



Class 3 **Healing in our world**

Healing the self, healing others, healing the world. Energy release, release of attachments (some call this cord cutting) and sacred reciprocity. Tools and techniques to help you find your power, your methods. Understanding who is doing the healing and how to encourage that in yourself and others. Healing drumming ceremony- Journey 3

Welcome back friends! Let's do a short review of recapitulation if you played with that.

It's a new year and we have a fresh batch of fun to explore. Today is all about healing.

Shamans are healers but not always in the way you might think. When we are ailing, we go to a doctor who gives us a pill and we go home and hope for the best. "Medicine" in tribal times wasn't necessarily a pill or potion. The shaman knew the ones who came to them. The shamans sought to understand if the seekers were happy, if their life was well balanced, if they felt secure in their role in the community. The shaman might have a ceremony for the one seeking healing. In those ceremonies, sometimes the shaman would journey to spirit for answers but sometimes the shaman assisted the seeker to journey to find their own solutions on the other side. Sometimes the community would journey together seeking answers.

The shaman helped the community by reinforcing the belief in all that was spiritual/magical. Often the shaman dressed in a particular way, especially during ceremony. The seeker might also be asked to wear a special garment or be painted or ornamented in a unique way. The shaman used sound, scent, movement, words, fire, water, nature, wind to "set a stage" where one could believe that change could come.

Healing the self

I believe I can heal myself. Now I know that's a big statement and might seem odd or even irrational. However, it is true. Healing the self isn't a magic wand that I wave and my broken leg is magically healed. It is a power that I nurture every day. I pay attention to how I'm feeling. I intend to care for my body mind and spirit well with proper food, rest, movement, socialization. I intend to find work that is fitting to my purpose and will provide for

me financially. I care for my home and self in ways that is careful to protect the environment. I affirm myself with positive statements regularly. I participate in self-care practices often. Now, all that being said, sometimes I eat 2 pieces of cake at one sitting and don't get outdoors for a walk for a couple days. Sometimes I "hole up" like a hermit and sometimes I worry about finances. So no, I'm not perfect or even close. But the point is that I value my self-care, my health and I know as a rational adult, if I don't feed myself healthy food most of the time, if I don't move, monitor mental and emotional health and do dozens of other "good for me" things, then I'm not going to be well. I have to honor my health and wellness. It is only my job to make those decisions. Some days I do well and some days I don't but I try to keep the balance on the healthy positive side most days.

(The following is excerpt from my recent book- "This Journey- a path to simple enlightenment.)

The one most powerful way to help the body heal is to imagine, visualize, and believe that healing is possible. Why wait to be ill? Let's imagine wellness, wholeness, strength, and resilience every day. You're catching a common theme if you're reading through this book. I'm talking about our thoughts and projections again. Expecting to be well is a critical power in being well. And before we go too far, if you are ill, or have a loved one who is ill, I'm not saying they thought their way into their illness and can think their way out. Instead, I suggest that having faith in whatever healing modality they have embraced is very important. Combine that with good food, water, rest, movement (as permissible) and self-love. In these ways, you're doing all you can do to give the body what it needs to heal.

I have always believed that I can heal my body. Why would I believe that? I don't know. But that bit of wisdom is lodged deeply in my head, heart and gut and I'm glad for it. I have met others in this life who tell me similar stories. Many are people with no particular passion to make healing their career. But they know they can keep their body well. Most are aware of good practices in diet, exercise, hydration, sleep, and mental health. But the most important aspect that I have mentioned is that "they believe."

Modern western medicine operates on the premise that the body is like a machine in that if a part is malfunctioning, you fix or replace the part and all is well. Doctors prescribe remedies to relieve symptoms. When the symptoms resolve, then the patient is deemed well. Eastern medicine and many alternative therapies are more interested in how the malfunction occurred. Where is there an imbalance in the patient's life that might cause the problem? Is the patient emotionally healthy, socially connected, spiritually hopeful? Do they eat, move, drink, and sleep in ways that support a healthy, balanced body? Is the patient's social, spiritual, financial lives strong and balanced? Eastern and alternative healing seek causes or imbalances and work to resolve them, shifting the environment in and around the patient's body. The body, when relieved of the imbalance, has more power to move towards healing itself.

I recently read "Imagery Healing- Shamanism and Modern Medicine" by Jeanne Achterberg. Jean is a scientist. She and her scientist husband devoted their careers to studying the power of imagery, mental pictures, beliefs in the practice of healing. They focus on how imagery is used by shamans all over the world, and if you have a particular interest, the book is filled with so much powerful information that might help you build the power to believe in healing.

Shamans used sound, herbs, costume, movement, words and their important position in their society to help keep their communities healthy. A shaman will meet with a patient, then allow his/her spirit to journey into a higher plane seeking direction about how to help the sufferer. This journey is often completed as part of a

ceremony, so the entire community is there to support the healing. Some traditions have the patient themselves journey into the spiritual realm, seeking information that will assist the shaman to learn the cause or the remedy to the patient's problems. Assisting the one in need to go find their own solutions seems especially powerful to me, as the patient is integral to this process. They personally gain the knowledge that will assist on their own healing path.

A critical element to healing the body is emotional health. Physical disease is often caused by imbalance in the emotions. A beautiful story of healing is Jerome Braggs, a medical intuitive, poet and more- who healed himself from anemia, pneumonia, pancreatitis, giardia, kidney failure, and AIDS after receiving a diagnosis of 7 days to live.²⁹ He writes that his inner concept of himself and his lack of self-love which grew from feeling unloved, contributed to his disease. When he received his diagnosis, he asked himself these questions, which I think are important for all of us to explore.

- “Had I been happy with my life?”
- “Had I ever been my true self?”
- “Did I feel like I had lived my purpose for being here?”
- “Did I let the people in my life know how I truly felt about them?”
- “Did I feel good about who I was?”

Braggs changed everything- how he cared for himself physically and particularly emotionally. It took time and was quite a learning curve, but he is happy and healthy today, 20 years later.

“When we truly love ourselves, all is well, all is coming, and all is delicious. But not a moment before.”- Jerome Braggs- <https://jeromebraggs.com>

There are so many stories like Mr. Braggs'. I use him as a shining example because he has taken his experience as a calling and is sharing his healing experience, his skills as a medical intuitive to help others find healing.

We live in a world that doesn't encourage us to see our value- to accept, embrace and love ourselves. But if you've read this far through the book, you'll know how important I see self-love in every aspect of life. Sometimes we have things we'd like to change about ourselves, parts that should change for our health and well-being. It is important to remember; we don't wait to love ourselves. Instead, we love ourselves through the process of life and, in this case, through our healing process.

I have worked as a healer for many decades. I hesitated to use that title for a long time, as I can't heal anybody. What I do is create an environment of healing. I share knowledge with the client, ask questions, make suggestions if that feels welcome. The ultimate healing is really up to the client, not me. I offer healing energy and sound to a client. Most of my effort is spent helping them believe that healing is possible, informing them how they can assist their body in healing, how their efforts are truly working with those of their physician or other medical professionals. It's never an “us or them” thing. Healing comes when we create an environment, a community that helps us heal.

In healing work, it's most important to focus on the whole person/animal/plant. We're not trying to remove a problem. We wish to bring health, wholeness, meaning to the entire person, their spirit, and their environment. I imagine, visualize that they feel wholeness, peace, freedom. I remember that the challenges they are facing may serve a purpose well beyond our understanding.

Does healing work every time? No, my efforts and the efforts of individuals seeking healing do not always work the way we hope. Just as with modern medicine, not everyone recovers. That is not because they did anything wrong. It is because death is a part of life. Death comes sometimes early in life and sometimes much later, but it will come. Our society has created a sense that death should be fought or death is a failure. In my way of thinking, death is a graduation. You have fulfilled your life purpose, your lessons learned and taught. You are freed from the encumbrance of a physical self and fly free. I wonder if just accepting that reality might be healing in itself.

How does trusting your body's ability to heal help you?

I think embracing our body as a beautiful aspect of our wholeness is so important. Once you truly can love and inhabit this amazing flesh suit of yours, your awareness of it grows. You learn what feels right to you and when something feels off. Paying attention to imbalances and making adjustments are so important to our complete health. Consulting with others is often very helpful, too. But often we wait until some disease has set in, when perhaps the disease might have been avoided or mitigated by communicating with your body, mind, emotions and spirit every day.

How does trusting that your body can heal help the world?

The knowledge we gain about how to care for ourselves expands to how to care for our world. We all need healthy food and clean water. We need a safe, clean environment. We need love and compassion. We can help by applying these principles to others- humans, plants, animals, the air, the water...
to our world.

(End of quote from book)

Healing work with others

Some of you might have an interest in doing healing work with others. I suggest you might want to get some additional training- perhaps in energy healing, fitness training, nutrition, coaching, psychology... or any avenue of the healing path that appeals to you. My background is in energy and sound healing. But in all honestly, the true power in healing is you are there to help your client believe that healing is possible. I believe it's most important to not focus on the removal of a disease but rather seeking wholeness and balance in the person. To help them seek what their life might be missing (as Mr. Braggs suggested in previous paragraphs.) Helping them journey to find answers, meditate to find peace, make time in their lives for the things that are most important to them. Encourage another to believe in the medical protocol that they and their medical professional has chosen for them is very important, even if you personally would not have chosen that path.

Make no promises but do create hopeful visions, pleasant experiences and help them to learn ways to support themselves every day.

Sacred reciprocity meditation

I was in Peru in summer of 2022 studying with the Q'ero people. They taught me so much but their concept of sacred reciprocity is so powerful and an easy tool to incorporate in any culture. Some of you may have done this meditation with me before. There is a video of one version of this on my resource site at [ThisJourney.us](https://www.thisjourney.us). You do have to create an account there but there is no charge. I add you to my monthly mailing list and I think you all are on that already so I recommend it as there are a lot of other resources there.

<https://www.thisjourney.us/view/courses/energy-exchange-through-breathwork/2544473-default-section/8149257-long-version-explanation-and-practice>

To begin, let me talk a bit about the meaning of sacred reciprocity. I use this practice in place of a traditional cord cutting ceremony used in some traditional shamanic circles. The reason is I don't want to teach you anything that you can't do yourself on an ongoing basis. We could do a big cord cutting ceremony and you'd feel good afterward. But the neural pathways of these negative connections still remains in your body. You have to make new habits, new beliefs. I believe that the sacred reciprocity practice is something you can do anytime you need it. Once you understand and feel comfortable with it, you can do it in a breath or two.

Sacred reciprocity means the energy you give out will be available for you to receive in the future. Rather than a score keeping sort of thing, we are talking about a general way of life. When someone asks for my help and I can be of help, then I help because I live in a world that operates best that way. I put my energy into the universal pool of energy and I know that in the future there will be help/ energy/ support for me. My help may not come from the person I help, nor might it come in the way I expect but help will be there for me as the world is built on love and compassion. Yes, I know we were all raised in an old world that was based on fear and greed but the new world is here. The more we live as though our world operates on a system of love and compassion, the more the new loving compassionate world becomes visible.

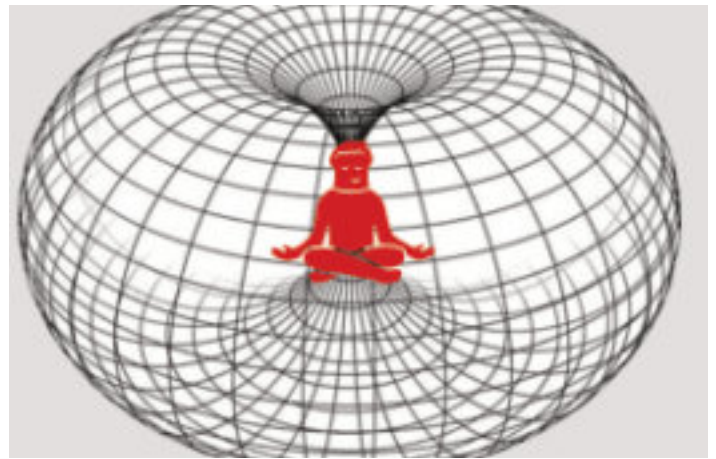
The gist of this practice is that we think about receiving energy from two sources, the Sun and the Earth. The Q'ero use a particular area of the body to release denser energies but for me, it's easier to think of receiving and sending energy from the sun through the top of our head (crown chakra) and receiving and releasing energy to the earth through our feet or our root chakra (base of spine.) As we begin, we settle into meditation seated or lying down.

Breathe in and out naturally for a few breaths. Let your body get comfortable and relaxed. Now imagine, visualize or pretend that on your next inhale, you are pulling in fresh, clear energy from the sun above. You might choose to receive energy from the cosmos, ancestors, god... whatever works in your belief system. It helps some of us to visualize this energy coming in as white light, filling our head, shoulders, torso. Breathe in energy on several inhales as we always want our energy system on full before we start releasing energy. :As you built this bright white light fills you, begin imagining, pretending or visualizing any heavy, denser energy moving down towards your feet. Once fully charged, continuing receiving clear white energy from above but on the exhale release heavier, denser more complicated energy out to the Earth through your feet or base of spine. Receive on the inhale, release on the exhale.

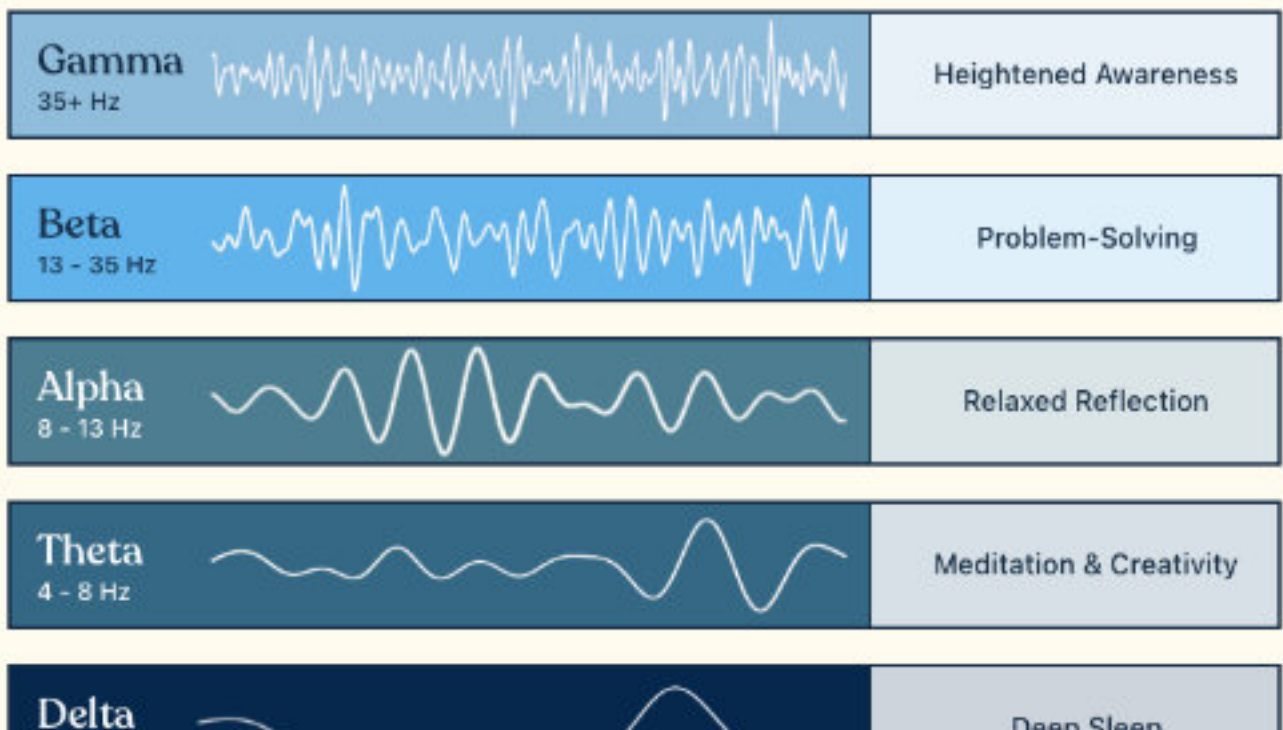
You can release heavier, denser energy to the Earth as to her, it is a resource. You are not dumping your junk on Mother Earth. She takes your complicated energy as though it's rich dark chocolate or a very complex mole and separates the ingredients then channels the parts to some other purpose. Continue receiving and

releasing until you feel lighter and clear.

Now, because you gave your energy to Mother Earth, she now wants to give to you. Ah, Sacred Reciprocity! On an inhale switch your attention down to the Earth and imagine breathing in a rich golden energy from the Earth. This can enter through the soles of your feet or through your root chakra or whatever feels right to you. The Q'ero refer to this energy as PachaMama's nectar. Enjoy this receiving for several breaths, imagining or visualizing this rich golden light energy mixing with the white light received from the sun. After several breaths, when you feel ready, you can begin exhaling this mixed white gold energy out through the top of your head, giving back to the Sun for its gift of white light. Sacred Reciprocity. Continue this exchange, receiving from below and releasing to the above for several breaths. I like to end this practice by imagining a continual energy flow between earth, me and the sky. My mental picture is a sort of toroid with me in the middle with energy flowing both directions. Ahhhh.



So we did the long version of the meditation. Once you get comfortable with this practice and you're feeling heavy, dense energy or a connection to something from your past, an ugly memory- breathe in fresh clean energy from above and release your heaviness to the Earth. It can give you instant relief. Sometime later in the day, I suggest taking a bit more time with the practice to get the flow moving and have time to return the energies given. Although neither the Sun nor the Earth keep score. Returning the favors is just part of a balanced life from the shaman's perspective.



Drums

Drums and rattles are very powerful to a shaman's work to shift consciousness and create deep meditative states. How they understood in ancient times, we don't exactly know but today we do understand the science behind this powerful practice.

Our brains produce energy as a vibration, or brain waves. There are five types of brain waves: Delta (± 0.5 to 4 Hz), theta (4-8 Hz), alpha (8-13 Hz), and beta (13-35 Hz) and gamma (35 Hz and up.)

Our brainwaves are often in Beta during daily life. I remember that by thinking Busy Beta. When we work on relaxing or meditating, we can move down into Alpha (which also would be the brainwave of being in a flow state) or Theta (deeper meditation.) Entrainment is a term which explains how things in a particular rhythm or cycle tend to synchronize with similar objects in rhythm nearby. So a room full of pendulum clocks will all tick together. Women who live in the same house will find their menstrual cycles begin to coincide. Brainwaves will also entrain to a steady rhythm of a drum or rattle.

So the shaman will play a drum or rattle at a particular rate, I use about 4 hz, which is 240 beats per minute. This is a powerful tool to help you relax and slow down your busy brain.

Types of drums- depending which tradition you study with, your instructor may use a different sort of drum. Shamanic traditions and many native Americans use a frame drum. These drums have a circular frame that can be a hoop or individual pieces. They can be the most cost-effective drums for you to start out with.

Drums are made with natural or synthetic materials. The drum I use for journeying is a non-traditional synthetic drum. I like this drum because it's loud and low and weather proof. I resonate with it. It costs less than \$100. Other frame drums have wooden frames and leather drum head (the surface you strike.) The sound is different depending on size and materials. These drums should be protected from humidity and temperature extremes

Many in shamanic traditions recommend a frame type drum made from natural materials. They may suggest the drum be made with proper intention for these purposes. I'm not saying they're wrong, but my intention in drumming seems to be the most important thing. I can buy a very expensive beautiful handmade drum and not get good response from a person or a group because my intentions aren't in the right place.

African healing traditions use a goblet shaped drum. There are many styles but the most common to me is a djembe (pronounced gem- bay). These drums are also available in natural and synthetic materials and in many sizes. They can be more costly than frame drums however, a handmade frame drum can be costly also.

Note that drum heads can break. A leather drum will have to be repaired and those repairs can be costly. With a synthetic head drum, you just buy a new head, disassemble the drum and replace it yourself.



Rattles

Rattles are another favored instrument to help you or your clients shift consciousness levels. You use the same rhythms. You can try drumming and rattling together but ... that's a bit much for most of us.

There are many kinds of rattles- some purchased, some homemade. Have a clean dry empty can with a plastic lid that fits it? Or a small juice bottle with a tight-fitting lid. Throw in un-popped corn, beans, small stones and voila... a rattle. Rattles are a common instrument to a percussionist so you'll also find options at a music store.

What to play?

When wishing to lead someone into an altered state of consciousness, the optimum rhythm is about 4-8 hz or 4-8 beats per second. I stay around 4 beats and while we will practice with a metronome, perfection is not our goal. We are trying to keep the mind engaged with listening to the rhythm. If the beat stays perfectly steady, the mind will get bored quickly and wander off to worry or making shopping lists. So the small variations is what keeps the mind engaged. And as it's engaged with your Theta rate beat, it slows down, calms down and opens to exploration in journeying.

Try counting seconds to yourself, "one one thousand, two one thousand, three one thousand" and practice 4 claps per second.

To lead a group in journeying

There is wonderful shamanic drum and journey group in our area. They have developed a great routine that works so well. They have people bring drums and they start off with a drum circle, with everyone improvising but the leader keeps a beat with a loud deep drum. The group probably plays for 10 minutes. Then they pass a talking stick around the circle and let the participants talk about how they are or what's going on with them. These are often less than a minute but sometimes people share for longer. No one has to share but it's a good way to help the group get to know each other. Then they might drum as a group again or the leader might choose to start the journeying. The playing and chatting get people slowed down and opened up so journeying is easier. This group meets for 3 hours total so they have time to drum, talk and often complete 2 journeys. You can find Bay View Drum & Journey Circle on Facebook or visit their website at <https://drumjourneycircle.squarespace.com/circles>

Your first handout as a section on "how to journey" that you can read to your group. Invite participants to bring yoga mat, pillow and blanket or you can journey in a chair. Explain that they should set an intention, choosing which world to journey to or if they're beginners, suggest a lower world trip. Demonstrate the drum rhythm you'll be using. You should plan to allow a group 10-20 minutes to journey. 10 minutes for the first time, 20 is a good standard. Let them hear how you plan to vary the drum beat so they'll know it's time to return. I play the rhythm for about 18 minutes then use 4 slow loud beats to indicate it's time to thank whoever they might have been visiting with and start coming back. After the 4 slow beats, I go back to the original rhythm for about another minute or so, sometimes playing slower and softer at the end to sort of bring them in for a soft landing. Speak clearly but softly to them, suggesting they're back, might want to bring a bit of motion to fingers and toes, maybe stretch a bit. And remind them it's a good time to journal what they remember from their journey.

Finding your tools and methods to help yourself and others

This is such an important point and we've talked about it before. This isn't a step 1, step 2, step 3 course. Many do teach standard tools that all shamans "should know" but I don't believe that is how we can be most effective in our healing journeys. We each resonate with different practices, different methods, different environments. I might not be very effective with a client that hates the outdoors because to me, that's the greatest source of healing power. You might be most effective with movement, sound, healing, color, food, nature, water, herbals, energy... oh, the list goes on and on. I want to open a few doors for you so you feel empowered to go seek your best paths.

Today I thought we'd talk about what you might have done with your piece of driftwood from last week. I know that it might carry it's most power if you did nothing to it. But if you played with it, let's chat about that a bit.

Ways to use the skills we've been exploring without saying "lets do shaman stuff." (grin) My goal has always been to teach you ancient skills that you might use in new ways, in needed ways in these changing times.

First, what are your gifts?

If cooking is your love language, you might invite a few friends over for soup and bread and have a project, like learning about healing teas?

If music is a strength, could you teach people songs or chants or drumming. Drumming is actually a great activity. You'll be surprised how it appeals to all ages. You don't need drums. 5 gal plastic buckets and drumsticks or wooden spoons work great. You could then close back taking the group on a little drum "meditation" suggesting they imagine a journey to their happy place if you don't think a discussion of shamanic journeying is appropriate.

If you're a nature lover and want to lead a walk in a park, I love to have the group explore how many shades of green they see, explore the different textures of bark, and spend 5-10 minutes leaning their back against a tree while breathing and listening. Do watch for poison ivy etc when choosing places to do this.

Gathering fall leaves or wild flowers and making a mandala is always fun. That might be a fun project for our final class?

A simple breathing practice is fun. You can ask people to breathe gently, and imagine releasing a bit of their worries or stress on the exhale. Play some soft music and let them practice for 5 minutes or so then allow them to share about their experience.

If smudging and herbs are an interest, you might bring samples of different materials and pass containers around the circle explaining how different herbs can change our moods and our bodies.

Your homework for next time is to think about ways you might choose to use your new skills. No one has to do any of these, just asking you to work your imagination and expand your role in your family or community if the opportunity arises.

Healing drumming ceremony- and Journey to the upper world.

So far we've journeyed to lower and middle world. You also learned that you are in charge of deciding where you want to go. So today's intent it to explore the upper work. You do you.

As a review- all these categories are fluid depending on your imagination, expectations and beliefs. I don't meet angels in the upper world but I don't seek that sort of thing out. I do meet etherial beings and aliens. Who knows. Sliding from one world to another happens. Just relax and enjoy the journey.

Lower world- we journey downward, generally into nature, sometimes underwater! It's a place of earthy appetites, subconscious values. Here we might be spirit guides or spirit animals.

Middle world- You're wandering this life, your life, in your current role but imagine the veil between the seen and the unseen is gone. You might see elemental beings (fairies and such) or have heightened intuition or psychic powers

Upper world- we float, fly or take an elevator upward. Here we're more in a spirit world, a higher realm, you might meet spirit guides, ancestors or angels.

As always, first set an intention for your journey. Settle in to a comfortable place. Allow your attention to rest on your breath, your safe little nest, your intention. To journey into the middle world, we are still seeking an opening but here it comes more like walking through a door, pushing through a veil, slipping behind a curtain. Allow the drum to settle you down. When you get stuck or lost, think of your intention and listen to the drum. Relax and enjoy. When the drum beat shifts, it's time to come back. Thank anyone you visited with and find your way back here. When you're back in the body fully, grab your journal and make some notes and your visions will float away like last night's dreams.

Next time, we're planning-4- Ceremony and ritual- Ceremony for yourself and as community service, 2 or more. Your role as a guide for yourself and your community. Guiding positive transformation in yourself and others. Guiding a journey- Singing, chanting, creative sound or art in healing- Journey 4

Have fun!

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