



# SUNADA

Music, Therapy and More...

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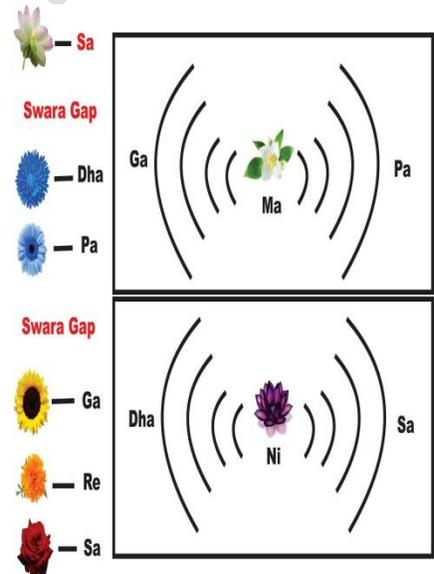
### From the Editor's Desk..

Continuing our tradition of dispelling the doubts expressed by various readers about how Music Therapy works, our science team is making constant efforts to answer and sometimes find answers to these doubts. As part of this continuous process, this month there is a special article on the Alpha state of mind and how some Carnatic Ragas can help achieve that state of restful, yet wakeful alertness.

**Editor & Founder**  
**KS Vasantha Lakshmi**  
**MA, MT, TM Specialist**

### A creative pictorial depiction of Music Therapy

**How Raga Therapy works in the vacuum created by swara gaps Part 9**



**Chakras - Swaras in the Raga Mohanam**

### In this issue...

Alpha state of Mind and some Carnatic Alpha Ragas.....2  
 What you think.....7

## ALPHA STATE OF MIND AND SOME CARNATIC ALPHA RAGAS

By

*KS Vasantha Lakshmi,*

*MA, MT, TM*

When we are wide awake, our brain is in a beta state. But as we drift into sleep, it shifts to alpha, and then to delta and theta in deep sleep. The Alpha state is a light hypnotic state—relaxed, yet focused and receptive. In this state of consciousness, a person is calm, able to absorb new information and become more resourceful and open to new possibilities. The human brain enters the alpha state right before falling asleep which is usually of 8 to 12 Hz. One can program the subconscious mind, such that noise and other distractions only tend one to move into deeper Alpha state. Alpha brainwaves are dominant during quietly flowing thoughts, and in some meditative states. Alpha is ‘the power of now’, being here, in the present. Alpha is the resting state for the brain. Alpha waves aid overall mental coordination,

calmness, alertness, mind/body integration and learning.

One can compare the Brainwaves to musical notes - the low frequency waves are like a deeply penetrating drum beat, while the higher frequency brainwaves are more like a subtle high pitched flute. Like a symphony, the higher and lower frequencies link and cohere with each other through harmonics.

The descriptions given are only broad - in practice things are far more complex, and brainwaves reflect different aspects when they occur in different locations in the brain. Our brainwave profile and our daily experience of the world are inseparable. When our brainwaves are out of balance, there will be corresponding problems in our emotional or Neuro-physical health. Various Researches conducted has identified brainwave patterns associated with all sorts of emotions. One may safely assume that any process that changes your perception changes your brainwaves.

Chemical interventions such as medications or recreational drugs are the most common methods to alter brain function and many times they are habit forming and addictive.

Of the newer methods, Music Therapy is an easy, low-cost method to temporarily alter the brainwave state. The most magical mood changer ever is music. In the long term, traditional eastern methods such as meditation, music and yoga, train the brainwaves into balance. Brainwave training through Music Therapy is a non-invasive, complimentary, supplementary and no-side effects-guaranteed method of choice. If one is trying to solve a particular difficulty or fine-tune brainwave function, methods like Music Therapy deliver targeted, quick, and lasting results. Some music is called binaural beat music which resembles the human brain frequency and helps in achieving an alpha state fast. When one listens to it the brain adapts that

frequency thus reaching an alpha state. It would work to temporarily hypnotise the brain in to that state.

**The subconscious mind will be active throughout the entire procedure. In case of any emergencies, the subconscious mind immediately recognizes it and returns to full alert state. One can also control the subconscious mind to return to alpha state, by touching the forefinger and thumb.**

Given below are some Carnatic Alpha Ragas which can be used safely in Music Therapy, especially in Self Music Therapy.

The Seven Swaras/notes as they are used in Indian Music and their Western Equivalents are given for easier understanding of the following Alpha Ragas. It may be noted that in Indian as well as Western music, Sa and Pa are fixed notes, also called Prakriti Swaras. The remaining five notes also called as the Penta Notes, have variants, sharp and flat.

**TABLE 1**  
**WESTERN VS CARNATIC NOTATIONS**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Carnatic Swara</b>	<b>Note in the Western System</b>
1	Sa or Shadja	C (Do)
2	Suddha Rishabha	D flat (Re)
3	Chatussruti Rishabha	D
4	Sadharana Gandhara	E flat (Mi)
5	Antara Gandhara	E
6	Suddha Madhyama	F (Fa)
7	Prati Madhyama	F sharp
8	Panchama or Pa	G (So)
9	Suddha Daivata	A flat (La)
10	Chatussruti Dhaivata	A
11	Kaisiki Nishadha	B flat (Ti)
12	Kakali Nishadia	B

Below are mentioned some Ragas for which Shuddha Madhyamam is the common denominator in their Arohana (Ascent) and Avarohana (Descent). It may be mentioned here that although the first 36 of the 72 Melakarta Ragas (which have all the seven notes in ascent as well as descent) which have Shuddha Madhyama or Me –Flat, not all of them are suitable for use in Music Therapy.

<b>Name of Raga</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Melakarta/Parent Raga</b>
1. Neelambari	A lot of lullabies are composed in this Raga	29 - Shankarabharanam
2. Kanada	Darbari in Hindustani	22 - Kharaharapriya
3. Shahana –	Soothing Raga	28 - Harikambhoji
4. Shree	Sung as a finale	22 - Kharaharapriya

- |                   |                         |                             |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 5. Charukeshi     | Same name in Hindustani | 26 - Melakarta Raga         |
| 6. Nathabhairavi  | All flat notes          | 20 - Melakarta Raga         |
| 7. Kharaharapriya |                         | 22 - Melakarta Raga         |
| 8. Dwijavanti     | Jaijivanti – Hindustani | 28 - Harikambhoji           |
| 9. Sindhubhairavi | Hindustani Bhairavi     | 8 - Melakarta 'Hanumattodi' |
| 10. Keeravani     | Same name in Hindustani | 21 - Melakarta Raga         |
| 11. Malayamarutam | Conveys Pathos          | 17 - Suryakantam            |

(Complete Raga HAVING SAME NOTES FOR ASCENT AND DESCENT)

Arohana/Ascent: SA-RI-GA-MA-PA-DA-NI-SA

Avarohana/Descent: SA- NI-DA-PA-MA-GA-RI-SA

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HAPPY GANESHA CHATURTHI



## WHAT YOU THINK

What you think: [singvasantha@gmail.com](mailto:singvasantha@gmail.com)

Thank you for the July edition of SUNADA.  
I also thank you on the information of selection of music with respect to the patient etc. Yes the Doctor the patient and the condition of the patient call for the selection of the music to be played etc.  
Coming to the article on the the Jyotisha sastra's help/ influence on the person becoming a musician or singer musician is interesting though it dwelled on the Jyotisha sastra more.

I also note that in certain house holds the music played before patients who are terminally ill and unconscious is limited to chanting of Ohm etc. continuously. We would like to know more about this.

The other aspect is "DO MEDICAL DOCTORS NEED TO HAVE AN UNDERSTANDING MUSIC OR AT LEAST APPRECIATION OF MUSIC IN ITS TOTALITY AS THIS A SYSTEM/OPTION AVAILABLE TO HIM IN HIS PROFESSION AND HE CAN HELP IN DECIDING THE TYPE OF MUSIC TO BE PLAYED."

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I find most MEDICAL doctors do not have any ear for music strange but true.

B. S. Murthy, US

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[It is really great that you are bringing out this little digital magazine. all best!](#)

[Neelima, Spot Films, Naukuchiatal](#)

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Thank you very much for sending in the July issue of Sunada. Your Article on music therapy is very informative and interesting. The one on the influence of Sukra also is very well written.

With best wishes & regards,

Sincerely,  
Elchuri Muralidhara Rao

**Read these at: [www.sunadavinodini.com](http://www.sunadavinodini.com)**

**Articles related to Music and Music Therapy, not exceeding 500 words may be sent to: [singvasantha@gmail.com](mailto:singvasantha@gmail.com) . No remuneration will be paid.**

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