

Ride Your Body's Rhythm to Wholeness

Tapping into Vibrational Healing Techniques Used by Indigenous Cultures for Centuries

By Wendy Oden

The world's oldest living culture, the Kalahari bushmen, do it. Indigenous shamans throughout the Americas, and from the Australian Outback to the peaks of Europe, China and Russia do it. Our bodies, our babies, and even our animals instinctively do it. What is it? We *shake*.

Shaking, trembling, vibrating — moving rhythmically, and steadily, from head to toe. It is the oldest form of healing on the planet, believed to be the complement of the natural relaxation response. Shaking calms our nerves and excites our emotions, and can move us to states of ecstasy that transcend place and time.

In these moments, we can forget the limitations of our physical realm and tap into the cosmic energy that binds us all, the creative force inherent in all living things, our inner essence — our *ki* (*qi*, *chi*). And when our *ki* is moving, flowing freely with the ebb and flow of life, we can ignite the natural healing power within for optimal health.

While “shaking” may seem a bit *out there* to many of us, whose 21st Century conditioning dictates that we appear to be in control at all times, a milder and more readily accessible form of shaking is making waves across the United States. It's called brain wave vibration, and in its most simple form, the practice merely requires moving your body to your own natural healing rhythms in order to slow down your brain waves, and circulate your body's energy. It is designed to move us more readily into a meditative experience and calm brain wave activity, so our bodies and minds can naturally heal.

At its core, the technique involves three distinct elements:

1) deliberately making vibrations in your body, 2) allowing your body to ride the rhythm, and 3) following the flow of energy. It combines the ancient healing practices from Korea with modern scientific understanding of the brain. By tapping into the body's inherent rhythm, we're able to release tension and reach states of deep relaxation similar to that achieved through traditional forms of sitting meditation.

I have found brain wave vibration to be incredibly simple yet profoundly effective in relieving stress, and bringing my body and mind back into balance. A session can be just a few minutes or a full one-hour practice combining meridian stretching, vibration exercises, ki-gong movements, energy dance and sitting meditation. The beauty is that it can be done anytime, anywhere by people of all abilities, and takes no time at all to master.

While there are several variations of brain wave vibration exercises, my favorite is the full-body method. It is very similar to shaking medicine techniques that indigenous cultures have used for centuries. To try it, turn on some rhythmic drum music to get into the flow. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, hips forward, knees slightly bent, and weight naturally balanced on the balls of your feet.

Begin by shaking your head from side to side, as you close your eyes and focus on your brain stem at the base of your neck. As you relax, allow the shake to become more pronounced moving down to your

shoulders and throughout all parts of your body. Focus on the rhythm allowing all thoughts to leave your mind. As you move,

them to achieve higher states of consciousness, connect with the spiritual realms, and stimulate their own innate healing abilities. It was their way of tapping into the inherent life force or energy present in all things.

Scientific knowledge has come full circle with the ancient wisdom of our elders. Research proves the brain emits five distinct kinds of brain waves associated with our different states of consciousness, all of which affect our health.

Due to demands of modern life, we spend most of our waking time in high-frequency brain-wave patterns, thus creating chronic stress and other imbalances. Conversely, low-frequency brain waves, like those associated with rest, relaxation and meditation, are known to bring about healing.

According to Dr. Michael Winkelman, noted anthropologist and former neuroscientist, shamanic healing practices worked by integrating the older brain stem (regulating our

vital functions and innate healing capacity) and younger prefrontal cortex (thinking and reasoning) parts of the brain by physically stimulating systematic brain wave discharge patterns.

Like the “relaxation response,” shaking creates equilibrium in the mind and body, freeing our brain stem to work at its optimal capacity. Shaking also stimulates the brain's serotonin and opioid neurotransmitters — our “feel good” chemicals.

Bradford Keeney, author of *Shaking Medicine*, noted that all ancient indigenous healing practices of the world relied on ecstatic movement, such as



Sedona resident Michela Mangiaracina uses the full-body vibration method to shake away stress. Photo by Franklin Hughes.

your inhibitions will loosen up and you will intuitively take on postures that your body desires for its own natural healing.

The vibrations may be gentle or intense, dance-like or flowing. After about 10-30 minutes, your body will slow to a stop as it reaches a natural state of equilibrium. At this point, you can return to your natural awareness or move into a sitting posture and sink into meditation.

Ancient shamans of the past can be considered the original “brain wave doctors.” They instinctively knew that shaking of the body and dancing to distinct tribal rhythms could enable

dancing or shaking, to achieve states of deeply-relaxed consciousness during which the body could stimulate its own healing. Keeney writes, "When we shake ourselves to the fullest height of ecstatic expression and then fall into the deepest state of quiet, we set the stage for powerful realignment and evolution of our whole being."

Shaking, is indeed, the oldest medicine on earth. Even today, we shake — unexpectedly — when our body seems to need to reset itself. How often have you laid in bed in the verge of sleep when your body suddenly jerks you back to wakefulness? You reposition, take a breath, and soon fall into a slumber.

Have you vibrated from head to toe as an unexpected shiver and shake rolls through you in a matter of seconds? As babies, we were born to shake and it's time to get back into the rhythm of our ancestors for a happier, healthier life.

Wendy Oden is a freelance writer based in Sedona, AZ who has been exploring vibration healing methods for more than a decade. When not shak-

ing to the rhythm of life, she writes for various publications specializing in body/mind/spirit healing, sustainable living, and responsible tourism. She can be reached at woden9@comm speed.net. Wendy recommends Brain Wave Vibration: Getting Back into the Rhythm of a Healthy, Happy Life, by Ilchi Lee, to learn more about using vibration to create optimal brain health and relieve stress, available at online and neighborhood booksellers or www.brainwavevibration.com

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