Episode 572: Dr. Kulreet Chaudhary on Sound Therapy and the Healing Power of Sound
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Katie: Hello and welcome to the Wellness Mama podcast. I'm Katie from wellnessmama.com and wellnesse.com, that's wellness with an e on the end and this episode is fascinating. It's a lot of new information for me, it's all about how to use sound therapy and the healing power of sound.

I am here with Dr. Kulreet Chaudhary, I hope I said that right, who is a neurologist and neuroscientist, as well as a published author and researcher. She's internationally recognized for her work in this and a sought-after educator and public speaker around topics including sound healing. She's a rare combination of expertise in many areas and this gives her a truly unique perspective on health and she's helped thousands of people to feel better and achieve their health goals that they never thought were possible.
She was the director of the Wellspring Health and Scripps Memorial Hospital for 10 years and remains a pioneer in the field of integrated medicine. She has successfully developed a powerful system to manage chronic neurological disorders such as multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's, and headaches by incorporating regular detoxification practices, herbal medicines, fundamental changes in diet in addition to the standard allopathic approach to these issues.

Her program has been so successful that many patients now use it, not just for neurological issues but also for a wider range of health concerns including weight loss and chronic disease. And she has done a lot of research in a lot of areas. We'll talk a little bit about some of them today. She's the author of two books, "The Prime" and "Sound Medicine" which will be linked in the show notes. And she has a course available on the Embodied Philosophy of Sound Medicine.

This is a really interesting episode. We'll talk about how she got into sound therapy when she was just nine years old. How sound healing works, and how quantum biology is helpful in understanding it. How sound and light therapies impact the vibrations of the body. What brain entrainment is, and how sound effects it. Why we're wired to receive sound and how different sounds affect us. And how ultrasound is just one example of how sound is used in medicine but how ancient cultures have used it in many other ways for a very long time.

She talks about the vibrational frequency of different organs and how sound can impact them. What she calls the Chakra Mantra and how it can help our bodies find balance. How we are also impacted by the sounds of our own minds, and how to curate that carefully. How to turn on your neuroendocrine balancing system with sound including how to do this with your children so they're able to get into sleep a little bit easier.

How sound can actually be really helpful in healing trauma. Why mantra means through the mind and how a mantra can help clear trauma as well. And how even our language and the sounds of our words affect ourselves and others, and ways to integrate these practices into your life. She gives some pretty specific examples you can benefit from as well. So without any further wait, let's jump in. Dr. Chaudhary, welcome, and thanks for being here.

Dr. Kulreet: It's an absolute pleasure.

Katie: I'm so excited to get to jump in and learn about sound therapy and sound healing from you today. But before we do, I see my notes that you do martial arts as well. And I'm so curious what type you practice and how you got into it.

Dr. Kulreet: I got into it because of my son who wanted to do martial arts. And when we chose the school, I decided, well, let me do Tai Chi because, you know, Tai Chi is all about balance, and it's meditative, and it's relaxing. But I do a martial arts form of Tai Chi and it's actually very, very... It's also very aggressive and I love it. I absolutely love it. I'm like tuning into my warrior spirit through the practice.

Katie: I love that. I've been doing Gin Kwon Do for about the past year and I love the movement side and also kind of that meditative side. It's so fun. Well, the topic you are very knowledgeable in and that I'm excited because I am not at all knowledgeable in yet is the topic of sound therapy and sound healing. And we're gonna get to go deep in several areas of this today. But to start off broad, I'd love to just hear what prompted you to get into this in the first place.

Dr. Kulreet: When I very first got into it, I was nine years old. And I didn't really even know I was doing sound healing at the time because my mom had introduced us to a meditation practice and by us, I mean my sister
and I. And she got into it because she had developed a thyroid condition. And as a result, her endocrinologist had recommended meditation using mantra and within a few months, you know, she completely normalized.

And so I first got into it as a child not knowing that I was doing anything special. When I became a neurologist and dealing with such difficult conditions like Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis, I had to really reach for tools that had the capacity to reorganize the brain. And so that was when I started using sound medicine more as a medical practitioner and the results were amazing. But it wasn’t until I went to India to study the ancient...see the records there. That was the first time that I understood the quantum biology of sound. And that just completely blew my mind. That's why I wrote the book because I was like, "Oh my God, this is actually very, very advanced technology that we still have yet to catch up with."

Katie: Yeah. I'd love to hear more about that because I think a lot of people, me included, don't fully understand how sound can impact the body on such a profound level. And I love that you use the term quantum biology because this is when I think to your point and especially in the U.S., we're just starting to begin to understand but perhaps other cultures have had a lot of knowledge on for a long time.

Dr. Kulreet: Yeah. I think there’s an assumption that everything that we’re learning now must be new and that ancient cultures must not have known anything. And in the East, time is seen more as cyclical, meaning there's cycles of time. Meaning sometimes we're learning more and sometimes we're learning less, and that's why there's a great advantage to always look, you know, both forward as well as backwards. And the ancient medical systems were more based on vibrational medicine. And so what that means is they understood our nature as vibrational beings. Now, this isn’t at all different from how quantum physicists described the reality of the world that on the subtleness level, we’re not really solid beings, we're just ways of energy. And so, they came from that perspective. So, they used a lot of sound as well as light therapies in their medical interventions.

And when you are using therapies that are so basic to our very nature, they have profound effects. So, when I look at the mind, for example, there's a process that even we recognize scientifically known as brain entrainment. And what that means is that our brain cells, our neurons will begin to respond in a certain way to sound. So, when you hear something, your brain starts to actually mimic some of the patterns of the sound and your brain is what's sending the signals to every single cell in your body. So, if you wanna impact your health, start with changing the way that your brain is firing.

Katie: Yeah. And I've learned firsthand that perhaps that's one of the stronger tools that we have in our toolkit. And it's when we don't necessarily always think of. We wanna, you know, eat the right foods and take the right supplements and those things are great and important. But I feel like this is a whole area that, like I said, isn't really well understood, especially in the U.S. yet. And you mentioned the body being a vibrational waves of energy versus what we think of as just solid matter, which I think is such a fascinating concept for a lot of people. But I would guess then that different sounds can impact the body differently and this is probably far beyond just different types of music. But can you give us maybe an overview of some examples of how different sounds impact the body and what's happening in our physiology when that happens?

Dr. Kulreet: Yeah. Absolutely. And you know, we experience this as human beings, meaning, you know, if one of your kids is crying, for example, it takes less than... like you immediately have a flood of neurotransmitters. So, when we say different sounds affect us differently... all the sounds that we're hearing, whether it's the sound of traffic, whether it's a sound of birds, all sound affects us because we're actually wired to receive sound. And when I say we're wired to receive sound, we are wired down to the cellular basics, to the basics to actually respond to sound in a biological way.
So, when I talk about sound, I'm not just talking about something that like is woo way out there, I'm talking about the way in which our biology will actually adjust itself in response to sound. And this is something, like I said, we understand this from a quantum physics standpoint, from a scientific standpoint, it hasn't made it yet into medicine. There's certain things that have come out. I'm sure you've heard of an ultrasound, or you may have known of somebody who had an ultrasound. Ultrasound is just simply using sound waves for medical purposes. So, it's like the beginnings of that are there, but we haven't gotten deep enough into how do we intentionally use sound.

So, coming back to your question about different sounds affecting us differently in the ancient practices, they understood the...you can call it the vibrational frequency of certain organs. And this is astounding to me. And there's research now, one of the institutes that's doing this research at UCLA where they're actually trying to map out all of the sounds made by the different organs in our body. But this was well known before that there's certain resonant frequencies that are held in our body. And so, these would be used to help to restore balance. And some of these vibrational frequencies were called bija mantra, those are seed sounds. And they're seed sounds because they're just simply some of the most fundamental sounds of our body. And I'm happy to share some of these with you if you like.

Katie: Yeah. I'd love to hear some examples.

Dr. Kulreet: So, the one sound therapy that I recommend to most people it's called the chakra mantra. And the chakra system is just a major energy system in the body recognized by Eastern philosophies. I always marveled at this because the locations are also where all the major nerve bundles are. You know, so it's not really a separate system, it's just like a layering. So, if we recognize the body in terms of the different major nerve bundles, you know, the ancient systems from many of the Eastern traditions, they layered another organization on top of that and showed that where these major nerve bundles are located is also where there's major highway centers or relay centers of energy where the mind and the body intersect. And so, this is my favorite sound therapy to give because number one, you can do it yourself and it helps to balance the entire body and mind. So, I'll just go ahead and say it for you. And this actually helps to balance the resonant frequencies of all the major organs in your body. So, is it all right if I just recite it like a few times?

Katie: Absolutely.

Dr. Kulreet: So, when you do this, I typically recommend first just starting with five minutes a day because it is very powerful. When you start to open up those resonant frequencies, whatever's held in there starts to come up. So, people are surprised. They go, "Oh my gosh, I have all this anxiety coming out." Or, "All this anger coming out." Or, "I got a rash afterwards." And I'm like, "That's excellent. That's a sign of balancing." You do not have to be afraid of signs of balancing. So, first, start with just five minutes and then slowly over time increase it by five-minute increments, so you get to a maximum of 20 minutes. You don't need more than 20 minutes. And look at this as just taking a bath for your mind and body on a deeper level, not just the bath you take in the shower, but it's a deeper vibrational bath.

So, when you do this in the beginning, you can just do it out loud, and then slowly you can start to do it silently. So, I'm just gonna close my eyes because that's my practice when I do it. So, it goes like this. (sound)

So, when you do the sounds, you'll actually notice different parts of your body start to vibrate with each of the frequencies. And those sounds, they don't have any intrinsic meaning they're just simply pure primordial sounds for balancing the body. So, that is my daily sound practice. It's one of my daily sound practices. And to me, it's more important than any shower, anything I do to the physical body.
Katie: And that was gonna be one of my questions. I think we always are curious to know, so there's no particular meaning to the words, it's more the sounds themselves?

Dr. Kulreet: It's just simply purely the sound. That is what is important. It's just simply doing the sound. And what I can do is I'll send you a copy that has some instructions for people to be able to look at so that when they do the practice, they have the actual words and stuff they can look at.

Katie: That would be wonderful. And is it important for us to do it ourselves, like for our own voice or can you hear that and also have an effect?

Dr. Kulreet: That's a really good question. So, I made a CD, my husband and I actually made a CD, and it's just available on iTunes under Dr. Chaudhary on chakra mantra because hearing it is beneficial, especially in the beginning when you're trying to learn it because you wanna get to the pronunciation correctly. But it's more important that you do it. So, even though I made that CD, it was just as an instructional CD for people to learn it and then eventually do it yourself. You know, we don't tend to think about this, but the most powerful sound that we're exposed to on a daily basis is the sound of our mind, the silent dialogue in our mind.

And so what you're doing is you're adding these sacred sounds. When I say sacred sounds, I mean sounds of nature because they're like primal sounds. You're adding these primordial sounds for balancing and replacing kind of the negative thought patterns with positive sound waves. So, when we do this internally, you're really combating that negative pathway that is there in the subconscious mind. So, that's why it's so important that you eventually. You know, you can first do it out loud, but eventually, do it silently.

Katie: And is it important to kind of almost hum it or your voice is beautiful, but it almost was like a song.

Dr. Kulreet: Yeah. It has a certain... You know, first of all, I'm a horrible singer. And so the fact that I do this in public now at first for me was just like, "Oh, my God." But what happens with these sounds is you don't have to be a good singer, you don't have to have a great voice that there's a certain melody that you'll begin to feel naturally arise as you do it. Because you know, try to look at this was, is your body's gonna recognize these sounds? Your body's gonna be like, "Oh, we know this. These are the sounds of us in balance." And when I say us, I mean like all of the organs, the mind. And so, it's a familiar sound. So, as you begin to do it, there will kind of come this natural melody, this natural cadence to it. But it is like a...it's a little bit sing-songy. But what you'll notice is as you start to do this internally, it becomes less and less sing-songy and it just starts to get quieter and quieter that there's other characteristics that come out of sound as you yourself become quieter. And what I mean is that when the mind starts to quiet down and as it starts to permeate, there's other characteristics that come to life. How cool is that? I really love that. I love that we're such complex and intricate beings. We're so much more than meets the eyes. It's just amazing.

Katie: Well, and that even when you just did it for a minute, that was so calming. It makes me wonder if for moms whose babies aren't verbal yet, could a mom kind of hum this to a baby as they're going to sleep to help because, you know, baby sleeping is always a big pain point for moms. Would that be helpful to small children?

Dr. Kulreet: A hundred percent. You know what? I am so happy you brought that up. I don't know why I don't talk about this more. Maybe I don't get interviewed by enough moms, but these were the sounds that we raised our son with and it would help so much with the sleep disturbances that are just normal for younger kids. And I have a relative who the only way his baby will go to sleep is if they tamp certain mantras and that's the only way that he will settle down. So, it's wonderful to do with kids. And I would even say, you know, equally as wonderful do like when your kids are teenagers, my son is a teenager, so I'm always thinking about
like teenagers and what they need. But when they get into that age where they have just so many emotions and stuff coming, the sound is really, really settling and it helps them to process things on a daily basis so that they don’t accumulate and then explode.

Katie: Yeah. And you mentioned it like helps things come up to the surface and us to work through them, which since I shared my own personal history with sexual trauma, I've heard from so many listeners who had similar experiences. And I think that can be one of the difficult points is to actually start letting those emotions be felt and process them because so often the instinct is to hold them down or tighten down. And so it seems like this could be a really useful modality for that as well as for anybody who's really fascinated by the science of this kind of stuff. I had a past podcast guest who explained how when we make sounds with our vocal cords, that actually directly stimulates the thyroid as well. And I have a lot of listeners who have thyroid issues and I never made the connection. But about the time I started getting my Hashimotos in remission, I also started taking voice lessons.

And I wonder if making more wider ranges of sounds and belting actually help my physiology. So, that's just one small example of how sound we know can directly impact our biology like that. I'm sure there are many, many others as well, probably nervous system because even just as you did that, I felt my nervous system kind of go parasympathetic. But are there any other kind of direct physical connections that we know about or that maybe other cultures are way ahead of us on?

Dr. Kulreet: First of all, I'm blown away at the level of your knowledge, you know, you are like, "Oh, I don't know anything." I think you're just a very humble person because you know more about this than I would say the majority of people. So, you're so right on. You made my brain explode through the whole thing because I was like, "How does she know all this? Yes, this is all correct." So, yes. It turns on the parasympathetic nervous system and in addition to the thyroid gland. So, the mantra that I gave you, the sounds that I gave you, the therapeutic sounds, those will turn on all of the major organs of the endocrine system. It turns on basically the entire neuroendocrine balancing system. But it also helps to turn on the vagus nerve. And that's why you go into that parasympathetic mode. And one of the key things that I talk about in terms of overall healing is diving into trauma.

And this is actually one of the key aspects of healing in Ayurveda, into the medicine, in these, you know, ancient practices is facing the trauma. And, you know, my approach is you still bring the body along. Just like you said, it's still diet, it's still exercise. There are certain herbs that will help that. I actually have specific herbs I give for people to begin processing trauma. But when you add the sound in, because trauma is rooted in the recesses of your subconscious mind, you have built so many protective measures to make sure you don't go there. So, your conscious mind is going, "Uh-uh, there's no way we're going back there. That is the scariest worst place we could go." And yet that's exactly where you have to go for the healing. And you have to go back. Most trauma usually happen as kids because that's when we're so powerless. You have to go back as an adult and what the sound does, and this is what I think is just one of the greatest gifts of sound is it transcends the mind. It goes beyond the mind. So, you can go into those places and without even having to consciously experience the trauma again, the emotions just start getting released.

And that's when when people come back and they go, "Oh, I hated that mantra. I had such bad anxiety." Or, "You know, I hated it. I felt like queasy after doing it." And I was just like, "No. You just got the exact benefit of the mantra." And it was for free. You didn't have to pay anything. It was a brief investment in time and you want to be able to use those sounds to help you to clear the places that your mind has hidden out of sight. Mantra actually translates in sounds script as through the mind, through the mind. And that's why sound is so powerful. And I'm sure you know this because of, you know, the work that you've done is when you have
cleared trauma, when you clear those subconscious patterns, the body begins to heal spontaneously. I mean, it's just like your... and it's not just the body, it's everything in your life begins to open up. You know, it's just tremendous. It's absolutely tremendous what sound can do.

Katie: That was certainly my experience. I had all those foundational things with diet and exercise and supplements in place and I thought I was doing everything. And then when I started working through the trauma, all the things that I thought were so hard and that I was kind of like fighting myself "to resolve," they just sort of effortlessly started to resolve as, like I said, I learned to be friends with my body again.

Dr. Kulreet: And you're bringing tears to my eyes. This makes me so happy because this is the key. I'm sorry to interrupt. I'm really moved by what you just shared. This is the goal.

Katie: Well, I'm so excited to get to go deeper on this because I feel like sound is a tool, like you said, can often be free and be so profoundly impactful. And I've learned more and more over the past few years. You know, it's so tempting to wanna get into those fancy biohacks or the new expensive equipment. But often it's those foundational things like getting morning sunlight, which is free. The light is so powerful for us. Or just hydrating it like... And now sound, as I'm starting to learn about this, it's fascinating. And I think back to an experience I had years ago in Europe where I walked into a cathedral and a bunch of monks were just chanting. They were behind a screen. I couldn't even see them, but something in the...like I just got goosebumps even saying...

Dr. Kulreet: I just got goosebumps too.

Katie: But it was like an otherworldly experience, almost. Their harmonies and their chants just gave me chills. And I felt my physiology change from that experience.

Dr. Kulreet: Yes. You're absolutely right.

Katie: I think that was the first time I really thought to realize like maybe the sounds we hear, not just even our words, but any sounds we hear really can impact us. And it makes me think for even just music choices, you know, many people listen to music often. Are there kind of like..does music as genres or certain musicians or different types of music, can they be used for benefit or they are the ones that maybe we don't wanna listen to very often because they could kind of stress the body out?

Dr. Kulreet: Oh, you've already answered the question. I mean, you know, one of the reasons why temples were such powerful healing tools was because of the sounds that were collected. And they would actually use certain stones and then those stones would begin to...these were stones that were known to absorb the vibration of sound. So, when you were going into it, you were really receiving all of the sound vibration that had been collected there, you know, in some of these ancient temples for thousands and thousands of years. But your question about the impact of music, it's kind of like the impact of food where people are like, "Is food really that important?" And we go, "Well, yeah, that's why the food industry has spent millions and millions of dollars figuring out how to get you addicted to food."

And it's the same with the movie industry, the music industry, and even just the advertising industry. They spend so much money figuring out what sound do you need to listen to in a store to make you shop more? What sound do you need to listen to, you know, in a restaurant to make you eat more? What kind of sounds when you're watching a movie give you the strongest emotional response? So, it's not a question of does sound impacts us, It's just, do you wanna do it deliberately? You know, do you actually wanna be in charge of
this rather than just having multi-billion dollar corporations deciding how sound should be used in your biology?

And so looking at your music choices, I don't ever wanna dictate to people like, "Oh, don't listen to this kind of music and only listen to this kind of music" because I think music is also creative expression. But just keep in mind that music is also a very powerful brain tool. And so when you are listening to music that is angry, your brain is going to entrain to sync up to that energy. You know, when you are listening to romantic, I mean, why do we put on music when like on date night or something because you know, like, okay, this is going to shift the mood. I personally, at this point and again, you know, I'm almost 48, and so I'm a little bit past the genre of, you know, experimenting with all the different popular music. But almost all of the music I listen to except for the occasional times where I'm listening to music with my teenager, all the music is for healing.

So, I listen to predominantly ancient chants, ancient sounds. And it doesn't mean that they're not enjoyable. There's artists now that specifically make ancient mantras into kind of popular forms so that you can enjoy it in a modern way. Deva Premal & Miten are one of the artists that have popularized some of these ancient mantras, but even Tina Turner, you know, had come up with a mantra song. And so there's lots and lots of options out there for music to still be kind of like modern and enjoyable. For me because it's such a profound tool, I'm very, very selective to what I listen to because I know it's going directly into my brain and it's reshaping my brain. So, for me, it's one of my health practices. So, all the sound I listen to is doing something positive to my brain. All the sound that I choose to listen to. Of course, there sounds that you don't always have choices around. But the ones that I do have choices around are always sounds that I know are going to be therapeutic.

Katie: That's a great tip. And as moms, it seems like we could use that kind of knowledge to really curate the environment of our homes, especially toward whatever energy we want to have. For instance, at nighttime, one of my rituals I do pretty often is I'll put essential oils in the diffusers. I use one called "Calming The Child" And so the scent is very soothing. And then in our house, we have daylight bulbs up in the ceiling, but then we have lamps with no blue light, like just very orange, soft bulbs. And so at sunset, we switch those lights. And then occasionally, I should do it more often, but I'll put on like Gregorian chant or something in the house as a way to just kind of help. Everybody's nervous system start to calm down and get everybody kind of in the mood for bed. And it seems to make a big difference.

And I've often wondered, especially I think back to my music choices as a teenager. And certainly, I had some teenage angst that I listened to like music I would not listen to now. And I wonder in hindsight I'm sure some of that was, you know, teenage hormones, but was my music choice a result of my emotions, or was my music choice also spiraling and creating a circle that to where my emotions kind of stayed more angsty. So, I'm glad that you kind of walked us through that. And for people who this is a new concept to, what might be some kind of tangible, easy ways? You gave us the mantra already, but that we could start integrating sound therapy in our daily lives? What would a good practice for that look like? Is it as simple as just putting on some of this music in your home even just very softly or what are some ways we could start integrating it?

Dr. Kulreet: First of all, I just wanna say what a phenomenal job you're doing as a mom. I mean, talk about conscious parenting. Everything you're doing there it's just so beneficial. We have a very similar practice with my son as well. And we end the day with healing sounds right before he goes to bed. You know, sound doesn't have to be so mystical. I mean, it's very, very simple. First, just taking inventory to, you know, what are the sounds you're exposing yourself to? And include the way that you're speaking in your home. Include those sounds because those are very, very powerful sounds.
And so, if you want the most basic approach to sound therapy, I would simply say first look at how is language being used in the home. When you are angry, how are you communicating your emotions in a way that could be seen as either harmful to your kids or your spouse or a way that could be constructive? So, first, just simply start with how are you using your vocal cord, which is your most powerful sound tool. And just taking inventory of it and not through judgment because, you know, we're all busy and until you consciously start to think of like, "Oh, wait a minute, this is having an impact on my family." We all tend to be a little bit careless about our words. So, I would say first do that.

Next, as kind of low line through, you can just simply choose music that you find to be calming like Gregorian chants that's a great option, or if there's another song that maybe your kids identified with in childhood that felt really peaceful. Just like you said, playing that at a certain time of the day. Just starting to actively introduce sound that you want into your home. So, it's not coming at everybody passively through media, you wanna have an active role in the types of vibrations that you and your kids and, you know, your spouse or partner are being exposed to. And then finally, I think once you start understanding the power of sound, there's no way to replicate the sounds that you make internally on a silent basis for reprogramming your brain.

And that's where I would say, okay, so choose the sounds you wanna use. Now, I gave an example of the chakra mantra, which has a lineage from ancient India. But like you mentioned, the Gregorian chants. There are sound traditions in every major global, you know, tradition on the planet that you could participate in. So, if you're uncomfortable going with one particular culture over another, find the culture that you most identify with and then simply look for what were the sacred sounds in that tradition and then start using them. And I would use it the way I described like first five minutes, then 10, and slowly going up to 20, but then have a 20-minute a day sound practice.

And, you know, people who come from a Christian tradition will often say, "Well, I don't think we have a sound practice." I'm like, "There are so many sound practices." I said, first of all, look at just, and we would call it a mantra from an Eastern perspective, the mantra of "Ah-men." Ah-men is an ancient healing sound. It is an ancient mantra. And so, you could start with that. Every single major spiritual tradition has a sacred sound in it. So, that's the way I would do it is first, just look at the sounds you're creating in your conversation, in your speech. Second, introduce sounds that you want to create in the environment in the home and at work if that's an option. And then third, start looking for a sound practice that resonates with your belief system, and then start doing that on a daily basis.

Katie: I'm so glad you mentioned again, our words and how we speak being the most important kind of foundational piece for this. I know it gets a little bit more into the esoteric side, but that I've seen studies where they looked at even the structure of water when certain sounds were around it. And even in certain words and how words like I love you or words relating to forgiveness or peace or joy or love created a more coherent structure within the water. Whereas, harmful words or mean words that I wouldn't even wanna say on here tended to create chaos even within the water. And since our bodies are so much water, it's logical to think that maybe we should perhaps be careful of what we're exposing ourselves to.

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I also wonder, it sounds like sound could be very complimentary with people who already have a meditation practice. Is that true? Could you kind of stack some of these sound practices with your existing meditation time?

Dr. Kulreet: Absolutely. And it just depends on what your meditation practice is because there's so many different types of meditation practice. Sometimes people will do meditation practice with eyes open where they're staring at a flame, perfectly fine. You could still be repeating a certain sound in your mind while you're doing that practice. There's meditation practices that involve breathwork. And this is actually one of the practices that I also do in my morning meditation. And what you can do is just while you're inhaling in your inward breath, you repeat a certain sound. When you're exhaling in you're exhaling breath, you repeat a certain sound.

And if you're doing a meditation practice where you're just simply trying to think nothing, that's actually impossible to do. Thinking nothing is such an advanced state, it's such an advanced yoga state that you don't need to be meditating if you're able to do that. But if you're trying to just simply think nothing, try to do it by just simply dropping a sound and then just see what happens afterwards. For some people like you and I both love doing forms of movement. And so for certain forms of movement, as you're doing the movement, you can still be repeating just a certain sound that also helps to increase your parasympathetic nervous system tone and decrease your sympathetic nervous system tone.
And so, there's all these different ways you can incorporate sound. And you know, I love this. I love that my husband does this. My husband does sound therapy. So, he really lives in that world. And you can tell because wherever he goes, he's just like a little, I call him, "You're just a walking love bubble." I feel like there's just this 10-foot radius around him where love just gets drawn to him. But whenever he cooks, he's always using healing sounds while he's cooking. There's all these little ways that you can start to incorporate it. And whenever he showers, he's always reciting healing sounds even in the shower. So, I think once you start to realize that sound heals, you naturally start to look at more and more ways to incorporate it consciously rather than just being bombarded by the outside world, you know, where it's an unconscious experience.

Katie: Yeah. An important point. We're exposed to sound all the time anyway. So, having some choice around which sounds seems like a good idea. And you've made a strong case for kind of the general ways we can use sound. And I'm curious if it can be used in more targeted ways for people who have maybe specific conditions and maybe if you could give some examples of those.

Dr. Kulreet: Yes. Absolutely. So, in Ayurveda, into the medicine, we have very, very prescriptive sounds. Now, some of those sounds, I wouldn't give out in general simply because just like any prescription, you would only wanna use it for a certain amount of time because if you use it when you no longer need it, it can cause an imbalance. And most of the prescriptions I give in my book "Sound Medicine," those are all general recommendations that anybody can do. But one common sound frequency that I find people are needing more and more is a frequency used to help with anxiety. I think, you know, as we've gone through so many global events together, there's such a huge rise of anxiety, especially for children. I mean, I'm seeing more and more kids struggling with anxiety at younger and younger ages. And there's a very simple sound that we use for the treatment of anxiety.

Just "Om Aym Namah. Om Aym Namah. Om Aym Namaha." And so the bija mantra there is aim, you can spell it A-I-M or A-Y-M, aym. And that is the bija mantra for calming the mind down in particular. Really, really helping with things like anxiety, insomnia, IBS associated with anxiety. That's one of my favorite ones to give to anybody suffering from anxiety, but especially kids. It also happens to be the same bija mantra because it's the one for balancing the mind for promoting intelligence and creativity in children. So, it's oftentimes a bija mantra that little kids are given when they're school age to help them perform better in school.

Katie: That's so fascinating. And you mentioned it and I should have started with this, that you wrote a book about this as well. And I'm assuming...we'll put a link in the show notes, but people can probably find that in bookstores or Amazon?

Dr. Kulreet: Yes. They can find that. Anywhere you can find a book, it'll be there. And that book was really...it was a summary of, you know, everything I knew because I started a sound practice at nine years of age, and then was prescribing a sound practice as a neurologist. But also everything that I learned when I went to India, we went to India for a few years to study these ancient texts. And I really immersed myself into understanding both the ancient science, as well as the modern science behind these practices because they're, you know, so powerful, the results were so powerful. And so the book is kind of that bridge between quantum physics and our modern medical uses of sound, as well as, you know, the ancient civilizations who they understood this as just...it was as common of a technology during those days as electricity is today. That's how commonly sound was used.

Katie: Wow. So, with the book and with all of your work online, what do you hope that readers and our listeners today will kind of take away from "Sound Medicine" and start integrating into their lives?
Dr. Kulreet: One that you're already being affected by sound. You know, it's not a question of does sound affect us, it's a question of how do you want sound to affect you? I think the main point is just get in the driver's seat. Like, don't just be a passenger when it comes to sound where you're just being bombarded. And, you know, your mind is just being manipulated to make you buy certain things. But rather, you know, just like what you did with your kids. You consciously chose like, "Okay. I want my kids to have a better experience going to sleep. I want nighttime to be easier. So, I am going to consciously choose a sound practice to help them." Consciously choose how you want sound to be in your life. Don't let it be something that is just passively done to you.

Katie: And then as we get close to the end of our time, a few more questions I love to ask the first being if there is a book or number of books that have profoundly impacted your life and if so, what they are and why?

Dr. Kulreet: Oh, I mean, of course, the ancient synthetecht, which I know people aren't gonna go to India and travel to these little villages to go find them, but it's hard for me not to acknowledge just the impact that, you know, they have had. They've transformed every single aspect of my life. But in terms of a book that's easily defined, I would say "The Prophet" is definitely one of those books that I go back to over and over again just because the wisdom in there is so dense, but it's so simple and it's so lovingly written. I feel like every time I read that book, my heart opens up to my family, to myself, to my community, like to the world more. So, I would say it's one of the most powerful, easy to access books in the modern world that just makes your heart grow each time you read it.

Katie: And like I said, I'll link to the book in the show notes at wellnessmama.fm. But where else can people find you online if they wanna keep learning more about sound?

Dr. Kulreet: So, there's my direct website which is Dr. Kulreet Chaudhary. But I'm also launching several programs with a company called Healthy Directions. They're one of the most established supplement companies in the U.S. And I'm creating a program to bring out all of the knowledge that I learned from being in India. And my webpage there is just drkchaudhary.com. And so a lot of my information that I'm writing about will be available through them.

Katie: Wonderful. And then any parting advice for the listeners today that could relate to something we've already talked about or be entirely unrelated?

Dr. Kulreet: I think the one big misconception that people make about change is that it has to come in big steps. That big change comes in big steps. And I found the exact opposite. Big change comes in little steps that you do every single day. So, rather than trying to like go in and gut out your entire life and thinking like, this is how I'm gonna make that big change, just choose one small step, but do it every single day. Do it regularly and you'll see the profound change that happens. I mean, you know, with sound therapy, if you use sound therapeutically for five minutes a day, you're gonna notice an improvement in your life. That's how simple change can actually be.

Katie: I love that we got to shed light on this because, like I said, this is a pretty new topic for me. And it's one that I think at least in the U.S. we may be still or are having trouble understanding and grasping, but you made such a great case for how powerful this can be. And it seems that unlike many of the expensive health things out there, this is one that's relatively inexpensive or free that you can really just try and integrate in your life that seems to have no real downside and lots and lots of potential upside. And especially for those of us with kids and anything that can help kids in their nervous systems, get into a calm state and sleep better I know is invaluable. So, thank you so much for explaining all of this, for your time, and for all the work that you do.
Dr. Kulreet: Oh, it was my pleasure. And thank you for your dedication to children, you know, your own children, and helping other parents, you know, foster a loving and healthy environment. It's so important. So, I'm so inspired when I see moms that are just so devoted to creating health and healing space for their kids. So, really kudos to you for doing that.

Katie: Oh, thank you. And thanks as always to all of you for listening and sharing your most valuable resources, your time, your energy, and your attention with us today. We're both so grateful that you did. And I hope that you will join me again on the next episode of the "Wellness Mama Podcast."

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