

The background of the entire image is a photograph of a weathered rock wall. It features several handprints painted in white and red ochre. A didgeridoo is also visible, painted in a light tan color, extending diagonally across the middle of the frame. The rock surface is textured with various shades of brown, tan, and grey.

Relax with the Didgeridoo

By Nicole Lloyd

Relax with the Didgeridoo

"The pure energy of the tone will fetch you back into the here and now."

- Frederick Leboyer

This track has been created as a tool to tone (vocalise) with whenever you feel stressed, anxious, in physical pain or when you just want to relax. This e-book will highlight the benefits of toning with a didgeridoo (or any other sacred sound instrument) and will teach you some toning basics.

Dealing with Pain

"Music stimulation increases endorphin release and thus decreases the need for medication. It also provides a distraction from pain and relieves anxiety."

- Dr Mitchell Gaynor, The Healing Power of Sound

Pain... whether it's emotional or physical... is something we all have to deal with in life. Some people experience pain more than others. Some people deal with it "better" than others. Our society mostly deals with pain by avoiding it (if possible) or by taking whatever drugs we need to avoid feeling it. There is a lot I could write about this, but for now I am generalising. Of course sometimes drugs are necessary so please don't think I'm saying you don't need them!!

I'm just saying that there are other options that are completely safe and natural with only positive side effects (which you could use in conjunction with pharmaceutical drugs if you need to). Such as SOUND. Quality sound. And your voice. Yes YOUR voice! Not a rock star or opera's singers voice! Your voice! I'll explain more later!

Sound During Childbirth

For the last three years I have been teaching pregnant women how to use their voice as a tool during what most of us see as one of the most painful experiences a human can experience... childbirth. I did this because I experienced the power of using my voice with a crystal singing bowl (see image below) during my third labour. It was such an amazingly powerful, beautiful experience that I wanted to share it with the world. I did some reading about sound and discovered many correlations between using one's own voice and the decrease of perceived pain, increase in oxygen, increase in oxytocin, decrease in adrenaline and more.

All of the women who experienced what I call a "SoundBirth" confidently toned (or vocalised) with the accompaniment of a crystal singing bowl during each contraction and basically reported that they felt powerful and relaxed knowing they could draw on sound to support them throughout the labour. They said that the pain was MUCH more intense when the crystal singing bowl wasn't playing or if they weren't using their voice. They felt they NEEDED the sound to get them through each contraction. You can read their testimonials at:

<http://www.soundpathways.com.au/testimonials.html>

What is Toning?

"Toning is the use of the voice to express sounds for the purpose of release and relief.. It is nonverbal sound, relying primarily on vowels. Sighing, moaning and humming may also be recognised as forms of toning".

- Jonathon Goldman from Healing Sounds

As you can see, toning is PERFECT for dealing with pain. When you are in pain of any kind you need to release the pain! It is always more painful when you stub your toe in public and you don't yell and scream, groan and moan like you might do at home. When you release you experience relief!

"If something hits you, you cry out. This cry brings relief and is nothing other than a strongly ejected breath."

- Leboyer

Plus, toning is SO SIMPLE! We've been making sounds since we were born! When we stub our toe, what do we do? Scream our heads off! When we cry, what do we do? Make sobbing sounds. When we are having fun with our friends, what do we do? Laugh! When we are grumpy, what do we do? Groan and moan. We were born with a voice so that we have a way to express and release ourselves whether that's our sadness, our joy, our anger or our pain.

Benefits of Toning

There are SO many benefits that it's ridiculous NOT to tone...

Here is a quote from Jonathon Goldman (sound therapist and author of *Healing Sounds*) that lists some of the physical benefits:

"The power of our own self-created sounds has been recognised for many millennia by the ancient wisdom holders of the various traditions. Now, modern science is validating the effects of even the simplest of self-created sounds. The beneficial physiological effects include:

- ◆ Increased oxygen in the cells
- ◆ Lowered blood pressure and heart rate
- ◆ Increased levels of melatonin
- ◆ Reduced levels of stress related hormones (adrenaline)
- ◆ Release of endorphins – self-created opiates that work as "natural pain relievers"
- ◆ Increased levels of nitric oxide, a molecule associated with promotion of healing
- ◆ Release of oxytocin the "trust" hormone."

Once again, ALL of the above are needed when dealing with the experience of pain. So now you know why toning is beneficial, here's how to do it!

How to Tone?

1. Take a deep breath and exhale. Notice the length of your exhalation.
2. Now inhale and this time make a "Hmmm" sound on your exhalation. What did you notice? Longer exhalation? Feeling vibrations on your lips, head, throat and upper chest?
3. On your next exhalation open your mouth and allow an "Ahhhh" sound to come out.
4. Experiment with other vowel sounds - "Eee" "Ooo" "Aye" "Ohh"
5. And last of all try combining the sounds as you exhale eg. "AhhEeeOhhOoo"
6. Now, if you haven't already, play the "Didgeridoo for Birth" track and tone!

Tips for toning:

- ◆ Don't judge your sounds...put the judgements aside...they just get in the way and will not support you when you really need to make sounds if experiencing pain. So practice ignoring them (and others if they are bugging you about it!!)
- ◆ Notice how these exercises make you feel...so notice how you feel before and then after each exercise.
- ◆ Pay attention to which sounds you enjoy making...do you have a preference?
- ◆ Choose a pitch that is comfortable for you...experiment by making high and low sounds until you find the pitch you feel most comfortable with.

“But I Can’t Sing!”

I have heard this many times since starting SoundBirth. Many women feel shame around using their voice. This is the greatest obstacle I have found when teaching people about the many benefits of using their voice as a tool for relieving pain of any kind.

“But I can't sing!”

“What will people think about me?”

“Everyone (including my kids and partner) will run 1000 miles away if I sing!!”

“I haven't got a musical bone in my body!”

It's a good idea to become aware of any thoughts such as these and really examine them under a microscope! Believe me... none of them are true!

During my workshops and private sessions we explore any beliefs you may hold about your voice so that you can be free of them and able to then use your voice the way it was intended.... to EXPRESS yourself!

Sacred Sound Tools to Support Your Voice

I always ask people “what would you prefer? To sing on stage by yourself or with a choir?” Most people, unless they are professional singers, would prefer the choir option, thank you very much!

Below I have listed some instruments that could accompany your voice (instead of a choir!) when toning as well as immerse you in quality sound vibrations that will help you to relax AND energise!

1. Crystal Singing Bowl... or 2!

I loved being accompanied by a crystal singing bowl during my third and fourth labour. I didn't feel alone. I was less inhibited. It seemed to give me the confidence to open up and let go....

Whereas throughout the previous two labours I felt very shy, reserved and a lot of shame about making strange sounds in front of everyone!

This is one of the reasons why I always suggest that someone (eg. husband or doula) accompanies a birthing woman with one of these bowls.





It supports the woman to make awesome sounds which releases the pain, relaxes the larynx and therefore the cervix and increases oxytocin levels, to name a few benefits.

One of these bowls can also be used to accompany anyone when going through any other painful, uncomfortable experience or when feeling anxious, worried, depressed etc. If they choose to tone with the bowl they often experience a sense of calm and peace and return to the present moment. Sometimes people report that the physical pain they might be experiencing even dissipates almost immediately as the bowl is playing.

I'm not saying this happens every time... sound is a very personal experience effecting people in many different ways. But mostly the sound together with your voice will have a relaxing effect and when someone is relaxed healing can take place.

The great thing about these bowls is that they are easy to play. ANYONE can play a crystal singing bowl. They can be rather large though and difficult to transport as they are breakable, but if you look after it and choose a size that suits you this bowl will be a beautiful addition to any home and anyone's life. A tool that you can use to soothe your soul for the rest of your life!

2. A Tambura

About 40 years ago Frederick Leboyer wrote a book called "The Art of Giving Birth" which taught women the importance of using their breath during labour and accompanying it with a musical tone (toning). He also created a CD recording (a tape actually) of a Tambura (an ancient Indian instrument that has a continuous drone sound) for the women to tone with.

"The harmonic tone of the tambura should accompany the woman when she is passing through contractions and birth as if through a terrific storm. Its purpose is to keep her safe from "shipwreck" and to make the journey into a wonderful "crossing" instead."

- Frederick Leboyer The Art of Giving Birth

I happily discovered this book after my experience with toning with a crystal singing bowl during my first "Soundbirth".

It was amazing reading about other women who had also experienced the profound effect of vocalising with the accompaniment of a sacred, ancient instrument.

The Tambura is a traditional Indian string instrument which makes a droning sound like all of these other sacred sound tools. It is large and difficult to play which is why a recording is much easier to access.

(I do have a 20 minute recording of this instrument. Contact me if you would like to purchase this for \$9.95 and I can send it to you.)



3. A Didgeridoo

This "Didgeridoo for Birth" track can be used in the same way... whether you are giving birth, experiencing physical pain of ANY kind or experiencing "negative" emotional states. I just LOVE the didgeridoo sound because it creates a long, continuous, deep sounding drone, rich in harmonics which is perfect for supporting you to groan and moan and tone along with.

All you do is put this track on repeat on a good quality (if possible) stereo or comfortable head phones and TONE and the sounds will support you to ride and release the pain!

What is a Didgeridoo?

The Aboriginal didgeridoo (didjeridu, dijeridu, yidaki) is a long, wooden wind instrument or horn used traditionally by the aboriginal people of Northern Australia. Rock paintings on caves have established that the didgeridoo has been used as a musical instrument for at least 20,000 years. It is made from a tree branch, usually eucalyptus, hollowed out by termites. Branches cut into varying lengths produce instruments with different pitches. The mouthpiece is usually made of bees-wax or resin.

The rich tones of the didgeridoo are created by the vibrating of the player's lips. Since every branch has its own unique shape, no two didgeridoos sound exactly alike. The didgeridoo is almost unique in the world of music in its use of a technique called circular breathing. This allows the player to breathe while producing continuous sound.

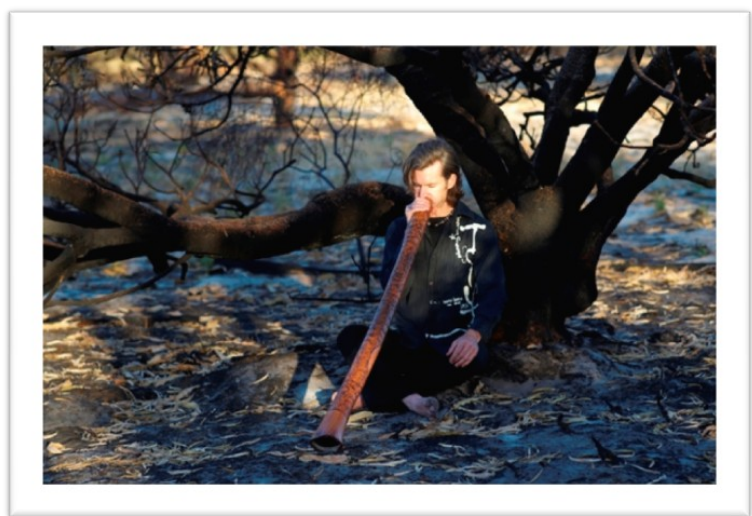
During this process, the player allows his cheeks to fill with air, like a bellows. Then, in one quick step, the player releases that stored air while quickly inhaling through the nose, refilling the lungs. This breathing technique is often used along with subtle tongue and lip movements and the voice to create energetic rhythmic patterns.

To see how didgeridoos are made and played watch this short YouTube video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vyf7hxVpl-Y>

The sound of the didgeridoo can be very powerful, often inducing the Trance State in the player as well as the listener. Here are some of the effects that people listening to a didgeridoo have shared:

- ◆ relaxing and yet energising
- ◆ deeply touching
- ◆ in tune with the world
- ◆ takes away from thinking
- ◆ awe inspiring
- ◆ magical
- ◆ feels like a voice from the earth
- ◆ ancient
- ◆ haunting
- ◆ powerful
- ◆ primal
- ◆ other worldly
- ◆ mesmerizing
- ◆ calming
- ◆ enchanting
- ◆ soothing
- ◆ mystical
- ◆ hypnotic
- ◆ relaxing
- ◆ earthly feeling
- ◆ primordial



Julian Silburn (the musician in this track) playing his didgeridoo

**“All of these benefits are just PERFECT
for coping with pain, right?”**

One More Thing!

I chose to give you this didgeridoo track rather than a crystal singing bowl track because the sounds of the bowls are VERY difficult to capture in a recording due to their highly resonant quality, whereas the didgeridoo sounds a lot more like a didgeridoo should sound when recorded.

To get the best sound experience, you really need to have a real-life crystal singing bowl (or any other instrument!) playing in the room WITH you... so you can hear the pure sound as well as FEEL the vibrations going to and through your body.

A recording of ANY instrument (especially a crystal singing bowl) can NEVER give you the same experience as having a "live" instrument. If you have ever been to a musical concert of any kind I'm sure you will appreciate what I am trying to say. It's not only about the instrument, it's also the fact that another human being is connecting with that instrument and playing it just for you! A recording just can't do that!

Having said that, this recording is perfect for:

- ♦ practicing toning with
- ♦ meditating with
- ♦ playing in the background (on repeat) to keep you focused if feeling anxious or in pain or if you just need to relax.
- ♦ masking out disturbing sounds in the hospital environment

Julian Silburn from Perth Western Australia played the didgeridoo for this track.

Click here <http://soundalchemy.com.au/about/> to find out more about his transformative sound healing work. If you ever have the opportunity, go and have a real live sound session with Julian!

Scott Mitchell recorded and added extra sounds to the didgeridoo track. You can find him here <http://www.devarqje.com.au/devarqje.htm>

There you go! Toning is simple and a very efficient way to relax and now you also have the transformative sound of a didgeridoo to accompany you!

With Love and Sound,

Nicole Lloyd



www.soundpathways.com.au

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