mental health treatment.

Naomi Elisabeth Mary Chadderys (the UK) uses a mixed method that includes both responses to online surveys and interviews, which she observes through professional development programs to fill gaps in knowledge.

Cherry Hense (Australia) describes a practice-based research which uses mixed data that analyze topics and results in recommendations for young people.

According to Soo-Jin Kwoun (the USA), students with disabilities can be used as music therapy teachers in a program with a local symphony orchestra. Hudder (the USA) explores the perception of the value of “musical interventions” by medical staff, and is surprised to learn that most people don’t know anything how useful music can be and some people don’t care to know.

Music therapy is also practiced in Japan. Thus, Yumi Tahara provides both English and Japanese reflections on the history of music therapy and comes to the conclusion that KerryL.Hyrniw Byers offers perspectives that are relevant for different cultures [4].

Active music production opportunities, including choirs and drum circles, are becoming increasingly popular as a means of supporting physical and emotional health [3]. With full confidence "singing bowls" can be referred to such means of creating music.

The objectives of the program. To develop a work program on music therapy basing it on existing domestic and foreign developments, to restore mental and physical health, using the ancient possibilities of "singing bowls".

To achieve this goal it is necessary to study the existing variety of "singing bowls" and justify the choice. For example, it is well known that initially they were ordinary vessels, containers for water and food, which also served as an offering to deities and spirits and in performing religious ceremonies. At present, there are five types of "singing bowls" (Fig. 1).

In addition, it is necessary to choose the most effective way of musical impact, as well as the range of impact.

It is important to draw attention to the techniques for working with "singing bowls", developed by V. OGuy (Nizhny Novgorod, Russia), a specialist in the field of Tibetan massage. Victor OGuy (Fig. 2) works with Tibetan singing bowls, justifying his choice by the following three aspects.

Firstly, the key to the technology of performing massage by Tibetan singing bowls is the simple mechanical effect from the oscillations of the walls of the bowl on the tissue of the human body when extracting vibrations (sound) from it by the impact method or by friction. Stable continuous vibration of classical massage is similar to this technique [7].



Fig.

1.

1. Indian singing bowls, method of their manufacturing: molding. The sound is extracted by friction.
2. Quartz (crystal) singing bowls. The sound is extracted by friction.
3. Tibetan singing bowls, made by hand forging. The sound is extracted in a percussive way.
4. Chinese singing bowls, the sound is extracted by friction on the handles of the bowls.
5. Japanese singing bowls are used in Japanese Buddhist [8] temples in rites and ceremonies.



Fig. 2. Victor OGuy

Secondly, singing bowls affect the psychosomatic state of a person and his psycho-emotional state. Psychologists use this property of singing bowls in "music therapy" ("sound therapy") [9], as well as shamanic practices with Tibetan singing bowls.

Thirdly, the exoteric aspect, which includes the peculiarity of the origin of singing bowls and their use in ancient rites.

Contacts of specialists with clients. In accordance with the recommendations of practicing therapists working with singing bowls, contacts of specialists with clients take place in a room that can provide 9 m² of floor space. Some experts use a massage couch. The room must be warm and provided with good ventilation and sound insulation, without any drafts. The floor must be covered with polyurethane foam or a carpet with a cotton sheet or a plaid made of natural fabrics.

Singing bowls treatment is **recommended** for patients suffering from:

1. Chronic fatigue syndrome.
2. Diseases of the musculoskeletal system.
3. Neuritis and neuralgia.
4. Depressive states (with caution).

Singing bowls are successfully used to harmonize the psycho-emotional state, psycho-prophylaxis, to improve immunity and prevent diseases. Experts note good results in using Tibetan singing bowls for women's gynecological problems, impaired reproductive functions and impaired potency in men.

The number and duration of the necessary procedures for Tibetan singing bowls massage for preventive purposes ranging from five to eight, two or three times a week, with a frequency of four to six times a year. Treatments begin with a classical massage, which lasts an average of 10-15 minutes. Next, singing bowls vibration massage is applied for 15-20 minutes. The procedure ends also with a classical massage followed by a mandatory non-contact ringing around the patient's entire body.

The type of musical activity that is used in the practice with singing bowls is extracting sound by rubbing and tapping on singing bowls. In the method of "Contact Ringing" V. OGuy uses the tapping technique of extracting vibration from the singing bowl, whose position can be either straight or inverted. In the inverted position, the bowl resembles a bell. Here there is an analogy with the therapeutic effect of the Russian bell ringing.

The role of singing bowls therapy organizers is directed to the proper organization of space and diagnostic research on the possibility of this therapy at the initial stage and diagnosing the effectiveness of the techniques used at the final stage.

Expectations of participants from meditations with singing bowls: strengthening, and sometimes restoration of extinct reflexes; pronounced analgesic and even anesthetic effect; improving muscle contraction function; activating regenerative processes; positive effect on the cardiovascular system by intensive dilation or contraction of blood vessels.

Program effectiveness evaluation. In evaluating the program the following criteria should be considered:

- The patient's perception of the improvement or deterioration of their physical and mental health, which can be assessed using questionnaires and discussions at the end of the course of treatment. A point rating system can be applied.
- Assessing the improvement or deterioration of a patient's physical health by measuring biological rhythms, such as heart rate and blood pressure, bowel contraction and the frequency of nerve impulses.
- The level of self-relaxation, which is expressed in the rise of spiritual and vital forces, filling with energy leading to the realization of creative potential.
- Reducing stress levels, for example, according to the methods of determining neuropsychic stability, risk of maladaptation under stress "Prognosis" or "Prognosis - 2" by V.Rybnikov. It is advisable to use the multi-level personal questionnaire "Adaptability" by A.Maklakova and S.Cherymanina or to offer the patient a self-assessment test of stress tolerance (ed. S.Kouhen and G.Villianson).
- Evaluation of sleep quality. A person under stress has difficulty in falling asleep, is suffering from heavy dreams.

In conclusion, it is necessary to dwell on the contraindications. For the execution of therapeutic manipulations with singing bowls, there are a number of contraindications, which are mostly associated with the exception of the violation of biological rhythms. They are:

- serious diseases of the cardiovascular system, the use of pacemakers, cardiac arrhythmias, hypertension of II – III stage), the risk of stroke;
- a serious head injury;
- the use of alcohol, drugs, sedative drugs;
- feverish states of various etiologies;
- epilepsy;
- mental disorders.

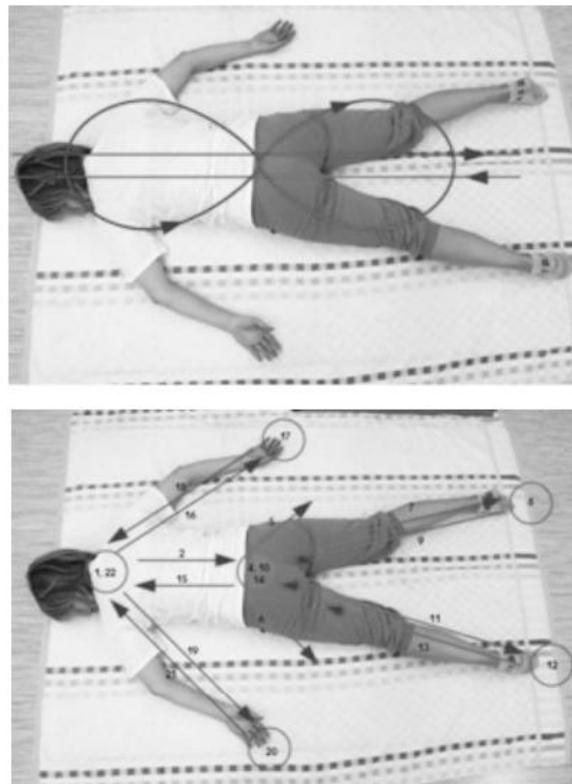


Fig. 3. Diagram of a common contact ringing with one Tibetan singing bowl in the background

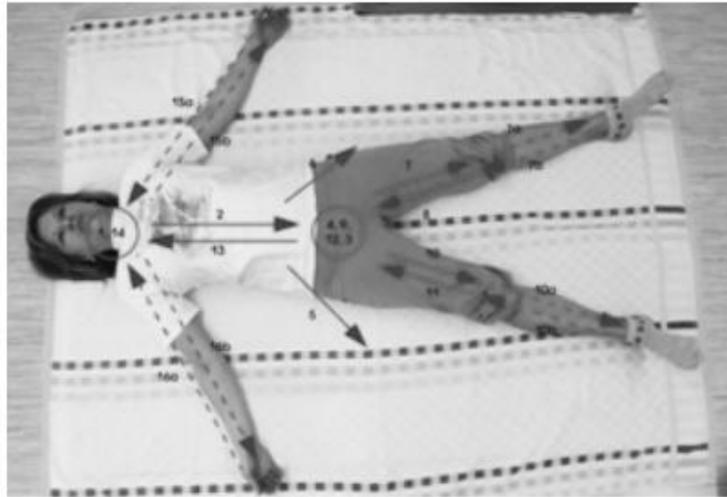


Fig. 4. Diagram of a common contact ringing with one Tibetan singing bowl in the foreground

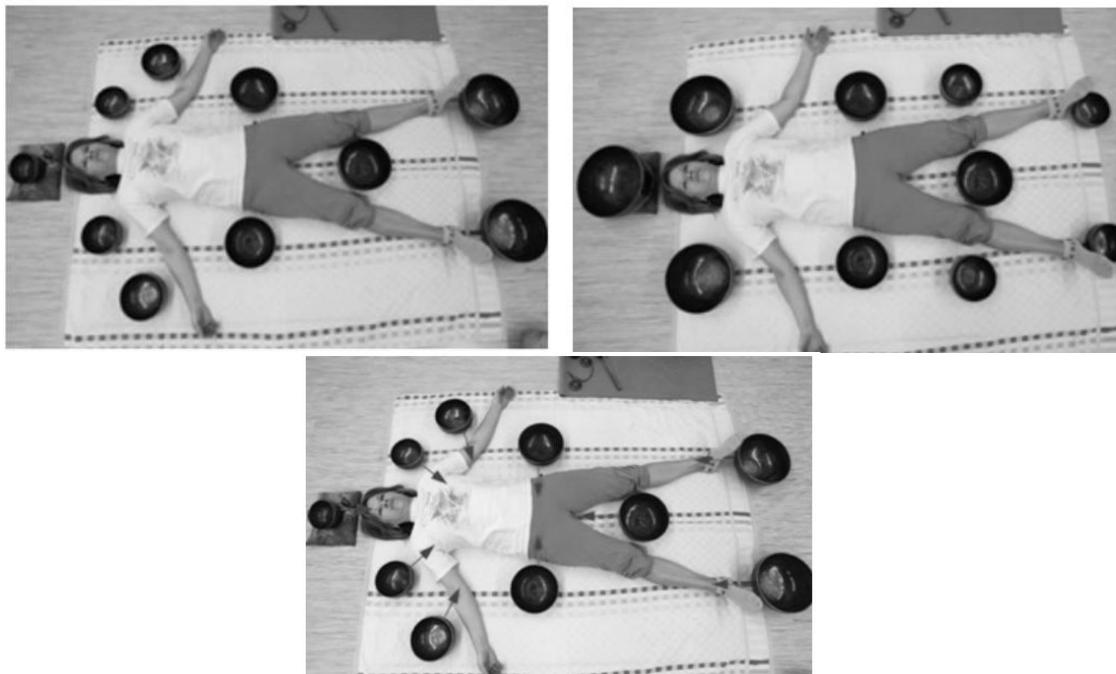


Fig. 5. Diagram of total contactless ringing in the presence of a set of 9–13 bowls

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