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Extreme Beauty: Tibetan Sound Healing

By Jessica Matthews



The name: Tibetan sound healing

The sell: Soaking up the sounds made by Tibetan singing bowls — a practice that dates back hundreds of years — can help lower stress, improve sleep, increase productivity, aid digestion, alleviate pain and assist with pretty much every other ailment you can think of.

The treatment: Gongs. Lots of gongs. Some high-pitched. Some low-pitched. The vibrations ring all around my body, which is lying flat on a plush white blanket and cocooned with pillows and an eye mask. How does Phoebe Joel — the therapist I'm visiting — make so many sounds at once? I sense them coming from my feet one moment and my head the next. It's like she's some sort of wizard, albeit a wizard with a beachfront apartment in Bondi (where we're doing today's private session) and fabulous earrings (Joel also happens to be a jeweller). I begin to imagine what Gandalf would look like with fabulous earrings, but then ... GONG. My brainwaves are hijacked

by another reverberation. This one is echoing near my head, where it seems to suck all my thoughts and feelings into a vortex of — OK, I’m going to say it — “energy” in the centre of my scalp. It feels tepid and tingly and kind of like my brain is taking a bath. Which is great because I love baths. Speaking of which, the session also includes something called “warm water therapy”, which involves filling the singing bowls with — you guessed it — warm water, and then placing them on different body parts while they’re chimed. How does it feel? Like you’re being washed with sound. Literally.

The truth: Yes, it does involve “singing bowls”. No, it is not completely bonkers. In fact, other vibration treatments — such as ultrasound therapy and acupuncture — have been embraced by doctors, and a bunch of studies have shown how music can affect everything from your pulse to your cortisol levels and blood pressure. Of course, this doesn’t mean Tibetan sound healing is for everyone. But if you’re into things like yoga and meditation and suspending the part of your brain that might think “Why is there a vessel of warm water on my back?”, then I’d highly recommend it. In fact, I’ll go out on a vibration-enhanced limb and say you’ll love it.



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