A new year ago I read an article in the morning paper about a violinist, a teenager, who was injured in a school shooting. The article detailed the immediate and long-term effects on the community and the school. It also highlighted the role of art and music in healing and recovery.

That same year, I joined a group of educators, artists, and community leaders to form Omega Theater, a theater company that focuses on healing through drama for those affected by trauma and violence. Our goal was to create a space where people could come together to heal and find solace.

We began by working with vulnerable populations, such as children in crisis and survivors of trauma. Our approach was to use the arts as a tool for healing, using stories, theater, and music to help people process their emotions and experiences.

In recent years, we have expanded our reach, working with schools, hospitals, and communities across the country. Our work has evolved to include workshops, residencies, and performances, all aimed at helping people heal and find hope.

One of our most successful programs is our Trauma-Informed Theater Training, which provides educators and therapists with the tools to use theater as a healing modality. Through this program, we have trained hundreds of professionals to incorporate healing arts into their work with clients.

Our work is not without challenges. We have faced opposition from those who believe in traditional approaches to healing. But we remain committed to our mission and continue to grow and adapt to meet the needs of our communities.

We believe that the arts have the power to transform lives and bring hope to those who are suffering. Our goal is to continue to create spaces where people can come together to heal, find meaning, and reclaim their lives.

In conclusion, we believe that the arts have the power to heal. Through storytelling, music, and movement, we can help people process their emotions and find a sense of healing.

For more information about Omega Theater and our programs, please visit our website at <https://omegath.com>.
schools throughout Massachusetts was one example. In another case, drama therapy changed a sterile state mental hospital classroom into a magical theater market environment, with each food section containing different pricing structures to accommodate a variety of learning levels. Disturbed and retarded adolescents learned basic math skills, at their own level, without embarrassment. They also enjoyed taking on the roles of shopkeepers, clerks, or consumers, in the food section that corresponded to their skill level.

We worked with drug, alcohol and food abusers to help them tell their stories to each other and to supportive audiences.

We called this process E.T. Theatre.

Environmental Theater (To Help Educate Adolescents Through the Reconstruction of Environments)

In the corporate world, actor-facilitators were each assigned to observe one manager. Later, with the managers present, each Actor assumed the role of the observed manager and played the subtext of the perceived feelings and thoughts that were not being expressed. The managers were then encouraged to explore the personal dynamics, communication, and issues that surfaced in the role-play.

These dimensions of Drama Therapy include many powerful tools from theater. The technique of role reversal to resolve conflict and create better relationships comes directly from psychodrama. Drama Therapy embraces psychodrama but is broader and also includes educationally relevant participatory theater, autobiographical storytelling, and theater ritual experiences which are therapeutic.

**Productions**

The whole approach of using theater forms to help people identify with their higher self or soul essence was evolved in the pageants that Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan envisioned at Sufi Camps in the 1970s. Most notable was The Cosmic Celebration, a pageant celebrating the unity of the human family, which was produced for thirteen years in several cities in the United States and Europe. As many as 350 people were cast into roles according to their soul level. Everyone was given, by Pir Vilayat, an inner concentration of qualities that would help develop the character they were to portray for the audience. The rehearsal process helped people embody, sing, dance and dramatize the character from the consciousness of that inner concentration.

An exercise I developed originally for my own healing involves connecting with the Angelic Spheres through music, visualization and enactment. People are taken back in time to remember what it was like in the heavens, and relive the moment of deciding or resisting coming to the earth. Proceeding through birth, infancy, toddlerhood, childhood, adolescent years, young adult life and older adult experience helps people connect with core soul qualities and life challenges that have been recurring themes throughout their life.

**Sound Healing**

In the Drama Therapy and Sound Healing group, we help a participant find their own voice by singing their soul song, a method developed by my colleague, Sarah Benson. These songs are created spontaneously as an expression of the person's emotional state and transformational edge. Often the participant is sung to by the group and many times people are encouraged to move spontaneously to the sound, to more fully embody the experience.

*It was so great, it worked immediately!—YES, I said, this is how you get it going! This is how it works for me: Move. Sound. Do it! This stands out incredibly because it was immediate, informative experience that really worked; it carried through beyond the moment to uplift my spirit. —David Hammond*

There’s no place to hide in the sound of our voice. It carries the vibration of the truth of the moment, of one’s life: our fear, anger, guilt and shame, love, joy, and delight. As we release these emotions through releasing the voice, the energy begins to flow with greater ease. We have more space to experience love, joy and soul integration which is also sounded by the voice. Songs of anger, songs of love walk hand in hand as we explore mysterious regions in the forest of the self. Music has been called the universal language of the soul that transcends individual religious, racial, ethnic bias or identities. We have found the most effective way of creating an attunement within a therapy or training group or within a public theater environment, is by consciously working with vibrational resonance. Weaving beautiful sound and music textures that open hearts creates a safe and nurturing chalice to contain our sacred stories. This helps participants feel safe about opening themselves to attune to the deeper dimensions of their life experience.

*There will be a performance sharing in May of the Transformational Theater training program. Call (617) 522-8300 for info about the performance sharing, as well as next year's 9 month training program, (September 1995 - May 1996). Saphira Linden and Sarah Benson guide an ongoing healing group, and will be guiding a Sufi Women’s Retreat on June 17 in Boston and a two day retreat at Aegis at the Abode on July 22 -23.*