

HEALING THE PLANET WITH SOUND

Explorations with Soul Voice® founder, Karina Shelde

By Chip Richards

I remember the first time I heard it... I forgot my wetsuit that morning, so I was shivering as I paddled out into the spring waves, but the water was so crystal clear, it felt like it was calling me... and I knew I had to answer. As I reached the deeper sapphire waters out past the break, I slid off my surfboard and dove down deep – something the buoyancy of my forgotten wetsuit would not have allowed. I swam down as far as I could go, where all is silent and still... And as I stretched through morning sunrays, I suddenly heard him in the distance... His hauntingly peaceful hymn, echoing through the water... moving to and through me. Up for air and I see his breath plume up on the horizon as well... I dive back down to listen. This ancient song that has circled the globe for millions of years. This song that continues to change and evolve, yet is sung in unison by all within a thousand miles. This song that unifies and guides the way of all who hear and join its chorus.

It has been said that the songlines of Whales weave a sonic web of energy through Earth's waters... that the frequency and vibration of their singing actually helps to keep the magnetic fields of our planet in balance. As the pulse of this Humpback sonnet encircles me, I feel the truth of this theory to the core of my being. For a moment I sing back with my own garbled bubbling from the depths, then I rise to the surface with a yearning question permeating my being... How can we begin to access the primordial energy of our own voice in such a way that it contributes to the harmony and balance of life – in our own bodies and the living body of our planet?

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I recently had the gift of spending a few days with global sound healing pioneer and the founder of the Soul Voice™ program and method, Karina Schelde, where we explored this question and more on the eve of her recent European workshop tour.

“To me, sound is the synergizer.” Says Karina, whose 21 year journey into sound evolved from an in-depth background of breath work, body work, shamanic healing, counseling and theatre. “Humans are resonant beings. Our cells and those of all life forms are made up of vibrational energy. So sound is the building block of everything. Every word we speak carries the tone of our sound as an instrument of communication and healing. Understanding how to tune and use this instrument effectively shifts not only our own consciousness, but also that of those who receive and hear our sounds.”

“This is where we must turn first in our efforts to heal the planet. To awaken our own innate capacities by using the voice with intention, as a healing vessel through all the systems of our own body – mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually. There is no more potent medium for this than sound.”

We have all felt the transformational effect that sound can have on our experience... In the natural world we are brought into profound peace through the whispers of a breeze, the rhythm of waves or the chorus of birds, frogs and crickets. In the human world, the sound of voice and music have a way of powerfully shifting the energy of any space – be it a concert hall, temple or a child's bedroom. Beyond the realm of the mind, and often more direct than words alone, sound has a way of penetrating straight to the emotional center of our being.

“The key is accessing the emotional body,” says Karina. “We know whenever we sing, cry or sigh, there is an expression of emotional release, and this is a vital element for accessing the power of sound. The emotional body is the most suffering body in the planet. As we let ourselves really go into the feeling of our sounds, and allow them to guide us, we start to unravel the layers of our own subconscious where genuine healing can really take place. With this awakening of our emotional center, comes our direct communion with higher consciousness.”

Through time, sound has always been considered a gateway between humans and the Divine. Karina believes that our voice has a ‘soul print’ that we have, since birth, been trying to come in contact with. It is as unique as our fingerprints, and acts as a map to our body, our personal and collective stories, our ancestral roots and soul's aspiration. Through various Soul Voice? techniques, she guides students step by step to unravel deeper layers of this cellular memory and latent capacity.? Through her workshops and certificate programs, students learn to access their own primordial

energy through sound frequencies, bringing them into contact with what Karina calls our original 'sound language'. "In the western world we put so much power outside ourselves – into our computer, our doctor, our boss, etc..." say Karina. "So much projection keeping us from turning to the infinite power within. But there is a cry, a call deep within our hearts that wants to be heard. We long to liberate and rediscover the grandeur of who we truly are... a force of the highest vibration and creation. I am continually awed by how sound brings us back into our body, and empowers us to make real and profound shifts in our experience – and our world – from the inside out."

So how do we begin to find our way back to this pure expression of Self through sound? The first real step, according to Karina, is to create a space of acceptance within ourselves and our surroundings. "It is vital for us to feel comfortable and willing to explore our own sound energy," says Karina. "We have to learn to accept all that comes out of us, because our trained tendency is to say, 'Oh this can't be right. This doesn't sound good. I'm awful.' But the truth is, the more we can accept and allow the sounds that come, the more things begin to really open up in magical ways." It is fascinating to consider that we are the only creatures on the planet who question and constrict the most natural expression of who we are. For most of creation, the clear and potent expression of self is tied very closely to survival, to the fulfillment of needs and the continuation of each species as a whole. And though we may not realize it, perhaps the same is true for humanity and the many imbalances we now experience in society and the world around us... What if the harmony and balance of the whole actually depended on each of us hearing and responding to that deep call within?

I have always resonated with the idea that we all have a vital role – or note – to play in the Divine balance and symphony of Life. Just as the whales and birds sing, the bees hum, the frogs croak, we are here to sound the essence of who we are and sing our note of contribution to the whole. If not us than who? If not now, then when?

It is quite profound to consider that one of the best ways for us to connect with our 'true voice' and 'higher calling' in life, is to quite literally liberate the voice within our body. As Karina says, "When we let go of the linear brain through sound, we begin to open ourselves to this original self and all of its many layers. It's like coming back to the indigenous essence of our true self. And in this way we are grounding our greater capacities into our physical bodies, into our experience and of course into our connection with the Earth."

According to Karina, one of the first most vital steps to healing the planet with sound is to learn once again to LISTEN. "We must first fine tune our listening skills so we may once again begin to HEAR the calling of this planet, and to really know what is needed – individually and collectively. From there we have to realize that it's not an individual journey. We cannot do this alone. It's about standing together and building up strong community."

In Karina's work, students are constantly propelled to practice and take the work further with their sound family and partners in the Soul Voice "Sound Tribe". "Doing this work together is what makes it so potent in the long run," says Karina. "When people have journeyed far on the path of working with sound, and they are sounding together, the resonant field that we send out becomes so much more strong and potent."

According to Karina, the effect of sound when a group is gathered is way beyond what we think it is, therefore she believes that it is very important to educate people what we are doing. "Because on a deeper level," says Karina. "The sound can only resonate in congruence with the energy of those who are singing and the openness of those who are receiving. It's not about just breaking down all the walls with sound. Sound works very fast, but people have to be ready for it, so we have to work step-by-step."

"The more people gathering in this way, the stronger the effect will be, but more important even than the number of people, is the purity of intent and the level at which those participating have refined their own instrument. With sound the work is just so powerful. It really needs to be used consciously, because it is like tuning the instruments of a great earth symphony."

"On a bigger scale the energy and focus potential of what sound can do – for troubled areas, for institutions and for the Earth herself – is way beyond what we can imagine."

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It's dawn on the eastern-most point of Australia. Solstice morning and a group has gathered on the stony rise above the sea, to sing in a new day. As the mist of waves and sprinkling rain sweep across the point, we begin to sound a simple chant... a call... a blessing to the waters. As the sound of human voices rise, the rain begins to pour – as if the Earth herself is responding, baptizing all who have gathered. Clearing these sound vessels to sing from greater depths. Several minutes pass and the chanting song finishes, but from it emerges something else... a spontaneous and primordial harmony, as each person answers the unique call of their own expression within this growing whole. Like the whales have done for so many millions of years, we each seek to find our own voice within the energy of a song that is shared by all... A pulse of genuine unity and peace sent out across the waters of this living planet... As the breath of our voices finally come to silence, the sun emerges from the clouds and the whales arrive in the waters below. We stand in quiet acknowledgment, having answered our own inner call, and in turn been answered.

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