

# **The Authenticity, Usage and Efficacy of Ear Candles**

By Harmony Cone 2007

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **SEPARATING FACT from FICTION**

The Authenticity, Usage and Efficacy of Ear Candles ©

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Historical reports of ear candling and the use of ear candles are prevalent in a wide and diverse variety of cultures, including Europe, India, Japan and the United States. Ear candles have seen a resurgence in popularity within the last 10 years.

### **FACT vs. FICTION**

The reality is that Ear candles are an incredible holistic wellness modality. In fact, most holistic therapies have some “energetic” affect on our body’s cellular electrical system, including the meridian and reflexology systems, which overlay our subtle nadis human system.

The purpose of this research is to discover the originations of ear candles, to establish standards of safety for ear candles, and to reveal how ear candles TRULY work.

Regrettably, to date, there have been few scientific studies to validate these remarkable energetic shifts in the human body, although we are preparing to conduct some studies to prove the efficacy of this holistic modality.

The resulting true effects of holistic ear candling have been documented by a few manufacturers and some practitioners of alternative wellness therapies. It is uniformly agreed, that various unbalanced health symptoms usually dissipate within a day or two after a holistic ear candling session.

Further validation of ear candles’ efficacy is seen by allowing the body to dissipate or reduce imbalanced health conditions, returning the body to its natural homeostatic balance. Scientific use of clinical studies will prove the body’s self-healing from holistically applied ear candle use.

The findings of *this* research has dated ear candling to over 80 years old. This is also involved with establishing safety and quality standards for all ear candling manufacturers, and has, for the first time ever, explained the mystery of ear candles – how does it work, and what information is true, and what data is false.

In the process of our investigation, many myths, tales, and fraud were discovered, exposed, and rejected while we identify and promote the truth.

Holistic ear candles are a marvelous relaxation “energy” product and can significantly help to aid the body in healing itself, as nature intended.

## **Introduction**

This study was designed to authenticate the historical usage of ear candles, to address the quality of ear candle manufacturing, to ensure its relationship to their perceived functionality, and to provide realistic and substantial evidence in support of its efficacy.

In the United States, there is a resurging consciousness in Americans who are interested in choosing options outside of the allopathic medical domain, for maintaining wellness and health on physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual plane – its called “holistic”.

Historically, the press in major media forums has held a biased support of the politically-backed allopathic medical monopoly. However, within the last five years the press has begun to acknowledge the inadequacies of allopathic medicine by exposing these shortcomings and by reporting in support of holistic or natural options.

For example, the role of antibiotics has been prescribed for ear infections yet the media reported against this established and accepted medical protocol on CNN, August 16, 2000, “The analysis found that ear infections ran a similar course, whether or not antibiotics were used.” (Par. 3) This type of reporting is enough encouragement for the average person to consider holistic and natural options.

The natural health care industry, ethnic and spiritual groups, in general, support ear candling. The allopathic medical establishment is opposed to ear candles and their usage.

Even though ear candling has been utilized both currently and historically for natural, physical, emotional, and spiritual cleansing, the history of ear candling has been unknown and is only supported by oral traditions within the natural and holistic health industry and testimonials obtained by manufacturers and consumers of ear candles throughout the years.

The lack of accurate and/or scientific information available on holistic ear candling has led to many spurious books, websites, and articles written by speculative or presumptive experts that have provided false or misleading information, resulting in a misinformed public or poor production practices by some profiteering ear candle manufacturers.

The internal and external controversy surrounding holistic ear candling and the natural health industry in general, is also faced with an overwhelming majority of manufactures that produce and sell dangerous ear candles and produce false information on Ear Candle uses, applications, and effects.

It is apparent that standards need to be established for the protection of the consumer and for the proper manufacturing of this holistic and natural product. The safety of ear candling must be the number one priority of any manufacturer, practitioner, retailer, and end user or consumer.

There are specific manufacturers engaged in poor candle manufacturing or who have fostered unscrupulous claims. These few fraudulent ear candle manufacturers have created an atmosphere for slanted or misdirected scrutiny. This, along with a few adverse events reported due to sub-standard ear candle production, allows the FDA to tarnish the reputation of holistic ear candling, in general, by giving false information to the press and by creating a general sense of public opposition to ear candling.

Although holistic ear candling is utilized to aid the human body and mind to return to a balanced homeostatic state, inferior products and false information have led the general public to believe that ear candles are simply an ear wax remover, or used for other misbranded issues.

In reality, holistic ear candling induces positive energetic bio-physical changes (feedback) and helps enhance wellness and harmony in humans and animals by correcting various “energy” imbalances within the meridian pathways, and our chakra system. The “chakra” is an electrical grid within the human framework associated with natural wellness and bio-balance.

The ear candles’ ability to energetically trigger within the human frame for physical, emotional, and spiritual recovery to excellent health (Webb, 1993b).

### ***Research vs. MisInformation***

The majority of people who use ear candles are taught or told that ear candling is a simple, noninvasive, inexpensive method to remove earwax and debris from the ears. *This is blatantly false.*

The general public also thinks that ear candling works when the spiraling effect of the smoke and heat from the flame forms a gentle vacuum that draws ear debris up into the candle. This too, is false. (Layne, 2005, p. 1)

Another widely held misconception is the belief that ear candling removes Candida [such as *Candida albicans*, which can cause infections (called [candidiasis](#) or thrush) in [humans](#) ] from the ears. It is also *believed* to be an infection that breeds in the head because it is close to the blood supply, providing the yeast infection with a source of food. (Maccaro, 2003, p. 224)

Within the medical community, there are medical experiments and tests that easily dispel the false information that a holistic ear candle has the ability to extract *anything* from the ear. It does not.

These controversies often arise as a result of end users finding foreign objects in the ear candle after application and use. Through various testing, it has been found that a very fine residue, that is **neither** hot nor harmful in any way to the practitioner, can sometimes “coat” the ear after ear candle use. This very fine ash or residue is readily and easily cleaned by rinsing or wiping away, just like that used for any other daily cleaning of one’s ears.

There is an integral moral and healing obligation within the holistic and alternative health professions to embrace manufacturers that are dedicated to the use of specific organic and/or environmentally low impacting raw materials used for ear candles. Therefore, it would be imperative to consider the **quality** of ear candles on the market in order to understand the results gained from proper ear candle applications.

Regardless of any controversy, people who use ear candles regularly and consistently, experience enhancement of their body’s ability to naturally gain relief by a innate return to homeostasis, and also for a general improved sense of well being (G. Webb, personal communication, May 26, 2006).

### ***The Significance of this Study***

This study seeks to identify, expose, and confirm the ideology surrounding ear candles and to help establish this modality of healing as an acceptable holistic alternative.

More significantly, though, this study is also a prelude to establish guidelines of safety and education for the manufacturers of ear candles and the general public, while instilling a sense of consumer trust.

Holistic ear candling has helped the body to encourage emotional and spiritual healing amongst the thousands of ear candle users (S. Yemm, G. Webb, K. Boulton, P. Quanten, personal communication, March 10, 2006).

Therefore, to suggest the use of ear candles as simply an ear wax remover is both demeaning to the healing arts, and is a false scientific fact which causes the product to be misbranded.

Within the a few applications, holistic ear candling works to help the body move into a very harmonious state of functioning. This was commonly achieved by the sixth session. As a result people were more emotionally balanced; felt more capable, relaxed, less threatened, and seemed more hopeful. (Webb p. 6, 1993a). This is true of aroma therapy, massage techniques, meditation, and other catalysts used for natural health.

Ear candling is a home based remedy with long-term wellness resolutions that, if clinically researched, could dramatically affect the way people heal themselves of many common, and sometimes not so common, ailments or imbalances, especially when we acknowledge emotional or psychological stress as a major cause for health imbalance and its causing adverse physiological changes.

## **Literature Review**

Historical, oral tradition seems to provide the most accurate source of ear candle's historical usage, but even these stories do not define precisely how ear candles function.

Holistic ear coning was used to open the spiritual centers and to clear and cleanse the physical, emotional, and other "auric" bodies. It was used in conjunction with other wellness practices and assumed a co-creative position with these practices. Traditionally, conings were performed by master energetic healers who worked on the physical as well as intermediate planes. (Bucci, E. 1991, p. Channelings on Ear Candling)

Even with the advent of the comprehension in the realm of quantum physics, channeling is still not an acceptable form of scientific proof nor does it lend validity to any medical or scientific inquiry, including ear candles.

The well believed story of a picture being painted on the pyramid walls appears to have evolved from the channelings at Coning Works, where even the owner tells a story of 'coning' in a Mayan setting at a pyramid. Data surrounding the origins of ear candling are an overwhelming challenge within the ear candling community.

### ***Quality and Safety***

Another recurring issue besieging the ear candle community lies in its manufacturing and handcrafting process.

Since the introduction of ear candling in the United States, it has been generally regarded that ear candles are used as an ear wax removal device. This false statement has led to the widespread belief that ear candles heal ear infections and ear problems by removing the wax in which various bacteria and parasites live (Relfe, 2006).

This deception is also exhibited with the use of inappropriate raw materials that some manufacturers use to create ear candles.

As the ear candles burn down, they leave behind a very fine non-injurious residue that has been misconstrued as ear wax, bacteria, fungus, Candida, and other debris. Poorly selected raw materials has occasionally caused some consumer ear damage, both externally and internally resulting in adverse reports.

Most ear candles creators use a heavily laden beeswax, soy wax, or paraffin wax, due to their ignorance of the complexity of the burn, viscosity, and combustion rates in conjunction with their desire for cheap raw materials.

The public at large continues to falsely believe that ear candles pulls wax from the ears and hence this removal is what heals their ailment. The medical community has conducted some studies and the ones that they have conducted show that there is no human debris within the ear candles or that there is not enough of a vacuum to lift even a grain of salt.

In January of 2005, Andrew Skeats, the top ear candler in the United Kingdom, commissioned the accredited Reading Scientific Services Laboratory to test the Biosun Original Hopi Ear Candles. He did so by comparing and analyzing a new, unburned pair of candles and the remains of four pairs of candles which had been burnt within one hour of each other. The new and burnt candles were from the same batch. This test confirms that the residue wax in the candles was from the candle and was not ear wax (Skeats, 2004 p.11).

Seely (1996) also completed a clinical investigation using Rainbow Ear Candles that demonstrated that ear candles do not generate any negative pressure, and they do not remove cerumen from the ear.

Manufacturers of ear candles could produce high quality, drip-free ear candles which would promote the establishment and acceptance of standards for the production of ear candles, allowing this modality to be far more understood, accepted, and also free from litigation or regulatory actions.

Unfortunately, an overwhelming number of manufacturers in the United States have chosen to use a very cheap paraffin wax or a chunky beeswax, which has led to uncomplimentary studies' results and a few damaged ear drums.

To use a cheap, paraffin based wax or a 100% pure beeswax ear candle in conjunction with false claims is irresponsible and has led to easy attacks from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which has misbranded these products from false claims, as medical devices, rather than the holistic, natural product they are.

This could be avoided easily if the manufacturers would properly educate their customers, and use a high quality, "organic", food-grade wax meeting the standards of the Food & Drug Administration. Although the cost may be prohibitive to many of the smaller ear candle companies, it surely would avoid injury to the end user (consumer) who is properly using ear candles according to well written instructions.

## ***True Functionality of Holistic Ear Candles***

The lack of clinical trials completed in the United States, compounded with ear candle users being injured, along with the dissemination of serious misinformation, has given the FDA and the medical community time to establish their own ill-perceived conclusions, based on false data and the suspected violations of manufacturers.

In reality, the FDA has mostly based all of its policies, internationally and domestically, on one letter written by Dr. Vasant G. Malshet, Ph.D., DABT, Toxicologist for the Ear, Nose, and Throat Device Branch of the Center for Devices and Radiological Health of the FDA, to wit:

Based on the growing concern associated with the manufacture, marketing, and use of ear candles, the FDA has undertaken several regulatory actions, including product seizures and injunctions, since 1996. (many of these were of foreign imports of candles).

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These actions were based, in part, upon violations perceived by Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to pose an imminent danger to health. Specifically, the devices were considered to be misbranded in accordance with Section 502(j) of the Act because:

- Poorly made ear candles are dangerous to health when used in the manner, or with the frequency or duration prescribed, recommended, or suggested in the labeling. FDA considers these devices to be dangerous because the use of a lit candle in proximity to the face carries a significant risk of potentially severe burns to the skin/hair, ear canal, tympanic membrane, and middle ear structures.
- The labeling was deemed to be false or misleading [section 502(a)], in that there is no valid scientific evidence to support the efficacy of the intended uses. (misbranded as medical device).
- The label of the device fails to bear adequate directions for use since adequate directions cannot be written for the “*device’s*” purported use, Section [502(f)(1)]. (FDA, 2005, p. x)

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This letter is false, in that it does not encompass the accurate information that is relevant to the safety of holistic ear candles. This letter also states within it, that the letter is only the professional opinion of the author, and NOT an official or legal document (Malshet, 2005, p. 2)

The medical and political communities’ presumptive conclusions ignore one simple fact: Holistic ear candles do indeed work to aid the body reduce stress and to return to homeostasis, as do other holistic methods. That holistic ear candles, are in fact safe when made in accordance with accepted technical data regarding waxes used for production.

In conjunction with thousands upon thousands of verbal testimonials of satisfied ear candle users, there are notarized testimonials held by Harmony Cone Ear Candles, that attest to the fact that adults and children alike, have had a variety of “ailments” successfully alleviated by their body’s own natural processes, in conjunction with the usage of holistic ear candles.

Instead, what holistic ear candles do, is to serve as a holistic conduit for any releases that the body is naturally prepared, willing, and able to release.

## ***Challenges Assessed***

The ear candling community is facing a serious challenge to establish criteria and standards within their own industry. To avoid further negative press, consumer disparity, and erroneous regulatory actions from the FDA, the producers of ear candles need to self-regulate under a set of applicable standards for manufacturing, quality processes, and safety.

It is imperative that the retailers purchase products from manufacturers that are interested only in providing an ear candle that is safe to burn, and that provides truthful and accurate marketing, instructions and educational materials.

It is imperative to consider the implications of an ear candle being labeled and used as a medical device especially because it simply is not true or applicable. Holistic ear candles have been utilized successfully for millions of people world wide for their own wellness.

## ***Material Quality & Safety of Ear Candle Wax and Ingredients***

Ear candle makers use a variety of waxes in the creation of their particular brand of ear candle. The top four types of waxes used are beeswax, soy wax, paraffin, and food grade wax (which is a highly refined petroleum product).

The perception is that beeswax and soy wax are non-harmful to the environment, unlike petroleum products, such as paraffin and food grade wax. However, the retailer and their customers have neglected or ignored the far more prevalent issue of safety.

The question to consider is the harm an inferior ear candle’s wax may inflict upon people if they are produced using the wrong kind of wax with an improperly wrapped ear candle for use in the ear.

The real correlation between micro and macro management is based upon the laws of physics in relation to combustion rates.



An active member of the National Candle Association, Stephen Philips, has thoroughly researched the issues of carbons, pollutants, and other similar substances and has concluded in conjunction with the National Candle Association that there is no such thing as a 100% natural candle. Carbons are carbons, and they are released when you burn anything in the world (S. Philips, personal communication, June 21, 2006).

However an ear candle manufacturer's goal should be consumer safety.

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Over the centuries, candle waxes have been developed from a variety of fats, oils, and waxy-like substances derived from animals, insects, plants, and rocks.

Waxes are generically classified as materials that have certain characteristics of being: solid at room temperature; liquid at higher temperatures; primarily hydrocarbon in structure; water repellent; low in toxicity; low in reactivity; low in odor; and combustible.

Paraffin wax was developed after chemists found a way to remove the naturally-occurring waxy substance from the petroleum during refining. Within this category of paraffin waxes, are a variety of paraffin, food grade wax, and microcrystalline waxes.

All waxes are primarily hydrocarbons, whether the wax is of animal, vegetable, or petroleum origin. The chemical composition of all waxes used for ear candle making is similar, and there has never been any indication of candle wax ever being shown to be or toxic or harmful to human health (S. Philips, personal communication, June 21, 2006).

Because all types of waxes are based on hydrocarbon chains and create carbon when burning, the issue invariably is to eliminate any danger of ear damage to the of an ear candle user.

What appears to be imperative for an ear candle manufacturer, is to create a slower burning ear candle with a consistent, thinner wick that will decrease the soot rate and allow the ear candle to burn slower (S. McColl, IGI Wax, personal communication, July 21, 2006). To control the combustion rate and decrease any and all molten candle wax, it is necessary to compare the characteristics of each wax.

Beeswax, in general, is a favored marketing term in the natural and alternative health industries, which draws a parallel in the retailer's and consumer's mind as being synonymous with healthy, organic, and environmentally-friendly. However, there appears to be several issues with this very sticky and soft wax that potentially could be dangerous to the end user.

Whereas beeswax does create a slower burn because it has a stickier, thicker composition, it is impossible for an ear candle manufacturer to create a 100% percent beeswax ear candle that does not have the inherent disposition to become molten at lower melting points, which increases the risk and inevitability of hot beeswax dripping directly into the consumers ear and onto the eardrum. It is irresponsible of any ear candle manufacturer to create an ear candle without blending in a synthetic or FDA-approved food grade wax.

Not only is beeswax thicker and more prone to dripping, it is important to know where the bees had circulated in their collection of pollen. This determines the rate of oil content and extra residues within the beeswax. This is either unknown or unpublished information by any ear candle manufacturer interviewed or researched, *except for one* – Harmony Cone.

This leads to an inconsistency in quality integrity from beeswax ear candle to beeswax ear candle. This creates an environment in which to assess the end results that appear inside an ear candle, and it further instills an inaccurate belief system among retailers and end users that the benign debris left over from a beeswax ear candle came from their ears.

Ear candle manufacturers use different types and shades of beeswax. Lighter beeswax is indicative of bleach, chlorine, or some other chemical agent being used to represent virgin beeswax, which immediately after being secreted, elaborated, and formed into comb is white. It only becomes darker with the bees' use.

Rendered but untreated beeswax comes in varying shades of yellow, and pure beeswax has at least 284 different compounds, not all of which have been identified. Beeswax is unable to be certified organic, as it is not possible to track every single bee's movement within the hive.

Inconsistent procedures are maintained within the ear candling manufacturers' process when beeswax is heated, as it changes the ratio of ester to acid beyond the limits set for pure beeswax.

Longer heating or higher temperatures lead to greater degradation and loss of hydrocarbons, thus changing the physical characteristics of the wax. Thus, excessive heating during rendering or further processing changes the wax structurally and alters the beneficial characteristics of many of its minor compounds, not only the aromatic and volatile compounds (Santa Fe Candle, 2006).

At this point, for the 100% beeswax ear candles, manufacturers have lost control of combustion, fuel, and viscosity rates. They are unable to guarantee an environmentally-friendly or natural remedy that will not cause damage to the end user or the environment.

**SOY WAX:** A product that “appears” environmentally acceptable in the natural health industry is soy wax, which is actually a hydrogenated soybean oil.

The process of hydrogenation typically performed at an elevated temperatures (from 400 to 700 degrees Fahrenheit), under pressure, and in the presence of a hydrogen catalyst such as nickel. Whereas other catalysts have been used to accomplish the hydrogenation and may be suitable in the practice of the present invention, nickel is most preferred.

The hydrogen will preferably be mixed with the oil, either by mechanical agitation or through various jets or bubblers which effectively pass the hydrogen through the vegetable oil. As the oil is progressively hydrogenated, its properties are monitored for optimum values and characteristics.

Among these are the Iodine Value, which, in the preferred embodiment, will be between approximately 49 and 53.

Then there is the Mettler melting point, which will range between 122 and 128 degrees Fahrenheit. Preferably there will be less than 0.1 percent free fatty acids after hydrogenation.

Once the hydrogenation is complete, the catalyst will be removed, the oil will be cleaned and purified, and the oil may again be bleached. It is important to note here that, contrary to commonly held beliefs regarding suitable compositions, the soybean oil referred to herein, is not isolated to yield a soybean stearine as an attempt to substitute for stearic acid.

Instead, the preferred ingredient is quite surprisingly, a shortening stabilizer. In addition to this first hydrogenated vegetable oil, a small amount of synthetic wax has been found to offer some benefit in some embodiments.

Soy wax has a very oily content. It is created through hydrogenation utilizing toxic elements that are later removed, it has a low melting point and, therefore, is not an environmentally-friendly product, not to mention being an imminent danger to ear candling users.

As with beeswax, soy wax is very oily in its content with a lower melting point, which produces a tremendous amount of wax residue, when molten, can drip and burn an ear candle user's ear. Regrettably, there is no such thing as an organic ear candle.

**A MOST PREFERRED MATERIAL** is a hydrocarbon polymer of alpha olefins, polymerized or co-polymerized in the presence of free radicals at low pressures.

The resultant hydrocarbon polymers are highly branched, and have increased molecular weight, higher viscosities, and greater hardness but lower melting and congealing points than the original alpha olefins from which they are derived.

In this particular process, an iodine value of approximately 15, with a melting point of approximately 124 degrees Fahrenheit, has been found to be satisfactory. Although, other suitable materials having slightly different characteristics, and melting points may be determined in light of the present teachings.

The preferred synthetic wax may help to increase the opacity of the candle, to bind and to disperse fragrance oils throughout the candle composition, to harden the candle, to reduce the formation of air bubbles, and to inhibit mopping of the candle. Color quality of the candle will typically be improved by the addition of the preferred synthetic wax. (Free Patents Online, 2006)

Ear candles that are manufactured or handcrafted with **HIGH-QUALITY, FOOD GRADE WAXES** with the highest melting point on the market and the cleanest, unbleached, unprocessed muslin on the market, creates not only a clean burning, but also a safer ear candle for consumers.

## ~ Quality Standards ~

### **High Quality Materials Requirement:**

What is integral to the safety and toxicity of ear candles are **high quality raw materials**. The equation for success lies in the rate of burn, how much fuel is being used, how big the flame is to burn, and how controlled the burn is.

With fully refined food grade waxes having higher melting points, a user can obtain the optimum conditions, of course, depending on the type of wick or cloth used as the wick. (S. McColl, IGI Wax, personal communication, July 21, 2006).

Food grade wax is created from a multi-step processing of wax that provides clean, high quality organic products that meet FDA requirements. These highly purified white waxes have less than 0.5% oil content and meet all FDA requirements for use in and in contact with humans and food (Astorwax, 2006).

Fully refined food grade waxes are heated from the by-product derived from refining lubricating oil. This product, slack wax, is heated, cooled, crystallized, and then filtered numerous times in order to obtain the different low oil content required.

To produce fully refined wax requires that it be passed through a bed of clay to remove color and that it be vacuumed for odor removal. The results are then blended together to produce the high molten point required of some fully refined food grade waxes (IGI Wax, Wax Refining page, 2006).

These waxes contain predominantly straight-chain hydrocarbons with an average chain length of 20 to 30 carbon atoms, unlike a paraffin wax, which has a range of 50 – 95% carbon chain link. Highly refined food grade wax viscosity rates are **not** toxic to human contact and are approved by the FDA for use in food.

Food grade wax is a natural product derived from the molecular components of decayed vegetable and animal material. It is non-reactive, non-toxic, a clean burning fuel, and colorless.

Typical wax properties that can be measured and controlled include melting point, congealing point, hardness, oil content, viscosity and color. However, these properties alone do not define completely the suitability of a wax for a particular application. The functional properties of wax should be considered as well. Ear candles need a wax with a melting point that exceeds 150 degrees Fahrenheit and that have a low viscosity rate.

Food grade wax, with the highest melting point possible and a oil content below 1%, is desirable for the production of an ear candle that is tightly and consistently wrapped with an unbleached muslin, and that will create a wick that will combust and rapidly disintegrate its fuel (food grade wax). This process eliminates the dangers and issues surrounding ear candles and environmental toxicity.

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### ***What Ear Candling Actually Does and How It Does It...***

The only way to understand how ear candles affects the human body is to study the physical as well as the nonphysical aspects of holistic healing, in particular reflexology, meridian pathways, and energy healing.

With the ear candle inserted into the ear, the heat from the flame creates a stimulating, soothing, warming effect. The mechanics of this process are *energetic* in nature.

Holistic ear candling helps strengthen the bodily systems through balancing the body's own energetic system. (1994, Ear candling.)

Holistic ear candling works energetically in nature, though the actual mechanics or physical address have yet to be fully understood. Harmony Cone has numerous notarized testimonials from people all over the world who have had varying, yet beneficial experiences with ear candling.

## Definition of Terms

**Ear Candle** – A hollow candle that is generally handcrafted or manufactured using paraffin, beeswax, or specially formulated waxes. The length and the diameter of ear candles vary from each vendor.

**Nadis Human Subtle System** – Yoga describes some 72,000 lesser nadis for energy distribution within and without the body. This leads us to the more external system of acupuncture in Chinese medicine.

**Chakra** – In Hinduism and in some related Asian cultures, a chakra (Devanagari) is thought to be a nexus of metaphysical and/or biophysical energy residing in the human body. The New Age movement, and to some degree the distinctly different New Thought movement, have also adopted and elaborated on this belief.

**Meridians** – Meridians are the channels of pathways that carry qi and blood through the body. They are not blood vessels. Rather, they comprise an invisible network that links together all of the fundamental substances and organs. The substances qi and blood move along them, carrying nourishment and strength. Because the meridian system unifies all the parts of the body, it is essential for the maintenance of harmonious balance.

**Acupuncture** – is a technique of inserting and manipulating needles into “acupuncture points” on the body. According to acupunctural teachings, this will restore health and well-being and is particularly good at treating pain. Acupuncture is thought to have originated in China and is most commonly associated with traditional Chinese medicine. Other types of acupuncture (Japanese, Korean, and classical Chinese acupuncture) are practiced and taught throughout the world.

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