

Toning for Peace Facilitator Guidelines

Thank you for your interest in starting a Toning for Peace(T4P) Vocal Toning Circle! This guide was created in order to walk you through the process of becoming a Circle Host and establishing your circle. *Please read it very carefully.*

We are just beginning to reclaim the power that awaits us in group toning. Group toning is what will awaken humanity. It will pop us all out of the collective dream and land us firmly in our authenticity. It is a means of travel, a portal-creating exercise. Humanity is poised to experience profound breakthroughs through the practice of group toning. Toning facilitators are on the cusp of this expansion serving as midwives to humanity's birth into its next phase here on earth.

Anyone is welcome to become a T4P Circle Host regardless of experience and training. The only thing that is required is interest and a willingness to use your voice freely as well as a desire to encourage others to do the same. Your circle may be private (invitation only) or public. In other words, you may choose to simply invite a group of your friends over to explore vocally or you may want to rent space, advertise, and welcome anyone who shows up (do I have to add “as long as they are not harmful or disruptive?” I didn't think so.). Toning for Peace circles are by donation events, so please keep this in mind when planning your circle.

LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

While anyone can become a T4P Circle Host, there are certain restrictions. Those wanting to have more freedom may be interested in the training available through The Voice of Life to become a T4P Facilitator or Certified Vocal Toning Meditation Practitioner (CVTMP). The levels of involvement available are described below.

Toning for Peace Circle Hosts

As already mentioned, anyone can become a Toning for Peace Circle Host by filling out the online or attached application. There are no fees involved, and you don't need any special training other than the guidelines suggested in this handout. All T4P circles are *by donation* events. So while you may ask for a love offering, you may **not** set a suggested donation. And absolutely **no one** should be turned away due to lack of funds. Please keep this in mind when considering the costs of advertising your circle. However, most communities have local newspapers or magazines that offer inexpensive or free calendars listings. You may also need to rent a meeting space. Some churches or other organizations may be willing to let you use their space for free or for a percentage of any donations received. This is how Toning for Peace was started at the Light Center in Black Mountain in 2008. Circle Hosts are also asked to tithe a percentage of donations received back to Toning for Peace. The rest is yours. This is completely a matter of honor on your part and not managed by The Voice of Life. This is explained in more detail later.

Toning for Peace Facilitators

By working through Level I Training of Vocal Toning Meditation, you can become a Toning for Peace Facilitator. The advantage to this level of involvement is of course the training in vocal toning which includes a great deal of practice and methodology allowing you to work with groups in more in-depth ways. Further details of the program requirements for obtaining T4P Facilitator status are available at http://www.thevoiceoflife.com/certification_17.html. The expertise you gain can then be used to offer your own unique workshops for which you can set a suggested donation keeping the proceeds for your efforts (but if you decide to tithe back from these as well as the circles, it will be most welcome!). Workshops can be offered before or after regular circles that you host or at any other time that works for you. Keep in mind that circles you host will still need to be donation-based. As we grow and our funding allows, we plan to list at no charge all Facilitators on the Voice of Life website to include contact and event information.

Vocal Toning Meditation Certified Practitioners

Those with a love of this path wishing to deepen their practice and offerings to others may complete Level II of Vocal Toning Meditation and become a Certified Practitioner. Certified Practitioners are endorsed to work both with individuals one on one and with groups facilitating workshops. They may also charge *any* fee for their workshops. While the proceeds of your workshops are yours to keep, tithing back to

Toning for Peace is encouraged to help keep us strong and growing. As we grow and our funding allows, we plan to list at no charge all Certified Practitioners on the Voice of Life website to include contact and event information, a photo, and a link to your personal site or page. Further details of the requirements for obtaining T4P Facilitator status are available at http://www.thevoiceoflife.com/certification_17.html. This, too, is a separate application from this form.

VOCAL TONING APPROACH

Whether or not you want to become a Facilitator or Practitioner, it would be extremely helpful for those with no toning experience to invest in the Vocal Toning Meditation Level One Foundations CD Set available at http://www.thevoiceoflife.com/certification_17.html. You'll get some excellent background information, learn warm-ups and various approaches to toning, as well as have opportunities to practice along with the CD.

Toning for Peace Circles are meant to be experiential. You won't be offering any instruction per se. Rather, you are serving as the example for the rest of the group. There are two basic types of sounding that your group can try, straight toning and free form toning. Straight toning is the more traditional form of vocal toning and tends to be easier for beginners whereas free form toning lends itself more to improvisation and experimentation. Both are powerful and offer many rewards. The differences are

outlined below. Feel free to share this information with members of your group or discuss it before toning sessions. You can decide what the focus of your group will be.

Straight Toning

- can be done alone or in a group
- hones our listening skills
- resonates the bodies (physical, mental, emotional, etc)
- utilizes “vitalized breath”
- provides all the benefits of singing
- more restrictive
- tends to focus on pure vowels and more specific syllables
- typically one pitch per exhalation
- is more disciplined
- straight forward

Free Form Toning

- can be done alone or in a group
- hones our listening skills
- resonates the bodies (physical, mental, emotional, etc)

- utilizes “vitalized breath”
- provides all the benefits of singing
- allows for more variety
- includes an endless combo of syllables/sounds
- can change dramatically within one breath
- can include rhythm-making (tapping, clapping, etc.)
- lends itself more to letting go
- is more like singing/utilizes more improvisational skills

Free Form Toning in a group is probably my most favorite of all practices and how I have been conducting Toning for Peace circles in North Carolina. I find that it has the deepest impact on my physical, mental, emotional and spiritual bodies with the ability to balance my brain and help me shift into altered states of consciousness. It is wonderful when you can bathe yourself not only in your own voice, but in the collective voices of others as well, each expressing individuality. Because it is beyond language, I find myself able to relate to each person present in a much deeper way. It is a universal language. Free form toning gives everyone involved an opportunity to experience Oneness *and* Individuality at the same time.

Free form toning requires that we let go. The more we do it, the deeper we are able to surrender. In that state of surrender, we open ourselves to both give and receive

messages from the Divine, unadulterated by our egos and mental constructs. We begin to trust and obey a deeper impulse, one that arises not from habit, right or wrong, punishment or reward, but rather from essence. We make discoveries. We become enchanted. Done in a group, free toning is a door to an amazing mystery school.

The magic of free form toning is that there is no wrong or right way. Done in a group, everyone is free to discover his or her own path within the framework of toning. What arises spontaneously is always different because the group is always different, and it is always perfect. And the group becomes the teacher. What happens is a metaphor for our daily lives. We clash, we crash, we arise from the flames, we soar, we merge, we clash again, we compromise, we rediscover ourselves, we reclaim our power. We enter joy, peace, love, and light itself. This is the promise of free form toning with others.

A VERY IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR ALL CIRCLE HOSTS

I appreciate your contributions to the mission of Toning for Peace. I would like to take a moment to address something very important to facilitating. We all know the potential of toning to sound beautiful, angelic, and transcendent. Of course, we want to share that beauty with others. But sometimes, that isn't where a session goes. Toning for Peace was built on the premise of “freestyle” toning, allowing individuals to find their own “sound.”

It is important to remember these toning sessions offered through Toning for

Peace are meant to be experiential. They are practice sessions, a safe space for exploration. Your task as facilitator is to provide that safe space for participants to unravel and discover their voices. For that reason, every expression must be made to feel welcome. This takes a great deal of awareness and at times compassion but always a trust in the larger process taking place.

Many of you are already aware that each group you facilitate will be completely different based on who shows up. Obviously, a circle of singers is going to be more skilled and sound “better” than a group of untrained voices, just as a group of harmonious souls will sound different than a group of dissonant souls. There is no good or bad in the equation; the results will just be different. Generally speaking, the larger the group, the easier it will be to compensate for greater dissonance, but again, that will depend on who makes up the group. The point is to be prepared and accepting of whatever arises. The process of healing occurs independent of us as facilitators...but only if we allow it. It should not be manipulated, bypassed, sped up, or denied.

While we want to welcome all sounds and help people to feel safe, we are also here to encourage participants to move out of comfort zones into new territory helping them achieve new sounds, freer sounds, deeper listening, and authenticity. You will come to know intuitively those moments when something needs to be said about deeper listening, blending, attention seeking, or authentic sounding. You will also recognize those times when you serve best by allowing and trusting that others will learn these

lessons on their own without intervention. If you note a participant is getting stuck in a vocal habit over time, say, they repeatedly voice more loudly than anyone else or perhaps just the opposite, they repeatedly hold back, that is the time to gently encourage them out of their habit...possibly by addressing the group with generalities or a specific practice.

It is delightful when our sounds mesh and everyone is paying attention, but remember that by and large, the people who attend Toning for Peace aren't necessarily singers. It would be unfair and even limiting of us to mold them into some “acceptable” form of expression based on our judgments of what sounds good. In essence, when we do, we are repeating and reinforcing the damage already done to expression as a divine thing. So I hope you can all find equal delight in those times when your group is releasing, not really paying attention, or searching for its equilibrium.

We know the exhilaration that awaits and at times, we just want everyone to “go there”. It can be challenging to hold back from “managing” and wanting to steer the process. So, what do we do when we find ourselves in reaction to what is happening during an event we are facilitating? First, notice that you are in reaction. Track your thoughts, judgments, and resistance and use it for your own healing. Ask yourself what is disturbing you and why. Does it remind you of something or carry associations? What is it that makes it difficult to be with? What is making you uncomfortable? Where are you uncomfortable in your body? Why is this holding your attention? We all

know that what we focus on increases. If we get wrapped up in judgments during a facilitation, it will pull us out of the moment, and we will miss the beauty of what is. We won't be listening. We won't be holding space. So, in those moments, how can you work with what is occurring to create harmony within yourself? How can you bring yourself into acceptance?

The more we surrender to the process, the less the “weirdness” and “dissonance” bothers us and pulls our attention. Instead, we find ourselves focusing on our personal experience of harmony and begin to hear beyond what we've heard before, hearing immense beauty and truth where once we only heard noise. And we find ourselves like masterful conductors who become the music, able to weave, bob, and dance with whatever sound palette we are offered in the moment. This is our art as facilitators and an important skill to ground for the greater benefit of the entire group. Remember, we can't evolve AND stay in our comfort zones. We have to move beyond the familiar, the known, the taught, to experience what lies beyond.

By virtue of its definition, nothing can be excluded from wholeness. When we can be with sounds, experiences, and stimulation that once made us uncomfortable and feel equanimity, we are at peace. These sessions, this work, and sound itself are passages into the unknown. They challenge all those places within us where we contract, fear, judge, and separate. Sound is a healer with its own intelligence that works in dimensions beyond our mental comprehension. When we let go of our need to know,

we can come to peace through our acceptance of what is. That is the intent and practice of Toning for Peace.

GETTING STARTED

You can do this! First, decide when you want to have a group. Maybe you'll meet once a month for 90 minutes. Or perhaps you want to meet once a week for an hour. Next, find a location to meet. If you are just inviting people you know, then you can hold the circle in your home. If you are opening up to the public, you may want to rent space and hold sessions there. Consider the environment carefully. Certain locations won't lend themselves either acoustically or “spiritually” to this kind of work. And of course, you'll want to make sure you are free to be loud! Then, set the date and time of your first meeting. Finally, invite your friends or people you work with or even advertise around town with fliers. You can also do this through social media. That's really all there is to it. You just have to show up!

ADVERTISING

Any advertising should list the event as Toning for Peace, include your name, and host designation (Circle Host, Facilitator, Certified Practitioner) and clearly specify that it is by donation.

CHARGING & TITHING

Toning for Peace circles are strictly by donation. No one should ever be turned away due to an inability to contribute. T4P Facilitators may ask for a suggested donation for their workshops and other special events, not for circles. Only CVTM Practitioners may charge whatever they deem appropriate for their workshops and special events. Circles however, even for Practitioners, should remain donation-based. As a Circle Host, if you are renting space, you may mention that any donations received help to cover your costs.

Whatever your level of involvement, The Voice of Life asks that 10% percent of any donation amounts *above and beyond your costs* be tithed back to Toning for Peace. So, if you received \$20 in donations, but it cost you \$20 to rent space, you tithe nothing. In the same scenario, if you collected \$25 in donations, you would tithe back 10% of \$5 or 50¢. These funds will help support and develop programs aligned with the T4P mission. Tithing is based entirely on the honor system and can be mailed or arranged through Paypal once the total tithe approaches an amount over \$25. If sending a check, please make the check payable to The Voice of Life and send to:

The Voice of Life

118 Savannah Woods CT

Asheville, NC 28806

To arrange payment through Paypal, please contact T4P@theVoiceofLife.com with the amount to be rendered and the email address to which you would like the invoice to be sent.

YOUR FIRST CIRCLE

I advertised my first circle which is next week! Help!

First, congratulations on making this happen. Way to go! At your first event, spend some time talking with folks about why you decided to become a host and what you hope to accomplish. Start by sharing the Circle Host script included in this packet. Be sure to ask your guests why they chose to come as well. Get a sense of whether folks are comfortable with their voices or not. Any ice-breaking activities are encouraged...name games, getting to know each other, that sort of thing (see suggestions below).

You might want to do some physical stretching next to warm up. This can be as simple as allowing everyone to do their own thing in their own space for five or ten minutes, maybe while playing some music. Or, you may want to facilitate some gentle yoga, dance, chi gong, or other form of movement to help loosen people up if you have experience with that. You could also just select a piece of music and have people move free form for several minutes.

Then just move into sounding. Toning for Peace circles are all about jumping

right in and doing, sounding continuously for 30 minutes to an hour. Be sure to leave time to appreciate the silence that follows sounding. This is where much of the “healing juice” arises. A bell or other method of letting folks know that sounding should come to a close is helpful to move people into silence.

Try to save a few minutes for folks to share any observations or comments about their experience. Because a great deal of energy is built up during toning, it is essential to close the circle by grounding the energy. To do this, stand in a circle holding hands and dedicate the energies. You can say something like, “We dedicate this practice and the energy of our sounding to the cultivation of peace, both inner and outer” or “We now offer up the energies of our toning for the benefit of the earth.” You can close in any number of creative, different ways. Finally, make any announcements about future events afterwards.

And that's all there is to it!

ICE BREAKERS

CHANTING NAMES

Go around the group asking people to either sing, or if they are feeling shy, say their name. Have the group then reflect back to each person, with the same inflection, the name sung or spoken. If the person feels satisfied, move to the next person. Give everyone a turn.

MOVEMENT & NAME

Stand in a circle. Start this yourself by making a movement of some kind and adding your name to it. You might, for example, swing your arms back and forth in front of you. You may then sing or speak your name with the movement. After a second or two, the circle then copies your movement and says your name back to you. Then move on to the next person.

MY NAME IS ____ AND MY SOUND IS ____.

Have each person introduce him or herself by filling in the blanks. Everyone then responds. So if the person's sound is something like OOOGA SHUUGA, everyone would then reply “HI OOOGA SHUUGA”. Continue until everyone has had a turn.

CIRCLE EXERCISES

SONIC BATHS

It can be a fun experience for people to form a close circle and ask for volunteers one at a time to step inside to receive the sound bath of tones coming from the group. If you want to, you can even tone with a specific intent in mind. For example, if the volunteer has a request to receive healing for a wounded knee or to relieve sadness, then everyone will tone with that focus. It doesn't matter if they “know” how. It is enough to offer up your care and concern to another on the energy of your voice.

CALL & RESPONSE

A fun variation activity is to try a little call and response. You can lead this yourself by sounding a tone or short melody and then having your group repeat in unison what they heard. If you think your group is up for it, you can ask for volunteers to call while everyone else responds.

CLOSING SUGGESTIONS

THE ALMIGHTY WEE

Stand in a circle and join hands. Stand close together, shoulder to shoulder. You start by swinging your arms, jumping up and down a little, and shouting “Weeeee!” like a child. Everyone in the group will follow right along bringing about smiles and laughs to send folks back into the world.

SOUL SONG

If you or anyone in your group is feeling brave and daring, have them offer a little closing song or improvisational sounding for the group. Everyone else just sits back and receives. You can take turns week to week if your group is ongoing.

THREE OMS

Have the group complete three OM's in unison. This can either be done on the same or varying pitches. Then allow each person to dedicate the practice to something of their choice, “peace,” “healing,” “water,” etc.

GETTING SUPPORT

If you encounter any challenges or have questions, I will do my best to respond to your email in a timely manner. Send your questions or comments to T4P@theVoiceofLife.com. You may also refer questions that your attendees may have to me.

APPLICATION

The application for becoming a Circle Host is included. Please fill it out completely in very careful handwriting or type in your answers and mail the form to :

The Voice Of Life

c/o Circle Hosts

118 Savannah Woods CT

Asheville, NC 28806

You may also apply online at

http://www.thevoiceoflife.com/T4PCircleHost_28.html.

You will be notified by email upon acceptance so please make sure that email from The Voice of Life is not winding up in spam filters.

TONING FOR PEACE CIRCLE HOST APPLICATION

(all other level applicants must apply through the Voice of Life Vocal Toning Meditation Certification Program at http://www.thevoiceoflife.com/certification_17.html)

Please print clearly or type:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

COUNTRY _____

PHONE (H) _____ (C) _____

EMAIL _____

EVENT TIME (include AM or PM and Time Zone)

FREQUENCY

One time Once a week Once a month Other

VENUE ADDRESS (Where will you hold your event(s)?)

I have read and agree to follow the guidelines set forth in this packet. I understand the Toning for Peace circles are “by donation” events and that no one should be turned away due to lack of funds. I also understand that 10% of any donations received above and beyond my costs should be tithed back to Toning for Peace at least on a yearly basis or as the collected amount approaches \$25. I agree to accept full responsibility for my circles and any resulting situations or circumstances and hold The Voice of Life, Dielle Ciesco, and Toning for Peace free from liable for any reason for anything I may or may not do under the name of Toning for Peace and/or as a Circle Host.

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

Office Use:

Toning for Peace Suggested Facilitator Script

(Bold type is required at each circle)

Welcome! **This is a Toning for Peace Circle, and I am your Circle Host,** _____ . This is an opportunity to make noise. It can be joyful, it can be playful, it can be anguished, beautiful, dissonant, loud or soft...it can be anything. Here you don't need anyone's permission to express yourself in a language beyond words (or if you think you do, then permission is granted!).

This is not an instructional group on toning, its history, or techniques. I'm not here as a teacher; I'm here as a fellow explorer of this practice. You don't need experience to be a part of it. You just need a pair of ears, a voice, and a set of lungs. If you do have technical questions or experience any voice issues, you can speak with me before or after our gathering (and either send me their question or put them in touch with me).

The group intent we hold is for healing...for ourselves, each other, our earth and all existence. Therefore, you are welcome to come here and just receive. You don't need to contribute with your voice, though it is welcome and encouraged.

Every circle experience is different. But listen and pay attention for three movements. Sometime the group will enter these movements together, sometimes not, sometimes once through, sometimes over and over. The first stage is expressing. Here we are in our own worlds, recapitulating, releasing, tuning up. We may encounter one

another as we sound or we may remain separate. The we move into listening, when we become conscious of and curious about the voices around us. We begin to unify as our listening deepens. We follow nature's way from dissonance into harmony. That takes us into the third stage of soaring, where we are ourselves within what is bigger than ourselves, flying on the wings of our creation, in service to that creation.

We then bathe in the fully charged silence that follows our sounding for a few minutes, we'll have some time to share our experiences, and then we'll close the circle.

And finally, Toning for Peace circles the world over are by donation. Your love offerings are much appreciated to help cover expenses, thank your host, and further support the growth of the Toning for Peace organization and these circles across the world. If you are in hardship, come anyway with no embarrassment or guilt. Just help spread the word about it to others or ask if you can serve in some other way.

Are there any questions before we begin?