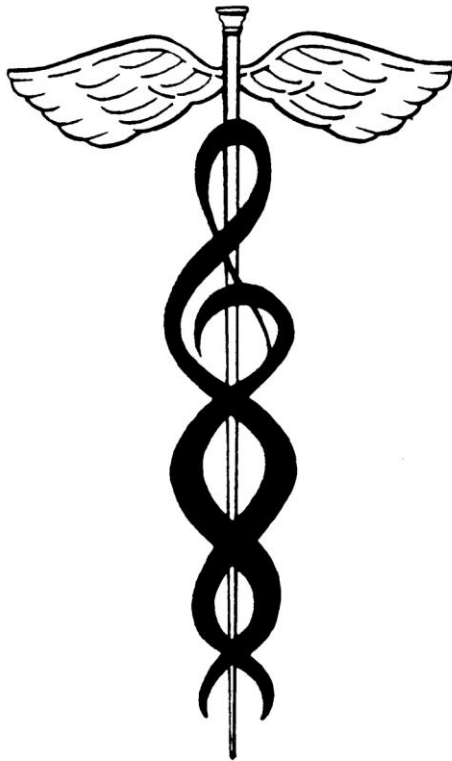


HUMMING FOR HEALTH

By Andi & Jonathan Goldman



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Jonathan and Andi co-authored **Chakra Frequencies** (Inner Traditions), winner of the Visionary Award for “*Best Alternative Health Book*” of the Year and the newly released **The Humming Effect**. Together Jonathan and Andi have dedicated their lives to the path of service, helping awaken and empower others with the ability of sound to heal and transform. They live in Boulder, Colorado. Website: www.healingsounds.com.

Introduction

This booklet is being written in order to teach a very simple but effective technique for assisting in our health. Its subject is humming—perhaps the easiest sound we can make. Yet, the effects of these self-created sounds may be among the most powerful you can imagine.

We have been working in the field of sound as a therapeutic tool for over 30 years. During this time, we have taught many different varieties and sound and seen some extraordinary outcomes. But in truth, the power of humming equals anything we have ever seen or taught.

In our next section, we'll describe in greater detail some of the physical benefits that can be achieved through humming. These benefits may be found by researching what are known as “peer review” journals—periodicals of high esteem which are considered the best the scientific world has to offer in terms of validating research that has been undertaken.

Here are but a few of the beneficial physiological effects of humming:

- Increased oxygen in the cells
- Lowered blood pressure and heart rate
- Increased levels of melatonin, assisting in sleep
- Reduced levels of stress related hormones

- Release of endorphins—self-created opiates that work as "natural pain relievers",
- Increased levels of nitric oxide, (NO), a molecule associated with promotion of healing
- Release of oxytocin, the “trust” hormone.

What if you could lower your blood pressure without taking a pill?

What if you could get a good night's sleep without resorting to getting a perspective medicine?

What if you could improve your circulation without ingesting some substance?

What if you could enhance your overall health and happiness without spending a penny or imbibing any chemicals or pharmaceuticals?

What if you could reduce your stress and anxiety naturally and effectively?

Well you can—simply by taking a few minutes each day and humming. It's the truth and it's been scientifically proven. In addition, we can tell you that from our own experiences of having taught various methods of creating self-created sound, we have seen these things and much more from those who have participated in workshops with us.

Benefits of Humming

But first and foremost we have to tell you: there is a method to humming—a technique to making this simplest of sounds that is necessary to undertake before you begin to feel the effects. No doubt you remember as a little child humming a favorite song and feeling good when you did this. In fact, you may unconsciously find yourself humming when you're in a positive mood. Such humming is actually quite beneficial—it helps you feel better and acts as a self-soothing mechanism. But once you begin to experience the benefits from the method of humming we'll instruct you in, you'll notice an immediate difference.

How long before you begin to notice an effect? Usually, it doesn't take much longer than 5 minutes. 5 minute! And if you can go up to 10 or 15 minutes, the effects will become even more powerful. Then, when we add another aspect to the hum, you will find greater enhancement of the ability of your hum to create shift and change.

Before we begin, here's one final comment. We wouldn't be writing this material for you to experience if it wasn't true and it wasn't real. You might ask if this was so, then why has no one written such a manual before? We don't know. We suppose there's always a first step for anyone and anything. So please come with us and take your first step into therapeutic humming. You won't regret it.

1. Lowered blood pressure and heart rate

Slowed paced humming causes both our blood pressure to be significantly decreased as well as a decrease in heart rate. Thus it promotes deep relaxation and reduces stress, including reducing all those hormones associated with stress such as cortisol. If there is a #1 killer on this planet, it's stress. This is no revelation to anyone who has picked up a newspaper, magazine or watched a television program on health in the last thirty years. Stress causes heart attacks. Stress causes strokes. Stress causes cancer. Stress causes neuron death which damages your brain. First benefit from humming is that it lowers our blood pressure and heart rate. It also reduces our stress and the release of stress related hormones.

2. Increased levels of Nitric Oxide

Nitric Oxide (NO) is a molecule named “Molecule of the Year” by the prestigious journal “*Science*” back in 1992. It is not Nitrous Oxide (NO₂) or “laughing gas” which you might be given in the dentist's office. Nitric Oxide is a molecule that causes vasodilation which causes smooth muscle cells to relax. This positively effects and enhances circulation as well as increasing the amount of oxygen in our cells. A compromise in NO release is a precursor in many diseases including heart disease,

upper and lower motor neuron disease, ALS, depression, Parkinson, auto immune diseases, Alzheimer's, digestive disorders, and sexual dysfunction. So humming through can positively effect the above disorders as well as many more. When we make a sound and vibrate any part of our body, NO is release, helping to heal that part of the body. This may be one of the reasons why many people report that humming helps them relieve headaches.

3. Increased Lymphatic Circulation

The lymphatic system, has a number of functions, including the removal of interstitial fluid, the extracellular fluid that bathes most tissue. It also acts as a highway, transporting white blood cells to and from the lymph nodes into the bones, and antigen-presenting cells to the lymph nodes. You get rid of a lot of bodily toxins through the lymphatic system—toxins that can be quite damaging to your health. As noted, when you vibrate an area through your own self-created vocal sounds, you are also vibrating, massaging and activating your body, especially your cells, your circulatory system and your lymphatic circulation.

4. Increased levels of Melatonin

Melatonin is a hormone that is produced by the pineal gland, located in the center of the brain. It has numerous functions including working with biological rhythms. Thus, humming releases melatonin which helps us sleep. In addition to this, melatonin is a powerful free-radical scavenger and

wide-spectrum antioxidant that works with our immune system and has anti-inflammatory effects. Some studies also suggest that Melatonin might be useful fighting infectious disease. Other studies have shown that melatonin plays a crucial part in the aging process and that it may act as an anti-aging agent. Melatonin has also been studied for its use as an anti-depressant as well as its potential for enhancing memory loss. Thus, you can potentially enhance your sleep, your immunological system, your aging process and a whole lot more through producing melatonin with your own self-created sound.

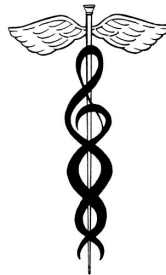
5. Release of Endorphins

Endorphins are those wonderful self-created opiates that make us feel good and help us reduce pain. That is basically all we need to know with regard to this benefit. Here's a little more: endorphins are produced by the pituitary gland and the hypothalamus during exercise, excitement, sexual activity and just about any activity that makes us feel good. This includes, playing music, dancing, singing and making self-created sounds. And quite naturally, these natural opiates are generated when we hum. That why most people hum when they feel happy. It's speculated that two thirds of people hum when they feel good and are happy. Conversely, when we hum, we can help generate a feeling of being happy. So if we feel pain, humming helps. And if we're feel sad, humming can also help.

6. Release of Oxytocin

Oxytocin is known as the “trust” hormone. It’s often produced during intimate activities and that includes making sound along with another person. It seems to create bonding between people. When we make sound with another, all the barriers that exist between us just disappear. The release of oxytocin may be an explanation for why our hearts and souls feel so nourished when we singing a song in a group in a church, temple or similar situation. We know of no better way of creating harmony in a discordant group than by having them make sound together—particularly humming together.

These half a dozen benefits have been scientifically validated. There are many other benefits that have been experienced by those who practice humming, but have yet to be adequately researched. Regardless, these benefits can be life changing. As noted previously, just 5 to 15 minutes of practice of humming will provide these benefits.



How to Hum

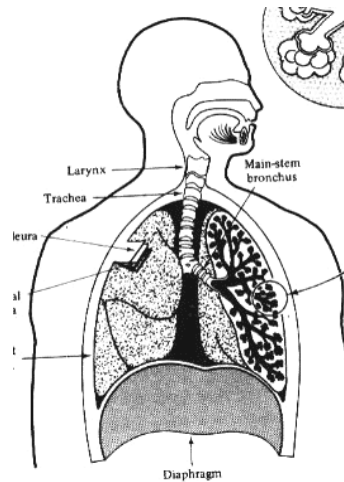
There’s no one we know of that can’t hum. All that’s required is that you make a sound with your lips closed. If you want to know if you’re properly humming, simply pinch off your nostrils while you’re humming so that no air is coming out. If the sound stops, then you are humming correctly. If there’s still sound occurring, it means your lips are open. For proper humming to occur, it’s necessary that your lips be totally closed in order for the complete resonance of humming to happen.

What’s one of the most important aspects of humming is to be sure that you take a deep breath in before each hum. This is called “Diaphragmatic Breathing”. Here’s a short description of it.

Diaphragmatic Breathing

With regard to taking deep breaths, we suggest that whether you breathe in through your nose or your mouth, that you get your breath as deep down into your lungs and belly as possible. This is called Diaphragmatic Breathing; it means to breathe down into your diaphragm—that part of your body just below your rib cage. If, as you breathe in, your rib cage and stomach begin to expand, then you are probably breathing in

this manner. It allows for the greatest amount of air to enter your body.



Many of you may remember being shown how to breathe in school, with your shoulders raised and your stomach and ribcage remaining firm and unmoving. This breath has also been taught in the military. It is totally useless in terms of expanding your air capacity. If you take a deep breath and find that your shoulders are rising, you are most likely not doing Diaphragmatic Breathing. You may also find yourself feeling tense. If this is the case, it might be useful to learn to breathe in a different manner. Here is a suggestion:

Lying on the floor, put your hands on your stomach and take a nice deep breath. As you breathe in, focus your intention on bringing the air into the deepest part of your lungs

and belly. Imagine your stomach as a balloon that you're blowing up. Watch as your belly rises with each breath as you breathe in. Then, breathe out and feel your stomach contract as the air is pushed out of your lungs. Do this again and again, until it begins to feel natural. Congratulations, you are now doing Diaphragmatic Breathing.

Diaphragmatic Breathing, incidentally, is a very natural way to breathe. If you ever watch infants, you'll see it's what they do. Sometimes we forget what is natural, so it's helpful to be reminded. So, we remind you to breathe down into your stomach. If you're finding this difficult, it can be useful to remember that you once actually breathed like this when you were a baby—and you can learn how to do it again.

By breathing in this manner you are increasing the supply of oxygen to your bloodstream, giving all the organs of your body more energy. Slow, deep, breathing not only oxygenates your body and brain, but it also slows down your heart rate and brain waves, helping induce states of calm and relaxation. This is excellent for your health, reducing stress which is a major cause of dis-ease.

More on How to Hum

As we previously discussed, the two most important aspects of proper humming are to make sure you are actually humming (and that the air and sound is not escaping through your mouth) and that you take as deep and relaxed a breath as possible

before you hum. Slow, deep breathing is one of the major keys to health and wellness. So it is when we hum. By taking a slow and deep breath, we can create a longer and more resonant humming sound. There have been times when we have been stressed out and forgotten this. We took short, shallow breaths and created short humming sounds. The effects were negligible. It simply didn't work. So again we stress taking a slow deep breath before each humming sound you make.

We suggest that when you hum, if possible, you find yourself a comfortable position (preferably sitting) with your back as straight as possible. Do this in a place where you can make sound without disturbing others. Usually, it doesn't matter where you hum because the sound is so soft that most people won't even notice. But this is something to be aware of. Incidentally, as with many things regarding sound, louder is not better. Humming is subtle. It isn't necessary to make a loud humming sound in order to experience the beneficial effects. What is important is that you take a deep breath before you hum.

In addition, we'd like to suggest that when you hum, you close your eyes and make just one single sound. There's nothing wrong with humming a song, but we've found that just making one note (if possible) produces a more powerful vibration within your mouth. These sounds also go into your sinus cavity and other parts of your cranium. If as your practicing this, you find yourself making other notes that perfectly fine. Try for making just one note. If you're able to do this—great!

If you're not able to do this, it's also great. Whatever works for you is most important.

Incidentally, check yourself out before you begin humming. How are you feeling? Do you have any discomfort anywhere? Are you feeling relaxed or are you tense? Notice everything that you can about yourself so that when you have completed your first humming experience, you can check and see if anything is different.

Most people will unconsciously hum, not noticing any changes that may have occurred. Few people have ever hummed consciously for an extended period of time. We recommend that you hum for at least 5 minutes. If someone has a clock around, have them time this and perhaps ring a soft bell or something after 5 minutes is over. If there's no clock around, we've found that if you take a slow, deep breath and then make a slow hum, it takes about 10 to 15 seconds. So if you don't have a clock, hum for about 25 times. That usually does it.

We taught this technique of sitting straight, closing your eyes, taking a slow, deep breath and then humming one note. Very few have ever experienced this and most people are quite amazed at the shifts and changes that occur from this. For most people, they become very relaxed. We've even seen people fall asleep from doing this. It's quite amazing.

Sometimes simply blocking both ears with a finger from each hand helps enhance the humming experience. It really assists in making this an "inner" experience that can be quite unique and exciting.

Adding Intent to the Hum

More and more medical and scientific studies are focusing on the power of Intent. Intent can be understood as being the belief of the effect of something such as a pill, some music or almost anything. Once known as the placebo and dismissed as being unimportant, science is finding that our expectations of the outcome of any experience or medicine that we may take can powerfully effect what occurs. There are many times when the belief creates the same experience, whether someone is taking a sugar pill or a prescriptive drug.

This same phenomenon holds true with sound. When we project intention on a sound—when we have a belief about the outcome—often we experience this. For the next level of working with the therapeutic aspects of humming, we are going to add the ingredient of intent.

How do we do this? Simply decide what you would like the intent to do to you. Earlier on, we provided a number of different benefits—things that actually have been scientifically validated through the act of humming. There are different hormones and neuro-chemicals released and different physiological benefits that occur—everything from relaxation to pain reduction.

For this next humming exercise, we would like you to take your time and decide what you would like the hum to do. Is there somewhere in your body that you have discomfort?

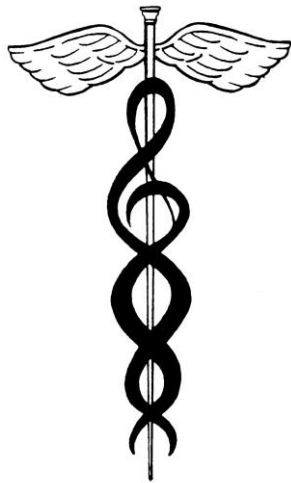
When you hum, direct this sound to the place of your discomfort and be aware that the sound is gently vibrating whatever is causing the discomfort, making it less and less. If you are able to visualize something like the sound actually gently massaging the area of discomfort, that's wonderful. If you are not experienced at visualizing, just thinking that the sound is helping you can certainly be enough.

We've known people who have gotten rid of chronic headaches through doing this. They've even been able to alleviate pain in their belly or lower back or even their knee through humming in this manner? Rather than give a long and complicated explanation of how this is possible, we'd simply like to suggest that through the micro-tubules found in the cells of our body, almost any sound can travel anywhere and have almost any effect—particularly a hum.

While most people will be most aware of the sound of their hum resonating in their head, when you add the element of intention or belief to the sound, you might be amazed at what happens.

So now we ask that you do exactly as you have been doing in the previous exercises, but now adding the aspect of intention. Do this for five minutes and see what happens. If it brings you some relief from a discomfort or brings you great peace and tranquility when you first do it—that's fabulous. If it doesn't, don't give up. Continue this humming exercise. It's a little bit like trying an exercise or learning a new technique. The more your practice, the better you become at it.

In the different research that was conducted showing the effects of humming to create the benefits we discussed earlier, the participants were not told to visualize anything or focus their intention on anything. They were just hooked up to different equipment while they hummed and the outcome that occurred was reported. These included reduced blood pressure and heart rate, which enhances relaxation and reduces stress. There was the release of endorphins which helps reduce pain. Melatonin was also released, which helped people sleep. Humming caused Nitric Oxide to be released, opening up blood vessels and enhancing the healing process. Oxytocin helped trust with other people.



Conclusion

These are just a few of the beneficial effects that have been scientifically found to occur during the process of humming. There are many more. We would also like to suggest that there are even more benefits from humming that have yet to be investigated by science but which have been reported by people who practice humming.

What seems to be most important for most of us is that humming helps instill a feeling of tranquility and wellness. That may be one of the reasons why it's one of the first sounds that infants make. We've noticed it's something that the elderly naturally do as well. And as we noted, two thirds of people hum when they feel good. We suggest that in addition to this, humming is not only a result of feeling good—it can actually help make you feel good.

This booklet is being written because so far no one else has. We trust that you will find great value in the information and exercises provided. The technique of conscious humming may be among the easiest and yet the most powerful that exists. We wish you the very best with your exploration and journey into the world of humming.

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