

## Learning to hear again

Listening therapy in the Atlantis Centre passes through various stages. The duration of the individual stages and the entire therapy can be very different. They depend on the problem of each individual and the individual response to the therapy.

The first visit to Sint-Truiden should not be shorter than 12 days and the second, after a six or nine week break, five days. All subsequent visits should, if possible, take place every five days, but they can take place over a long weekend.

Listening tests are carried out and the appropriate action is planned at regular intervals. The breaks between the listening sections are important for the permanent integration of new impulses and improvements made. They are also to be regarded as maturation periods.

### Timeline

#### Initial meeting

Anamneses, psychological listening test, drawing up of an individual programme

#### First listening section

Twelve days, daily 3 x 1½ hours of listening

(nine listening units of 30 minutes each in total)

Listening tests and briefings

#### *Break of six to nine weeks*

#### Second listening section

Four to five days, daily 3 x 1½ hours of listening

Listening test and briefing

#### *Break of six to nine weeks*

### **Third listening section**

Four to five days, daily 3 x 1½ hours of listening  
Listening test and briefing

### **Further hearing sections depending on individual progress**

The principle of listening therapy according to Tomatis consists in repeatedly passing through the stages of listening development in order to enable the smooth integration of the sense of hearing and balance.

As, according to Tomatis, the foetus in the mother's womb primarily hears the high frequencies of the mother's voice, initially the low frequencies are increasingly filtered out of the music.

After this "acoustic feedback" into prenatal hearing, the hearing is repeated, as it would be in the mother's womb. The music or the mother's voice contains frequencies above 6,000/8,000 Hertz. In this high filter phase in particular psychological processes are often triggered among children. For example, a child will seek closer proximity to its mother, or exhibit other behaviours, believed to have survived for a long time.

By analogy with birth, one speaks of "acoustic birth" if, in the following phase, the low frequencies are gradually reinserted and the voice or the music is ultimately heard unfiltered, i.e. "normally". This process corresponds to the changeover from filtered auditory perception in the amniotic fluid in the uterus to the transmission of sound through the air. All stages until the end of the acoustic birth are regarded as the passive part of the therapy.

Now comes the active part. In addition to listening, the person undergoing the therapy reads from a book into a microphone, repeats words or sentences, or sings. Exercises with a speech therapist and motor exercises also take place depending on the problem.