

Rafaele Joudry, leading author and lecturer on Sound Therapy, talks about her programme which has provided relief for tinnitus, hearing loss and other hearing problems. She has also seen extraordinary results with auditory processing correction, ADD, autism and dyslexia.



Listening

that makes hearing possible

Rediscovering the importance of the ear

Forty-five years ago a French doctor, Alfred A Tomatis, made some remarkable discoveries about the effect of sound on human functioning. His work in the fields of audiology and psychology culminated in the development of a whole new field of treatment – the Tomatis method of Sound Therapy. This method offers effective treatment for many people suffering from hearing loss or tinnitus (ringing in the ears) as well as correcting auditory reception problems for learning disabled children.

The role of the ear in the human body is still not fully understood, but Dr Tomatis greatly broadened our knowledge of what it does. Even before birth, the ear is functioning. Hearing is the first sense to develop in the foetus. The baby hears the mother's voice while still in the womb and is born already conscious of an acoustic relationship with the mother. Babies under ten-days-old have been found to recognise and respond to the mother's voice and the sound of her voice continues to provide stimulation that is essential for the child's emotional and cognitive development.

It is through the ear that we tune in to our environment as we grow and develop meaningful social relationships, beginning with the relationship to the mother. The ear is our social connector. It also contains the mechanisms of balance, enabling us to orient ourselves in space. Besides this, it lets us listen to ourselves, giving us immediate feedback, which controls the timbre of our own voice.

The importance of what we hear

The human ear is capable of hearing sounds in the frequency range between 20 Hz and 20,000 Hz. The low frequency sounds are heard in the roar of machines, traffic noises or the kind of low hum put out by an air conditioner or a nearby factory. High frequencies are heard in children's voices, bird songs, running water and classical music.

Children's voices contain clear, high frequencies, not only because their vocal chords are smaller, but also because their hearing is usually intact, so they are still able to hear the high frequencies. The first law of Tomatis, one of his confirmed scientific discoveries, is that the voice contains only what the ear can hear. Therefore when people begin to lose some of their hearing – generally the high frequencies are lost first – those same frequencies disappear from their voices. The most valuable discovery made by Dr Tomatis was that the lost frequencies can be returned to the hearing, that a person's auditory curve can be therapeutically changed. This means that lost hearing can be restored, children who cannot learn (because they cannot listen) can be taught to listen and learn, and singers with damaged voices can regain their vocal range.

Listening for rehabilitation

Traditional medicine has failed to find a remedy for hearing loss caused by noise damage or aging. Mechanical problems of the ear can sometimes be treated by surgery, but the more subtle damages of flattened sensory cells in the inner ear or lassitude of the middle ear muscles have kept the specialists stumped. Dr Tomatis' breakthrough came because he was not looking at hearing (the mechanics of the ear), but at listening – the psychological desire to use the ear and "tune in" to sound. This approach led him to use sound – music in fact – to provide therapy for the ear. He discovered that by tampering with the frequencies in the music, removing the lows, boosting the highs and constantly altering the pitch, he could produce a programme of training and reeducation for the ear. The Sound Therapy which he eventually developed, gradually reopens the ear and restores its ability to register high frequency sounds. This means that partial hearing loss can often be restored, and other troublesome complaints like tinnitus or dizziness are removed at the same time.

- 20-30 per cent of people suffer with tinnitus or noises in their ears
- Hearing is the first sense to develop and be used in the womb
- The tissue of the ear is the first skin to develop and all other skin develops from that
- "We can only speak that which we can hear." Tomatis
- Most humans hear up to 13,000 Hz, dogs hear up to 21,000 Hz, moths hear up to 60,000 Hz, cats hear up to 64,000 Hz, bats hear up to 1100,000 Hz, dolphins hear up to 150,000 Hz

A new concept for tinnitus

Tinnitus may be caused by a short circuit coming from damaged cells in the inner ear, and the stimulation of these cells as the high frequency hearing is re-awakened results in an end to the phantom noise. Additional benefits are improved sleep and increased energy, brought about by the recharging effect of high frequency sound on the cortex of the brain.

Getting results

Tomatis' method has spread all over the world and is practised in about 200 special treatment centres. A recent adaptation of the method in Canada has now brought Sound Therapy to Australia for the first time as a self-help programme, which is easy to use with cassette tapes and a personal cassette player. The Canadian author, Patricia Joudry, was instrumental in developing the method and records this process plus her own experience of the Sound Therapy treatment in the book, *Sound Therapy: Music to Recharge your Brain*. A problem of confused hearing in which the voices around her became a jumbled blur had made Patricia a social recluse, until the therapy corrected her hearing imbalance and made normal socialising possible. Her daughter, Rafaele Joudry, has added four new chapters to the book in 1999 since bringing Sound Therapy to Australia.

In the past 12 years many people have been helped by listening to Sound Therapy tapes. Mr K Pleming of Glebe had suffered from tinnitus for 35 years and achieved complete and permanent relief after only six weeks of listening to Sound Therapy. He said, "I will be forever grateful for Sound Therapy and I want to do all I can to let other people know about the method."

For some people the treatment takes much longer. Gladys Irwin, age 87 of Pennant Hills, listened for seven months before she realised that she could now hear the bellbirds without her hearing aid. She had her hearing tested and her doctor was amazed at the improvement. He told her that her hearing was as good as the hearing of a woman of 40. After another two months of listening, her tinnitus, which had been unbearably loud, subsided to a more tolerable level.

Helping kids to listen and learn

Sound Therapy is also being put to use by parents, Special Education teachers and Speech Pathologists to help children with learning and behavioural problems such as dyslexia, hyperactivity or attention deficit disorder. This method has also been used to successfully treat children with autism. As the hearing is re-awakened, the emotions and the desire to communicate are also stirred. One 13-year-old girl with higher functioning autism wrote after using the tapes: "Life is so much easier now. But of course I feel like a new person. The world has changed a lot."

The world is what we perceive it to be, so as our sense perceptions change, the world changes for us.

Rafaele Joudry is the Director of Sound Therapy International PL and author of two books, *Sound Therapy: Music to Recharge Your Brain and Triumph Over Tinnitus*

Free information packs can be obtained from:

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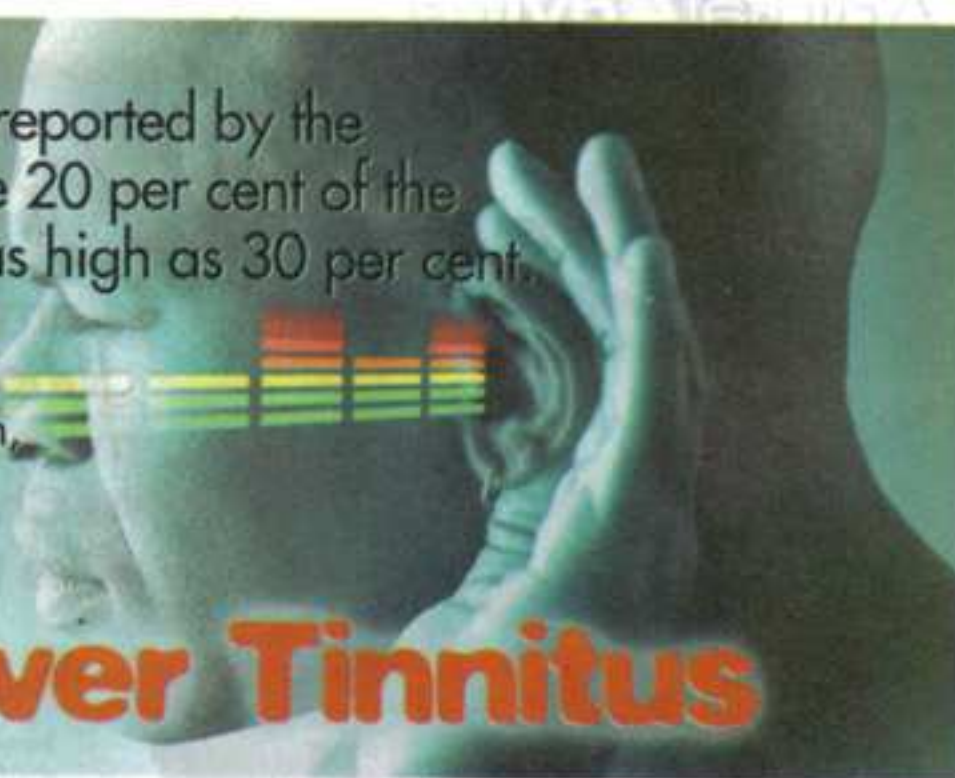
For an opportunity to win a well written book on Sound Therapy, see Giveaways, p74.

Tinnitus, or ringing in the ears, is reported by the Tinnitus Association to affect some 20 per cent of the population. Some sources quote as high as 30 per cent.

Most people who you speak to are living with, related to, or know someone suffering from this maddening condition.

Triumph Over Tinnitus

by Rafaele Joudry



What is tinnitus?

Tinnitus is different for everybody. It may occur in one ear or in both and sufferers report many different sounds in their ears including humming, ringing, a high pitched whine or crickets. It can also be experienced at various volumes and pitch, and can be worse at different times of the day or night. Often sleeping is a problem. During the day, activities and other sounds provide distraction, but at night when it is quiet the tinnitus seems to become louder.

Dizziness or vertigo, loss of balance and nausea are symptoms, which may accompany tinnitus. This combination of symptoms is known as Meniere's Syndrome and is caused by an imbalance of fluid pressure in the inner ear.

What causes tinnitus?

The most common cause of tinnitus is loud noise. Industrial noise is a very common cause of both deafness and tinnitus. Many sufferers report their tinnitus began during the war when they worked with guns, tanks, heavy machinery or particular aircraft. Ear protection was unfortunately unheard of in those times.

Loud music is another major cause of tinnitus and many musicians including younger people are dealing with the condition today. Farmers also commonly suffer from tinnitus, due to long-term exposure to tractors and other machine noise. A bang on the head may bring on tinnitus, as will constant ear infections or viruses. Some medications can cause or aggravate tinnitus, as can some foods. Stress plays a significant role in tinnitus either as the major cause or an additional factor. Neck and jaw tension is also significant for some people.

Current treatments

The medical profession is generally baffled by this condition, not knowing what causes it or how to treat it. Because tinnitus is a sign that the body is out of balance and the ear is expressing a hypersensitivity, drugs cannot be used to treat tinnitus. The only case where surgery may be recommended is if there is an acoustic neuroma (a growth on the auditory nerve.) In the past, in extreme cases, doctors have actually severed the auditory nerve, meaning that hearing is lost entirely. However, it has been known for this procedure to be done and despite the patient becoming deaf, the tinnitus still prevails. This would indicate that tinnitus does not always stem from the ear, but may in fact be created by the brain.



How do we avoid tinnitus?

- Protect your family's ears from loud noise. Use cotton wool, ear plugs, or your hands when in a noisy place.
- Play music or TV quietly.
- Use supplements to provide good nutrition for your ears. Antioxidants can reduce damage done to the ear by noise. It is important to use a powerful antioxidant including grape seed extract, pine bark extract and circuminoids. Colloidal minerals are also important as the body needs 60 minerals a day to function properly and prevent disease.
- Manage stress. Learn yoga or meditation, learn to relax.
- Avoid medication that may trigger tinnitus.
- Listen to sounds in the upper frequency range, e. g. birds, frogs, running water, the wind in the trees. These sounds calm the nervous system.
- Avoid low frequency machine noises, e.g. refrigerators, air conditioners, computers, traffic, tractors, aircraft, industrial noise.

What if I already have tinnitus?

- Do all of the above.
- Play a radio or music softly to distract you from the internal noise.
- Avoid stimulant foods such as chocolate and caffeine.
- The Tinnitus Association recommends retraining programmes that teach you not to focus on your tinnitus.

Another view ...

Rafaele Joudry, director of Sound Therapy International, leading author, lecturer and expert on hearing problems believes tinnitus is caused from damage to the hair-like cells, called cilia, in the inner ear. She says when they are damaged they lie flat, and in touching each other they "short-circuit" and create a phantom noise. Leading ear, nose and throat specialist, Dr Alfred Tomatis developed a recording system where classical music is played through special equipment so that the high frequencies are enhanced. This stimulates the hair cells to become erect again. The music is specially recorded through a device called the Electronic Ear, which transforms the music into a highly enjoyable and therapeutic medium.

Rafaele says, "We have been treating tinnitus for 12 years now in Australia and overseas with results ranging from partial to complete relief for sufferers. Our treatment is a safe selfhelp method that is affordable and enjoyable. Our clients have achieved results where they were told that no hope existed."

For further information or advice on tinnitus please contact:
Sound Therapy International on 612 9317 3799
or browse their website: www.soundtherapyinternational.com
or read Rafaele's books, *Sound Therapy: Music To Recharge Your Brain* and her latest book, *Triumph Over Tinnitus*.