

## **Podcast Series: Holistic Nature of Us**

### **Episode # 77: Meet: Ed Cleveland**

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Hi I'm Judith Dreyer,

Thank you for joining me for this pod cast series "The Holistic Nature of Us".

I invite you to journey with me into a better understanding of the concepts behind our holistic nature and how that ties us directly to the natural world around us. My intention is to be your guide for this half hour as we begin seeing our world with fresh eyes, gaining more understanding and learning how can connect the dots in practical ways that we are nature and nature is in us.

I feature a broad range of guests deeply concerned about the environmental issues of our time and more; authors and educators, practitioners and others whose passion for this earth and for all species helps us create sustainable bridges of understanding. These folks are innovators, action oriented, creating solutions in a variety of ways that honor us and the planet's holistic nature. I am honored to share their stories, their projects, and their passion with all of you. So, thank you for joining me today for another engaging interview.

I'd like to introduce you to Ed Cleveland. He is the founder and owner of the Ed Cleveland Reiki and Sound Therapy Training Center located in Hartford, Connecticut. He is an advanced gong practitioner, a neuro-acoustic sound practitioner, a Master Reiki teacher and holographic sound teacher, medicinal aroma therapist, as well as a national award winning martial arts teacher. Ed brings forth three decades of personal education and experience in his private practice and his teachings.

Welcome Ed, it's a pleasure to have you at the Holistic Nature of Us!

ED: Thank you very much. It's a pleasure to be here.

JUDITH: Great. Well you have so much to share with us and I always like to begin with my guest's journey into their specific field. And today you're

going to be talking to us a lot about sounds, the science behind it, the vibration, and benefits. So, let's begin with you and how you got into this field.

ED: Thank you. Well, it all kind of started with the martial arts practice. I was going through many years of that training. I was actually fully ready to graduate into my fourth degree black belt when I got injured. This was many years of experience going into that. And it was always easy to break things and harder to fix things. So, when I kind of got busted up I started looking into different ways to heal my body. In martial arts, advanced students are really working on listening and the timing of different motions, the timing of how people interact and how to defend yourself, again using sound. So, it was really interesting how the first led into Reiki to learn about how to heal my own body.

And then as I went on into meditations and different sound practices from different teachers that all of a sudden have to appear, which is very unique and something I get a lot from other people. They say they had different dreams, or all of a sudden, they were drawn to seek me out.

And I learned that light is sound vibration. Colors are sound vibration and as I went deeper and deeper I started realizing that all these things fit under the same umbrella which just gives you an increasing awareness of everything that is possible that you could do, as far as the more you know the more you can do with it. I like to say it's like putting spices in spaghetti sauce or the soup mix. You know you get to pick your own flavor with all your different modalities.

JUDITH: Oh, that's a great metaphor. I like that.

ED: So, with that I got into listening to sound and how the sound works and as I got more advanced, I started learning that it's important to work with the different elements of the sound. There's different male voices and female voices within certain instruments following how they ascend and descend, the rate of decay of certain instruments.

I really started to fine tune how I was listening to things which really broadened my experience and the work I do in my private practice, but also in the teachings because now I'm able to teach a person with higher levels of learning or capacity, like professional musicians where you have to see and

hear an instrument from a whole different angle that really broadens their scope, and I'm having some amazing results with that.

JUDITH: Oh, I be you are. That is really fascinating because anything that deepens our own private practice, and I'm thinking of a musician, is only going to make the music sound better and come across in a more pleasing way which generates excitement amongst the folks who are listening to it, right?

ED: Yeah, exactly! And if you have certain themes, you can play in certain ways that will help different moods, again going back to these five element things. Some that I learned in the teachings that were making these natural sounds because the natural sounds are in the different elements which are: space, wind, fire, water, and earth. In helping certain people, different elements are exactly what they need to help compensate for things that are going on with them. For example, if a person has a lot of anger and they happen to come to me and I'm doing different sounds I will have them focus on deep breathing exercises because I'm introducing more of the wind element to help put out their internal fire, where the anger is coming in. And it happens all by itself. It's once you know that you can interweave different elements into a practice of advanced experiences with sound, you can do unlimited amounts of things as long as you can get the person to respond to that and want to move.

JUDITH: Well that's really interesting Ed. What you remind me of is music therapy that uses an instrument, whatever the clinician is drawn to, to create songs or just chords to help. For example, child therapy with music to get them into a better place of feeling about themselves. So, I'm assuming that when you say create moods that's what you're talking about and you're using some TCM in there, right; the five elements, the four elements?

ED: Yes, exactly. The tradition I work with is Bon Po. They're the original religion of Tibet that goes back 18,000 years. And they believe that sickness, ailment and disease are either the lack of or too much of one of the five elements. When you start to learn these different things, Laws of the Universe, and you're working with inside them, you can automatically help people on many different levels while you're also focusing on other things. Like striking those individual chords, that's more what I do in creating ambient sound. In my practice I don't play music to give a person something to expect or to follow. I want them to be unpredictable, have an

open space that they don't really know what's going to happen. And then when certain sounds come in, that also offers different doorways or escapes) within the sounds but it can also help bring a person into a deeper state of consciousness allowing your brainwaves to go down into more or an awakened dream state so that some people end up starting to snore and they're wondering whose snoring and it's them and they don't know how they're snoring while they're still awake.

JUDITH: Oh, that's funny, yeah. That's true and when I hear awakened dream state I often think of some of the Shamanic practices that use the sound of a drum in a specific way to get us into that state of deeper awareness, so that's always a fascinating journey to me, the use of sound.

Let me ask you this: You alluded to your practice and working with people, so could you give us an example of how you might work with someone?

ED: What I do is when they come in I'll find out the things that are going on. I'm really engaging them on listening to what a person is saying, because they're actually telling me what they need. If people could listen to themselves, they would have all the answers that would be pretty beneficial. But I'm getting an idea of what they're looking for, what they need but I'm also helping them to do like the reverse psychology is help them give themselves permission to do the work, because as in Reiki everyone knows that the person on the table is the one in charge.

So, if I cannot get this person to surrender, to let go, to feel comfortable, sometimes I'll give them a mantra "I feel safe, I feel secure, I'm in perfect health, all my needs are met." And this is no matter what's going on, that they repeat those things and it helps to dissolve away a lot of things that are really going on because back into the practice that I do they believe 75% of ailments are created in the brain.

So in helping get a person to possibly start changing the way that they're thinking, because now you're working with the cause and condition of the things that happened in the first place which, if you do that, it will actually stick and last longer versus just being a Band-Aid and coming in. I've got a great sound and I feel great but then leaving and having something happen and all of a sudden, they're thrown out of whack again.

JUDITH: That's a really good point because you know we have so many wonderful holistic fairs here in CT and I've experienced some of the gongs,

the singing bowls, etc. but it's true. That's it. When you're done you walk away and hopefully the vibrational affect of the sound stays with you for a while but giving somebody a mantra like that to me takes it one step further. They have something to go home with.

ED: Yes, yes. That's very important and you were mentioning working with kids, I've done some different things with different schools, intensive schools where children even have very, very sensitive conditions where they have headphones and stuff on. And when I go to play for them, being nice and gentle I can watch them be curious because it's fascinating when you're watching a child see or hear an instrument for the first time that that curiosity allows and again, gives them permission to want to hear it. And then when the experience that it's okay and it's gentle I like to finish with, you know that internal feeling that it managed to give you a little bit of peace and harmony inside you, that's what you try to learn, that feeling; but you can do this on your own anytime that something is bothering you or someone else is picking on you or something. Find your own way once you realize that Zen feeling feels like inside then you look for different ways that could help bring that in when you're seeking times of difficult moments in your life.

JUDITH: Yeah that's true and children are so receptive to that, aren't they?

ED: Yes, they are.

JUDITH: They're more single minded focused at those ages than we get to be as we get older.

So, could you give us a couple of examples of clients and stories and how effect the sound was for them?

ED: Yes. I had a – when people are coming in. I kind of got with that part. I was thinking of a different scenario. So, I'll set up and sometimes give the person a variety of different sounds because they know that their life, they're just not able to find their path or their way. When they come in I'll make sure I go through all the different elements. I'll have different things set-up to give them water elements. I'll put water in a bowl, or I'll use an ocean harp or a rain or ocean drum to bring in that element and comfortably give them an overlay of wing sounds with different wing wands, different – I have Native American flutes, an eagle bone flute, different things to almost

do like a little ceremony thing and calling in the ancestors to give and help out.

And then kind of working in with the grounding at the earth. I have certain gongs that are working more with the earth element like a hand gong. Then going into the fire, which is sometimes what I do – you really want to know how to work with fire because that’s like the fire of digestion but that’s where you can actually burn away some of the things that are bothering a person. But if you don’t really have the experience and really watching and are certain in what you’re doing, you don’t want to take that too far and have a person start to feel uncomfortable because of that firing sounds which are like twigs and things snapping like if you were outdoors with a fire that has maybe pine or something that is sappy and crackling and popping. So, it’s creating a comfortable container but also really watching how the person is breathing, how their body posture is so you’re in line and work, so you don’t go out of the way in any one of those different elements. The training and observation is extremely important.

JUDITH: Oh, I can imagine, yeah. I had no idea there was something called an ocean harp. I bet that’s lovely.

ED: It actually, the way I play it is very gently around the brain it’s like a psychoacoustics because your brain is now trying to search through the database of the history of your life on where have you heard that sound? As long as you haven’t seen the instruments that bonds into a theory called accoustamatic theory where it allows the imagination to really wander and travel and in some places for people it can bring them back to what it would sound like if you were in the womb.

JUDITH: Aha. Oh, I can imagine that, yeah, very easily. For some people I think that would be an easy thing for them to connect with.

ED: Yeah, yeah.

JUDITH: Okay, cool – so now you’ve got the person in your practice and you’re working with the four elements with all these different sounds and you’re observing them. What’s the next step?

ED: From them, I want to watch their breathing and then eventually I play in a certain what of changing and altering time by the rhythm of what I’m doing. So in other words, I’m kind of grabbing a hold of the brain with the

sound. A person's brain is usually very quick in moving at the beginning so I do things that will again, engage through entrainment and like get them on the line. Then as I start to systematically spread open, start to create more space between the different sounds it automatically brings them into more of a relaxing deep state but it also alters and shifts time for that person because they could experience that the session went by in just a couple of minutes. But that also helps them get out of the left brain which is the processing and trying to figure out everything in life where all the stress events are created into the right brain of like when you were a child where you just want to have fun, get out of your own way and just enjoy the experience.

So to have that precious time, that self-care of going somewhere where basically this person here is taking my brain away for hour, my body is enjoying the experience of all these different sounds and vibrations because I am literally creating millions of different sounds with all these instruments and mallets that I use. Every sound works differently with each person because we're like a snowflake. You're getting nourished by the electrons, by all the different natural sounds that are being created and it's a great way to pull away from the pain and inflammation because you're allowing the person to surrender on the table and just fully let go into the moment.

JUDITH: That's very interesting. I can imagine in this day and age you have a lot of folks that do have pain and inflammation.

ED: Yes. Including myself, which is why I got into this art.

JUDITH: Well that's great because you know firsthand how it works and that's always a good thing with a practitioner to have that personal experience then they can relate differently to their clients. I think this is fascinating Ed.

I came across, a long time ago, in some of the aboriginal stories that if somebody broke a leg the community would tone and sing certain tones, very specific tones to help mend that broken bone. I would love to see our use of sound get to that level of healing. Do you know anything about that?

ED: I absolutely do. That is something that I also do in my Reiki practice, again working with the five elements. The five elements have sound, so the space element is "ah". So, singing or chanting "ah" is bringing in the space element sound. It's "ah, yang, ram, mang and cam," so that you're actually toning the element while you're playing different elements. Plus it's also

helping you get out of your own brain, because that's important as a therapist or practitioner creating this. That we want to get out of our own brain and really trust the skill set that we have to engage in the whole process. And you simply are chanting those different sounds of the elements, so again, knowing which element the person needs more than the other, then that's what you switch to. But there are also many different mantras that you do that are like different prayers that bring in different healing aspects. There are many, many different things that you can do with that sound.

JUDITH: Interesting. I know from my study of Ayurvedic Medicine and Ayurvedic mantra practices that the oldest mantra that we still sing today, each syllable and each sound with that syllable of our voice is carried in a way that we can't even comprehend today. It's like it contains the sound of everybody through time that's ever sung that syllable and so there's a real power in understanding that about sound and vibration with mantra work, for example.

ED: Exactly! I'm so happy that you got this. This is how I teach people when they're playing with different instruments. Eventually we want to get to a point that you're not playing this instrument as a musician, you're playing this instrument more as a whether as a physician. Or you're playing it as a ceremony, not only to help the people in the room but all of creation where every being that is in pain and suffering that has anything to do with any of the stuff that is going on, is all happening at the same time. And when the musician understands that, that puts a lot more emphasis on, "I really should know what I'm doing, how am I spacing this different time and how am I using the container of the room through boundary physics of how sound works." I mean it's so scientific that you can get very, very deep with this stuff but that makes you that more precise in what you're doing because these things actually worked 14,000 years ago.

JUDITH: Yeah and they still work today, you know? Sometimes I hear criticism about that. Well it's, you know, old. We've got to bring the new stuff in. Well let me tell you something. The old stuff that's still here works.

ED: Exactly. My teacher says, you want to go further back into either who taught who and get back down to the bottom source, which is one of the classics that I took. It was seven days of just going back through the

following of sound therapy from 14,000 years ago to today. So, learning about Raga music, mean this was a person with classical Raga music training, they can diagnose and prescribe sound or music to help you with your condition. For example, listen to this Raga at 4:30 in the morning for a week and it will help you with your blood pressure.

JUDITH: Oh, that is fascinating. Are there resources for that kind of information?

ED: Yeah. Well actually they're part of my classes. I have sheets of different things that you can do from different sounds but where we're taught is not a Raga-esque music person because it would take me a whole college degree to get there; that if you understand how your instruments work and then kind of file in how those male and female sounds are ascending and descending together and how they're working that rhythm or harmony, that if you apply that same type of music into whatever instrument you're doing you're now connecting with those certain sounds and you could have some of the same methods happen.

JUDITH: Wow, I think that is fascinating. I have another question on the same vein, if you will, but in a slightly different direction because it ties into music and how music affects us, and the sound of music affects us. But I also came across a few years ago the information that our music, for example, was done on an eight note scale but some of that's changing. We're using a different set of sounds. Is that true for music?

ED: Yes. About one hundred years ago the music had changed to equal temperament and adjust in tonation which made it easier for the so-called starving artists to tune their guitars easier and to have instruments that are of so called less quality. I'm speaking in terms of looking at a \$350,000 dollar violin you know that you need a college degree to learn how to play in that way in that part of the world, that that was kind of changed so it alters things like narratives.

You know the piano is not mathematically perfect from one end to the other. A piano tuner knows about the Pythagorean, so they have to make an adjustment throughout the piano to make the math work from one end to the other. But then again, everyone knows that God and the Universe don't make anything mathematically incorrect. So, you're looking for some to make these sounds that work with nature because those natural sounds are

more mathematically correct. If you check the math of certain instruments, if the math works you have a better chance of things working out better.

JUDITH: Or sounding better, right?

ED: Yes.

JUDITH: Sounding better, interesting. I didn't know that about instruments. So what variety, just a quick list, a variety of instruments that you typically work with.

ED: I have monic boards, which are very powerful for working on the spine. They're scientifically proved to help bring out pain inflammation but also open up blockages in the spine to allow more chemical electrical magnet signals to flow freer up and down the spine. The gongs, the singing bowls, the Tibetan bowls, a large quantity of indigenous instruments, every instrument that I play I've taken classes on and I've learned about the history and how we want to play them in a certain way that is delicate, especially when bringing it into a human energy field. We're taught to play like we would be playing for an infant.

JUDITH: Hmm. I like that because I like the sense of respect.

ED: Yeah.

JUDITH: Well Ed, what I'd love you to do before we close out today is to give my listeners three practical tips, something that they can apply in their everyday life.

ED: Okay. **One is definitely breathing.** Breathing is definitely important but going for a sound walk. **Going out.** Picking your favorite path or neighborhood or something or other but you want to try to get an area and distinguish the different sounds as far as like elements. So, if you were walking on a path through the woods, you know, how is the wind moving through the trees. If there happens to be a brook or a stream what are the sounds of the brook and the streams are making? Different animals, even when you're walking, you're hearing the twigs; you're hearing the leaves; you're hearing things that's more of that earth. As you're going for a sound walk you can really absorb these natural sounds which are building and nourishing your organs. It's kind of like walking barefoot outside. You're bringing in all these elements from the earth into your body and that's

basically the same thing that happens with these large gongs as they're releasing these electrons which are basically nourishing your organs the same way that Earthing does. So, the sound walks, **it's important not to talk** with anybody or bring your cell phone because you want to be in the moment. And finding different water sources like waterfalls or streams and just letting those kind of take over. I like to visualize putting thoughts, worries, concerns, anger, jealousy, things other people have on a leaf and then I watch it go down the stream.

JUDITH: Oh, that's beautiful. That's a beautiful thing to do, so simple but yet it's very powerful.

ED: Yeah, yeah. And if you have to get the leaf blower out, bring the leaf blower.

JUDITH: You can get rid of a lot of stuff that way huh?

ED: I've had people say they have trouble in getting to sleep. They've gone through years of different people trying to help them out and that one thing works better or changed everything that the last ten years couldn't change. That simple visualization of putting my trouble on a leaf and watching it gently go down. You're surrendering. You're letting go. I don't want to be attached to it anymore and especially if it's disempowering to you. Another thing is forgiveness. Forgiving yourself for different things. Like when you look at yourself in a mirror everyone criticizes themselves. What about saying, "you are perfect in every way, right here, right now"?

JUDITH: I love that. We do need to remind ourselves about that. We have so many stereotypes that are constantly given to us in the outside world and it's easy for all of us to get caught up in it and those kind of affirmations, mantras if you will, are so effective because they bring us to a place of more centeredness, you know?

ED: Yes, absolutely. And we pick on ourselves throughout the time we're looking in the mirror. You know we're always, why am I ageing? Why am I this, and you're telling yourselves all this. So the simple changing of, even apologizing – "I'm sorry for what I had said to you in the past, where I had known what I was doing. I'm choosing to love you now, perfect in each and every way." And talk to the child inside you and say "what can I do to make you happy today"? And these are things that your organs will respond to in bringing you the health and help us learn how to be the master of our

feelings and our emotions, so we don't lose control from other people because we're actually just poisoning ourselves that way. So, it's really that expansion of how the mind thinks, again tying into how the sound works with the brain and then with the energy work to help to surround and complete everything, so it's a beautiful match.

JUDITH: It is. It sounds like a wonderful process too. You're so well trained in schools and everything that you do it has to be a mystical experience for some people, you know, working with you.

ED: I'll ask people if they'd like to share. "I don't really know what just happened." And I'm like, that's perfect. That's exactly where I want them to be. I give you sounds that you cannot put words to. I don't want you to limit it to, "oh it was just this". No let's do the big picture, you know? What would the entire space void sound like? Or what would it sound like in the earth or under the ocean? You work on your sonar you know to understand all these different things and just get out of that. It's a very beautiful experience.

JUDITH: Oh, it really sounds wonderful. Well, we're at the time of closing. Is there anything else you want to add before we sign off?

ED: That would be it. Just my location. I'm out of Hartford, Connecticut but then I also do things in different yoga studios or different areas. Like right now I'm doing things out of Beyond Center in Vernon, R&R Massage and Dayspot in Canton. Again, I'm here in Hartford. My website is [www.edcleveland.net](http://www.edcleveland.net) and my email address is edreiki3.com

JUDITH: Perfect and that's great information for everyone to have because I'm assuming, you'll get some questions.

I want to say thank you Ed for joining us at the Holistic Nature of Us and I hop my listeners feel as inspired as I do by your practical advice but also your wealth of knowledge about sound and sound vibration.

ED: Thank you very much. It's definitely a passion of mine as you can probably feel.

JUDITH: I think we can tell. It's wonderful.

So,folks, this is Judith Dreyer. I'm the author of "At the Garden's Gate", book and blog. My book is available through my website [www.judithdreyer.com](http://www.judithdreyer.com) as well as several distribution arms such as Amazon, Nook, Goodreads and more. I'd like to remind all of you again that a transcript is available for each podcast. Please like and share them. Let's support each other and get the word out.

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Enjoy your day.