



## MATTIAS BOGEFORS

### The World's Smallest Gym

My presentation focuses on the benefits of harmonica playing as a form of physiotherapy. It's not a miracle cure, however music-making on the harmonica can certainly be a joyful vehicle for physical and mental exercise and relaxation. It offers up complimentary training opportunities for neck, mouth and jaw problems, lung diseases such as COPD, and the reduction of stress and anxiety.

Using standard C and G diatonic harmonicas, I have developed a progressive method for physical rehabilitation with live music. I will share with you some very important techniques regarding posture and body reflexes, and other incremental but important details worth bearing in mind. Good musical tone is central to everything, and good tone means you must be relaxed and breathing well.

I will explain the importance of body mechanics when related to harmonica playing. We will investigate methods for boosting breathing using the lower pelvic muscles and consider how to relieve mucus congestion in the wind pipes by playing the harmonica. Please note, however, that my workshop can help every harmonica player (from beginner to advanced) to improve their tone and physical comfort; not just those with medical conditions or those in health care. If you can breathe you can do it, and it's fun. Welcome to conscious harp therapy!

My thanks to harpin' By The Sea for giving me this opportunity to share my experience. Thanks also to Hohner for supporting this cause.

### From Hohner Music

A few years after suffering a bad whiplash injury, Mattias picked up the harmonica. With the support of his physiotherapists, he discovered that playing the harmonica had many similarities with the gentle and subtle exercises he was already doing clinically. The harmonica has helped Mattias find his way back into life, which is why he calls it "the smallest gym in the world" or "just a medical instrument".

For more than 20 years, he has been passing on his experience by means of his specially developed therapeutic concept to private clients, patient organizations and hospitals in Sweden and the Netherlands, thus helping struggling people with a wide variety of problems, including respiratory diseases and medical conditions affecting the neck, jaw and tongue. The deep breathing is also beneficial for coping with pain and anxiety. Thanks to Mattias' efforts, people have been able to sustainably improve their quality of life, and have lots of fun in the process!

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