

SOUND THERAPY FOR THE MIND

Tuning into Emotional Balance

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INTRODUCTION TO

 *Serenity
Sensory
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Sound Therapy for the Mind



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INTRODUCTION TO

Sound Therapy for the Mind

Caring for others, whether as a parent, carer, or support worker, can be deeply rewarding, but it can also be emotionally demanding. Many of the people you support may struggle to express how they feel, regulate their emotions, or find calm during moments of stress. Sound and music offer a powerful, accessible way to support emotional balance, often without the need for words.

In UK music therapy practice, sound is frequently used as a regulatory and relational tool. From the early 2000s onwards, approaches have increasingly focused on how live or carefully chosen sound can support emotional regulation, communication, and wellbeing. Sound therapy principles overlap with music therapy practice, particularly when used intentionally and responsively rather than as background noise.

This booklet is designed to help parents, carers and support workers use sound safely, gently and purposefully to support emotional balance, both for those they care for and for themselves.



My sessions are tailored to meet the unique needs of each child or adult, ensuring a personalized and effective experience.

- Laura Seymour

CHAPTER 1

What Is Sound Therapy and Why Does It Matter?

Sound therapy refers to the intentional use of sound, such as music, rhythm, tone, vibration or silence, to influence emotional and physiological states.

In supportive and therapeutic settings, sound is used to help calm the nervous system, support emotional expression, and create a sense of safety.

Why sound is so effective

Sound reaches us quickly and directly. It doesn't require explanation or cognitive effort, which is why it can be especially helpful for individuals who:

- Experience anxiety or emotional overwhelm
- Have communication differences
- Are neurodivergent
- Have experienced trauma
- Struggle with emotional regulation

From a music therapy perspective, sound can:

- Slow breathing and heart rate
- Provide predictable structure
- Offer emotional containment
- Support co-regulation through shared listening or music-making

Sound vs silence

Silence can be calming for some, but for others it can feel unsettling or overwhelming.

Gentle, predictable sound can act as a holding space, helping emotions feel manageable rather than intrusive.

Reflective prompt:

Think about the person you support. Do they respond better to quiet, steady sound, or complete silence? There is no "right" answer.



CHAPTER II

Emotional Regulation Through Sound

Emotional regulation is the ability to notice, manage and respond to emotions in a way that feels safe and balanced.

Many children and adults need external support to regulate—this is where sound can help.

The role of co-regulation

In caring roles, emotional balance is often achieved together.

Sound therapy works best when it is shared:

- Sitting together while listening
- Matching breathing to rhythm
- Playing or humming alongside someone

Your calm presence combined with sound can help another person's nervous system settle.

Types of sound and their effects

- Steady rhythm: grounding, organising, reassuring
- Low-frequency sounds: calming, supportive
- Simple melodies: soothing, emotionally containing
- Repetitive patterns: predictable and safe

Avoid overly complex or fast-changing sounds when someone is already dysregulated.

Practical sound regulation tool

“Anchor Sound” (2–3 minutes)

1. Choose one consistent sound (soft music, drum beat, hum).
2. Keep volume low and tempo steady.
3. Sit nearby without expectation.
4. End the sound gently rather than abruptly.

Use the same anchor sound regularly so it becomes familiar and reassuring.



CHAPTER III

Using Sound Safely and Responsively

Sound is powerful, which means it needs to be used thoughtfully. What calms one person may overwhelm another.

Key principles for carers and support workers

- Follow the individual's cues (body language, facial expression, movement)
- Less is often more — start quietly and briefly
- Choice matters — where possible, offer two options
- Stop is as important as start — silence can be regulating too

Signs sound may be too much

- Increased agitation or withdrawal
- Covering ears
- Increased pacing or tension
- Vocal distress

If this happens, reduce volume, slow tempo, or stop entirely.
Regulation comes before goals.



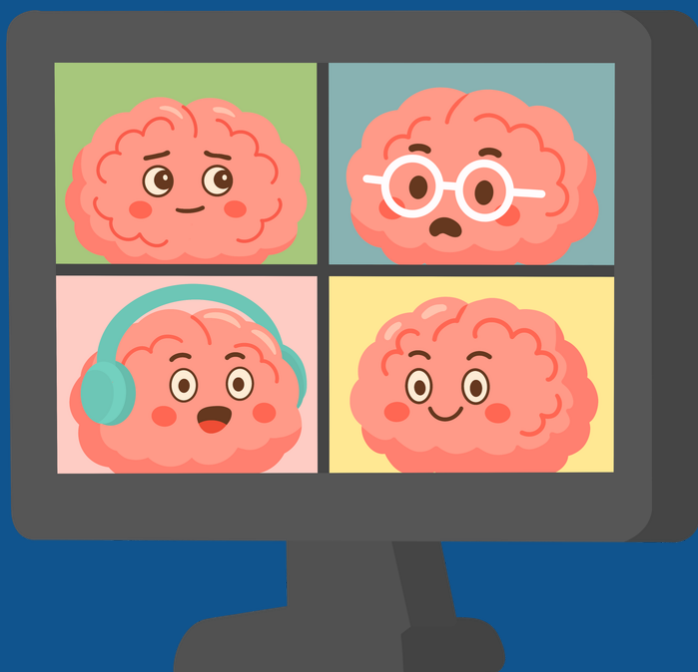
CHAPTER III CONTINUED

Sound as emotional expression

Sound can also allow feelings to be expressed safely:

- Drumming for frustration
- Low humming for sadness
- Gentle chimes for calm

You don't need to interpret or fix the emotion. Simply acknowledge:
"I hear how strong that sound is."



CHAPTER IV

Everyday Sound Strategies for Care Settings and Home

Sound therapy doesn't require special equipment.

Small, consistent practices can make a meaningful difference.

Morning transitions

Use the same gentle music each morning to signal the start of the day. Predictability reduces anxiety.

Difficult moments

Introduce sound before escalation when possible:

- A steady tap
- A familiar song
- Slow humming

Group environments

For support workers:

- Begin sessions with a consistent opening sound
- Use sound cues for transitions
- End with a calming closing sound

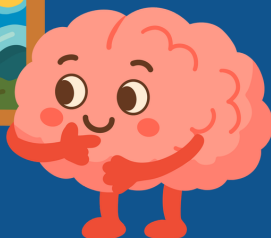
Supporting your own wellbeing

Carers' emotional balance matters too.

Try:

- One calming track at the end of the day
- 60 seconds of humming or breathing with sound
- A short "reset sound" between tasks

Supporting yourself strengthens your ability to support others.



CONCLUSION

Sound Therapy for the Mind

Sound therapy offers a gentle, accessible way to support emotional balance for both carers and those they care for.

Rooted in music therapy principles used across the UK since the early 2000s, intentional sound use can support regulation, expression, and connection - often without words.

For parents, carers and support workers, sound can become a shared language: one that says you are safe, you are heard, and you are not alone.

Used thoughtfully, sound doesn't overwhelm, it holds, supports and steadies. Small moments of intentional listening or sound-making, repeated over time, can make a lasting difference.

If you feel that someone you support would benefit from more individualised or therapeutic work, consider seeking guidance from a qualified music therapist or allied professional.

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