


Mar 3, 2026

Meeting Mar 3, 2026 at 18:48 GMT

Meeting records  Recording

Summary

Sara Teal led a discussion on the role of a sound therapist, emphasizing the primary intention of creating client safety through practitioner self-regulation, awareness of subtle cues, and attention to client comfort, including session preparation and post-session grounding. Key talking points included the necessity of standardized information collection for group sound baths, with Elisha Collier sharing her studio's practice, and Sara Teal committing to providing a template due to the field's lack of regulation. Important contraindications such as hearing aids, severe neurological conditions, and strong negative reactions to gongs (particularly for clients with ADHD) were highlighted, along with managing deep emotional responses and severe mental health issues, with input from Elisha Collier regarding mental health disclosure.

Details

- **Meeting Opening and Intention Setting:** Sara Teal initiated the session by encouraging participants to be present through a brief body-centered exercise focused on deep breathing. They acknowledged the participants' progress since starting the course on February 8th, moving from drums to bowls, voice, and now theory, focusing on holding space, intentions, and contraindications.
- **Intention of a Sound Therapist:** The discussion moved to the importance of intention for a sound therapist, suggesting that the primary intention should be creating safety for the client. Sara Teal emphasized that the goal is not to be attached to an outcome, but to offer a safe space using sound instruments that interact directly with the nervous system.

- **Practitioner Self-Regulation and Safety:** Sara Teal stressed that practitioners must be well-regulated themselves before a session, as they cannot regulate a client from a state of dysregulation. They explained that sound instruments, especially the voice, are extensions of the practitioner, making emotional stability, being grounded, and physical comfort (e.g., having eaten) necessary preparations.
- **Subtle Signals and Holding Space:** Practitioners must be conscious of the subtle cues they send, as every thought carries a tone and pace. Sara Teal noted that clients' bodies pick up on micro-signals such as breath rhythms, facial tension, and vocal tone, and advised that nervous systems should lead the practice, with the aim of holding the field in a group using a slow, steady rhythm.
- **Client Comfort and Session Preparation:** Client comfort is essential, including ensuring they are warm and in loose clothing, as body temperature can drop during sound work due to blood redistribution as the nervous system reacts. Sara Teal also suggested guidelines for clients, such as avoiding heavy meals two to three hours before a session, and noted the danger of alcohol use during a session.
- **Information Collection for Group Sessions:** The need for standardized information collection was discussed, particularly for group sound baths, where group forms or disclaimers are less common but perhaps necessary. Elisha Collier shared that their studio uses an automatic health form for registrations, and they list contraindications in confirmation emails. Sara Teal acknowledged the lack of regulation in the field and committed to creating a template for information collection by the end of the training.
- **Client Expectations and Information Provision:** Because many attendees of group sound baths are novices, Sara Teal provides information on their website to set expectations about what a sound bath entails. This includes clarifying that it is a lying-down session where they do not have to do anything but relax, and what items to bring, such as a mat, blanket, or eye mask.
- **Considerations for Gongs and ADHD:** Sara Teal pointed out that some people, especially those with ADHD, have extreme negative reactions to gongs, describing the sound as "a circular saw or something metal in your head". While Himalayan bowls are generally more accessible, practitioners should be aware of volume, as crystal bowls and drums can also be loud.

- **Addressing Deep Responses and Post-Session Care:** During a session, clients might experience physical sensations, see colors, or enter a trance-like state. Sara Teal noted that for one-on-ones, they hold a 15-minute chat afterwards, and they clarify at the outset that they are not a counselor. They also offer an email follow-up for group sessions, acknowledging that strong sounds like gongs can be so powerful they may induce panic or even trigger PTSD.
- **Structuring a Session and Lunar Awareness:** A session should be structured like a mountain, with intense focus on safe starting and ending points, allowing the middle section to build in response to the client or group. Sara Teal suggested gentleness around full moons, which have more Yin energy and may make people more emotional, while new moons can accommodate more Yang energy and active work.
- **Contraindications for Sound Therapy:** Key contraindications and safety concerns include clients with hearing aids (who should remove them), a history of seizures/epilepsy, or severe neurological conditions. Pregnancy, particularly the first trimester, requires caution, and the practitioner should obtain emergency contact information for safety.
- **Addressing Severe Mental Health and Trauma:** Discussion focused on the difficulty of managing severe mental health issues like acute psychosis, dissociation, recent trauma, and mania, as sound can shift states quickly.
- **Post-Session Grounding and Aftercare:** Sara Teal ensures the end of a session is slow, incorporating silence and grounding instruments such as Koshi chimes and the ocean drum to help the body return. Post-session care includes reminding clients to drink water, rest, and journal, as the energetic work may continue for up to 72 hours.
- **Lack of Industry Regulation and Future Resources:** Sara Teal acknowledged the field's lack of regulation and the absence of standardized guidelines or a formal intake form template. They agreed to create and share a template for paperwork to assist practitioners with gathering necessary information, noting that any document will need to be adapted due to the varied needs of practitioners and the nuances of client responses.
- **Scheduling the Next Zoom Session:** Zoe Rebecca Jackson inquired whether the next Zoom session would take place in April or at the end of the current month. Sara Teal indicated that they needed a day or two to determine the appropriate timing, considering the group's scheduled meeting on the 22nd. Sara Teal

committed to thinking about whether the scheduled meeting is sufficient or if an additional slot needs to be added before then.

- **Concluding Remarks and Follow-up:** Sara Teal expressed gratitude and encouraged attendees to reach out with questions by sending them a message anytime. Elisha Collier, Zoe Rebecca Jackson, and Julie Christian thanked Sara Teal as the meeting concluded.

Suggested next steps

- Sara Teal will definitely integrate a health form into her system by the end of the training in April and share it as a template with the group.
- Sara Teal will put something together to let the group know what she says in one-to-ones and groups.
- Sara Teal will put the GDPR guidelines and information on how to deal with somebody who has epilepsy in the notes.
- Sara Teal will put together and share an intake form template and her current usage for the group to adapt.
- Sara Teal will sort out the paperwork for the case studies, including documentation on how the practitioners felt in the session.
- Sara Teal will determine the schedule for the next Zoom session, considering whether to wait until the 22nd or slot in something sooner, and will communicate the decision within a day or two.

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