

## *Shamanic Drumming*

Here is some simple guidance to support your drumming journey. It is not intended to be prescriptive – the main lesson is to follow your intuition.

Shamanic drumming uses a single, repetitive rhythm played at a tempo of three to four beats per second. Although sounding quite simple and redundant, the unique connection between the drum and the player gives this drumming great power, richness, and depth.

Shamanic drumming is a technique of accessing and directing archetypal or transpersonal powers for healing and manifesting what is needed to benefit the community. It is a simple and effortless way to still the incessant chatter of the mind, thereby inducing a shamanic trance state. Shamanic drumming carries awareness into the transcendent realm of the collective unconscious, the infinite creative matrix of all that we are and have ever been. It is an inward spiritual journey of ecstasy in which one interacts with the inner world, thereby influencing the outer world.

Start by drumming with a quiet, steady beat, without any “accent” notes. Be open to, and trust that, the drum will bring its own song to the session – don’t try to create a rhythm. Tune your mind into the harmonic note that will come from the drum and focus on your purpose (e.g. healing session, shamanic journeying, or simply relaxation).

Let the drum play you. Play your drum close to your body, move it around intuitively, experiment with the sound, move your head to alter the angle of hearing – and find that sweet spot where the beat of the drum is resonating with your chakras.

Listen for what else you can hear, without trying to create it, or rationalize it – can you hear singing/fire/water/jungle sounds/wild animals? All of these are possible as the brain’s hemispheres synchronise. Be open to the messages that the drum will bring – perhaps a sudden image of a person/place/animal will unfold, or a feeling or emotion will surface. What is this trying to teach you? Is it the answer to a problem you have been struggling with, is it a release of something you have been hanging on to, is it an affirmation of some sort? Spend some time after your drumming session to reflect on this.

Watch the volume of your drumming, if you have neighbours or if you are playing in a drumming circle – it is easy to get carried away! Don’t try to dominate the drumming circle e.g. being the loudest, deliberately changing the beat or tempo etc.

Honour your drum every day – if you do not have the chance to play it every day, greet it, touch it, connect with it, thank it for being in your life, and for the teaching it brings.