

Meeting Apr 14, 2026 at 18:53

BST

- **Formal Welcome and Upcoming Sunday Session Structure:** Sara Teal formally welcomed the participants to the meeting and noted that the upcoming Sunday session would be the last in-person meeting. The Sunday session is not a formal exam but an opportunity to explore holding space using instruments. It will involve each person delivering a 20- to 30-minute sound bath, which includes five minutes for opening/bringing people into the space, 17-18 minutes of playing instruments, and 7-8 minutes for grounding and gently pulling participants out of the experience using their voice. After the sound bath, participants will offer reflection by writing down what went well and what could be even better.
- **Materials and Approach for the Sound Bath:** Participants are encouraged to bring instruments they wish to use, but Sara Teal recommended focusing on the concept that "less is more" for the sound bath. The instruments that Sara Teal plans to bring include one Jupiter gong, three quartz crystal bowls, a couple of Himalayan bowls, and the drum, which everyone is expected to bring. The session should be seen as an exploration, encouraging the use of silence, and participants should not overthink the planning of the instrument playing portion, allowing the instruments to speak.
- **Suggested Structure and Instrument Usage:** Sara Teal shared their preferred sound bath structure, which is drum, bowls, and voice, noting that participants are welcome to follow this structure or deviate by focusing on only one instrument, such as bowls or a gong. They emphasized that the opening, grounding, and finishing segments should be prepared, and encouraged the use of voice for intuitive singing, mantras, or "oming" if comfortable. Zoe Rebecca Jackson asked for clarification on whether to start with voice, and Sara Teal advised checking the research web page for an opening script.
- **Guidance on Opening and Grounding Techniques:** The opening segment should focus on making sure people are physically comfortable and warm, followed by a short meditation or breathing exercise to help them relax and "drop from the head into the body". The opening and grounding segments are considered part of

the overall journey, and participants should allow the instruments to take them on the journey. Sara Teal noted that notes and a grounding sheet are available on the website, and that being nervous is natural.

- **Overview of How Sound Travels in the Body:** The theory component of the meeting covered how sound moves in the body, emphasizing the need to understand potential experiences people may have during a sound bath. The purpose of discussing this is to help the sound therapists explain experiences to clients, as sound therapy is a complex, multi-dimensional experience that is not solely heard through the ears but travels through the whole body. The consensus is that sound does not travel **to** the body, but **through** it, affecting individuals as vibratory beings.
- **Sharing Personal Sound Bath Experiences:** Participants shared some of the sensations they have felt during sound baths, which Sara Teal documented, with Julie Christian describing the feeling of "waves of energy" and "flushing through" the body, particularly from a gong. Zoe Rebecca Jackson shared the sensation of "floating through space" with no weight to their body. Sara Teal noted that sound therapy bypasses the rational mind and that the internal experiences people report can include feeling like they are having an internal massage, thoughts stopping, seeing visions, memories, colors, or feeling old injuries agitated.
- **Measurable and Non-Measurable Aspects of Sound Experience:** Some physical state changes can be scientifically measured, such as frequency (hertz), volume, vibration through tissues, brain wave changes, heart rate, and cortisol levels in saliva. However, the full experience of sound is too complex to be fully scientifically measured because it is impacted by factors like body tension, hydration levels, how someone arrives into the space, and whether they are neurodivergent. Sara Teal recommended starting playing gently and building up, particularly for those who may be sensitive to loud sounds.
- **Nervous System and Intention in Sound Work:** The nervous system is described as being completely in control, affecting perception based on whether a person is stressed, in fight-or-flight mode, or relaxed. It was noted that intention is crucial, as the practitioner's nervous system "comes through the instruments". The body acts as a vibrational and conductive operating system, with parts like skin, internal organs, fascia, and bones all conducting vibration. The mechanics of sound can be measured, but the way it is received is unique to each person.
- **Instrument-Specific Effects on the Body:** The sacred drum operates at a low frequency, which is felt deeper in the lower body, and its rhythm and repetition

support the entrainment of the nervous system, creating a sense of safety. Himalayan bowls introduce rich harmonics and multiple tones, giving the body more to respond to than the simple rhythm of the drum. The sustained sound and resonance of crystal bowls are also appreciated by the body. Voice is described as fascinating and often linked to emotional responses, potentially reminding people of a maternal figure or bringing up emotional material. Gongs are powerful, offering complex, layered frequencies and unpredictable sound waves that interrupt the thinking mind.

- **Concepts of Resonance, Entrainment, and Tuning Forks:** Resonance is defined as the natural vibration of an object. Entrainment occurs when two objects vibrating at different frequencies begin to vibrate at the same dominant frequency, which is the mechanism by which rhythm and repetition in the drum support the nervous system. Sara Teal mentioned bringing a tuning fork that resonates at 128 hertz, which is associated with heart coherence, and briefly discussed the potential for tuning forks to stimulate different things, noting they are best suited for one-to-one sessions.
- **Factors that Hinder and Support Resonance:** Tension in the tissues and fascia, holding patterns in the body and breath, and shallow breathing can hinder resonance. Sara Teal emphasized that deep, slow, diaphragmatic breathing helps drop people into a relaxed state. Sitting upright rather than slumping can also help, as slumping increases cortisol. Sound is thought to travel more easily when people are well-hydrated, so clients should be encouraged to hydrate and wear loose clothing.
- **Impact of Sound on Emotional and Mental States:** Subtle factors like emotional holding and being "in the head" (overthinking) can impede relaxation. However, the sound instruments often automatically bypass the overthinking mind, leading most people into deep relaxation or sleep, especially if they are chronically fatigued. Sara Teal shared experiences from a rehab setting where people, sometimes experiencing stimulant withdrawal, fall into a deep restorative sleep. Emotional shifts and a sense of relief or release are common, with one client reporting a feeling of "love flowing through me veins".
- **The Role of Fascia and Brain Waves:** Fascia, a connective tissue, is being increasingly studied for its potential role in holding memories and transmitting electrical impulses, which could explain the efficacy of practices like reflexology. Sound baths affect measurable brain waves, dropping people from the alert beta state (13-30 hertz) into more relaxed states: alpha (8-12 hertz), theta (4-7 hertz), or delta (0.5-3 hertz), which is deep sleep. The ability of the instruments to drop

the brain into the theta state is a fact that practitioners can share with clients to explain the deep relaxation.

- **Visual Experiences and Processing:** Visual experiences, such as seeing colors or patterns, are common during the deep, meditative state (theta) achieved in sound baths, which the brain may be doing to "entertain itself" due to a lack of visual stimulation. Julie Christian affirmed that they also get feedback about colors during yoga and relaxation. Both Sara Teal and Julie Christian agreed that when clients ask for explanations of their visions, it is best to provide a succinct explanation that they have dropped into a different brain state without feeding the logical, information-seeking mind.
- **Final Confirmation for Sunday's Meeting:** Participants confirmed their readiness for the Sunday session . The plan for Sunday includes an initial meet-up with cacao and chat, followed by the sound baths, lunch, and then discussion of the essay and one-to-one work, with an aim to finish with a drumming session .

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