

Advice to New Gong Players by Sheila Whittaker

When you discover the world of gongs for the first time, and decide you want to buy a gong and become a gong player, it can be a little daunting at first. Nowadays there are so many gongs to choose from, and then you need to learn how to play the gong in the right way, so that the healing sounds that emanate from a well-played gong are able to do their work well in your hands. How to go about it...

There are a few books on the market now, including my own two, which will help you find the right gong, and learn some basic techniques for playing. However, there is no substitute for good training. Attending a Gong Workshop with a reputable, experienced gong player and teacher will give you the best possible start. Look for someone whom other people recommend, or do a search on the Internet to find a suitable Workshop or Course that feels right for you.

If the training is up to scratch, you will receive tuition on how to play the gong, some background information on the history of the gong, how they are made, the different types available, the effect of the gong on the listener, and where to buy gongs and everything else you need to get started. Most importantly, we need to adopt the right attitude - approaching the gong without ego, and playing it intuitively, with no sudden bursts of loud volume - rather allowing the layers of sound to rise and fall in waves, so that it is simultaneously both powerful and relaxing. It takes time and practice to develop these skills.

When you have bought your gong, start playing it regularly – you can make it into a daily practise, and do your “gong meditation” each morning. As you get into it, your playing will start to feel more natural, and you will gain confidence in the gong, and your own abilities. Above all, enjoy it! Wishing you well with your gong journey!