



CHAKRA TONING— A WAY OF EXPERIENCING PERSONAL BALANCE AND HARMONY

In several of the sound trainings I offer, as well as at a variety of community sound events I have facilitated in the past, chakra toning has been incorporated as a means of bringing balance and harmony into our own, or another person's energy field.

There are various ways of working with sounds and the chakras, but this article is going to discuss the use of using vowel sounds which are considered sacred by many cultures and traditions

throughout the world. Sound healers recognise that the voice is probably our greatest musical instrument, and indeed a very powerful one, allowing for a deep resonance on a cellular level, and is an instrument which can be used by anyone, at any time, and in any place. In toning the sacred vowels, we are not chanting or singing words to a specific rhythm, we are creating sound by breathing in and then creating an extended vowel sound for as long as we are able, allowing the vibration to have an effect on both our physical body and also our subtle energy bodies.

Chakras are spirals of concentrated life force located in the subtle energy body starting from the base of spine and extending to the top of the head. In Sanskrit, the word chakra means “wheel” through which universal energy flows in and out of a person. These energy centres carry with them profound emotional and psychological associations, and on a spiritual level, each chakra is the site of a specific consciousness with its own specific set of values. They represent a ladder of personal, psychological and spiritual growth. There are seven major chakras and many secondary and tertiary ones. If a chakra becomes blocked, congested or partially closed, this will have a profound impact on not only the physical body, but also the entire subtle energy body. Initially this will manifest perhaps as mental or emotional disturbance, but if prolonged, physical disease will occur. By using the vowel sounds for toning the chakras with intention, the flow of energy within the chakra is balanced and restored, our energy system resonates at a much healthier vibration. Just a few minutes of chakra toning can make a huge difference, and it is interesting to compare how one feels before and after a 20 minute chakra toning practise, to see how profoundly it impacts us on a psychological and physical level.



It's always good to get together in community to tone, as the more people toning, the more incredible the energy we generate through the power of sound. When you have several people toning at one time, the room can sound like it holds some heavenly angelic choir, and the effects on the individuals within the group are amplified. However, it is just as effective to tone on one's own, and can add a very valuable part to one's own personal practise.

When toning sit comfortably with your spine as straight as possible so that the energy may flow as free as possible. Toning on its own is powerful in its own right, but for those who practise Reiki, you can enhance the toning session by placing your hands on each chakra as you make the relevant vowel sound, channelling Reiki as you tone with the intention that Reiki and the vocal sounds you are making clear and balance that energy centre. It can be good to focus on the element or colour associated with the chakra as you tone. As an example, when making the vowel sound for the root chakra, you could focus on the element of earth, intending that the root chakra is cleared and aligned and you are grounded and secure in your place on the Earth. Alternatively as you tone, visualise the colour red, the colour associated with the root chakra, and feel



vibration of this colour fill your energy field with vitality. For those of you who practise Yantra meditation, a visualisation and concentration technique which incorporates the use of symbols within the chakras, then you can tone and focus on the relevant symbol, in the case of the root chakra, a yellow square. It is also possible to incorporate movement as you tone, making specific movements which are symbolic of the chakra you are working on - walking around as you tone the vowel sound for the root chakra or circling the hips for the sacral chakra. For those of you who work shamanically with Power Animals, as you tone each chakra ask an animal to present itself to you for each different chakra and see what unfolds.

The simplicity of this practise is one of its advantages. As you sit with your spine straight, relax your body, letting go of any tension, take a few deep breaths, then on the next out breath allow the vowel to be toned for as long as you are able without straining. Take another breath and repeat. Toning should be done gently and there is no need to worry about what pitch or note you are making, just see what comes, allowing your voice to dictate the sound. Often when an energy centre needs a little more work than others, the sounds seem quite discordant to start with until the energy becomes clearer. There is no wrong or right as is more often the case when we do work of this nature. You do not have to be musical or have an excellent singing voice to do this practise or really benefit from its effects. When toning on your own explore the depth of the sound, start gently but raise the volume if it feels appropriate, without straining. However, when toning in a group, it's always best to allow your voice to merge with those of the others toning with you. If your voice stands out above everyone else in terms of volume, then the harmony and oneness of the group experience is affected.

You can choose to work through each energy centre in sequence starting from the root and finishing at the crown or vice versa, or you may spend your toning practise working intuitively with your own energy field, making the vowel sounds which are most important for you at the time. As you tone become aware of the effects of the sound on your physical body, your emotions, and your thinking. Listen to the sounds you are making and be aware of the vibrations in different areas of your body. As the toning progresses, focus how the energy is changing in that area. I have found that 20 minutes is a good time period for a daily personal practise, but you can do less or more. When toning the chakras in sequence, it is good to have a small silence at the end of each chakra vowel toning segment to really appreciate the work you have done. Tone for about 2-3 minutes per centre. If you are working intuitively then just go with the flow of what feels right. You may wish to start slowly and build up the time you spend toning. In larger toning groups I have been part of, I have taken part in toning periods of up to twelve hours, so don't worry too much about overdoing it! At the end of your toning period give yourself a little time to ground yourself.



Many different traditions work with vowel toning in this way, and some of them differ in the vowel sounds they attribute to each chakra. In the following table I have listed the vowel sounds and correspondences I personally use but should you wish to try other vowel sounds and correspondences according to other traditions, then please do.

| Chakra | Vowel Sound | Sanskrit | Element | Colour | Yantra Meditation |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|--------|----------------------------------|
| Root | Uh | Muladhara | Earth | Red | Yellow Square |
| Sacral | Ooo | Svadhastana | Water | Orange | Silver Crescent Moon |
| Solar Plexus | Oh | Manipura | Fire | Yellow | Inverted Red Triangle |
| Heart | Ah | Anahata | Air | Green | Blue Hexagram (Six Pointed Star) |
| Throat | Eye | Visuddha | Ether | Blue | Black Oval |
| Brow | Aye | Ajna | Light | Indigo | White Whirling Circle |
| Crown | Eee | Sahasrara | Space/All | White | Point of White Light |

There are numerous benefits to vowel toning. As a meditation, this type of practise helps to relieve tension and stress from both the physical and energy body. It is not uncommon for people to have deep transcendental inner experiences, visions, and altered states of consciousness. Repressed emotions often come to the surface to be made conscious and let go of, resulting in a more peaceful, blissful state of being. Toning can both relax and energise due to its balancing nature on the mind and body and the increase in universal life force energy. It develops focus and concentration and a greater awareness of one's own current state of health energetically. On a physical level toning in this way allows for greater breath control and improved breathing with resultant greater oxygenation of the body and brain. It is said to have a neurochemical effect on the body, releasing endorphins, our feel good chemicals, hence contributing to our feeling of well being, boosting our immune system, and lowering blood pressure. It rejuvenates at a cellular level, improves circulation, and can alleviate pain. As mentioned earlier, when toning together in a group, there comes about a real sense of "oneness", love and connection.

Sarah runs several workshops and events which incorporate chakra vowel toning as a healing modality. Please contact her at info@reikidrum.co.uk for further information or telephone 01279 600104.

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