

# The Drum & The Lower Chakras

In drum-based sound work, we are primarily engaging the lower four chakras: root, sacral, solar plexus and heart. The drum is percussive, embodied and rhythmic — it speaks directly to the nervous system and the physical body. Because of this, it tends to activate the grounding and survival centres first before energy naturally rises higher. Each chakra can be understood as having a *pace of expression*. When the energetic flow is too slow or too fast, distinct patterns appear.

## Root Chakra – Muladhara

The root chakra relates to safety, belonging and physical existence. When the flow here is too slow, someone may appear fatigued, dissociated, unmotivated or disconnected from their body. There can be a sense of not quite being “here.” When the flow is too fast, the opposite pattern appears: hypervigilance, anxiety, control, rigidity and fear-based thinking. The system is bracing for danger.

The drum supports the root through a slow, steady, repetitive beat. The rhythm does not need to be complex. In fact, simplicity is the medicine. A consistent, predictable pulse allows the nervous system to settle and entrain. The message is one of reliability: the ground is steady. For those who are dissociated, the repetition can gently tether them back into their body. For those who are hyper-alert, it offers something solid enough to lean into.

## Sacral Chakra – Svadhisthana

The sacral chakra governs emotion, pleasure, creativity and relational flow. When energy is too slow here, there may be numbness, low desire, creative block or emotional withdrawal. The waters are stagnant. When the flow is too fast, emotions may feel overwhelming or dramatic, with attachment patterns, mood swings or addictive tendencies emerging. The waters become turbulent.

Drumming for the sacral shifts from mechanical repetition into fluidity. Softer strokes, fingers rather than full-arm strikes, brushing or pulling the beater across the skin create a wave-like texture. The rhythm can rise and fall, introducing variation without chaos. This invites emotional movement without forcing catharsis. The sacral responds to rhythm that feels organic rather than rigid.

## Solar Plexus Chakra – Manipura

The solar plexus is the centre of will, agency and identity. When its flow is too slow, confidence may be low, boundaries unclear and decisions difficult. There can be passivity or people-pleasing. The fire is dim. When the flow is too fast, the fire becomes excessive: anger, control, over-achievement, perfectionism or burnout can appear.

The drum engages this chakra through stronger accents, increased volume and sharper rhythmic emphasis. You may introduce more disruption, unexpected beats or dynamic contrast. The rhythm becomes activating rather than purely containing. This can mobilise stagnation and awaken stored energy. However, intensity must be held within a stable field; activation without containment can overwhelm rather than empower.

## **Heart Chakra – Anahata**

The heart chakra governs love, connection and compassion. When the flow is too slow, there may be emotional shutdown, isolation or guardedness. When too fast, the pattern often becomes over-giving, porous boundaries or emotional overwhelm.

The heart responds beautifully to the “lub-dub” rhythm that mirrors the physical heartbeat. Gently playing this pattern can reconnect someone to their own pulse and aliveness. After stronger solar plexus activation, returning to a heart-based rhythm helps integrate and soften the field. The beat reminds the system that rhythm is life itself.

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In drum work, we are not “forcing” chakras open. We are adjusting pace. Too slow can lead to collapse or dissociation; too fast can create anxiety or flooding. The role of the practitioner is to sense the field and choose rhythm accordingly — stabilising, fluidifying, activating or integrating as needed.