

Shamanic Meditation Listening Study 3

Introduction

This study compares the effects of three shamanic meditation soundscapes. The goal of the soundscapes is to help create and maintain an altered state of consciousness, a deep meditative state characterised by strong theta brainwaves. The brainwave entrainment in the soundscapes was developed in my doctoral research (2021), it relies on the method of auditory entrainment often called frequency following response or sonic driving and my understanding of how this method has been used for shamanic journeying in shamanic traditions.

This entrainment in all three soundscapes is based on computer-generated drumming that should help you increase the power of your theta brainwaves. The first soundscape is the most minimal sounding one, the second has additional sound effects and my acoustic drumming, and the third expands on these instruments with additional binaural beats pulsating in sync with the tempo of the computer-generated drumming.

A summary of what each soundscape contains:

soundscape 1: computer-generated drumming and a few sound effects | <https://tedor.bandcamp.com/track/k> (30 minutes long)

soundscape 2: computer-generated drumming and more sound effects + my drumming on an acoustic frame drum | <https://tedor.bandcamp.com/track/jester-original> (20 minutes long)

soundscape 3: computer-generated drumming and more sound effects + my drumming on an acoustic frame drum + binaural beats | <https://tedor.bandcamp.com/track/jester-binaural-beats-version> (20 minutes long)

You can listen to these soundscapes online with the links provided above or email me for download instructions e.g. if your internet connection is not fast enough for uninterrupted streaming.

You are encouraged to participate in the study several times i.e. do several sessions and to experiment with each of the three soundscapes at least once in order to find out which could support your meditation practice the most. For each session you can freely choose the soundscape you would like to listen to. By experimenting with all, I hope that you can find one that you can carry on using for a few months, ideally at least once a week.

The estimated completion time for one session is between 30-40 minutes long, including the 20-30 minute listening part with eyes closed.

What is shamanic journeying? Shamanic journeying aims to take participants on a trip to a nonordinary reality, traditionally through drumming. Participants are often encouraged to ask for clarity on a specific personal question in the journey.

How are the soundscapes in this study different from the traditional shamanic forms? In my soundscapes you will hear audio of drumming largely based on the traditional shamanic methods, but with additional sound textures and more diverse rhythms becoming gradually more concentrated.

What are the binaural beats in the third soundscape? Similarly to the rhythmic entrainment employed in the drumming, binaural beats are also proposed to alter the state of mind by entraining selected brainwaves. In

principle, binaural beats and shamanic drumming are similar in how they use monotone pulses, however as binaural beats is a perceptual phenomenon in the brain i.e. they are created inside your brain, they need to be listened to through headphones. As binaural beats is still a new technology to research, I would discourage the following risk groups to take part in the study:

- epileptics
- pregnant women
- those wearing a pacemaker
- those prone to seizures

If you fall into at least one of these groups or have concerns in regards to binaural beats, auditory entrainment or are sensitive to unknown sounds, please do not participate in the study.

Each meditation session has these three parts:

Part 1: Before listening (2 min)

A few enquiries about how you feel before the meditation.

Part 2: Listening (20-30 min)

You will be asked to freely choose one out of the three soundscapes provided and then listen to this soundscape with your eyes closed. The following conditions will need to be met for each listening part:

- your environment has to be comfortable, safe and undisturbed throughout the listening
- you have to avoid eating for at least two hours before your listening to make sure your body is not concentrating on digestion
- you have to use headphones

Part 3: After listening (10 min)

A few enquiries about how you feel after the meditation. In this part, you will also be encouraged to interpret your experiences textually with writing or visually with drawing.

Personal data and consent

If you would like to participate in the study, please answer the following questions, sign and date this document and return it to me via email.

1. Please give yourself a random nickname:

2. Which category below includes your age?

- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55-64
- ☐ 65+

3. What is your gender?

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male

☐ Other (please specify)

4. What is your current religion or belief, if any?

5. How often do you meditate?

☐ Often

☐ Sometimes

☐ Rarely

☐ Never

If you meditate, please provide some details about your techniques:

6. How many shamanic journeys have you had before?

☐ 0

☐ 1

☐ 2-10

☐ 10-25

☐ 25+

Your responses will be collected anonymously, analysed for scientific research purposes and results may be disseminated through conference presentations, publications and public engagement events. By signing this document you are providing consent to participate in this study.

Please sign and date below:

Please return the completed document to me via email at kris@khofstadter.info. If you have any questions before enrolling or during the study, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

Yours sincerely,
Krisztián Hofstädter