



The Shaman's Drum

Domínique Oyston Dip. Mus, Dip. SV, A.I.



The Intuitive Healing Voice Course

with Dominique Oyston

THE SHAMAN'S DRUM

The basis of Shamanism is that there are two worlds. The sensible – that which we can see with our senses and the super sensible – that which we cannot perceive with our normal physical senses.

This super sensible is accessed through ecstatic trance and altered or non-ordinary states of consciousness. This is called 'soul flight'.

The Shaman is the 'dreamer'. Not in our Western sense but actual dreams.

Dreams full of symbols, messages, conversations, beings and feelings.

The Shaman uses their dreams, visions, the powers of the Earth, their personal power and the Great Creator's power to heal.

Theirs is a lifelong journey of study, personal development, learning and growth to create a 'profession.'

The Shaman's path is one of independent spirituality. It is not priest guided but self-sufficient – individualistic. As such it requires dedication, responsibility and a desire to grow in knowledge and wisdom. It is a path of service to union with the divine.

Past and Present

In olden times most sicknesses arose through violating the Laws of the Creator. Chemical pollution, stress, poor diet, mental illnesses from drugs, addictions, child molestation, rape, Western diseases and so much more did not exist. Insect bites, ghosts and sorcery, injury, spiritual intrusion and social taboos were the field of the Shaman. The drum was a healing tool that took the Shaman into the realms where the 'disease' or disharmony or spell might lie and resolve it there.

The Shaman brought spiritual wisdom, social balance, healing and environmental knowledge. There is a greater complexity to Shamanic healing now. Much is asked of a Healer.

Shamanic drumming

Shamanic drumming is spiritual in nature. It is a tool for healing and journeying to retrieve information or achieve ecstatic oneness with the great mystery.

It is currently estimated to be 20,000 to 30,000 years old.

Despite existing in many cultures the world over, drumming is similar everywhere. Perhaps in the same way that the rhythmic pulse of the earth and the human heart is the same the world over.

Singular repetitive beats played over a period of time induce a trance like state. But a Shaman will have a repertoire of healing rhythms and rhythms for invocation of spirits. They will also improvise depending on the guidance or sensing of what is needed.

This is slightly different from using the drum as an accompaniment to dancing or entertaining or social inclusion.



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Hearing the voice of the drum

Shamans are trained to hear a greater range of frequencies, harmonics and tones than others. They train to hear subtle shifts of resonance in their drum and to 'follow the sound' as I call it. We do this in intuitive sound healing with the voice too.

The spiritual realms and the nature realms are full of tones and vibrations that we do not pay attention to unless we train our inner ear. These frequencies carry information. The drum has its own sound codes and the job of the Shaman is to interpret which tones will create a sound dialogue with the spirits that can provide information or healing.

The drum becomes the spiritual eyes and ears of the drummer. The world of sound becomes a bridge between functional reality and the unseen energetic field. Drumming also calls in nature beings and spirit helpers. The drum is the portal through which knowledge and remedies can travel to the Shaman thus bridging magic and 3D worlds.

Author Michael Drake says:

'Tuvan shamans believe that the spirits of nature create their own sound world, and it is possible for humans to communicate with them through the sound of the drum. Tuva (southern Siberia) is one of the few places in the world where the shamanic heritage has remained unbroken. Tuvan shamans use the drum to convey to the spirits of a place their greetings, any requests, and thanks. It is a spiritual practice designed to help human beings relate to all of nature.'

Drumming opens the shaman's inner, spiritual ears and eyes and also calls the helping spirits. As Tuvan musicologist Valentina Suzukei explains, *'By changing and listening to the frequencies and overtones of the drum, the shaman is able to send messages to, and receive them from, both the spirit world and the patient. For example, the shaman might use the overtones to send signals to the sky, where they provoke a voice from the cosmos; in turn, the cosmic signals are caught on the drum and reflected to the shaman through the creation of subsequent overtones.'* (n1) The shaman builds a sonic landscape which interacts with the natural world.

Drum journeying

The drum takes a Shaman on a 'journey'. This journey is like a trip to the doctor where you go to get information or a remedy or a transformation. The journey takes you to the world of inner perception, perceiving beyond the physical senses.

According to C. Michael Smith, author of *Jung and Shamanism in Dialogue*,



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'The shaman's journey employs the imagination, and the use of myth as inner map gives the shaman a way of imagining non-ordinary reality, so that he or she may move about intentionally in it.'

The drum tones enable the Shaman to 'speak to' or 'hear' the tones of the spirit world. This may arrive as symbols, sounds, colour, stories, non-linear events, power animals, archetypal imagery and sensations. The Shaman then has to interpret these things.

Maintaining relationship

We are most familiar with our day to day relationships. We don't often (unless we are healers or guides) have strong connections with spiritual beings in nature or the invisible worlds.

It is important for a Shaman to build a relationship with the spiritual worlds and certain healing spirits. Nowadays we call this spiritual healing or having a spiritual team. One way to keep connected is to take regular visioning and drumming journeys with the spirits. It's like hanging out with your friends. The spiritual wisdom gained from this journeying is used to benefit the community of the Shaman.

Ariadne's Thread

In the myth of Theseus and the Minotaur, the King's daughter, Ariadne offers Theseus a spool of twine to take with him into the labyrinth as he goes in to destroy the monster. Even if he destroys the beast, the way out is a maze of bewildering passageways. The thread is Theseus' means of retracing his steps and walking out of the labyrinth.

The drum is the Shamans thread. It is the guide rope into and out of the other realms. The drum leads you into the trance and returns you to your body at the end of the journey.

Ceremony

Every culture has different rituals that lead the community in and out of rites of passage, celebration and ceremonies honouring the gods and goddesses. The drum has always been a core instrument at these festivals and events. The drum speaks the language of the gods and earth.

The drum is a Healer

It seems that across cultures the drum is an instrument that can heal. *'The resonant qualities and attributes of these rhythmic phenomena are universal and come into play whenever we drum. The sound waves produced by the drum impart their energy to the resonating systems of the body, mind, and spirit, making them vibrate in sympathy. When we drum, our living flesh, brainwaves, and spiritual energy patterns begin to vibrate in response.'* **Michael Drake**



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Science is now verifying the therapeutic effects of drumming. Recent medical research studies indicate that drumming boosts the immune system and produces natural pleasurable experiences, enhanced awareness of preconscious dynamics, a release of emotional trauma, and reintegration of self. Other studies have demonstrated the calming, focusing, and healing effects of drumming on Alzheimer's patients, autistic children, emotionally disturbed teens, substance abusers, trauma patients, and prison and homeless populations. Study results demonstrate that drumming is a valuable treatment for stress, fatigue, anxiety, hypertension, headaches, asthma, chronic pain, arthritis, and sleep and emotional disorders.

Knowledge of spiritual symbols and the invisible worlds

'Some are so skilled at drumming, they can duplicate the rhythms of various animals. This is used to facilitate a shapeshifting, an aligning with the archetypal forces represented by the animal.'

Ted Andrews, *Animal Speak*

Shaman's commonly communicate with power animals and spirit guides when drumming. Imaginative sensitivity is helpful in perceiving the essence of these beings. The drum and the imagination combined provide a container for consciousness to take flight.

Relationships with helper spirits or helper animals are built over time. These beings often wish to be support to the people on the earth who are likewise intentioned. They are like care takers of the earth but also guides towards self-realisation. One of the liberating aspects of this is that it is very individualised. It is a system that requires the self-development of the individual, not just following a predetermined script or process.

Inner Communication

Basically, shamanic journeying is a way of communicating with your inner or spirit self and retrieving information. Your inner self is in constant communication with all aspects of your environment, seen and unseen. You need only journey within to find answers to your questions. You should have a question or objective in mind from the start. Shamanic journeying may be undertaken for purposes of divination, for personal healing, to meet one's power animal or spirit guide, or for any number of other reasons. After the journey, you must then interpret the meaning of your trance experience.

The drum, sometimes called the Shaman's Horse, provides a simple and effective way to induce ecstatic trance states. When a drum is played at an even tempo of three to four beats per second for at least fifteen minutes, most novices report that they can journey successfully even on their first attempt. Transported



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by the driving beat of the drum; the shamanic traveller journeys to the inner planes of consciousness.' **Michael Drake** (website)

The Three Worlds

On a drum journey, the Shaman or traveller will meet the Three Worlds. These are the Upper, Middle and Lower Worlds. Each is associated with a different plane of consciousness.

The three worlds existed before humans and are part of the realm of the collective unconscious. We can choose to become aware of them and learn how to enter them or not.

As in the Norse version of the cosmos, which has nine worlds, the worlds are linked by The World Tree.

Called Yggdrasil in the Viking mythology, the World Tree has many different names.

Even the human being is seen as the world tree in some mythologies.

For Shamanic journeying, the roots of this tree reach down into the Lower World, the trunk of the tree is the middle World and the branches support the Upper World.

This central column is a mirror of the central axis of the human being and the resonances travel up and down the spine itself, singing the bones.

The wood of the drum acknowledges this framework of the tree.

As Tuvan musicologist Valentina Suzukei explains, "There is a bridge on these sound waves so you can go from one world to another. In the sound world, a tunnel opens through which we can pass-or the shaman's spirits come to us. When you stop playing the drum, the bridge disappears."

The Lower World Journey

The Lower World is not to be confused with the Underworld in Greek Mythology – ruled by Hades in Greek and Hel in the Norse pantheon. It is more ancient than this and is usually the place to start as you find your power animals there. The focus for this plane of consciousness is empowerment.

This is a description of journeying to the Lower World by Michael Harner. Founder of The Foundation for Shamanic Studies, Harner is widely acknowledged as the world's foremost authority on experiential and practical shamanism.

In his book, *The Way of the Shaman*, Harner suggests that you "visualize an opening into the earth that you remember from sometime in your life. The entrance could be an animal burrow, hollow tree stump, cave and so on. When the journey begins, you'll go down the hole and a tunnel will appear.



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The tunnel often appears ribbed and may bend or spiral around. This tunnel-like imagery is related to the central axis that links the three inner planes of consciousness. Enter the tunnel and you will emerge into the Lower World -- the realm of power animals, spirit guides and ancestral spirits. It is a beautiful, Earth-like dimension, where we can find lost power, retrieve lost souls and connect with animal and plant spirits."

The Middle World Journey

The Middle World is our everyday reality- where our consciousness lives. You can travel to a different location or city to visit relatives, do some healing of a nature place you love, or lend support to a friend or cause. It's like long distance healing or checking in.
This is the realm of 'experience.'

The Upper World Journey

The Upper World is not the same as our Heaven. Here you find ancestors, religious figures, angels and archangels and ascended masters. This realm is entered to seek knowledge, guidance and wisdom. This world is entered by a visionary 'climb'. This climb takes you above the clouds, the clouds representing the veil between the realities.

In all these journeys you are opening up a vortex or energy channel within your own being that offers a pathway to this altered state of consciousness. The vortex must be nurtured and prepared. The drum is the vehicle or carrier of consciousness as it is:

1. Rhythmically structured and universal law is rhythmic – it's beat is the sound of totality
2. Embodies the World Tree which is connected to all worlds

Intention

Intention is paramount to the success of the journey. There's not a lot of point just wandering around.

Consider what you wish to achieve from the experience before setting out.

You may wish to develop a particular trait or quality within yourself.

You may wish to understand a problem.

You may wish to reclaim and part of yourself that has become disconnected or 'lost'.

Focus on a single issue.

State your intention #outloud

"I am going on a Shamanic journey to the Upper World to seek guidance about ...X..."



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Five Shamanic Drum Journey ideas

Here are five basic drum journey ideas to help you access realms and information to guide you on your path. Depending which realm you choose, you can meet your teachers and guides, your power animals, and learn to understand the realms the shaman-you can access.

- 1. Journey into the Womb**
- 2. The Lower Realm**
- 3. The Middle Realm**
- 4. The Upper Realm**
- 5. Free Journeying**

The Journey drum beat.

A Shamanic drum beat is traditionally 3 or 4 beats per second, so it is quite fast. This triggers the alpha brain wave state that meditation requires. You may get tired doing this at first, so you can listen to a recording. But it is powerful to play your own drum. Sometimes singing and dancing help.

Research shows that this beat is synchronistic with the brainwave state called 'Theta', where imagery from the subconscious drifts into normal waking consciousness. We become more receptive to learning, destressing and activating psychic and intuitive faculties in this state. The sub conscious is the motivator for most of our beliefs and actions in life. If we create a more regular access to the subconscious realm it offers us the opportunity to redirect our experiences in the world.

I learned my drumming from a few sources. Steven Farmer, Jane Hardwicke Collings, Denise Linn and Brooke Medicine Eagle.

They all use 90% similar processes.

Sacred Heart Beat of the Drum

The earliest sounds we encounter in the physical world are the waters of the womb and gut, and the heartbeat of the Mother.

The heartbeat is regular and essentially rhythmic. It grounds us, soothes us and centres us like no other. For most people, unless they have experienced unusual trauma in utero is a powerful means of clearing stress. It provides a primal connection to all that is.



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The drum is often held close to the heart and this allows feelings to transfer and move between you and the drum. The breath also moves with the heart beat in connection to the drum.

How you breathe your energy into the drum as you hold it is a key element. The rhythms of the earth, your own body rhythms and the tones of the cosmos meet and resound together.

Do you know the rhythm of your own heart?

Have you ever tuned in to feel it or measure it? This is a good starting point for your drum practice.

To begin with, you can learn a two-beat rhythm lub dub lub dub lub dub. This is a heartbeat rhythm of around 60 beats per minute or 30 beats per minute because one heart beat equals two beats.

It is calming and centring and reminds us of the soothing and safety of the mother heart beat in the womb.

Masculine and Feminine forces

180 beats per minute (or 90 double beats) a yin energy is provoked that is yin in quality. Yin energy is descending. It is also magnetic and receptive.

Magnetic energies are descending in nature conducive to healing, mindfulness and regenerative powers.

The feminine energy is the Lower world side or power of the drum. It is cultivated in the lower energy centres and stored in the solar plexus.

This energy can be directed to the higher mind and intuition or creative or healing activities.

The celestial aspect of the drum (masculine) develops psychic, visioning and intuitive abilities. It opens portals in the mind to higher knowledge, and spiritual wisdom.

It focuses at the third eye centre.

A single drum has no place to store power.

A double headed drum will have a masculine and a feminine side.

The drum is said to unite masculine and feminine forces. It is an instrument of unity. This union is said to generate chi, the life force. This primordial life force is the Will or the intention to 'be'.

In the Cherokee tradition, Will is the underlying current, the fire that brings forth that which we perceive as our reality.

When this source energy is impeded, our personal power is depleted.

Personal power is called 'hiimori' by the Mongolian Shamans, which means Windhorse.

Windhorse allows us to think clearly and accomplish our aims.



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Negative attitudes, fear and envy block Windhorse.

Drumming quickens our frequencies so that we actually begin to spin off our slower negative vibrations of anger fear and doubt. The energy channels of the body are cleared, and harmonious resonance is restored within the divine will.

Drumstick

A subtle life force flows between the drum and the drum stick. You become sensitive to these pulling forces. This is the stream of the Will of the divine. Tuning to this original voice from source allows you to become a co-creator

Rim

The rim of the drum is made from wood which represents the World tree, wood that lives between heaven and earth. The drum is either a circle or oval. Oval is said to be female. The circle acknowledges the circle of life and how, as we walk the Medicine Wheel, we are on a quest for knowledge and the accumulation of power as self-realisation.

A single drum has no place to store power.

A double headed drum will have a masculine and a feminine side and stores power in the centre.

Playing your Drum

If you want to sing with your drum, you can use syllables to speak/sing with the rhythm of your drum. It can be a way of introducing the voice and the drum to one another and bring another element into your drum journey.

Drums can be heavy to hold for the entire drum journey so if you find it uncomfortable you can hold your drum on your lap to take the weight more. This is called 'lap style drumming'.

However, the sound can end up being muffled from the body contact.

Playing with your hands when you are lap drumming means you can use both hands. But the stick is more like masculine and feminine components again. If you are using a beater, hold the beater in your dominant hand.

The surface of your drum will have a 'sweet spot' or a few sweet spots where the sound feels particularly good to you.

It can change depending your energy that day or what is needed from a healing perspective.

If you have a painting on your drum, then you can also work with that to bring out the energy of the symbols or colours on the painting.



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You may feel called to change the tempo and speed. You can change up the rhythm

Single side drum

The deep tone is usually in the middle of the drum. It is slightly more flat and precise.

The edge tone tends to be more open. It has more overtones in it and has more ring.

The strings can create a buzz sound and the more strings you have, the buzzier it can be.

You can use these two tones to build out your musical ideas in drumming.

You can also have a basic beat that you add accents to. This builds out a musical idea or story or atmosphere.

Drumming the Elements

Earth, Air, Fire and Water all have distinct sound on a frame drum.

You can call the elements into your life in a meditative drum session for healing and connection to Mother Earth.

These tones are from a Nubian tradition played with the hands.

Earth in the Centre at the lowest pitch Doom. What grounds you?

Fire = Tak = right on the rim. What ignites you?

You can snap it and use both hands, fingers slightly spread and firm

Air = rubbing the surface of the drum with your hand or a brush What breathes you? Inspires you?

Water = KAH - the hand 'falling' into the drum on the finger tips and it dampens the sound somewhat.

What keeps you in the flow?

(Sometime Doom is called water/ Ka is earth)

These playing suggestions only touch on Shamanic drum teachings.

You would have to study with a proper Shamanic teacher for this and it is a life path.

Consecrating a Drum journey

1: Form a Circle

2: Cleanse the Space

3: Call to the Directions

At this point, you may wish to invoke the powers of the Eight Directions.



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This is an ancient shamanic rite practiced cross-culturally to access and honour the powers of creation. The facilitator can lead the group in this process. The Eight Directions are:

- North (e.g. Ahead)
- South (Behind)
- East (Right)
- West (Left)
- Above (Father Sky)
- Below (Mother Earth)
- Centre
- Within

The circle of Awareness is then complete and harmonious. Next bond this with LOVE.

- 4: Form Your Intent
- 5: Prayer Round
- 6: Finding Unison
- 7: Healing Round
- 8: Giving Thanks
- 9: Closing the Circle

The Shaman needs:

1. A consistent, safe and supportive space to practice shamanism
2. To deepen their relationships with their helping spirits through shamanic practice
3. To provide help, healing and support for individuals and for the community;
4. To have a shamanic community;
5. To develop key drum skills such as rhythmicity, ensemble playing and therapeutic drumming;
6. Acquire shamanic knowledge through collaborative sharing and from helping spirits through direct revelation.

Making Your Drum

You may feel called to make your own drum or buy one. There are many drum making workshops available. You can choose different hides to create your drum. I have a deer hide drum.

- **Deer Hide:** Deer medicine holds the energy of the feminine, the gentleness, the nurturing, the mothering; it is about the star energy, universal energy.
- Deer helps us to live by the heart, heart energy and openness. Deer teaches us to trust and empower the feminine quality of love and wisdom.



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- **Kangaroo Hide:** Kangaroo medicine is about the masculine energy. It is the warrior energy. It is the grounding connection to our Earth Mother. A kangaroo can't go backwards as it is always moving in a forward direction.
- **Goat Hide:** Goat medicine is between both kangaroo and deer medicine as it brings balance to the extension of self. Goat is always trying to reach just that little bit further, taking that next step. Goat seeks the high places and balance.

Prior to making your Drum it is important for you to set your intent:

- Why am I making this Drum?
- What do I want from this Drum?
- What energy do I want to place into this creation?

How to offer Drum Journeys

Just in case any of you are interested in offering drum journeys as part of your work, I've included an example of teacher Peter Bowden's offerings as a comparison and as a suggestion of what is possible to offer.

As we journey across different dimensions of life, through the past, the present and into the future, life can be a struggle. If you find yourself struggling with illness, anxiety, addiction or depression you may be interested to find that your condition may come from a previous trauma in this life or from a past life. Maybe it is time to call back aspects of yourself with Soul Retrieval and Soul Fragmentation Journeying.

Losing energy, power or balance can happen when people experience traumatic events. Traumas can take many forms, such as, abuse, an accident, a big change in life, over-stressed from work, death of a loved one, events from previous lifetimes, and many other possibilities.

Offerings by Peter

Intuitive Energetic Healings include:

Gentle and subtle energetic healing / Energy balancing / Reiki
Shamanic Reiki / Deeper universal energetic healing / Distance Healing

Shamanic Drum Healings include:

Drum balancing / Drum bath / Sound healing
Shamanic Medicine Drum journeys traversing the shamanic upper, middle and lower worlds.

Shamanic Healings include:

Reclaiming of self / Soul retrieval / Soul fragmentation recovery
Past life regression / Removal of entities, energetic parasites and curses.
Sacred Pipe (Chunupa) Ceremony for Counselling or Healing



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Shamanic Counselling includes:

Holding and sharing sacred space for both divine masculine and feminine – for men, women and couples.

Tobacco Ceremony (Rapé):

Pronounced 'Ha-peh' A introductory traditional plant ceremony based on meeting the spirit of Tobacco – Protector Plant and Medicine ally.

Peter offers shamanic healing sessions drawing on a range of techniques, energies and experiences. A shamanic session with Peter may include any of the following techniques, by your request or by recommendation by Peter. If you're feeling called to a session with Peter, please **contact him** to discuss your healing needs.

Intuitive energetic bodywork include: -

Hands on healing

Intuitive energetic Bodywork (includes massage and shamanic bodywork techniques within and on your body temple)

Intuitive energetic healings include: -

Gentle and subtle energetic healing

Energy balancing

Shamanic reiki

Deeper universal energetic healing

Shamanic drum healings include: -

Drum balancing

Drum bath

Sound healing

Drum journeys traversing the shamanic upper, middle and lower worlds

Crystal healings include: -

Crystal layouts and grids

Crystal journeys

Shamanic Healings include: -

Reclaiming of self

Soul retrieval

Soul fragmentation recovery

Past life regression

Removal of entities, energetic parasites and curses.

Smudging include: -

Clearing

Letting go; and

Balancing.



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Sacred smoke include: -

Soul retrieval

Soul fragmentation recovery

Past life regression

using sage, cedar and sweet grass for heavy clearings.

Shamanic counselling include: -

Holding and sharing sacred space for both divine masculine and feminine – for men, women and couples.

Individual Sessions with Peter Bowden

Special offer: introductory 1 hour session to the 4 session package \$120 – a saving of \$80

Then choose between:

4 Session package short time special offer at \$595.00 – a saving of \$200.00

4 x 1 hour sessions

Must be used within 3 months of commencement

Or

Individual Sessions are offered at \$200 each

The 1st introductory session has **50% money back guarantee** if you are not satisfied with the session and contact Shamanic Earth Medicine within 48 hours.

This Individual Healing Package is normally priced at \$780.00.

Bookings are Essential.

