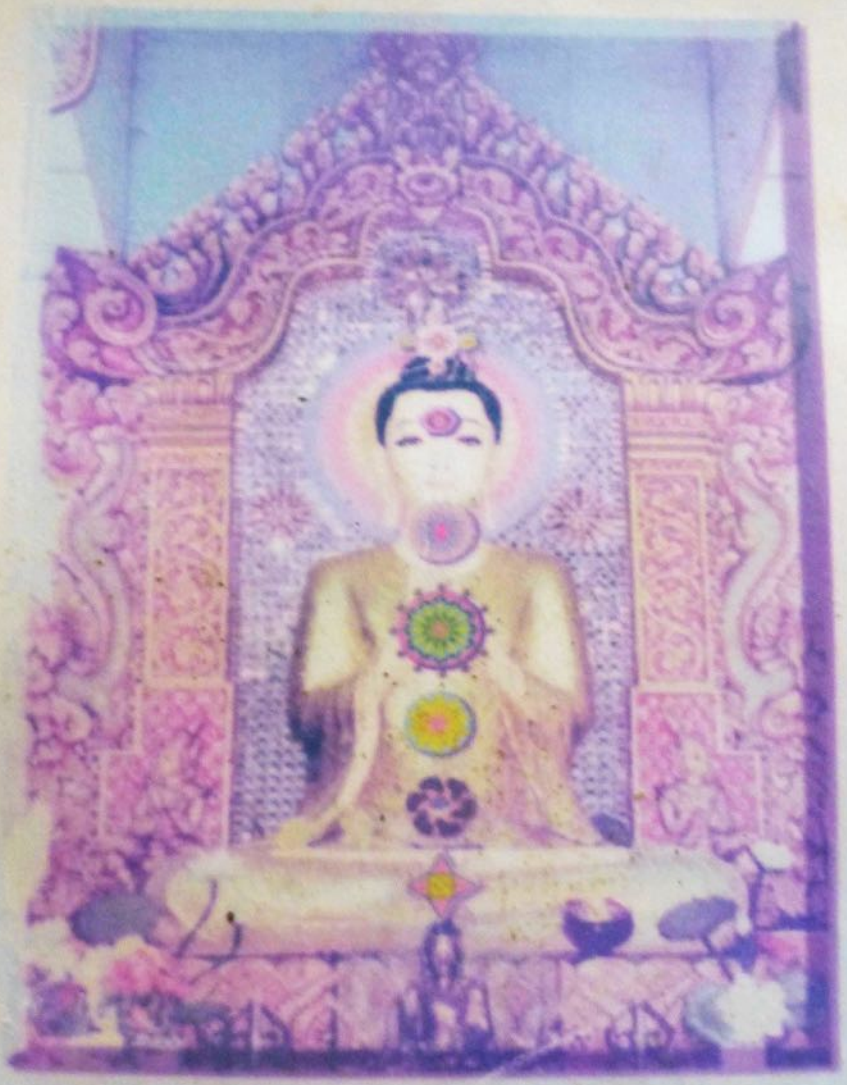
# CHAKRA YOGA



## TEACHER'S MANUAL

CHAKRA YOGA CENTER

VICTORIA, CANADA

This text has been written for those who have an interest in the whole science of yoga. I have studied and researched it for 35 years at this point, and have looked into many other methods offered in the spiritual marketplace. It is my personal opinion that yoga is the most complete and comprehensive system for study and development of the human body, mind and spirit.

However, in the West I have too often seen yoga taught in a mechanical way, with little or no attention to the breath, and virtually nothing said about energy and the chakras. Part of the purpose of this book is to fill in the gaps—to supply the missing pieces of the puzzle that compose the "science of yoga." The basics of posture, movement and breath are only the beginning of an exploration that takes us deeply into the physiological, psychological and spiritual aspects of our being. You could look at this book as an owner's manual for the mind/body vehicle in which out sprits resides. Whenever we buy a new gadget, machine or appliance, it comes with such a manual, yet here we are in the most complex biological vehicle in the universe without an understanding of how it actually works, physiologically or mentally. We recognize the importance of bringing our cars in for an oil change and a tune-up, but we know little about reprogramming our own minds. In the ancient educational systems of the cultures I have studied such as the Hindu, the Maya and the Egyptians, mind and body were the primary subjects of study for the elite and upper classes of society. Years of study were required to develop an understanding of the eternal nature of human consciousness, the energy world of the mind, and the physical reality of the body. These ancient systems trained people to become masters of themselves. The knowledge was regarded as sacred, and always guarded as secret, to be revealed to those who proved themselves worthy.

Today this information is re-emerging and becoming accessible to those sincere seekers who are striving to understand the reality of their own inner selves, those walking the path of "Self-Realization." This "Level 1" teachers' training course is aimed at developing the necessary abilities for you to be in charge of your physical body, your energy and your state of mind. During this process you are prompted to discover who "you" really are as an individual spiritual being. This course will give you the techniques to being and/or proceed with your journey in an organized and systematic way. Daily practice of this yoga method is necessary to move energy through the body and attain higher states of mental awareness. You will be provided with the foundation for the ancient knowledge system bases on understanding the timeless energy world of the **chakras**.

## Foreword by Marina

I would like to begin by saying that discovering the energy world of the 'Science of Yoga – Chakra System' has been a magical, unfolding, mystical journey. The science of the universe is vast and mysterious.

Mother Earth carries within her energetic memory the history of many ancient civilizations, some of them far more advanced than our modern age. Many cultures such as the Greeks, Egyptians, East Indians, Chinese, and the Mayan culture, to name a few, seemed to understand the workings of the mind, the energy body, as well as the power of sacred sound. These ancient cultures practiced advanced techniques for the development of their higher senses such as clairvoyance, clairaudience, telepathy and visualization. Understanding the inner world of the chakras, through breathing patterns, meditation, as well as working with sound, light and sacred geometry, these ancient peoples were able to connect with their higher consciousness, the upper, heavenly realms and affirm their place with the oneness of the universe, the one consciousness.

For myself, each day, I am grateful to have been introduced to the teachings of the 'Science of Yoga – Chakra System' by David & his teacher, Swami Gitananda, for it lays out a well traveled map to self-realization. In opening up to this integrated system of yoga I was very inspired. I felt I had found the piece of the puzzle to the great mystery of the cosmic universe. I felt a sense of remembering this ancient knowledge and how it all made logical sense to me. One day after one of my yoga practice I remember saying, "all the world should learn this knowledge". If all the world's people were to practice the nine forms of yoga we would have a much more healthier, happier and peaceful global village.

It was in 1995 that I was very fortunate to meet David through one of his weekly yoga classes. I felt a sense of exhilaration in stumbling across a teacher who had this knowledge. In studying & practicing with David I was very impressed with his dedication to the discipline of yoga. I thought his mandala drawings of the chakras were incredible. In his teachings David laid out the system of yoga similar to how it was taught to him by his teacher, Swami Gitananda. The progression and integration of the nine forms of yoga made a good balance. I was exited to perceive that the practice of each of these forms of yoga leads one to the mastery of the self and in union with higher consciousness of the sacred universe. This practice of yoga is a sacred, scientific, spiritual path which has been explored by many enlightened beings over the past 10,000 years or more.

Another teacher who brought the teachings of the Science of Yoga to the West is Sri Paramahansa Yoga-nanda. Yogananda was sent to the United States from India by his guru, Sri Yukteswar Giri. During his 30 years teaching in the West Yogananda initiated over 100,000 students in the practice of Kriya Yoga. This practice of yoga encompasses the forms of yoga such as Pranayama Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Raja Yoga, Mantra Yoga as well as Bhakti Yoga: Techniques and practices to attain self-realization.

In his book, A World in Transition, Yogananda stated, 'Kryia Yoga provides the 'missing link' in our twentieth century understanding of energy. He said it gives the means to balance material progress with spiritual development.'

In 1934 he said : “there will come a day, after I have left this physical form, when there will be a great surge of spiritual enthusiasm and interest in God. The message of India will sweep the earth. The Science of Yoga will take hold in this country more than any other form of spiritual seeking. The entire trend will be away from churches, where people go only to hear a sermon and into schools and quiet places where they will go to meditate and really find God.”

(Noted from his book, A World in Transition)

Yogananda taught that only by purifying our own minds and energy fields could we begin to help purify and positively help the consciousness of our global community. The people of the earth are awakening to this ancient science of the universe. Around the world today people are drawn towards the practice of yoga, meditation, chanting, tai chi, qi gong, pranic healing and so on. There is an intuitive and soulful longing for divine self-realization and union with our spiritual universe. Each people’s individual practice can make a good difference in the world as a whole.

In the last several years practicing, studying and teaching chakra yoga with David I have been amazed by the accuracy of this science. The accuracy of the chakra energy time cycles and their psychological characteristics have been very profound to experience. As well the exact science of Mantra Yoga has also been very clearing and awakening for me. Chanting particular Sanskrit sound formulas has many physiological, psychological and spiritual benefits. It is incredible how it works on so many levels. All of the forms of yoga integrated together purifies one’s mind and energy field and leads one to sweet levels of bliss and peacefulness.

In Alberta, Canada, at the young age of nineteen, I began my practice of classical Hatha yoga. I started out with some weekly classes from a local yoga instructor in my community and fell in love with the flowing, meditative practice of yoga. Yoga became my daily practice. Since 1995 I have been greatly influenced by David’s inspiring teachings of the ‘Science of Yoga-Chakra System’. For me, it has been an incredible exploration of the self ; body, mind & spirit!

In my early 20’s I also explored my love of dance and singing. I enjoyed studying and practicing different schools of dance such as the styles of jazz, ballet, modern, contact improve, African, and creative improvisational dance. In my yoga classes I encourage my students to explore their authentic dancing spirit to awaken their unique chakra energy centers and connect with the breath and the rhythm of the cosmic universe. Dance is known down through the ages of many civilizations and shamanic cultures as a gateway to connect and come into union with the masculine and feminine energies; the Shiva & Shakti of the divine universe. Our body holds much knowledge and thousands of memories from past and present lifetimes. This awareness has been has been substantiated by renowned scientist, Dr. Candace Pert who wrote the book, Molecules of Emotion as well as recorded the lectures, Your Body is Your Subconscious Mind . Through her research on neuro-peptides she affirmed that every thought or experience we have in our brain is also registered in

the receptors of particular cells in the body depending on the vibration of the thought. This is amazing research of the modern age! Our mind is not just in the brain as the old schools of thought once believed. The mind is in the whole body. We can free our mind through the medium of dance!

Gabrielle Roth, a dance teacher & musician from New York who wrote the books, Maps to Ecstasy and Sweat Your Prayers, created a format of dance and music called 'The Five-Rhythms' and uses it to take people on a journey through the physical and energy body. It has proven to be very liberating for people from all walks of life!

On another note working with sound & vibration has proven to be a very effective way to connect with spirit and free the soul! For myself, all my life, I have loved. It has given me great joy! I believe everyone loves to sing and everybody can sing but the singer in many people becomes dormant as a child gets older. This happens for various reasons but I fell this is sad for I truly believe that the should is truly alive when it sings or makes sounds in such practices as chanting or vowel toning.

My formal training includes the study of drama, musical theatre, jazz singing as well as classical voice training. Exploring the potential of my voice was an incredible journey back to the self! Opening up one's voice frees and expands the soul and awakens the beauty & joy within the heart chakra. I encourage all my students to give themselves the gift of singing lessons, even for a few months, for it is wonderful to know the potential of your voice, to use the power of the voice through song & poetry and awaken the life-force of the throat chakra. This vibrant chakra energy is the home of the akashic recorded, the ancient library of knowledge and reservoir of many creative gifts.

It is through the practice of the various forms of yoga, breath, mantra, voice, dance, music and art that these latent, dormant energy centers along our spinal column begin to awaken. The lotus petals of the chakras emerge into the light and thus awakened from the darkness of the sub-conscious mind. In this awakening one feels the vitality of the pranic life-force flowing through them. One begins to feel motivated, energized, confident, courageous and curious. In activating the chakra energies one begins the journey of re-uniting with their inner teacher, leader, artist and creator! Kundalini-Shakti awakens and the creative potential and beauty of the universe is revealed! OM Namah Kundalini!

Back to my love of yoga, through my own self-study programs I have been grateful to research the teachings of Harish Johari, Hiroshi Motoyama, Anodea Judith, Dr. John Mumford, David Coulter, B.K.S. Iyengar, Mukunda Stiles. Esther Myers, Godfrey Devereux, Erich Schiffman, Patricia Walden/Linda Sparrow, Beryl Bender and others.

In the world of yoga philosophy I have been influenced by the teachings of Swami Vishnu Devananda, Swami Sivananda, Ekath Easwaran, Hazrat Inayat Khan, Swami

Sivananda Radha. Sir John Woodroffe, Rammuri S. Mushra, David Frawley and George Feuerstein to name a few.

In the world of the 'sacred power of sound' I have been truly inspired by the research & writings of David Tame, Dr. Alfrew Tomatis, Swami Sivananda Radhe, Fabian Maman, Laurel Elizabeth Keyes, Thomas Ashely Farrand, Don Campbell, Robert Gass, Jonathan Goldman, Eknath Easwaran, Hazrat Inayat Khan and others.

Gratitude goes out to al of these authors and teachers dedicated to spreading the knowledge of yoga, meditation, mantra, sound and vibration. I am forever grateful.

It has been a great honor and educational experience to collaborate with David on the writing of this yoga book. The teachings are infinite on many levels.

I am deeply grateful to David & his teachers for sharing this system of Chakra Yoga with me and all the students who have joined us on this spiritual path. We are truly fortunate to learn these mystical teachings of India!

Dhanyavad OM Shanti Marina

**Foreword by David**

When I began my journey into *yoga* I knew of no one in my environment, friends or family, who had heard of such a thing. I just happened to find a book about it in the local library in North Bay, Ontario, in the psychology section: Complete Illustrated Book of Yoga by Swami Vishnu Devananda. I had a keen interest to explore the mind, so I looked for related information in that section. Little did I know where this first book would lead me. I gained an interest from it, or at least a curiosity. In that library book I found many techniques to improve the functioning of the mind through physical exercise, as well as to promote better health. There were also statements about better perception and higher states of consciousness, though at the time I really did not know what the author meant by that. Some months later I began traveling and bought my first small book on the practical exercises, or Hatha Yoga. Thus began three decades of experience and research. I certainly didn't realize when I first started doing a few exercises, in 1969, that I had stumbled upon the oldest "science" on the planet; I didn't even know it was science.

The basics were simple enough, a bit of exercise and some breathing. In some ways it was like looking at the first two letters of the alphabet; I had no idea there was a whole alphabet to follow. I was coming from a different culture. In my Western culture, exercise was acceptable and cleanliness was connected to heath, but this elaborate system seemed a little extreme. There were some strange things in this yoga book. For instance, there were pictures of a man passing a string up one nostril

and down through the mouth, to clean the nasal passages; another picture showed him swallowing a 30-foot strip of rag and pulling it out again, to clean his stomach and digestive tract. I found this type of internal cleanliness a little far-fetched. I did not think I would ever want to do that, and I never did. However, there were other aspects of this yoga method that did capture my attention, like the concept of perfect health and developing mental abilities.

Quite innocently I entered this realm with my curiosity in one hand and my pioneering spirit in the other. I did have an interest in improving my health since I had a weak heart condition perhaps inherited from my father (he had died of a heart attack). This dysfunction was obvious whenever I did hard work or strenuous exercise. I did not find the problem surfacing when I did the gently exercises in the yoga book. In fact, I soon discovered that these "exercises" done with the physical body felt good and did indeed have an effect on the mind, an interesting fact that made me ever more curious.

This curiosity led me to India in 1971, to find out more about these states of mind. But as the connection between body and mind became ever more complex and detailed, I found myself researching further and further into the phenomenon of energy itself—the link between body and mind. The yogic perspective in India held a very refined and detailed view of the nerves as a wiring system which every part of the body was plugged into. These nerves carried the energy impulses between the brain and the entire body. To me this was like a schematic diagram giving us an indication of how we actually functioned.

Perhaps I found this to be interesting because of my previous education. Having finalized my high school education with math, chemistry and physics, and with electronics and stereos as my favorite hobby, this whole idea of the electrical energy side of our being made a lot of sense to me. Most of man's latest creations were electronic, while he himself also had an electronic part. This "part" is as obvious as the nervous system – an elaborate wiring system that is continuously conducting energy impulses between the brain and every part of our physical bodies. It seemed to me that gaining an understanding of how we were wired could lead us to some interesting places. I got the impression that the nervous system and its mental effects had already been largely mapped out in the East, while everything I had read in the world of Western psychology seemed primitive in this regard, although this "wiring" aspect of the nervous system was a bit documented. The research that I could find was still directed at rats and attempts to modify their behaviors. I had the feeling little was known about the human brain, while the phenomenon of the mind hardly received any mention; in fact the Western concept made no distinction between brain and mind at that time.

Meanwhile, physics and chemistry had merged in my mind (as they have in science by now to form nuclear physics). In this new merger the key element seemed to be energy, yet in the exploration of this energy there did not seem to be a clear picture of what it was. Add to this what I was reading in research books like Bertrand

Russel's "The A B C of Reality", on the space-time relation and how everything was indeed relative to the position and velocity of the observer—it all brought me to the point on wondering just what this quantum reality consisted of. There were a lot of theories about it but no one really knew, and the best of the "scientists" also carried this impending question mark!

I found myself traveling, my curiosity directing me to find out more about the mysterious magical methods that apparently could lead people to grasp the truth about "mind over matter."

I was quite fortunate in my travels, in that everything worked out fairly well and I never had any "bad" experiences. I don't mean to say there were no challenging times, but I met a lot of good and helpful people along my journey. Within the first months of my solo journey I connected with some people of like mind in Mexico, who invited me to stay with them. They had a paradise villa in Cuernavaca and were all interested in yoga, so we soon became friends. Each morning the sun would rise and shine onto the front lawn to find us breathing deeply and doing postures. Half the day would be spent talking about the philosophy of the East and religions of the world. The experience created a nice bond of kinship amongst us. For me it was the first occurrence of being with a group of friends I could fully relate with.

After a month of living in this heart-warming environment, I continued along my solo journey, but I kept meeting folks who were on similar paths, exploring the world and looking for philosophical idealism. There were many coincidences of meeting the right people at the right time. I leaned to enjoy encountering friends with whom to share spiritual experiences and worldly adventures.

As I went through the Orient I met more friends from different cultures, who exposed me to a variety of spiritual ideas. In Japan I spent a few months studying Buddhism, learning to calm my mind so that I could meditate. That is where I first realized that consciousness was separate from mind – an awakening discovery for me. In Thailand I wandered a bit with the young monks who had invited me to join them. With a begging bowl in hand, I followed their simple lifestyle, enjoying rural life and contemplating the workings of the mind.

By the time I reached India I had more or less become a monk myself. After a year of being on the road, observing all the sights one could imagine, my eyes had seen enough of the outer world. I was firmly established in my yoga practice and had gleaned some wonderful meditational techniques from my Buddhist friends. Now I just wanted to go inward. I wanted to know more about the inner world and the *chakras* that were referred to in so many books. What was this phenomenon all about?

I had shared a room at the YMCA in Malaysia with a Hindu man from India. This gentleman was a Brahmin (priestly caste), well versed in the philosophies of India

and yoga. He practiced yoga every day and had been doing so for years. We spent many hours discussing all sorts of spiritual ideals that had recently been awakened in me. During our week together he showed me how to get up into the headstand, amongst other things. He assured me when we parted that I would have no problem finding my "guru," mentioning something I had read in Yogananda's writings: "When the student is ready, the teacher appears." The coincidence factor I had begun observing earlier had evolved into mystical synchronicity for me, especially in the people I was meeting along my path. This Hindu roommate and friend was on my teachers. At this point it felt to me like there was an overall Intelligence making the connections I need and setting the times for the meetings.

Someone else along my journey had mentioned Pondicherry as a really nice place to go in India. With that in mind I headed south from Calcutta, where I had landed. In Madras I boarded a bus for Pondicherry, and in stepped Teresa, who sat in front of me and said "Hi, where are you going?"

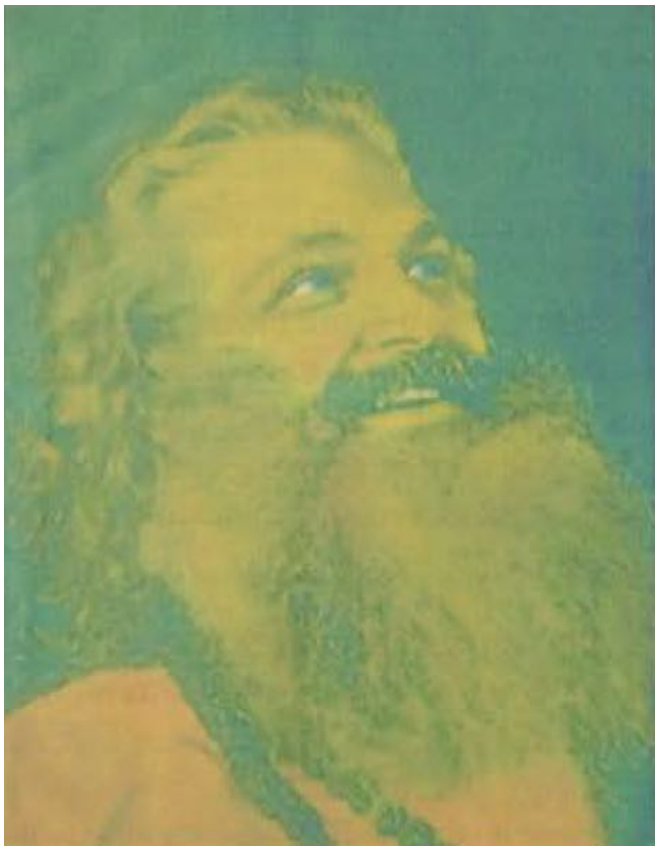
Teresa had come to India to visit her sister Barbara, who had been studying with a yoga master in Pondicherry for a couple of years. She suggested that I come along. Arriving at the ashram, we were greeted with a royal welcome and it soon became clear that Barbara was more involved than a student. She lived in the master's suite, was not called Meenakshi, and worked as his secretary. We received this warm and intimate welcome as a result, with a great dinner and a lengthy evening getting acquainted. For me it was a wonderful opportunity to make a connection with this teacher and find out about his teachings.

The ashram, called ***Ananda Shram*** with a 40-plus students, was at the beginning of the second semester of a six-month teachers' training. I was invited to join. I did so, and during my stay I was so impressed with the quality and quantity of information and practice on yoga that I came back in the fall to do the full six-month training.

Swami Gitananda had studied yoga in his teenage years with Ram Gropal Muzumdar, who is referred to in Yogananda's Autobiography of a Yogi as "the Sleepless Saint." In his late teens he went on to England to study medicine. Either his mother or father (I don't recall which) was British, so he had the opportunity to go to college in that country. His medical career went from there to Canada and the U.S. spanning 38 years. I heard many interesting stories about what was really going on in the medical establishment, some of which surprises me at the time, but since then I have come to see the reality of what he said. The result of his years of experience as a doctor and surgeon led him to the conclusion that Western medicine had no long-term positive effects. Consequently, he returned to India in order to teach people how t live healthy lives with a spiritual purpose.

At the time I arrived, he had only been there a couple of years, but he had managed to establish a very "happening" ashram. The atmosphere was bustling with activity; over 40 students were in the full-time residential curriculum and several others

were coming in as guests for a period of a few days to a week. Swami himself taught eight hours of classes each day, seven days a week, except Thursday afternoons when we had time off to look after personal business. The course was intense by anyone's standards. He made it more so that term, by extending it for one full month. Also, that semester was the only time that I know of when he taught the full course on *Yantra Yoga*. He dropped it the following year. What he added in that year, however, was a series of discourses on the chakras. Again, this proved to be a one-time event that he never repeated. Some of us advanced students prompted him to do this, and we recorded every lecture. Afterwards, I took the tapes and spent my spare time during the next month transcribing the tapes. The noted I assimilated at hat time became the foundation for my research on the energy world of the chakras, an exploration that is still expanding my inner vision 30 years later.



***Swami Gitananda*** was a brilliant orator and a very inspiring teacher, always a dynamo of energy, who bounded up the stairs to our rooftop classroom in such a way as to stir everyone up with his radiance. With his storytelling abilities his sense of humor, he kept us all well entertained. When we were not being entertained by his words, we were busy practicing the multitude of things we had learned. For me, this experience of being intensely involved in the practice of yoga for so many consecutive months created a lifestyle that simply became part of me. I am forever grateful for that gift. The wealth and depth of his knowledge of yoga was encyclopedic – it covered such a wide range of the various aspects of this science that I have not since found anything like it in my studies.

That first year at the ashram, the Yantra year, there was another doctor who came every day to teach homeopathy. Dr. Ganapathy was his name. Only about a dozen students took the course. I did not because it was half over when I arrived, but I did get to know him as a teacher. A couple of the other students, Teresa and I, became friends with him after the teachers' training, when all the other students had left. He was full of good philosophical advice on how to live a spiritual life, very knowledgeable on herbs, and, as we found out through the grapevine, quite an adept at healing through touch. I got to verify the latter when Dr. Ganapathy put the final

touch on healing my heart problem one day. He quite literally touched my rib cage, just near my heart, and kept his fingers there for what seemed like one whole minute. Meanwhile he was talking about compassionate living – through reaching out to people in need and helping them in whichever ways were appropriate. I noticed the dramatic change in my condition a few minutes later when I went running up two flights of stairs to get something, and felt empowered at the top of the stairs, rather than my usual heart palpitations.

These two doctors were the teachers who initiated me into the ancient wonders of yoga, health and healing during my first few months in India. In the months that followed, I travelled around the country as a *saddhu*, a wandering monk, staying in temples and mingling with those who had renounced the world for the spiritual path. It was during that period of travel that I met Prakash, a man with a name that translates as God's Light. Though I met many people who had something to teach me throughout this time, I can say that OM was one of the three principal teachers who contributed to my transformation. I spent one week with him and his family up in their Himalayan home, during which time he offered me his meditation room and often gave me advice on what was important to practice and what to teach or not teach. This enlightened gentleman always possessed an aura of serenity, but when impressed me deeply was his vision. He could scan through you to past lifetimes, and let you see what he was seeing. My time with OM was not filled with teachings and techniques, but rather like an expansion of mind and consciousness that allowed me to see the greater picture of who I was, had been, and was going to be.

This summarizes my encounters with some of the masters of India. The next significant phase of my education came the following year when I began living in Guatemala and Mexico. I was still a wandering monk, a penniless monk in fact, as is the tradition in India, but now exploring the old ruins of the Mayan civilization from Palenque to the Yucatan. Within thee ruins I kept finding icons, statues and symbols that reminded me of India. In one of the old temples I found a life-size statue of Shiva with the five-headed cobra rising up over the head. This my friend Don and I discovered in an underground area of the temple that was closed to the public. We were there at 5 a.m. with flashlights, and there was no one there to stop us from exploring. We were also finding mandala symbols of the chakras in a variety of places and contexts. While the serpent Kundalini kept raising its head everywhere. Not only did the serpent raise its head, but here it had wings, as if it were a flying serpent. Obviously, Kundalini was once awake in this part of the world. As well, little icons of people in different postures that were very yoga-like could be purchased from some of the locals )often illegally, since they had been found during excavations and were not supposed to be sold).

The familiarity of all these things made me feel there was an old India buried here, and we were just seeing some of what was coming up to the surface. Even the structure of the temple towers looked the same as in India. The following year I made my way to Tikal and found what I recognized as a South Indian Temple, still half buried in the Guatemalan jungle. To me this was the final proof that the ancient

system of yoga and the chakras had been here. It was still here. I had been living in Guatemala for a couple of winters by then and had spent time observing the ways of the "brujos," the local shamans. They had a lot of chanting and drumming rituals similar to the sadhus of India. What struck me the most was their bright jackets embroidered with those  same chakra mandalas that kept resurfacing.

This was the period during which I was painting mandalas myself, while reading books about ancient native cultures. Books like *Burning Waters* by Laurette Sejourne, and *Seven Arrows* by Hyemeyohsts Storm, were providing further inspiration about an underlying perennial philosophy that was bonding all these cultures. That philosophy explained the universal energy of the chakras, the energy which weaves the fabric of the world as we perceive it. The more deeply I looked into it, the more apparent it became that beneath the surface of these belief systems from separate cultures lay the understanding of the energy world and its manifestation into matter.

Almost a decade later I finally made it to Egypt, again for the purpose of exploring what they knew about yoga and the chakras. Although much of what I found in Central America was coded in symbolism that requires a background in Yantra to decipher, Egypt required a lot less interpretation. Many of the classic postures of Hatha Yoga are carved in stone. In the museum at Luxor, for example, you can see Queen Nefertiti and her dancers in a whole variety of classical asanas. There is a statute of King Tut sitting in the half-lotus with a scroll in one hand, his other hand held in a mudra position usually demonstrated by Buddha or the Hindu deities. This is said to be in his student years; so what was he studying? One of the favorite things he was buried with was a golden, two-and-a-half-coiled cobra--Kundalini strikes again. This serpent is everywhere in Egypt; the seven chakras are in most temples, and the little pyramid I had seen in a Hindu version of the first chakra is here blown sky-high.

In the Temples of Angkor Wat in Cambodia, which Marina and I visited during the winter of 2001, we found the serpent to be woven into the fabric of virtually every wall and wallway. No one doubts the strong Hindu influence that inspired the original temples. For those who understand yoga and the energy world of the chakras, the whole area can be seen as the expression of a culture which lived to awaken all the dormant forces within us and develop full human potential.

It is not within the scope of this text to go into all the details of my/our research. However, I want to highlight my electric perspective on yoga. I have observed that this wonderful science of the energy world is based on a universal reality that goes beyond any one culture.

It has been a long and interesting study, and after 30 years I can say that "mystical" yoga turns out to be much more scientific than most of the "sciences" of the West. Because of my experiences with high school science, which taught what "science" and "scientific" meant, I could clearly see the logic in this yogic approach. For

instance, in the classical scientific experiment you need an objective, a method to demonstrate that objective, and then you must observe what happens when you apply these methods. After a certain amount of observation of the results, you can draw conclusions about what is going on during this experiment.

With yoga the experiment is performed on your own body and mind. You, the practitioner, must become the scientist, performing the experiments with posture, movement, breath, diet, concentration, visualization, sound, and a variety of techniques over an extended period of time. You must carefully observe the results of what you are doing at the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual levels over that time period. Then, and only then, can you draw conclusions about what affects the body, feelings, mind and spirit, and just what those effects are. You learn this from your own experiences, and although this is considered subjective rather than purely objective, it is valid for each individual. Yoga is a very personal experience, one that each individual needs to go through on the path to enlightenment. Don't worry too much about getting to that final enlightened state either, as you will find that with the practice, the inner light simply becomes progressively brighter, as the out world becomes more colorful.

Marina came to some of my classes as a student in 1995, and found the teachings about the chakras and my artwork on the inner vision fascinating. Seeing the value of my research and becoming inspired with breath and her own vision, she decided to share this with more people. She has since become my partner in ongoing studies and research in this incredible science. Since that time we have been formulating and shaping the Chakra Yoga Teacher's Training so as to give students a deep insight into the vast energy world of the Chakras and to present a good course on the whole "Science of Yoga". Together we teach others to discover themselves and learn, through the practice of all forms of yoga. Marina's perception and attention to detail have greatly helped to mold the material into good form, and her dynamics social enthusiasm have brought public awareness to this valuable science.

# Introduction

**Samkhya Philosophy** – from **consciousness** to **mind** to **energy** to **matter**.

Before we dive into the experience, let us look at what this integrated system involves. The science of yoga lays out a view of the universe that is as systematic as it is complete. The first statement that view reveals that the material creation in which we are living is composed of energy in a variety of forms. The forms are what our senses perceive as objects when we experience the world; it is sort of like objects molded out of clay, but the clay is energy.

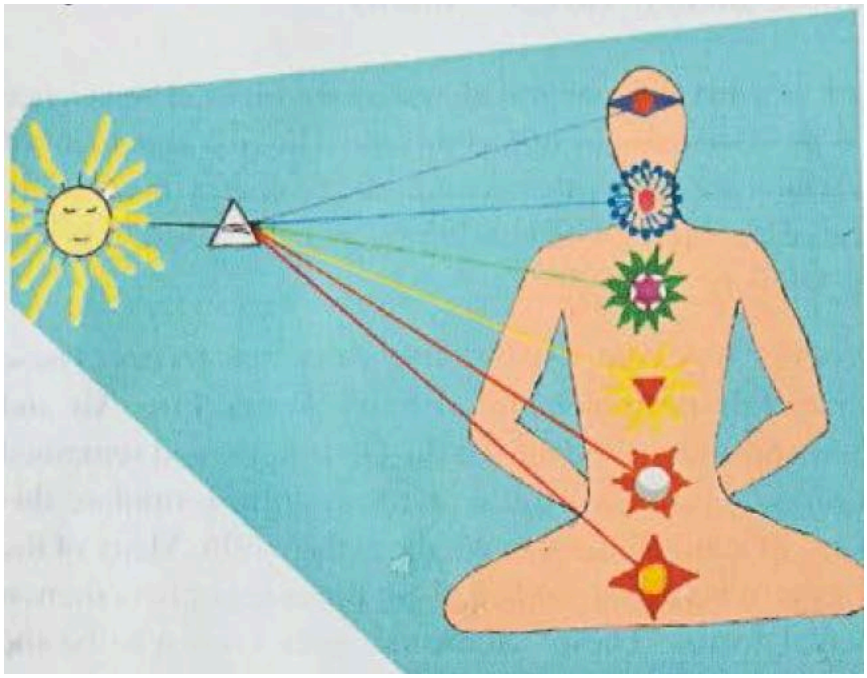
To many ancient cultures the fundamental energy was composed of five elemental forces. These "elements" came down through the Greek into European alchemy as Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether. Though the concept of "element" became misunderstood during the Dark Ages, and remained misunderstood up until the age of quantum physics, scientists are now trying to re-formulate this energy concept and relate it to the many elements of solid matter that we see in the world. Many of the early Greeks, like Plato, traveled to Thebes, Egypt, where they studied about the energy phenomenon and its division in the elements, or, elemental forces. These "elements" were known to be the building blocks of the universe. As this knowledge spread through Europe in later centuries it was kept amongst the shamans, witches, wizards, and those who were known as alchemists.

Then came the dark ages, a time when all such information was considered to come from the devil (according to the church fathers). Shamans and witches were burned at the stake, wizards disappeared, and alchemists became chemists. This last group, the "chemists," were steered into the realm of solid matter, where the elements became physical substances, and combining them so as to produce healing "medicine" was acceptable, as were combinations such as gunpowder. These were all real and tangible, nothing magic about them. The energy aspect of the elemental

force was lost to many, and held within certain secret societies like the Free Masons, and of course The Church which wanted to be the sole proprietor of any such information. The original knowledge did remain in cultures such as the Hindu culture in India and in Tibet, as well as among the shamans of Central America (etc.), where it is stated in their most ancient texts that "**everything is made of energy**."

When I first discovered these texts I was baffled by all the different terms that were utilized to describe energy. These words were in Sanskrit, of course, as there were no English equivalents. Terms like *prana*, *prakriti* and *shakti* all remained in these translations. Through years of studies, I have developed a much deeper understanding of what those terms mean and what those energies are. Much of what I have leaned comes from personal experience with the forces themselves, yet I appreciate having had these texts to refer to as descriptive maps of where I was in my journey. In some ways these ancient reference manuals remind me of a schematic repairman's book for a television set, showing exactly how the energy flows in a functional unit. Yet the unit is human, not electronic. There is, however, a parallel that cannot be denied.

In this book I will attempt to explain what I have learned about the energy world and how it relates to, in fact condenses into, the human form. Fortunately, we are in a scientific age and most everyone has some understanding of energy. I will simply be elaborating on the many forms that this energy becomes. For example, let us take sunlight as out basic energy and pass it through a prism; the result is a while array of colors, each unique yet united in a rainbow.



In the ancient cultures, universal energy (including sunlight) was separated into its different colors or frequencies, and observations were made on the various

characteristics of each. What kind of prism or crystal they used I cannon say for sure, but I do know that their most sophisticated toll was the mind. With this instrument, and a lot of time, they analyzed the energy world until they had seen, heard and understood, the whole picture.

Part of that picture has come down to us in the concept of *chakras* (Sanskrit for "wheels"). These chakras are vortexes of energy which radiate the colors of the rainbow. In their unified state they blend into one white light. This unifying point is referred to as the seventh chakra, a major energy vortex that contains the others within it. On the other side of the prism are the component energies, colors and frequencies, which make up the "real" world in which we live. These vibrational vortexes become the "energy centers" along the spine that are referred to as the ***Shat Chakras*** (the six body chakras) in the yoga system. In the age-old system of the chakras the various rates of vibration were known to behave as different energies, each creating and manifesting unique characteristics.

In modern times, colors are known to be different frequencies of vibrating electromagnetic energy. Quantum physics research has led to the concept of various "forces" working in balance to create the building blocks of the perceived physical world. The forces at play (or work) at the sub-atomic level are also the energies that manifest on a greater scale throughout the universe and can likewise be found within our bodies. This energetic power is known as *prakriti* in the Sanskrit language.

## The Basic Chakra Energies

The Ancient Mystics of most cultures have always considered our perceived "reality" to be a mere appearance. Understanding the energy from which the apparent forms were made was the goal of life, and brought the student to a state of enlightenment. With this perspective in mind, this book will explain some of the basic theories and techniques used by these ancient cultures to obtain greater insight into the energetic foundations of manifest reality.

Each vortex of energy contributes specific characteristics to the life-forms we view on Earth. What appears to our eyes as real, does so because we cannot see the substance of which it is made without a powerful microscope. If you look at your hand through an electron microscope, you no longer see a hand but rather a sea of vibrant dots that are quite far apart from each other. Although mostly empty space, your hand looks quite solid without aid from the microscope.

Underneath the appearance we find the energy force which creates the illusion of solid matter, a type of force that holds the parts of the atom together – if I may use

such an antiquated term as the "atom." In yoga this force creates the first element, earth, and moves through the **Muladhara Chakra**.

The second manifestation of the energy is a weaker, cohesive force that holds the atoms together in combinations such as H2O. It is a more flexible arrangement that can be changed, as in chemical reactions, and moved, as in fluids. This is the character of the second element—water, which corresponds to the **Swadhistana Chakra**.

The third form of energy comes as fire, a force that sparks change and transformation in the more solid "reality." This solar power is the radiant part of nature that we see and feel as light and heat. It manifests the third element, fire, which expresses itself through the **Manipura Chakra**.

The next phenomenon of energy is a gentler force, not easily seen or felt, that pushes apart the molecules in the air we breathe. Although much subtler than the other forces, it does take up space, as when it fills up our lungs or a balloon. This is the fourth element, air, expressed in **Anahata Chakra**.

The first energy, even subtler than the fourth, cannot be seen or touched, tasted or smelled, but it can be heard. It is the energy of vibration, the force that makes and spreads sound outward at a thousand kilometers per hour, and that which spreads light waves across the universe (at the speed of light of course). This vibratory force makes up the fifth element, ether, (which could more appropriately be called electromagnetism in this century), and relates to **Vishuddha Chakra**.

In fact it can be very misleading to refer to the elemtns by their English translations. The very word "elemtn" is not even appropriate. People have mistakenly assumed since medieval times that these elements were physical entities. Science in tis development had proven that there were many more elements in the physical constitiution of the universe, now science is coming full circle to see that all of these physical elements are made up of a more fundamental energy in different quantities and configurations. While modern science is grappling with how many types of energy there are, the oldest science has always maintained there are only six essential manifestations of energy. These came ot be know as "the elements" to the Greeks, and from Greece to later Europe, but somewhere along the lin the understanding that these were elemtntal forces was lost. As alchemists became chamists, they reality started looking for physical elements, when the forces never were physical. They were originally an explaination of the energies that make up reality and they still are. Besides the five that came to be highlighted in the European aristocracy, there was one more element that was important in the East—the element of **mind**. The materialists who were looking for solid evidence of thee elemetns must have discarded this one. Even now the medical or scientific commuintiy does not consider it as anything tangible or real. Yet, as on of the forces we have been discussing, it is the magnetic energy which permeates everything. It

may not be perceivable to our senses, but today we cannot deny it exists. It expresses itself through the sixth, **Ajna Chakra**.

## Microscopic View

Now we can look more closely at how these various energetic forces function to create life in this realm. My research into these forces took me through a few different cultures over the years, and I will be drawing on the information I found in those cultures. The basis of what I learned about the body and its physiological connections to the chakras came from India, through my teacher Dr. Swami Gitananda. Also, I leaned that there were psychological characteristics attributed to each. From the Mayan culture, I gathered information and expanded my view of these attributes. Their placement of the chakras in the cardinal directions, in addition to the directions above and below, oriented the energies very well. Descriptions of journeys undergone in the individual directions painted elaborate pictures of the experiences we need to have in order to develop those chakras. The Egyptian Pharaohs on the other hand knew how to move and unite the energies, creating one force that was used to govern and direct the nation. These cultures had a common view, and an education, aimed at understanding themselves.

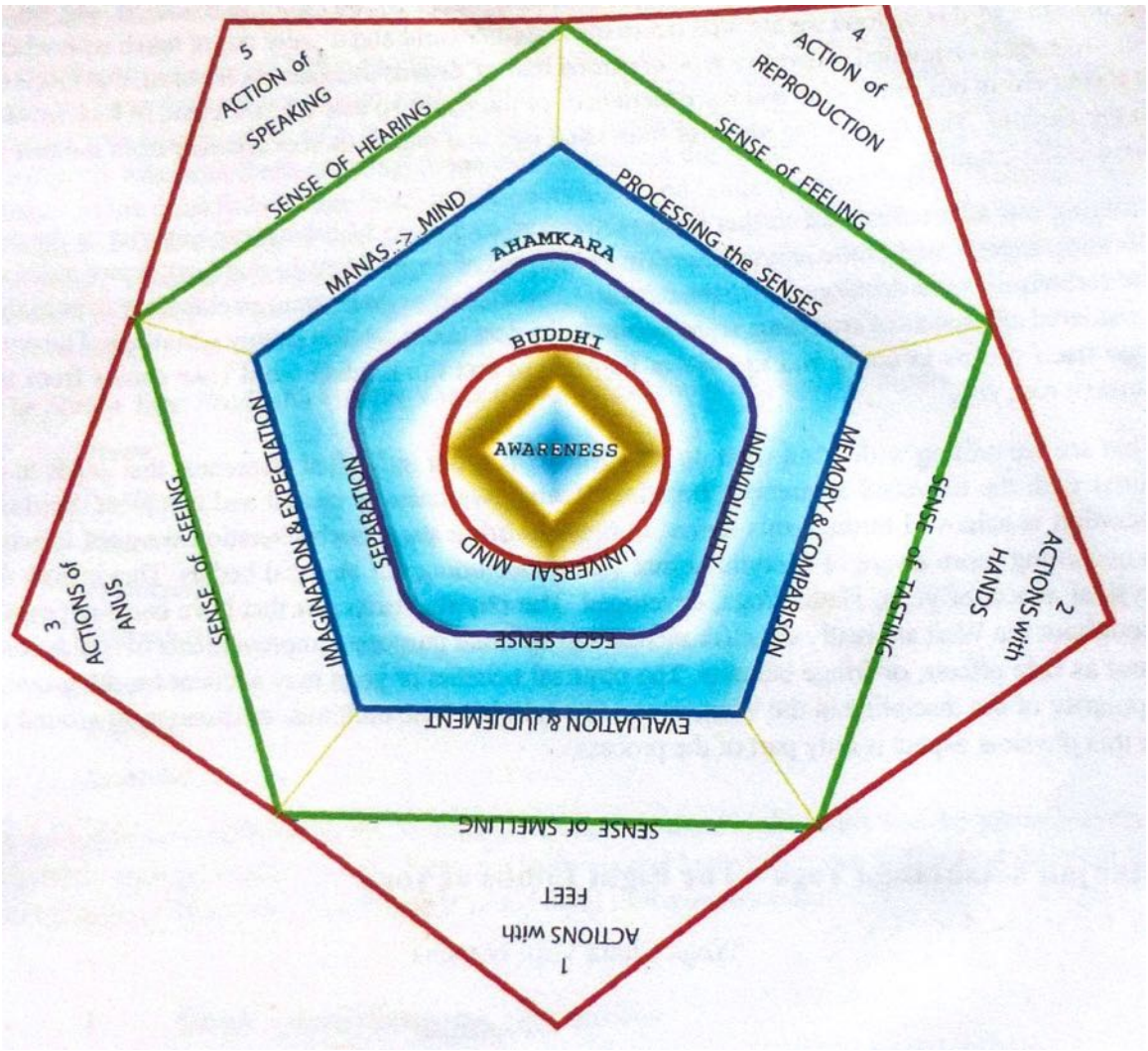
The picture that unfolds is one of the **whole** human being: mind, body and energy—a wholeness discovered by one's own introspection so that its truth can be seen in the light of one's own experience. Otherwise it may just remain an intellectual theory, and the inner truth might well be lost for yet another lifetime.

From the quantum level of energy, yoga steps down into the body to see which part of the nervous system is influenced by each energy field. It then looks at which parts of the mind and body are connected to the division of the system. This "look" goes right down to the molecular details of body and brain chemistry, so that we may develop an understanding of how energy becomes coded into our "physical" being. In fact one begins to realize that our physical being is made up of all the energies. As I mentioned previously, this understanding comes from actually feeling the different energies. They should be experienced rather than theorized about.

From this experiential perspective the energies can be adjusted, balanced, amplified, toned down and shifted as necessary, and this reshaping brings about the resulting changes in our physical bodies. This energetic adjustment instigates a whole process of rejuvenation for our organs, glands and cells, right down to the chromosomes and molecular structure, and is accomplished through the practice of yoga, using breath, movement, sound, meditation, etc. The practical application of the science of yoga brings us to experience the energy on the inside, within our essential core.

Here we come to what used to be a fundamental difference between Eastern and Western philosophy. Back in the days when I was finishing high school, I was taught that mind and consciousness developed or evolved out of material substances, a

contradictory view from Eastern philosophy. According to Eastern teachings, consciousness exists as a universal (spiritual) reality, a pure Awareness that has intelligent awareness of its own existence. It manifests, through vibration, as electromagnetic energy, to become the universe in its material form. Intelligent awareness then evolves perception and senses to experience its own self-creation. We as humans are the perceivers of the universe – a divine manifestation. In the ancient texts known as the Vedas, written by Indian sages thousands of years ago, this philosophical concept is explained time and time again. There have been subsequent commentaries written about these texts down through the ages. The view expressed therein has become known as Samkhya philosophy, the underlying principle of yoga for thousands of years. Looking at the structure of the universe through the lens of Samkhya gives us a kind of scheme of energy flow, from its source in consciousness to its destiny in solid matter. Consciousness in this context is pure awareness of being. The universe is aware of "Being", on a large scale, and this awareness is at the center of everything. We, as very little parts of that universe, have small pieces of that awareness, which gives us individual perception of ourselves.



As this universal consciousness begins to vibrate it becomes a cosmic energy substance called *prakriti*. In modern technology, this infinite energy field is known as the electromagnetic ocean. It contains within it every aspect of the energy world, from the smallest quantum to the largest galaxy. The way in which it vibrates demonstrates intelligence and order—which we might call Mind on the big scale, (Universal Mind, called Buddhi in Sanskrit). One of the functions of mind is that of imagination, and on the universal scale it becomes the creator that manifests the world, kind of like the dreamweaver. Mind then words through that dream to develop the sense of perception: hearing, feeling, seeing, tasting and smelling, through which awareness can experience life as it has been created. When we hear vibration we call it sound (music, voice, thunder, etc.). When we see the vibration we call it sight (yellow, bright, round, etc.). When we taste it we call it flavor (sweet, salty, etc.), and when we smell it we call it scent, from roses to coffee. These are all the ways in which consciousness perceives the vibrating energy field, and of course it all occurs through the mind. In order to complete visible manifestation there needs to be a way to interact with the senses of perception. To do so, five organs of action are added: the feet, hands, organs of elimination, organs of procreations, and voice. By the time all this is done we are well out in the material world and usually out of touch with where our awareness originated. There is a type of natural barrier, called Ahamkara in Sanskrit, that keeps us preoccupied in our mind stuff and the experiences of the world so that we don't tend to look inward to the Buddhi. This creates the sense of individual ego that makes us feel separate from the rest of manifested creation.

Bringing our awareness back to that inner realization, to a place where we can experience the one vibrating energy field of the universal reality, is the goal of yoga. To attain that goal, many methods and techniques were developed over the centuries. As a result, yoga became an elaborate science that considered all aspects of our being, from the most physical to the subtlest energy vibrations. The word *yoga* itself means to unite, and to yoke or harness; in fact the English word yoke comes from the Sanskrit root *yog*.

What are we uniting with? And what do we harness? It is our individual awareness that needs to be united with the universal awareness, because **"That"** awareness is eternal and complete. Spiritual liberation is achieved through this union. In order to bring about such liberation we need to work on becoming more aware of everything that we are, including our physical bodies. That is how the physical aspect of yoga, Hatha Yoga, developed. The physical exercises that have become popular throughout the West are really done for mental and spiritual purposes. Improvements in health come about as side effects, or fringe benefits. The physical benefits of yoga may account for the growing popularity of the discipline in the West, especially in light of the multitude of diseases all around us, but this physical aspect is only part of the process.

## Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga – The Eight Limbs of Yoga

"Yoga Chitta Vritti Nirodha"

-Pantanjali

'Chitta Vritta' translates as the mind stuff, mind chatter, modifications of the mind or turnings of the mind. Nirodha translates as cessation, stoppage, suppression or suspension. Yoga can thus be defined as "the cessasion of the turnings of the mind…the inhibitiions of the modifications of the mind." This is the translation of the above phrase, which Patanjali, Indian scholar, sage and author of the sacred texts, the Yoga Sutras, lays out as the tru meaning of yoga. The Yoga Sutras are a compilation of stanzas on the philosophy of yoga compiled by Patanjali around 600 BC. The word "yoga" is derived from the Sanskrit root "yuj" which means to united, yoke or to join together. In the philosophy of this ancient science, yoga is considered to be the sacred union fo the 'individual self' with the 'universal cosmic consciousness'. This union can only take place after the purification of the mind.

What has made us blind is indeed the mind running wild with thoughts, imagination, intepretations, memories, judgments, expectations, fears, etc. When all of these are brought to a standstill we find peace of mind and clarity of percetptiion. We also regain the vision of a magical world lost to us when we were young, when, as children, we started "thinking." It may take a while for some of us to regain that level of colorful perception, but if all the while we are gaining better health, vitatlirty, happier, emotions, and our knowledge is developing into wisdom, then why not go this route?

According to our research, the master Patanjali, spent many years observing the nature of human beings. From his observations as well as from his vast knowledge of the cosmic universal forces, Patanjali was inspired to help mankind attain this mastery over the mind and union with divine source. It was from these contemplations that he laid out the 'eight limbs of yoga' called Astanga Yoga. In the Sanskrit language 'asta' translates as eight and 'anga' means 'limbs'. Astanga Yoga is considered to be the 'eight-fold path of yoga' as well as the 'eight-fold path of the purification of the mind'. These eight steps of yoga, as laid **out in the Samkhya philosophy by Patanjali**, is also referred to as Raga Yoga. Raja is a Sanskrit word which translates as royal. Thus this path is also known as the 'royal yoga'; the complete mastery of the 'mind over matter'.

The ***Hatha Yoga Pradipika*** lists the stages of these eight limbs of yoga as follows:

1. ***Yama***
2. ***Niyama***
3. ***Asana***
4. ***Pranayama***

5. ***Pratyahara***
6. ***Dharana***
7. ***Dhyana***
8. ***Samadhi***

In the subsequent chapters on the chakras David defines these eight-limbs and the yama and niyama related to each particular chakra. For your leaning and knowledge, we will take a moment in the next few pages to list and describe each of the eight limbs in sequence.

## 1. *Yama*: abstentions ; ethical practices

The five yamas are as follows:

*Ashimsa*: non-violence in thought, word, deed or action to any living thing

*Satyam*: truthfulness; sincerity in thought or speech

*Asteya*: non-stealing, non-holding or non-accumulation for things which do not belong to you

*Brahmacharya*: sexual continence; celibacy; ethical sexual practice; the abstaining from sexual relations for specific periods of time during a spiritual practice; moderation in sexual conduct

*Aparigrabha*: non-grasping; non-greediness

According to the writings of Hiroshi Motoyama in his book, THeries of the Chakras, the Yoga Sutras state that the observance of yama also generate certain spiritual powers:

> For example if a man practices non-violence he will find that his enemies and Conflicts will disappear. One who practices truthfulness will find his wishes fulfilled. Non-stealing may accrue good fortune and wealth. Also celibacy will generate powerful energy in the body

## 2. *Niyama*: virtuous conduct; cultivation and observances of virtues

The five niyamas are as follows:

*Saucha*: cleanliness; personal hygiene; tidiness of personal environment

*Santosha*: contentment; ability to be happy in the present moment

*Tapas*: austerity; discipline; practice; chanting the sacred scriptures and mantras to the Divine; study of the spiritual texts

*Swadhiyaya*: self-study; self-observation

*Ishwara Pranidhana:* worship of the Divine; surrender to God. In the science of yoga this is better described as paying attention to the intuitive voice of the Guru within.

The practice of the yamas and niyamas teaches the yogi and yogini to develop a good, moral character. The student follows a set of ethics, principles and values to help uplift their mind. The purpose of the yama and niyama is to prepare the seeker for their spiritual, yogaic path.

### 3. *Asana*: sanskrit for 'seated posture'; 84 classical hatha yoga asanas

Some of the benefits of classical hatha yoga asanas are:

- Creates flexibility in the physical body
- Tones the muscles and strengthens the bones
- Increases circulation of blood and bodily fluids
- Improves the function of the endocrine glands
- Rejuvenates the cellular body, glands and organs
- Rejuvenates and balances the central nervous system
- May cure disease in the body
- Calms the heart rate
- Releases prana into body
- Activates the chakra centers; stimulates the nerve groups
- Increases brain activity
- Helps to clear the nadi channels & meridian pathways in the body
- Good for relaxation ; calms the mind
- Kundalini awakening
- Prepares the body for meditation and union with the Divine

In the Yoga Sutras, Patanjali discusses the purpose and benefits of padmasana (full lotus) and ardha padmasana (half-lotus). He that said if the body can sit in a good seated posture with a strong back and straight spine, one can experience the many benefits of meditation. A straight spine enhances the flow of pranic energy through the nadi channels located within and along the spinal column. This flow of pranic energy enhances the meditator's higher states of consciousness. It is said that the purpose of hatha yoga asanas is to prepare the yogi's body for the higher practices of concentration and meditation.

Asanas keep the body strong and flexible for long periods of meditation. As well, it is said that the practice of breathing and asanas prepare the nerve groups along the

spinal column for the increased flow of vibrant pranic energy through the primary nadi channels of ida, pingala and sushumns. )see chapter VI – Kundalini)

**4. *Pranayama*: releasing of prana with control over the breath; distribution of prana through particular breathing techniques**

In the practice of yoga, suspension of the breath is one of the techniques used to calm the mind. Khumbhaka, which is retention fo the breath, directly affects the flow of pranic currents in the energy body. Rechaka is the Sanskrit name for holding the body empty of breath. This practice is also very energizing. There are a multitude of pranayama breathing techniques which enhance the awakening of the pranic life force, Kundalini, located at the base of the spine. Alternate nostril breathing purifies the nervous system in preparation for the higher states of mind. The practice of pranayama breathing techniques in conjunction with the practice of asanas, bandhas, mudras and mantra are very awakening for the yoga practitioner. Purification of the mind and body is important before doing advanced practices of yoga. Pranayam prepares the mind for concentration, visualization and meditation.

**5. Pratyahara: withdrawal of the senses from outer worldly stimulations; the with-drawing of the mind from the major sense (taste, smell, sight, touch and hearing)**

In practice of pratyahara one may withdraw the mind by closing one's eyes, plugging one's ears and closing one's mouth. By removing one's senses from the outer material world one can begin the practice of concentration and meditation in the present moment.

**6. Dharana: concentration; the stilling of the mind by focusing or concentrating on one point, an object, Yantra symbol, chakra center or a mantra; one-pointedness**

This form of concentration may be done with eyes closed or eyes open. In the traditional yogic practices some of the points of concentration are usually done by looking upward to the third-eye or sixth chakra, looking towards the tip of the nose, focusing on the heart or concentrating on a particular chakra center.

In his book, *Mediation and Mantras*, Sawmi Devanada teaches that traditionally, ajna chakra concentration is recommended for meditators of an intellectual nature, while Anahata chakra concentration is recommended for those of an emotional nature. It is important to experiment with these practices to feel out which point of concentration resonates more naturally.

*Saguna*: translates as concrete; meditation on an external picture or object is a form of tangible, concrete concentration.

*Nirguna*: meditation practice that is more abstract; concentration on a concept such as love

Saguna meditation is sually practiced a long time before the yogi is ready for the nirguna practice for it is easier to hold the mind on a concrete object or image rather than just an idea or concept.

*Tratak*: the practice of steady gazing on a particular object such as a burning candle flame, aum symbol or a picture of a divine master or deity. One may concentrate on the object for a period of time; then close the eyes and visualize the object. This form of concentration calms the busy, wandering mind.

The main objective of these forms of concentration techniques is to prepare and clear the mind for the practice of mediation.

**7. Dhyana: sustained and uninterrupted meditation; unbroken meditation**

Through the practice of dharana and one-pointed concentration techniques, the mind becomes calm, intuition and awareness are increased, and one can achieve a higher state of meditation. Dhyana is the form of meditation where the yogi begins to move into an elevated state of higher consciousness. The individual self and the universal self begin to merge. Swami Gitananda was clear to point out that after you have prepared the body and cleared the mind, the higher experiences of Dhyana and Samadhi simply "happen", you are no longer attempting to do anything.

**8. Samadhi: state of blissfulness; union with the divine; self-realization; attainment of union with the divine consciousness; liberation from the bondages of the material world**

The Sanskrit term Samadhi comes from the roots *'sam'* which means complete, 'a' which means eternal, and *'dhi'* which translates as buddhi and inner wisdom. * In the state of Samadhi one is free of awareness of the individual self, time or space. Samadhi is the compete state of eternal blissfulness, or Sat Chit Anada which translates as 'truth, consciousness & bliss' – Aham (I Am).

*Samadhi* is the final result of the various practices of the *'Science of Yoga – Chakra System*'.

*Aham Sat Chit Anada*

I AM TRUTH, CONSCIOUSNESS & BLISS !

AUM

Though the terms ***Yama*** and ***Niyama*** are translated as die and not die, they could roughly be translated into the words **don't do** and **do**. There are five types of behavior to be avoided (which need to die), and five types of conduct which should continue. Most of these are rules of social behavior that keep us in non-stressful relationships with our fellow humans. They are required because during the process of exploring the mind we lean to see ourselves more clearly, and any wrongdoing we have been involved with come up in the mirror of introspection. Introspection or self-observation is one of the rules of conduct that needs to be highlighted (*niyama*: non-death). As we become aware that karma applies to all our actions ,we might well choose actions that bring us desirable results. In coming to realize that karma is an action mirror working through universal energy fields, we see that right behavior is the only way to go. Whatever we do to others will be done to us in such a way as to always keep things in balance; socially, all our consideration and helpful actions to others come back to us. Karma is not good nor bad, it is quite simply the result of our actions. Sometimes there is a backlog of actions we need to get caught up on, from our past years or even from past lifetimes. But inevitably the events balance themselves out, and with yoga the process accelerates until we may come to a place called "instant karma." It is a wonderful place to be, or should be, but for some people it could be lethal, depending on what you have been up to;. If we see it as action-reaction, and use it as such, life becomes a wonderful expression of whatever we are creating.

At a more personal level, this rule of action-reaction works quickly to our advantage when we begin tuning-up our bodies, eating the foods that are best for our health, and breathing deeply. The results come fast and we are encouraged to continue with our practice. Because we can clearly see the progress, it becomes self-evident why we should continue creating health and happiness for ourselves and others. Sometimes health may be difficult to attain when we have not been taking care of the body: no tune-ups, long periods of bad diet, head full of disease possibilities, lead to an accumulation of negative stuff, like the chemical preservatives from food that have settled in the body for a while. There it is—the backlog of very physical karma. With a good yoga routine of posture, movement and breath, the cleansing process is awakened and begins eliminating the undesirable elements from our system. Rejuvenation and health are on the way. But we first need to understand what we have been doing to interfere with the natural healing forces, and the cease our destructive patterns in order to come to a realization of our own bodily karma.

When we come to an understanding of karma in this way, it becomes more obvious why there need to be guidelines for our behavior. The Yama and Niyama are there to show us how to direct our energies in a way that will create a positive life for ourselves. I will enumerate these guidelines below but will elaborate on the matter in the appropriate chapters on the chakras. Each chakra stimulates a certain kind of action, and this action needs to be guided so that energies don't go wild. Energy likes to move, in fact it cannot stop moving, so it is important that it go the right way,

otherwise it could be detrimental. As na example, a water hose with high pressure water flowing through it needs to be held firmly and directed, otherwise the hose will fly all over the place and water goes everywhere. Since the practice of yoga generates a higher energy flow through the nervous system, the energy needs to be directed into mental and spiritual development, otherwise it may go wild, and so will your desires, thoughts, fears and fantasies.

In the field of Hatha Yoga one of the requirements of the practice is that of mental involvement, not in the sense of thinking, but of mentally observing the feelings which arise from each posture or movement. There is no "thing" to think about, rather, one just concentrates on the momentary experience of all the sensations coming into the mind—no thinking, analyzing, comparing or judging. These are all distractions, which dilute the richness of the present moment. For most people the focus and stilling of the mind is a challenge. We have been conditioned with so many years of continual thinking, in a educational system that never explains how to stop the process. Consequently, it now takes a lot of reconditioning to change entrenched thought patters. Because yoga is a while mind/body method of dealing with life, it is important for students to take the mental side of it seriously rather than mechanically doing postures and movements.

For the mental part of this self-mastery, four steps are required. The first of these is relaxation of the nervous system, without which the mind could well be in frantic non-stop thinking mode. This relaxation does not just mean having a nap, it goes to a much deeper level called ***Pratyahara*** – a term which means withdrawal and detachment from all sensory stimulation. This process allows the mind to relax. Concentration, (Dharana) meditation (Dhyana) and ***Samadhi*** follow. Before any of these can be achieved, contemplation, (***Swadhyaya***, one of the Nuyamas) as an analytical "thinking" process needs to be practiced. Here you are observing the thoughts without being carried away by them. It involves a degree of directing the thoughts—choosing what to think about and remaining on the subject rather than random thinking. Writing them out on paper is often a good way of slowing down and observing the process, together with various relaxation techniques. To this we add concentration techniques which focus on sight or sound—the mandala-gazing methods for instance, where one stares with fixed attention on an external geometric design, followed by looking on the inside at the after-image that comes up. Or one can concentrate on an appropriate sound (mantra) to stimulate the energy of a specific chakra through vibration. Focusing on something rather than random thinking falls into the realm of concentration. When this is accomplished for a period of time (not necessarily long), it leads to a state of meditation.

For now it is enough to have an idea of how the various phase of yoga fit together into a system that is self-supporting. When you add a little bit of experience to the idea, it becomes clear. If you spend a half-hour practicing a vigorous Hatha Yoga routine, following that with a relaxation that utilizes slow deep breathing , the you will probably find that contemplation and concentration come much easier, then a meditative state of mind becomes possible.

Energy likes to move, in fact it cannot stop moving, so it is important that it go the right way, otherwise it could be detrimental. Since the practice of yoga generates a higher energy flow through the nervous system, the energy needs to be directed into mental and spiritual development, otherwise it may go wild, and so will your desires, thoughts, fears and fantasies.

**THE FORMS OF YOGA,** which we will be working with during this teachers' course are:

***Hatha Yoga*** is that form most people consider to **be** yoga. It consists of physical postures and movements designed to stimulate and rejuvenate the physical cells of our being. Many postures nad positions are aimed at stretching out he body to make it more flexible. Other postures and movements are for gainaing strength and empowerment, while the Dandhal series is specifically for bodybuilding. Overall, yoga involves a detailed knowledge of our physiology and brings us to an understanding of how the glands and orgas function and what causes them to malfunction sometimes. We learn how to influence the glands and organs, what to feed the body, how to detoxify, strengthen, etc. All fo this information and more is incorporated into the first phase of yoga which is connected to our physical bodies, related to the first chakra, the most material element.

***Jnana Yoga*** has to do with achieving wisdom through the path of self-analysis. It leads us to understand the emotional aspect of our being and its ruling effect on our mind. As a practice. It is an application of many different relaxation techniques, along with introspective methods for studying the emotional motives for our actions and reactions in the social world. The technique of pratyahara, for example, is a withdrawal from the outer world of distractions to refocus the awareness on the workings of the mind itself. By studying how the mind is led around by the senses and desires, this form of yoga becomes an in-depth study of psychology., The philosophical principles of Samkhya are then realized followed by the application of yoga techniques for changing a distracting situation until consciousness leads and directs the mind rather than being let around by it.

***Pranayama Yoga*** begins with the art of proper breathing; from there it moves through dozens of techniques aimed at rejuvenating the nervous system through controlling the flow of energy in the nerves. Ultimately, prana-yama means energy control. Many of the methods learned here are combined with the other forms of yoga. It is a fundamental part of Hath Yoga practice (traditionally), as there are specific techniques for rejuvenating each gland or organ, for releasing stress or boosting hormonal productions, for empowering the muscles, etc. Likewise there are techniques for clearing the mind, weeding out old negative thought patterns, and bringing peace of mind. Some of the breathing methods are used to induce deep relaxation and meditative states; there are even some for leaving the body, as consciousness expands to higher realms.

***Karma Yoga*** is a more subtle study of the laws of cause and effect as they apply to our personal life. In essence it is a study of how we have created the situation we are in now, and a subsequent look at what we would like to create in our upcoming years and lifetimes. Techniques involve self-analysis of thoughts, emotions and feelings, leading to insights about where it all comes from, and methods to change the undesirable aspects. In practice it comes down to being helpful and compassionate with everyone, thereby creating positive karma.

***Raja Yoga*** may be more commonly known as the yoga of the mind. Here we find many methods of working with mental functions, such as creative visualization and the verbal and vocal processes (these will be distinguished and explained more fully in the appropriate chapter, 5). There is a lot of learning about the functions of the mind, followed by the application of what is learned. By skillful use of mental energies, certain results are achieved within the body, such as healing, and out in the world – as in manifesting your dreams. Meditation practices that take you out of the normal world to explore the inner world are a large part of this royal yoga (*raja* means royal). Here we come to know that mind rules over matter, that mind is the king.

***Yantra Yoga*** has to do with the structure of mind, energy and time. One of the least known forms of yoga, it is like a study of cosmic geometry and mathematics, as in the measurement of time and the biorhythms of the chakra energies. Sometimes referred to as ***sacred geometry***, Yantra yoga involves numbers, symbols and colors, leading us to an understanding of how these influence the mind while as a practice it applies the use of art as a focused concentration in designing mandalas. Through the time cycles a personal calendar can be made to help us see how the energies of the chakras are affecting us by the day, month, year, etc.

***Mantra Yoga*** is an intricate study of sound and its influence on energy, mind, and the external world. More than just the chanting of certain sounds, this form of yoga goes deeply into the essence of what sound is a vibration, what types of sounds affect which ares of the body and mind—the mental reactions, etc. Then comes the application of certain sound formulas to create the desired results. Fundamentally, it comes down to the reality that all is energy and that energy is in a state of vibration. Sound is one of the ways we perceive vibration. It is also an easy tool to work with as we can create sounds that bring the mind to a meditative state.

***Laya Yoga*** involves concentration techniques to move energy in certain ways for the purpose of awakening dormant forces in the body, so as to use them along the evolutionary path. These forces (or the *Force*) are somewhat magical in their nature and should only be used by an adept for dharmic (right) purposes, healing or helping others along the spiritual path. Other names by which this yoga is known are *Kundalini* and *Tantra*. Knowledge about the energy centers known as chakras is contained in this realm of yoga.

***Bhakti Yoga*** is the study of the oneness of the universe. It attempts to understand how it all fits together into a pattern, allowing us to see that the universe is unfolding with intelligence, beauty and purpose. Through a study of the energy fields we eventually come to a realization that the energy, which makes up the stars and planets, the heat, light, etc, is the same as that which makes up our own bodies. With this understanding we can go with the flow and trust that we are part of this unfolding process as well. Bhakti Yoga is more than a philosophy about his oneness; it utilizes the other forms of yoga in bringing about a heartfelt realization of this truth. *Bhakti* literally means devotion to God; in India it is known as the path of love to God (while *Jnana* is the wisdom path). Through developing an awareness of oneness, one arrives at the wisdom that we are all part of one infinite energy field, in a state of vibration that feels like Love.

**The PANCHA KOSHAS: The five bodies.**

In the yogic system we are said to have five bodies rather than only the one attributed to us by Western science. The word Kosha means a sheath or covering, *pancha* means five: these refer o the five coverings over our conscious awareness, five veils which limit our consciousness.

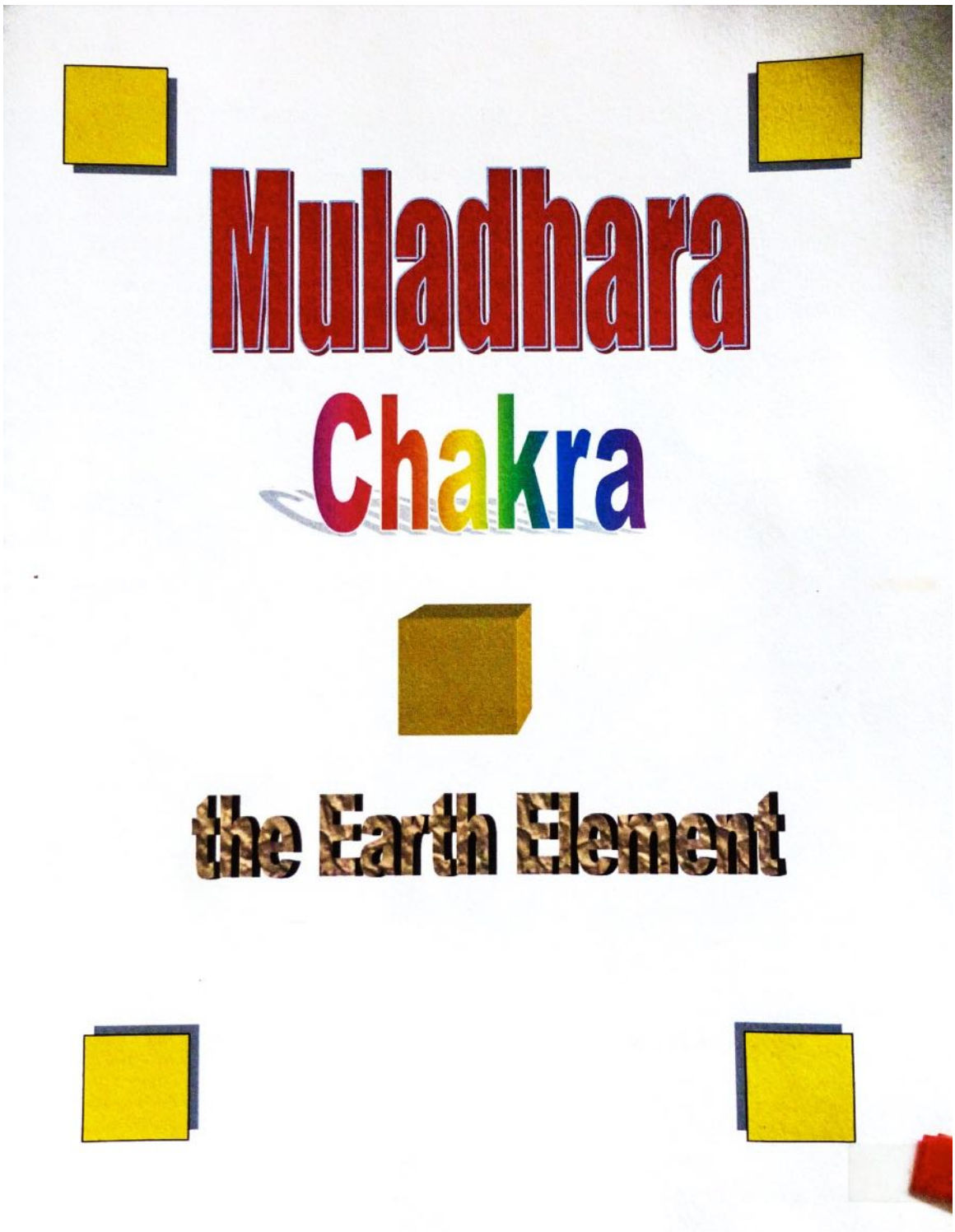
***ANNAMAYAKOSHA*** is the first of the koshas. It is our physical body, the most obvious and tangible energy form that we take to be a reality because solidity is what we are taught is real. *Anna* refers to physical food and the word *Maya* means illusion. The densest part of the illusion is our body, (in fact most of us become trapped in it), and it has to be sustained by food.

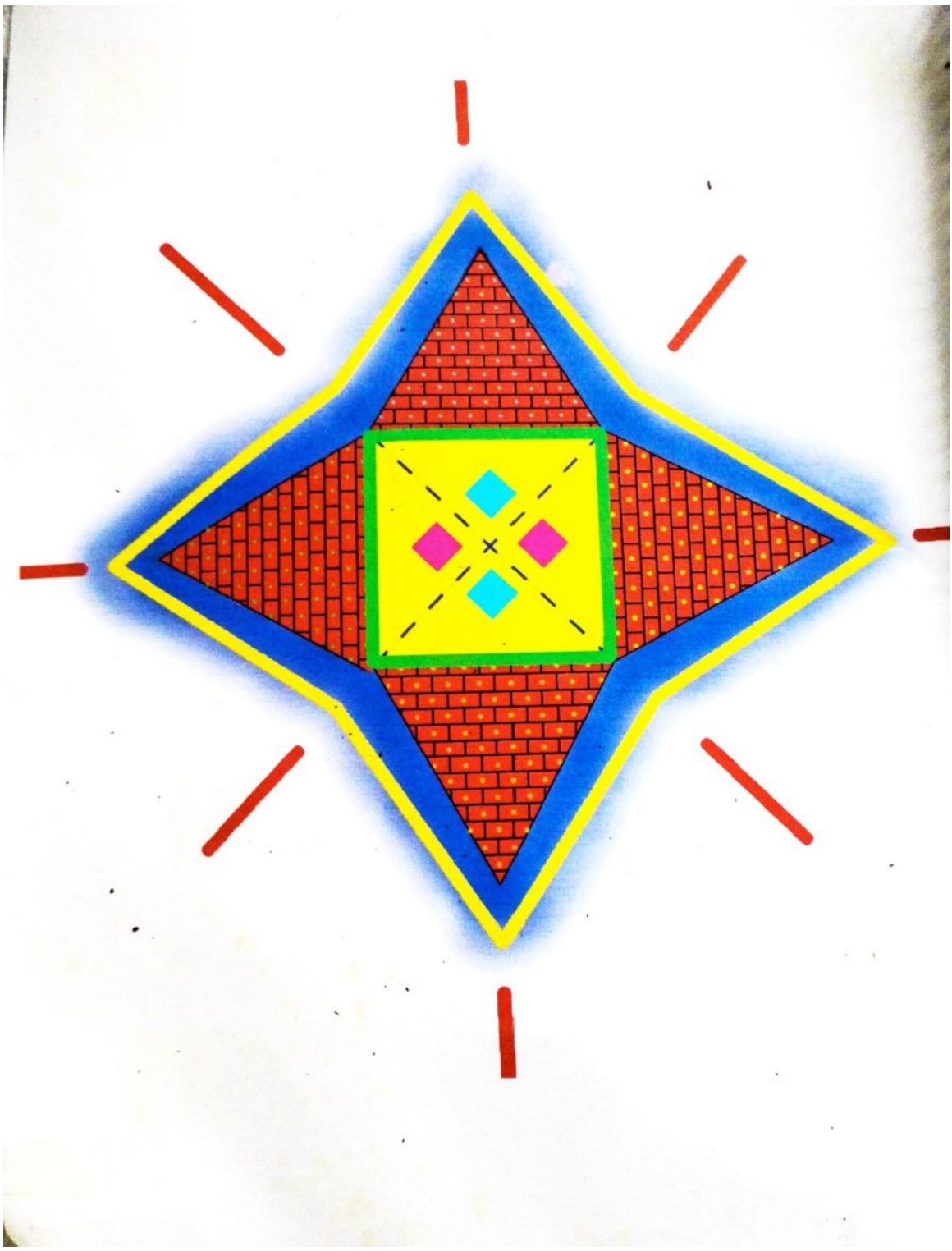
***PRANAMAYA KOSHA*** is the second sheath of the illusion. The word *prana* means energy, the vital essence (compare *Chi* in Chinese). Our energy body, or etheric body, consists of all the energy moving along the nerves, within the cells, in the brain and throughout the physical body; it is the power that animates the physical, making it move and think—the life force without which we would only be a corpse. When the energy body separates from the physical, we say the physical has died.

***MANOMAYA KOSHA*** is the third layer over our consciousness, and this one is composed of thought patterns in relation with our senses. The energy moving through the brain and nervous system forms certain patterns of thought and behavior as we learn and grow. Much of this has to do with survival and basic needs like eating and moving around to acquire the food and build shelters. Let's say you notice you are hungry, so you react by making something to eat and consuming it. All of this requires certain mental decisions and willful action, which are in the realm of the lower mind: basic functions. Animals have similar mind functions that allow them to survive in the same way, though not so complex.

***VIJNANAMAYA KOSHA*** is the sheath composed of higher intelligence and is comprised of both intellect and intuition. It covers our consciousness with a layer of knowledge about more universal concepts and ideals. More like a philosophical mindset, it doesn't have a lot to do with the basics of sensual existence. Because this mind is connected to the universe, it is expansive and actually much larger than our physical bodies – its energy is more electromagnetic and without body limitations. We could say that it is an eternal part of the universe and does not have any serious attachment to the body. However, it can be a very ungrounding influence due to this, as it can lead us into a dreamworld of endless possibilities.

***ANANDAMAYA KOSHA*** is the body of bliss. At this level of our experience, we perceive our whole energy being in a state of vibration, consequently it feels like bliss. Interference from the mind is absent, leaving us free to be in that bliss. Since everything is made of the same universal energy, this state of consciousness allows us to merge with the cosmic energy field and expand continuously. While we are still on the earth plane we can tap into this level of our being without having to dissolve our physical existence. In fact, whenever we are having a blissful moment we are in touch with it. If I may state an unexpected example, during orgasm, when we are shifting into feeling an intense energy flow through the lower centers, we are experiencing part of our blissful body. Imagine an orgasm as large as the galaxy!


Muladhara
Chakra
the Earth Element



# CHAPTER 1

## Muladhara Chakra

*Foundation Root Center*

- Muladhara, the energy of compression, is the creative force underlying the material world, pulling particles together like building blocks to manifest the earth element.
- At the molecular level this energy is the strong integrative power that holds each individual atom together; the nuclear core of the material world.
- At the universal level it is the gravitational pull that holds individual stars and planets together, and creates what we experience as the gravity of the earth—that pull that keeps us on the ground.
- At the physiological level it is the force that empowers cells to gather nutrients for growth, as in children's bodies where an abundance of this energy is required. Hormones and neuro-peptides produced by the sex glands reflect this energy and distribute it throughout the body.
- At the psychological level thoughts stimulated are around the self, possessions, survival, and acquisition.

## ELEMENT

**Earth** = The earth element is the primary force in material creation. The energy/power of gravitation, (energy that draws in upon itself, pulling in towards the center), it is a strong binding power that holds together the physical components of the universe. We could say that it is the force that holds the energy in patterns which give us the impression of physical matter. On the large planetary scale we know this force exists as gravity, a strong power that keeps the earth intact. This dynamic force is always influencing us on the outside, but it also affects us on an internal level. Just as we take gravity for granted, we often overlook the importance of this integrative power upon our physical beings. On the microcosmic scale, this same energy keeps each atom in our bodies intact and gives each cell its integrity, each organ its individuality; it gives us our individuality, keeping our bodies from melting into the ground beneath us. Once we lose that force we do in fact dissolve back into the earth. The Sanskrit name of this elemental force is Prithivi.

Muladhara chakra is the name given to this center of energy in the Sanskrit language. The name means root center amongst other things, because it is at the root of your being. It can be felt at the base of your spine in its pure essence, though this energy is present in many areas of your body (each cell actually). We can visualize the nervous system as the roots through which we draw energy from the body into the chakra realm. Feeling this energy emotionally can be the beginning of

developing confidence, which becomes quite strong as one works with many of the techniques supporting Muladhara.

All that is solid is held together by the force of this center. This works at the sub-atomic or quantum level, then upwards and outwards as these particles add up to become the building blocks we refer to as molecules, and these group together to become parts of cells, then complete cells. The cells group themselves into organs and glands, and these form an organized group that integrates into a complete body. All is made with the building blocks of the universe, and these blocks are held together with the same kind of energy: that primary force of Muladhara. Within the center of the blocks known as cells are the genetic patterns that determine what the form will be. Each cell has its own holographic image built in so that it "knows" its place within the structure. Similarly, each part of the body follows a development blueprint that is within tis own core, while at the same time being part of the greater picture.

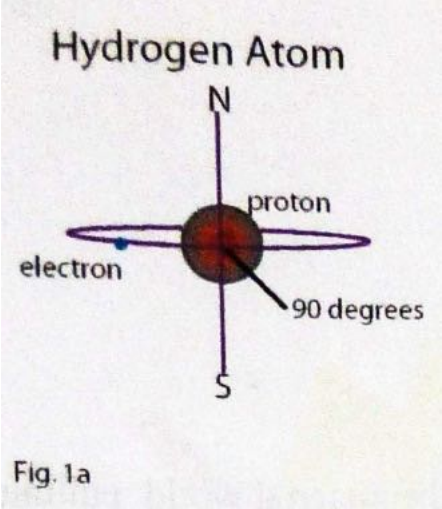


Fig. 1a

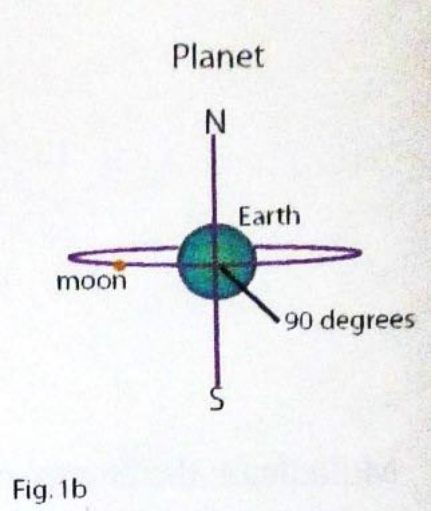
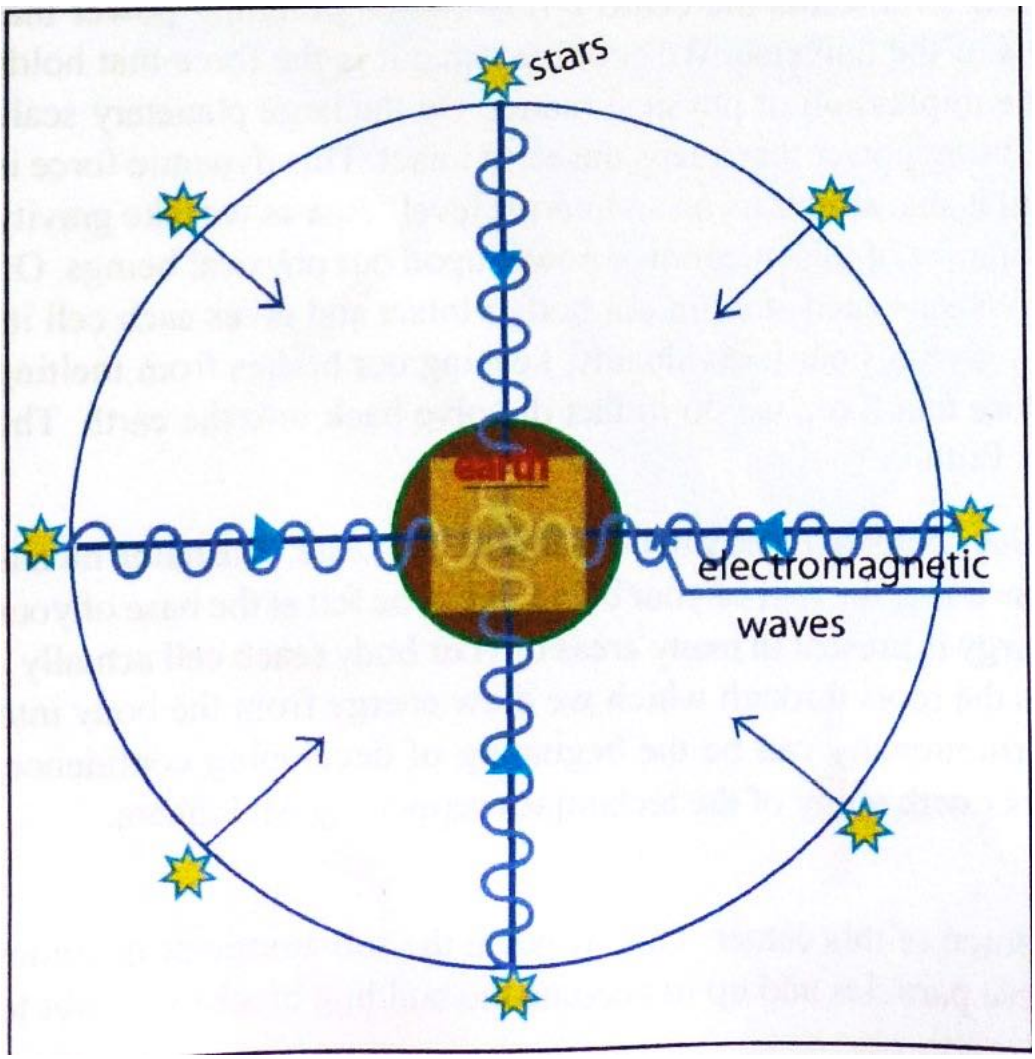


Fig. 1b

This idea of the small blueprint being part of the larger one, and simultaneously reflecting it, takes us back to the concept of macrocosm and microcosm, the atom being a small model of the solar system (Figs. 1a & b); the structure of the universe being reflected in our own molecular structure.

If we look out as far as we can in every direction of space we see stars radiating energy towards us in the form of light. That is why we can see them, but they can also sending a wider spectrum of electromagnetic energy which we do not see. As these energy waves cross at various angles they create different phenomena here in the material world, and when that angle is 90 degrees the waves wrap around each other in a binding dance that creates atoms, and appears to us as matter. One of the primary symbols used for this energy bound together is the yellow square. Yellow is the color we see when we look at fire or the sun, so we may think of it as the color of energy in general.




The square meanwhile is a box-like figure that contains four right angles and holds this energy. At the crossing point of the two waves mentioned earlier there are four such angles facing outward; in a square there are those same four 90 degree angles facing inward to contain the energy, energy condensed within the atom (Fig. 1c). Thus, there are four angles on the inside, four on the outside; one is the reflection of the other. These days, as nuclear physicists keep exploring the realm within the atom, they keep renaming the innermost particles. The latest term for these is *gluons*, which aptly describes how these waves get glued together. Since we are totally immersed in these trillions of energy waves coming in from trillions of stars, they end up forming the zillions of atoms that make up our material reality. This was the view held by most of the ancient civilizations. I found it very synchronistic that the symbol of the yellow square can still be found in the faded temples of Egypt and the Mayan lands, as well as in India.

Another classic symbol used for one of the aspects of Muladhara by each of these cultures is that of the serpent. The snake, moving in waves like energy, was depicted in many scenes to tell the story of what energy was doing in a variety of situations.

What we find in the first chakra symbolism is a serpent curled up and resting. In India it is curled up in three and a half coils and referred to as the dormant ***Kundalini Energy***; in Egypt it is two and a half coils. One of kind Tut's favorite treasures was a solid gold, two and half coiled serpent. The energy of the universe in motion takes the form of electromagnetic waves; when this energy condenses into matter, it spirals around itself, giving us the coiled of the serpent. In the material element of the earth we find the two crossing energy waves circling around each other in a vibrant cosmic dance that is contained and bound within every atom. This condensing effect is present throughout the body, though its impact is strongest at the base of the spine. As the **root** chakra, this energy is strongly connected to the coccygeal and sacral plexuses, as well as to the sex glands; the first of those being more directly related to the dormant force of Kundalini (it is called Junda in Sanskrit), while the latter is the more general area where this energy vortices. Note that many modern yoga books relate the sacral plexus to the second chakra. My experiences in concentration and meditation later took me in to the centers of those vortexes, and verified for me, (as Swami Gitananda was specific in pointing out), that Muladhara is definitely vibrant in the area from the sacrum to the coccyx. The contracting feeling of this energy is noticeable in a muscle that is held tight. In the center of the chakra it becomes the most solid form of bliss. In this case as in many, the experience is required to make the difference between theory and knowledge. (Level 2)

## ENDOCRINE GLANDS

The TESTICLES or OVARIES are the endocrine glands directly influenced by this energy. Looking at how this energy words, it is interesting to note that these glands have a gravitational condensing power so great that they take the essential elements of your being and pack them into a molecular structure much too small to be seen by the naked eye. The essence of your physical and psychological self are all here, within the sperm or the egg --- the macrocosm within the microcosm. The testicles and ovaries also fabricate hormones, which can be considered as chemical messengers. There are male and female hormones. The male hormone, testosterone, travels through the body toward specific targets; once there, it somehow communicates the function of gravity or pull-in power to the cells in need so that they can draw in the nutrients needed to grow. It gives each cell the power to attract. Some variations of this hormone begin surveying the body at puberty and guide the sexual development of the individual. Another aspect or version of this substance plays a large part in the utilization of protein by various body cells, including the gathering and condensing of these protein to make hair and other solid components. Testosterone is responsible for the male primary sex features, such as growth of the genitals, and secondary features such as hair growth all over the body, especially at the pubis, face and armpits; muscle development; and enlargement of the larynx causing the voice to deepen. It stimulates the growth of

bonce and causes it to harden when complete. It even helps the blood to condense in certain areas in order to form clots. All of these functions can be seen as directly related to the earth element, condensation into hardness being a principal feature of the gravitational energy. Sexual functions, sperm formulation, and physical drive or motivation increase or decrease according to the production of this hormone, production which is immediately influenced by the practice of hatha yoga.

The balancing effects of estrogen and progesterone are subdued by the force of Muladhara chakra, and stimulated by the effect of the second chakra energy, as will be discussed in chapter two. Each of the forces need to be balanced within each chakra.

## OTHER PHYSIOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS

### Muscle and Bone

Many of the body's physical components, such as bones and muscles, are governed by the force of the first chakra. In the case of muscles, their very functioning can be seen as a direct result of the contracting force of Muladhara. Muscle cells contract when fibers of actin and myosin slide into each other. What pulls them together? Polarities acting at molecular levels are causing the fibers to pull themselves together. Each cell uses the pulling power to contract, causing the muscle to shorten. You can observe this feeling when you tighten and hold a muscle. That same feeling is there near the bottom of your spine at all times but below the level of normal consciousness. In the practice of yoga there is one technique known as *mula bandha* (beginning with the contraction of the sphincter muscle) that is used to bring us in touch with the feeling of this force. It feels very tight, hard and strong, like a firmly contracted muscle. Also, there is a very centered experience that comes along with the here-and-now perception of the muscles at work. This phenomenon can be felt in each of the muscles, and can be amplified with certain methods of exercise in the Hatha Yoga system: those techniques known as the **Dandhals** (body-building and strengthening exercises).

Hardness is a primary characteristic of the earth element. Bones are obviously some of the hardest parts of our being. The enamel on our teeth is the only harder substance we have, and of course it also relies on gravitational power to pack the atoms so closely together into geometric patterns that fit together like building blocks, forming a very solid substance. In both of these substances the molecules become bound together in a rigid structure, like bricks in a wall, as opposed to our more fluid soft tissue cells.

### Red Blood Cells

Red blood cells (also made inside some of the bones), are mainly made of hemoglobin, an iron-containing protein. Hemoglobin gives red blood cells their color and is so highly concentrated in individual cells that it almost forms crystals. This crystallizing principle is a strong part of the first chakra power; packing in the energy until it forms a solid. Hemoglobin is an important protein in the transport of oxygen and carbon dioxide; it utilizes the gravitational pull of Muladhara to attract the molecules it needs to function. Red blood cells are manufactured in myeloid tissue. Better known as red bone marrow. This red bone marrow is found mainly in the sternum, ribs, and cranial bones, although a few other bones also contain small amounts of the tissue.

## **ANNAMAYA KOSHA** and DIET

As was mentioned in the introduction, our physical bodies are referred to as *anna maya kosha,* three words that are literally translated as food, illusion and sheath. Our physical body is made of the food we eat in the reality of this world. Although it may be an illusion when looked at from the energy perspective, flesh and bone do have substance and require food for their maintenance.

From the viewpoint of yoga, the primary food for the physical body is oxygen. Every cell in our bodies requires this fuel, hence we have a constant need for it. Oxygen is one of the main componenets in almost every chemical reation in the body. Most of the other nutrition we take in needs oxygen to be utilized. Every molecule of nutrition requires an atom of this substance, otherwise metabolism cannot occur. Fire needs air to burn in exactly the same way. During the last decade research has been done to try and establish the role oxygen deficit plays in degenerative diseases. The results of that research have shown beyond any doubt that many of the most common diseases (like cancer) are directly linked to a lock of O2. Oxygen deficit is considered to be one of the principal causes of cell malfunction and deterioration. As Dr. Otto Warburg, two-time Nobel Laureate Winner of the Nobel Prize for Cancer Research, notes: “Cancer has only one prime cause. It is the replacement of normal oxygen respiration of the body’s cells by an anaerobic (i.e. , oxygen deficient) cell respiration.”

With the oxygen we absorb through our breath comes *prana*, the vital energy which both nourishes the nervous system and replenishes the essential forces that power the body. Though this concept has been understood for thousands of years in the East, it is only in the latter part of this century that scientists have realized that there are extra elections attached to some of the molecules of the air we breath (ionized). These are in fact the little electrical charges that add up to make our vital force: prana. We absorb this force with every breath we take. In a world where the average person is only breathing with one-tenth of their lungs, we do not get enough

of this important energy, nor do we obtain enough oxygen. This we change with yoga.

Natural foods come next on our ladder of nutrition. Nature has long provided us with a large variety of very edible and delicious produce that is designed to fulfill our basic physical needs. These foods contain nutrients in the form of vital amino acids (vit-amin), proteins, carbohydrates, minerals, and even prana. Yoga has advocated the vegetarian diet for a long time. Some think this diet may not provide enough protein or have an adequate supply of the B vitamins. These doubts are not presented by people who come from generations of vegetarianism, but rather from those who come from a meat-eating background. Our bodies do become habituated in the way they digest food, just as they adapt to many other internal and external conditions. Because of this habituation, a radical shift in diet, like going from a meat and potatoes diet to totally vegan, can cause discomfort. A period of adjustment is necessary for the stomach and other digestive organs to learn how to digest different foods, as well as for the person eating to know how to gain adequate nutrients from the new diet. Protein does not come in the same density with vegetables, as a result, some high-protein vegetables and grains, buts and seeds, need to be added to supply the daily needs. Many new vegetarians do not take this into account and find themselves weak and losing weight. The types of vegetable foods that supply protein in abundance are the legumes, like beans, peas and lentils. (These are easier to digest and greatly enhanced nutritionally if sprouted.) From soybeans come such foods as tofu and tempeh, both very high in protein and much easier to digest than meat. Greens such as spinach, broccoli, kale, wheatgrass, have a higher protein count than meat. Other vegetarian proteins are nuts (almonds are especially high in protein and calcium) and seeds (sesame, sunflower, pumpkin, etc.) Avocados are 15% protein, as well as supplying essential fatty acids. Some grains, e.g., buckwheat, spelt, are also high in protein.

Some of the rules for healthy living can be the following:

- Breathe well and deeply to gain more oxygen and prana.
- Exercise and movement to keep the body fluid circulating with the nutrients.
- Eat live organic foods for vitamins and prana.
- Include protein in sufficient amounts: beans, tofu, seeds, nuts, etc.
- Add some herbs and teas to detoxify. Other helpful foods are spirulina, wheat grass, powdered greens, Microhydrin, etc.
- Maintain good emotional status by including pleasurable activities.

If right living is followed, then it is easy to maintain health. In this modern age, however, we also need to consider the pollution factor. So many undesirable components have been added to the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, and even to our teeth. Most of these additives have a very detrimental effect on our immune system and our health in general. We can take steps to avoid some of these, others we need to eliminate through certain means.

**Avoid:**

- Polluted air and water
- Processed food and any that might have strange additives
- Dairy and animal products
- Sugar, particularly the refined type.

Over the last couple of decades many "healing" diets have become popular in our culture. Most of these are for cleansing and detoxifying the body of the unwanted chemical residues that come from processed foods. Virtually everything we eat from normal grocery stores has been "treated" in some way, if not genetically modified. The majority of people eat without thinking about the results of putting these strange substances into an organic being. As this is happening, on the one hand, we see an alarming rise in degenerative and "incurable" diseases, on the other. A few people are waking up to see the connection, but most are still sleeping.

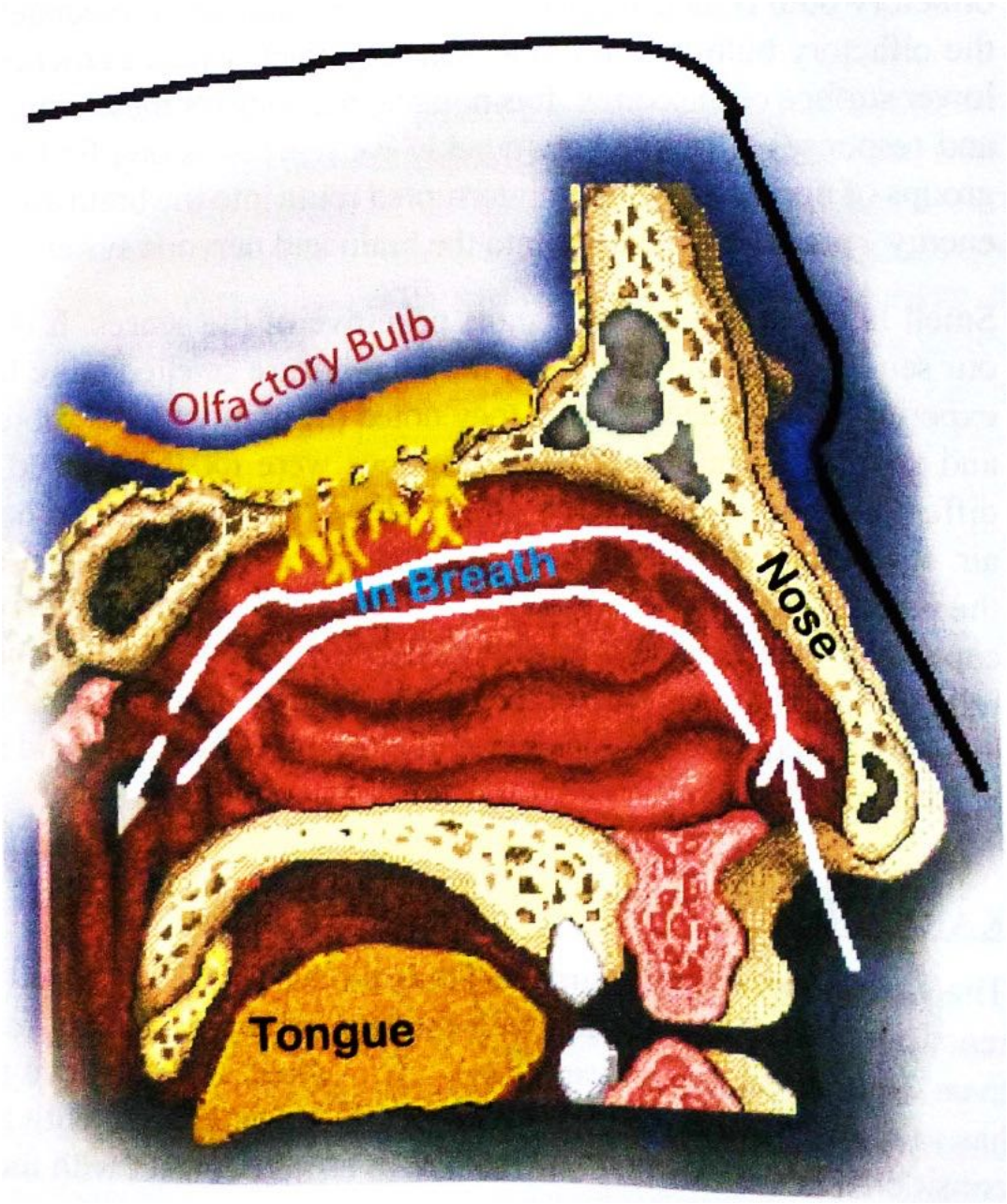
The reason most people are still sleeping has to do with our education. What we leaned in school and what we are being taught now does not present a complete picture of health, but rather an ongoing battle against disease. One example of this incomplete picture is the story of sugar. When I was living in L.A. in the '70s, I heard a broadcast report about research that had just been done on the effects of sugar on the human immune system. This report stated very conclusively that when blood sugar was at a high level, white blood cells were withdrawn from circulation, resulting in a suppression of our immune system. It went on to state that there was enough sugar in one bottle of pop to suppress our immune response by 40%. The effect lasted for a period of four hours, then began to diminish. Noted also was the fact that the effect was cumulative, so that if a person had two bottles of pop (or a larger bottle), the effect on white blood cells was 80% suppression. That left us with a 20% chance of fighting off any invading bacteria for the next four ours. Most people who drink pop would probably have some other sweet treat later, like a chocolate bar, with the ongoing result that the body's defense against disease would be virtually dysfunctional most of the time. The research had been done by the American Medical Association (AMA), and the report broadcast over an FM radio station.

At that time I realized this to be a wonderful confirmation of my own dietary experiments of the previous year. During that time I had been plagued with a serious infection of gangrene and after months of trying different foods and fasting, found the sugarless diet to be the one that prompted a very natural and painless healing. The medical solution of the time was to cut off my leg as soon as possible.

Now coming back to education, I thought the AMA's discovery about sugar could have revolutionized the Western approach to healing, as my own experience had changed my view. However, I never heard anything about it again. Sugar meanwhile remains one of the main ingredients in hospital diets.

## ORGANS OF PERCEPTION AND ACTION

In the Samkhya system of yoga our perceptions and actions have all been categorized so that we may better understand ourselves and how we function. In Sanskrit, the "organs of perception" are called ***jnanendriyas***; we know them as healing, seeing, touching, tasting, and smelling. The "organs of action" are called ***karmendriyas***, and these we experience as our feet, hands, anus, genitals, and larynx. There is one of each connected to each of the chakras.



## JNANEDRIYA

The *jnanendriya* that functions with the energy of the first chakra is the sense perception of smell. As a sense, smell pulls in molecules of a certain substance and either attracts or repels us, depending on whether we are smelling a rose or a skunk. Either way it is primal and has a strong impact.

With the sense of smell, it has been established that we can notice the scent of a rose if there is only one molecule of its aroma entering our nose. With dogs and other animals, the sensitivity of the nose can be amazing, but because of our environment and the modern living conditions of humans, we no longer pay much attention to this sense.

Another function of this sense as seen from the yogic side, is that it also absorbs a form of energy from the air. This energy, called prana in India, while the Chinese refer to it as ***chi***, is taken in through an elaborate group of nerves stemming from the olfactory bulb, (Fig. 1d). I will elaborate on the details because it is a very important point. We need to understand how our intake of prana works and utilize it in the right way; this will help us to grasp why breathing through specific methods of inhaling through one nostril and exhaling through the other. These techniques are based on a deep understanding of the different energy currents that run through each nostril. Or one could say more appropriately that when the inflow of air is through one nostril it has a charging effect on one aspect of the nervous system, and when inhaling through the other, a different part of the nervous system is influenced. One other point to mention here is the biofeedback loop that is completed when we exhale through the nose. Just as the olfactory receptors pick up smell and prana from the air we take in, they also take in the scents from the air that is coming out of the lungs. This information gives an indication of what is brewing down in there, allowing for biological adjustments to be made. Perhaps the lungs are full of mucous that needs to be eliminated for instance; if this info is fed to the brain, the body will react accordingly.

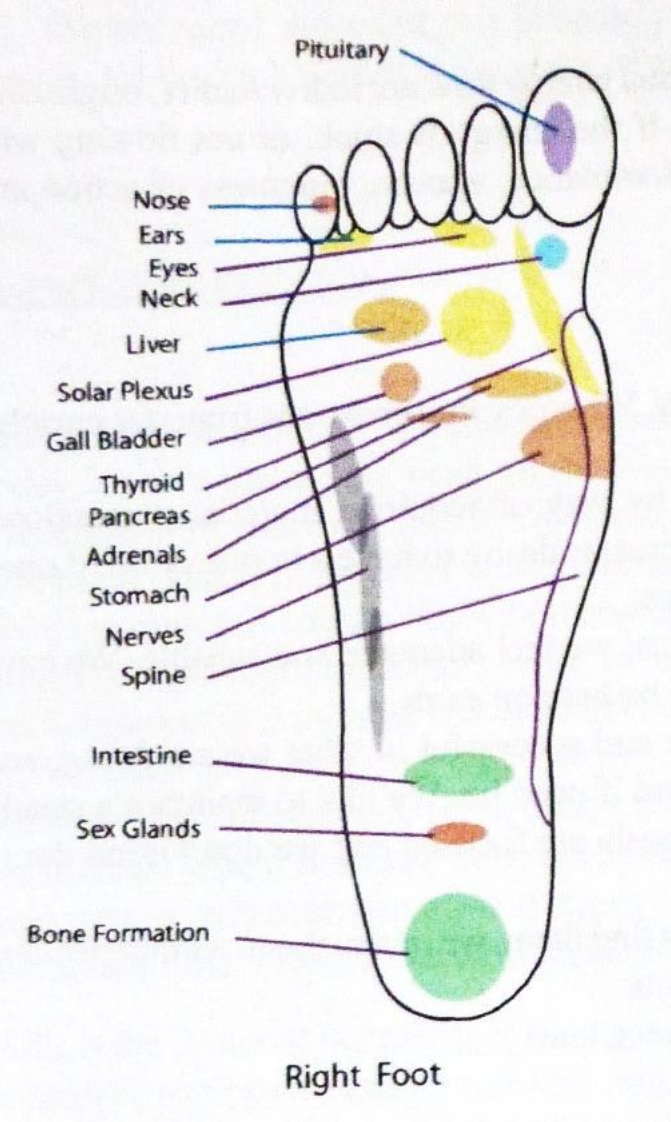
The smell and prana receptors are located at the base of the tiny hairs (cilia) located in the mucous membrane at the top of the nasal cavity. There are about 50 million nerve fibers leaving the smell membranes on each side of the nose. These link with a further 50,000 nerve fibers which carry messages to the frontal lobes of the brain, giving us an indication of its importance at the mental level. The olfactory bulb is an extension of the cortex, situated immediately above the nasal cavity. Fibers from the olfactory bulb pass into the olfactory tract, which branches to various structures on or near the lower surface of the cortex. It is notable that some of these structures are responsible for our emotions and responses. Observe how quickly we react to strong foul smells, almost instinctively. The large groups of nerves and their uninterrupted route into the brain are primarily for energy assimilation; the energy – prana goes directly into the brain and nervous system.

Smell is the most basic and most primitive of the senses. It is some 10,000 times more acute than our sense of taste. In fact, most food flavors are smelled more than tested. In a classic psychological experiment done decades ago they noted the ability of test subjects to differentiate between an apple and an onion with their nasal passages were totally blocked, and the subjects could not tell the difference. Similarly, though not to the same extent, nasal congestion prevents the little eddies of air, stirred up by the action of chewing and swallowing, from reaching the receptors in the roof of the nasal cavity, and as a result we have much less "flavor" in our food. Human smell receptors are capable of distinguishing several thousand different types of smell. The nose also plays an important role in conditioning the incoming air for the lower respiratory tract as well. This conditioning includes te control of temperature, the control of humidity, and the elimination of dust and infectious organisms.

## KARMENDRIYA

The *karmendriya* for the first chakra is the feet. When we smell something very strong, our primary reactions will often be take in with the feet, as we walk away from the skunk for instance. (It might even be our feet we are smelling). This primal urge to move towards something or away from it has to do with muscular reactions that are directly linked with the energy of Muladhara. Also to be considered is the fact that our feet are in closest contact with the earth. Perhaps it is a little less true today because of shoes, floors and concrete, but in our natural state it is our feet which touch the earth step after step as we walk around on the planet. Because our feet are he means by which we (used to) travel around on the earth, they are considered to be the organs of action connected to the earth element.

The science of yoga has taught for thousands of years that our feet are not merely something to walk with, but that there are nerve terminals in the soles of our feet that are connected to every gland, organ, and part of our body (Fig. 1e). As we walk along the earth, these terminals either discharge stress from the nervous system, or else they absorb some of the planet's grounding energy. Whether we are waling on soil, sand or grass, there is an energy connection which keeps us whole and keeps our energy flowing. To a large extent this is lost due to our habit of wearing shoes most of the time. In our yoga practice therefore it is advisable to take the time to stand firmly on the earth and imagine that connection as if our roots were going deep down into the soil – all the way to the core of the planet.



Right Foot

One of the other points I would like to make is about the natural acupressure that occurs when we walk on the surface of the soil, sometimes it is even natural acupuncture. I am referring to stepping on small stones or thorns that inevitably find their way into our feet when we dare to walk in the forest. The areas of our feet that are the most sensitive are connected to troubled areas of our bodies where stress levels are too high to be healthy. These areas feel painful when a stone pushes up into them, just as when a reflexologist puts pressure on them. In the same way that the therapist's pressure can relive the stress in the related gland or organ, a barefoot walk in nature can be very therapeutic. In Fig. 1 r, I have mapped out some general areas and points that are related to body areas, organs, etc. This is a very general map, as laid out in the Yoga Chiketsa system taught by Swami Gitananda, included here to give you a general idea. (These points may not fit perfectly with charts followed by a reflexologist or other therapist in the field).

## CHARACTERISTICS

There are both positive and negative characteristics born out of each energy and manifesting as psychological traits. Some may be consistent and others may change with the cycles of the month, day or even hour. As a result, we may see ourselves having both the positive and negative qualities of a particular energy. Habits created during one phase will linger through the next and sometimes create conflicting behavior. Also to consider is the fact that we are always made of a combination of forces and influences.

Some of the positive characteristics arising out of this primal energy flow are individuality, originality, uniqueness, strength, creativity and a pioneering spirit. If the energy is stuck, or not flowing with the others, it can make one's personality tend towards dominance, egoism, bluntness of action and speech, and lack of consideration for others.

## When this energy is flowing and balanced:

1. We are grounded and comfortable in our physical body. We enjoy the sensations from our muscles and feel motivated toward physical activity.
2. Our physical enjoyment extends out into the world by way of acquiring material possessions, which give us a feeling of tangible security. This energy creates desire to have a home, or build one.
3. Good survival instincts and strong personal boundaries.
4. Our self-image is good and confidence is normal to us; we feel adequate and capable. We have no problem liking ourselves and do not doubt our right to be here on earth.
5. We maintain a sense of happiness about being active and successful in what we are doing, and we are quite OK about being prosperous, which we defend if need be. We like to maintain a seady income that supports stability in our lives. Our material goals are focused and we don't mind doing physical work to achive what we want.
6. If some fo the things we want are original but we cannot find them , we invent them. As independent being s we can create and build things from our own insights.
7. Happy to be alone, doing things solo, some of the time at least

## When the energy is too strong and out of balance:

1. May be overly materialistic; may go beyond just acquiring possessions, all the way to grabbing and stealing them.

2. Body can become tough and too solid, stiff, perhaps too heavy. Laziness and stagnation can result.
3. Self-confidence turns to self-centeredness. We easily dominate others without noticing what they have to say.
4. Greed can develop as our independence causes us to think mostly of ourselves.
5. The boundaries we have developed in the social world become barriers which few are allowed to traverse. Our strength becomes defensive, like a fortress.

## When the energy is weak and depleted:

1. Stability and strength are lacking; it is east to lose our ground and our center. Physical health may be weak, and endurance is missing when it comes to strenuous activities.
2. We might be uncomfortable in the body, and find it easier to sit and think about doing something rather than actually doing it. We might want to spend more time out of the body than it, which can lead us to daydreams and fantasies, even lead to out-of-body experiences. We might not want to be here at all.
3. It might be difficult to maintain our stance in a social situation. Strong criticism from someone could be a crushing experience. If this happens when we are young, it can damage us for life.
4. Fear of survival becomes prominent.
5. Doubts assail the mind; we become particularly prone to self-doubt. We fail to see our own worth, while our boundaries are weak or undefined.

## MENTAL DIRECTION

The mental direction of this chakra is **down**. As the earth is down under your feet, so your physical body is down under your head. At the level of the mind we find this energy pulls into the body, and from there we move out into the material world in which the body is grounded (or should be). We see those objects in the outer world that attract us and strive to get them. A certain possessive nature evolves from this energy, but with it comes the ability to acquire the objects desired. The EGO gains much of its strength from this energy, giving the individual a solid independence that can lead one to self-centered thinking and can even develop into a degree of toughness and dominance, sometimes at the expense of others. As each cell in your body uses this energy to maintain itself, so collectively these trillions of cells add up to create a self-preservation instinct that is quite strong. Our survival as humans would not have been possible without this instinct, so it has its place. As we grow up

and evolve, however, the instinct needs to be balanced out with the more socially-considerate and compassionate forces of the other chakras.

This is the center of our physical being, and it is possible for our minds to go inward to experience our existence right down into the cellular and molecular levels of our bodies. As individuals we feel that the body is independent of what other people around us are feeling. You stand on your own ground, and I stand on mine. But you are not just on the ground, you are *in* it. Your individual consciousness is within our independent mind sitting securely in the fortress of your physical body. You may perceive a lot of feeling from your body if you are conscious of some of what is going on in there. Thinking will interfere with the observations of these feelings. Where you are in this center and your physical being is in top condition, movements which require effort have an exhilarating side to them. It feels good to go into cardiovascular exercise, and we greet the opportunities with enthusiasm rather than resistance.

Fig. 1 f Angkor Wat courtesy NDN Books, Japan

When you take a deep breath and directly perceive that action of breathing, you have created a personal feeling. Feel yourself in motion and be grounded in your own experience; you are feeling your energy in motion. E is for energy, and when you put it into motion it becomes Emotion – which is what you call your feelings. At the Muladhara level, you create and experience your own emotions through physical action. Here is the place where we are in our center and from which we move out into the four directions of life's experiences to develop our minds. It is

recommended, however, that we return into the center and integrate these lesions within ourselves. Doing so is not such a great challenge since it can be done within a second, or with one breath. An easy method is to take a deep breath and feel the sensations produced by that breath. The expansion and contraction of the chest can be physically felt in the moment, bringing you back to the center, to the her e and now. Your physical body is your first chakra, every cell being a manifestation of the solid reality we refer to as the earth element. Although this gravitational force has its center at the tailbone, its energy can be felt throughout your physical being. Any movement, exercise or practice which makes you connect with and experience your own solidity, is a **grounding** practice.

The Muladhara sites at the base of our spine with its four petals opening out into the four directions. Each one of these directions is specifically related to one of the next four chakras. This is not just in a symbolic sense, nor is it a coincidence. At a very deep level the energy of each chakra resonates with the actual frequency and type of force that flows to or from the direction. In this way we are influenced at an energetic, emotional and mental level when we face each of these directions.

In the Mayan system of yoga the chakras were laid out and explained with regards to the four cardinal directions. The initiate needed to go on journeys in each of these, in order to develop an understanding of the realities involved. The "journeys" also led to physical, emotional and mental characteristics evolving out of our potential source – and this nurtured a wisdom about life and the spiritual purpose behind it all. The initiate in this way became a wise man, or what was referred to as a "Truth Man" in their tradition. This "True" man was one who had seen and understood the truth about life and the multidimensional reality in which we live. I would well imagine that there were also "True Women".

The practice of going on these journeys was also followed by the North American native people, and some of their journeys, to the South, took them into the land of the Maya where they were educated in the ways of their southern brothers and sisters. Of course the qualities which developed through these journeys are just as present in the chakras which unfold as blossoming lotuses along the spine in the Hindu system.

The approach may differ as we look from one system to the other – the various perspectives might even lead one to assume different thoughts. But underneath those views we find that the concept of the chakras remains as a universal reality. In the temples of South India I first observed the huge towers rising up to the heavens in each of the four directions. When I visited the Mayan city of Tikal a couple of years later I saw the same temple structure with the same respect given to each direction. Years later I went to Egypt and was struck by the precision with which they had aligned their pyramids and temples to the four directions. In the great Kundalini temples of Angkor Wat in Cambodia this orientation to the four directions is a constant reality.

So these four petals of Muladhara chakra are more than mere flower petals, they go as deep in meaning as the directions go back in time. Do we know how long the earth has been spinning to the East? I will be describing each direction in the appropriate chapter, related to its chakra. Though they are different, they are all connected to the center – that being the first chakra. In the Egyptian pyramid the four petals are four triangles, all brought together in one point, upwards. In fig. 1f we can see that he central tower is going up, above all the others. Let us keep this as a reminder that the Muladhara center is the foundation upon which the other chakra energies can come together and rise up.

## THE GUNAS

In the Eastern teachings there are considered to be three main forces that govern life in the manifest world. The first one is called **Tamas** and is linked to inertia. The second one, called ***Rajas*** is thought of as a type of momentum, sort of like a ball that starts rolling down hill; it does not just stop on its own. This momentum can be applied to our nervous energy and even to the rolling thoughts of desire and fulfillment which motivate our normal lives. Thirdly we have the force of ***Sattva***, a higher mental force which creates our spiritual thought streams and is considered to be the seed bank for this world. Of these three, the first one is directly connected to the first chakra, so we can elaborate on it here. Rajas will be explained in chapter 3 and Sattva in chapter 5.

***Tamo guna***, as it is called individually, is that force in the universe which keeps things as they are. Without it everything would be in a continual state of flux. The universe in its gaseous state, before it condensed into matter, was lacking the force of tamas. Once it has solidified however it becomes much more difficult to change. We owe our material existence to this force; it keeps us together in a way that prevents meltdown and deterioration. It also keeps the world from eroding too fast. What Tamas does against us is create resistance to change – that is, when we need to change, as described in the following.

## THE GRUNTHIS

Three main barriers are known to be inhibiting our awakening energy flow. These are like three blocks that stop our evolution and keep us living in our ordinary consciousness, passing time away in the material world, eating, sleeping and growing old. Of thee three, one is directly connected to the Muladhara chakra: Brahma Grunthi. The second one, Vishnu Grunthi, is further up the spine and related to the third chakra, Manipura, while the third one, Shiva Grunthi, is related to the throat chakra, Vishuddha. Each one of these must be understood as a major resistance to our development, and subsequently we need to take action in order to pass through the barriers. The Sanskrit word *grunthi* literally means a knot. Seen as

such, it needs to be untied, untangled. These are areas in our ethereal body where the energy has been programmed into pattern that it is hard to get out of. Changing these patterns means breaking old habits.

## BRAHMA GRUNTHI

*Brahma* is the power (deity) of physical creation. Because of the physical nature of matter, or due to its solidity, it takes on certain characteristics that make it resist changes in motion. In physics this is called inertia. As an example of this force, take a larger boulder and try to move it. A lot of energy and effort are required. On the other hand, once it is in motion, try to stop it; this requires just as much effort. Inertia and momentum are both attributes of mass and matter. In Sanskrit they call this resistance to change *tamas*. It is one of the three forces we need to contend with in the material world. The other two are called rajas and Sattva (they will be dealt with in the appropriate chapters). Resistance is found not only in boulders but also in anything which has solid mass, including our bodies. Consequently, in the field of Hatha Yoga it becomes a force to be reckoned with since it creates a stumbling block along our spiritual path. The name of that block is ***Brahma Grunthi***; the first main barrier. This obstacle is resistance at the very physical level. We fell it as a kind of inertia within the body, which wants to keep the body at rest. The resistance to moving is what we feel when we wake up in the morning; the body does not feel like jumping out of bed and running immediately. Likewise, when we are sitting comfortably and it's time to get up and practice some yoga, there is often a little sluggish opposition coming from the body. It can easily make us procrastinate. Will-power and effort are required to overcome the resistance.

One of the methods used to overcome this resistance is in the application of ***Mula bandka***, the root lock. Here, the energy is pulled back in to the base of the spine. The process is begun with a simple contraction of the sphincter muscle, tightening the anus. The action can be applied to certain breathing and movement practices. Later it progresses into more elaborate and advanced practices (Level 2). This technique can have an awakening effect on dormant forces within the body (*kundalini*), sometimes arousing too much energy within the nervous system, so should be practiced with moderation in the beginning. It is a very creative energy and can easily create amplified desires when not directed properly. For the purpose of this course it is generally applied with the exhalation of the breath and sometimes on retentions. Awareness should be directed to feeling the sphincter muscle as it contracts, and observing the containment of energy at the tailbone. Visualization of the first chakra mandala can be added to the feeling, so that two sense are involved simultaneously.

## **YAMA/NIYAMA** (Ethical Rules of Conduct)

As mentioned in the Introduction, certain natural tendencies arise with the energies of each chakra, stimulating actions that are primal and not always to our advantage on the spiritual path. Consequently, with each chapter I will discuss one of the moral guidelines and one of the ethical behaviors that are appropriate to that chakra. Since taking and possessing is a characteristic of the first force, we will start here:

## YAMA: **Asteya** (Non-stealing)

One must not steal things that one desires to have, nor should one desire to have things that belong to another. Even when the objects are apparent necessities and there is no other way of obtaining them, one should avoid stealing; it is too east to rationalize and decide things are necessary. We should understand that all things that are truly required for life will come at the right time. Objects which are desirable for the pleasures they give are distractions at best, so for the material world the rule is straightforward: do not steal. This will also save a lot of time and energy otherwise wasted in scheming how to attain these objects, not to mention all the pretending involved. On the spiritual path, loss of time should be avoided; consequently, one must also be careful not to take other people's time and waste it. This is sometimes so subtle that most of us are unaware that we continually take each other's time and use it to talk about trivia, e.g. the weather. Sometimes of the spiritual path silence is to be respected. There is also another subtle thief, the ego, which will often take fame or credit that should go to someone else. One should therefore be aware and determined to take only what is deserved, and give credit and recognition to others are they so deserve.

Holding back what one owes to others is also the same as taking from them what is rightfully theirs. Karma comes from inappropriate lack of action as much as it does from action. If you hold back whatever you owe others, whether it is objects, time and attention, or effort, you will cause them to do the same to you. Remain on guard against all these tricky desires and games of the ego and you may find that other people are always there whenever you need them, with whatever else you might need. Any paranoia you may have about people taking from you will also disappear, since fears of this kind stem from the subconscious memories of your own dishonest behavior. Be honest. There is no need to steal because the universe already belongs to you.

## NIYAMA: **Swadhyaya** (Self-study)

One should practice self-observation in order to come to a better understanding of how to improve oneself and live more fully. Studying emotions, thinking processes, behavior habits, and anything else which is part of your personal life, can only bring a deeper understanding of how the human mind normally works through desire and motivation of the ego. Why do you do the things that you do? For pleasure? For yourself? To help others? To hinder them? Do you really know why you do many of the little things that are part of your daily routine? Are you aware of <u>how</u> you do

many of these things? Well done? Half done? Your hands are doing one thing while you head is thinking of something else. How coordinated is your thought with you action? How coordinated is your thought, period? Where do you thoughts come from?

These and other questions should be asked. We need to be able to distinguish between pure intellect and selfish thinking. One is objective thought, knowledge, inspiration. The other always has personal gains attached, some reward for one of the senses. There are two levels of mind to be considered along the spiritual path, which we will discuss in Chapter 5. When you think about yourself, what type of ideas do you have? When you think about other people, what kind of relationship do you imagine? Notice that whenever you are thinking, that is, putting things into words mentally, you become divided into two personalities: one talking, the other listening. Observe when you imagine yourself in conversation with other people how you must play the role of the other people as well as yourself. What are these other people like in your fantasies as compared with their behavior in real life? How different is you won behavior? If you imagine things as different from what they actually are, note the difference; see if you can discover why you cannot put your imagined behavior into action. Also study your behavior with people as compared with when you are alone. Simply be aware of what you are like inside and out.

Know yourself. This knowing needs to be applied to feelings as well, from the most physical sensations to the emotional to intuitive and spiritual. Becoming aware of the physical sensations that are coming up from your body to your mind is one of the expansions in awareness that needs to be fully regarded in this process of yoga. It is a discovery of many physical feelings, to which you may never have paid much attention. Notice what needs to stretch, what parts of the chest need to expand to get a more complete breath. Where are the aches and pains? Get to know just how your body feels and raise your self-confidence by dissolving the negative sensations and creating good feelings right down to the cellular level. Emotional feelings are also registered in areas of your body, so you will see these rising into consciousness, to be dealt with from your present state of being. There is often a lot of clearing required at this level before the higher realms of intuition and inspiration can be seen in a better light. Observe carefully the mental interpretations of the feelings that come up; a lot of mental re-arranging may need to take place. Take the time to deal with these things in an appropriate manner. In countries such as India and Thailand it has been a practice for thousands of years to step out of mainstream and dedicated specific time to self developing this knowledge. In Thailand it is a requirement for every young man (though not every young woman) to spend some months in the monastery learning about the mind and practicing meditation.

## HATHA YOGA

Hatha Yoga is the type of physical exercise that awakens and develops the energy in the Muladhara center. It consists of moving the energy down at the base level of the

muscles. Some of that energy becomes lodged in the physical components of our being, like the muscles, tendons, ligaments and joints, creating a solidifying effect we call stiffness. We can look at this as an over-condensation of the first elemental force. With the stretches of Hatha Yoga some of this energy is released as the muscles and tendons are elongated, resulting in a liberation of energy we can feel as vitality. Energy that is stuck in the muscles as tension due to stress, for example, then becomes a flowing electrical energy that can give the same muscles power to move and act. We can easily feel this shift with only a short routine of good yoga, particularly when the breath is synchronized with movement.

The free flowing energy through the nerves and muscles of our physical body then creates a positive flow of energy up into the breathing (and mind), a feeling of well-being that leads to emotional happiness and becomes a sense of bliss when the current is strong enough. In fact, it is the blockage and inhibition of this same energy flow that creates lower states of fatigue and depression. This is seen to be easily reversible with yoga practice.

One of the forms of Hatha Yoga, which is still relatively unknown, is that of the Hath Yoga Dandhals. These are very old Indian muscle-building exercises that differ from Western gymnastics or body-building primarily in that they do not consist of thoughtless repetitions, but the exercises are performed with focus on feeling the movements, and synchronized with breathing techniques. The movements are performed in such a way that we exert our will-power and imagination while we observe the moving muscles with feeling and sight, and we send a flow of prana from the breath to these muscles. These exercises were devised without props or aids, where the imagination was used to visualize an action such as throwing a spear, lifting a heavy object, or pulling back on a bowstring. The resistance from a complementary muscle in fact creates the effort of the muscle.

In my own experience of working with these techniques, the effects on the muscles were so dramatic that I once gained 6 pounds in 48 hours and then continued gaining a pound each day for the next 30 days. Admittedly I was quite thin when I began, nevertheless the experiment and the experience proved to be a dramatic demonstration of the effectiveness of these Dandhal techniques. I did use rocks as weights to start the process and make me feel my muscles.

For one to succeed with such techniques it is necessary to put in the time to practice, the concentration, and the effort required to do it well. Several hours were spent practicing each day in the above experiment.

In the Chakra Yoga System, the role of the asanas is considered important since it is the foundation of the practice, but postures, flexibility and strength are not the final goal. They are the stepping stones on which to stand while reaching for higher levels of consciousness, those levels in the energy world where the vortexes known as chakras can be experienced and we become aware of the bliss these vibrant

energies create. In order to generate a flow of energy with the postures, breath and movement are added, synchronizes those with mental focus on feeling the whole process.

Energy is what animates and gives life to our physical being. In doing so, it also recharges our nervous system, replenishes our reserves, and rejuvenates our glands and organs. This positive energetic effect is achieved through stimulating circulation, while increasing the oxygen and nutrients which are being circulated. Parallel to this, the prana (energy) is also increased and circulated through the energy body (nerves). The result is rejuvenation of the vital systems which sustain life in the body. Flexibility of limbs and joints is also achieved but considered secondary.

As the body becomes more vital and healthy, the energy flowing through it creates a feeling of peaceful bliss, and this bliss becomes the foundation for higher meditational practices.

# Active Practice

## Basic Breath Training

### ***ADHAM PRANAYAMA:*** Abdominal Breathing.

Sit in *vajrasana*, the thunderbolt. Sitting up on the heels, the back is held straight, head up. In this position practice the abdominal breathing, *Adham pranayama*, by moving the diaphragm down and up. Feel the movement. This movement of the

diaphragm pushes the digestive organs down and they subsequently move forward due to the elasticity of the abdominal wall, causing the abdomen to bulge out like a balloon. In this way the air is sucked down into the inferior or lower lobes of the lungs to fill a vacuum created there. The diaphragm muscle moves down onto the digestive organs during inhalation and back up into the chest during exhalation. When the air is expelled, the abdomen is pulled in as well, the navel being drawn in towards the spine so as to squeeze all the air out. This movement of the diaphragm muscle in the lower section of the torso provides a massage for all the organs in the lower body area, stimulating better function of those organs, good circulation ,good digestion and elimination, and healthier sexual functions.
The movement of the whole abdominal area acts as a second heat pumping the blood in and out of the area, as well as the lymphatic fluids, providing the motive force for circulation in the entire lower body all the way down to the toes. Many physical disorders that occur below the rib cage can be prevented through this form of breathing, and can be healed when this simple breathing is done in combination with various *asanas*, *kriyas* (movements), and proper diet. This includes all the digestive organs down to the intestines and bowels, the reproduction organs and prostate gland; abdominal breathing also has a positive influence on the kidneys and adrenal glands.
When teaching students who have problems in any of those areas, this abdominal breathing should be included in the routines, both by itself and in conjunction with certain postures and movements. With the lower section of the body in a good health the nervous system in the area becomes a better conductor, and energy from the first two chakras accumulates and begins to rise up to the brain for mental evolution.

***Sapurna shashasana***, the incomplete rabbit. From the thunderbolt posture, lean forward until your elbows come to the floor directly in front of the knees. The head is held up, shoulders are brought forward to compress the chest and force the breath down into the lower lobes. Feel the pressure against the thighs. #28

***Purna shashasana***, the completed rabbit. Here the hands are placed on the floor in front of the knees, arms and back are straight, head is up. Breathing is directed to both the lower and middle sections of the lungs. #29

## ***MADHYAM PRANAYAMA:*** Mid-chest Breathing.

Sitting in the thunderbolt again, practice the mid-section of the breath, Madhyam pranayama, so that the rib cage opens out to the sides. This controlled movement channels the air into the middle lobes of the lungs, the ribs moving out to the sides like an accordion and outward in all directions. This motion pulls the air into the middle area around the heart. Expelling the air here requires a squeezing effort that feels a bit unnatural at first but good to get used to, since exhaling completely is just as important as inhaling fully, in all areas.

The massaging effect is thus raised from the lower body organs to the area of the heart and the thymus gland. The thymus is in charge of our immune response system and can be easily reactivated by this type of breathing, in most cases, while the area around the heart can be cleared of the usual cholesterol and fatty deposits that inevitably lead to heart trouble. The lungs themselves get a massage and workout with this movement. The circulation of lymph through the body is carried on partly by movement and pulsation of the heart and arteries, but more so by the expansion and contraction of the mid-chest area. There is also a slight massaging effect on the upper digestive organs like stomach, liver, gall bladder and pancreas with this breathing. When the area has been detoxified, energy begins to charge up the nerve plexus associated with the third and fourth chakras, and move up from there.
When teaching this be mindful that it can create a cleansing effect on the lungs, which students will experience as coughing up mucous. People with heart disorders and immune problems should spend extra time focusing on this method of breathing.

***Sapurna ushra asana***, the incomplete camel, is done by coming up onto the knees to a deep in-breath and then bending backwards while holding the breath. The bend is done with the upper back, and the legs stay perpendicular to the floor. Do not hold long, just go back to feel the chest being stretched and then exhale immediately while going back to the original sitting position. Good for moving the air into the abdominal and mid-section of the lungs. #24

***Purna usthra asana***, the extended camel, is done from the above position by reaching back to grab hold of the heels. With the head hanging back, you inhale through the nose and blast the air out through the mouth vigorously, making sure the ribs are moving out and in using Mid-chest breathing. #25

***Vyagra asana***, the tiger pose, is done from an all-fours position. Arms are straight with hands on the floor directly under the shoulders, knees are on foot apart. As the breath is taken in, the back is bent downwards and the head brought up. Care should be taken to begin the back bend from the sacral area. With the exhalation, the back is arched up high and the head hung down between the arms. Get the movement going as far as possible in each direction. Very good for loosening the whole chest area so that I can move with the breath; also quite beneficial for all of the internal organs. #33

The tigress is done by changing the movement to the sides, exhaling to each side and inhaling in the middle. The head goes right around as if to look at your tail. Try a variation holding the breath in while bending to each side; this stretches the ribs a little further. #34

Come up to a standing position with feet apart. Take a deep breath in the straight pose and exhale as you bend over to the side. Feel your rib cage as you do this and observe how the ribs are compressed on the side towards which you are bending, while the ribs on the other side are being spread apart. Come back up to an inhalation, then exhale down the other side. The arm can come up over the head to help the stretch on each side. Try it a few times on each side. To extend this even further you can do it with a retention. #109

Follow up with a few loosening-up movements, including:

Warrior chest expansion: Standing with feet apart, inhale as your hands and arms move out to the sides and around behind you, as if you were swimming. Then as you exhale, the arms relax and bend, hands are brought down under the shoulders and stretched forward with the palms facing up as if holding water. From there you begin the next inhalation by turning the palms out and moving the hands and straight arms out to the sides and around behind you. Good chest expander, works the middle and upper sections of the chest to enhance the breath. #95

## ***ADHYAM PRANAYAMA:*** Upper Breathing

Sitting in the thunderbolt once again, do a few rounds of *Adhyam pranayama*, upper breathing. The air is drawn into the uppermost section of the lungs, up into the clavicular lobes. This is accomplished by raising the whole chest area upwards, as if the neck is sinking down into the chest. A good way to practice in the beginning is with the shoulder rolls, lifting them up and back to the inhalation. This can greatly help to loosen up the upper chest area, although particular care must be taken not to tense up the shoulders during inhalation, nor to hold them up during retentions. When expelling the air it feels like the chest and shoulders are dropping down and the neck is sticking out; a certain amount of downward pressure must be exerted to actually get all the air out. With enough practice it becomes a flowing up and down motion that creates a very fulfilling feeling; at that point, only the breathing muscles are used without the exaggerated shoulder movements. Obviously this breathing will e most beneficial to the higher body region, from the upper lungs to the top of the head. The pulsation of the lungs here provide an extra boost to the circulation in the clavicular area, affecting the neck with the thyroid and parathyroid glands, and continuing up through the voice box, tongue, mouth and entire head area. The brain itself is the most energized and highly stimulated organ when this breathing is performed, something to be remembered when doing any form of intellectual work. Disorders in the head (from headaches to brain tumors), can be alleviated through proper breathing in this area, and once things have been detoxified the energy flow from the breath will be amplified and empower the opening of the fifth and sixth chakras.

***Nikunjasana***, the baby pose. From a position on all fours the elbows are bent so that the upper chest comes to rest on the floor. Slide forward until you are not on your chin or neck. Buttocks are high up in the air and torso weight is on the chest; head is turned to one side then the other, while breathing deeply in the upper chest. If feels as if each breath is pushing the body up away from the floor. This strengthens the breathing muscles, as they are working against the resistance of the body weight. Phlegm and mucus can also more easily be drained from the lungs in this position. #37

***Sharabasana***, The cricket pose is done from a position sitting on the heels with the hands out in front of the knees. The breath is taken in while coming up and lifting the right leg straight back, then held while going down to touch the floor with the chin, bending the arms; at the same time the leg is lifted up as high as possible. Alternate from one side to the other three times each. Good for forcing the air into the extremities of the upper lungs. Now try the same movement while exhaling as you lower to the floor; good for squeezing all the air out. #30

***Sarvangasana***, the shoulder stand. Start with the double leg lift, continue until your feet are up over your head and almost down to the floor over your head; now place your hands on your back for support and straighten the legs upward. Breathe fairly deeply with the upper chest and feel how the air moves in and out of this area. #130

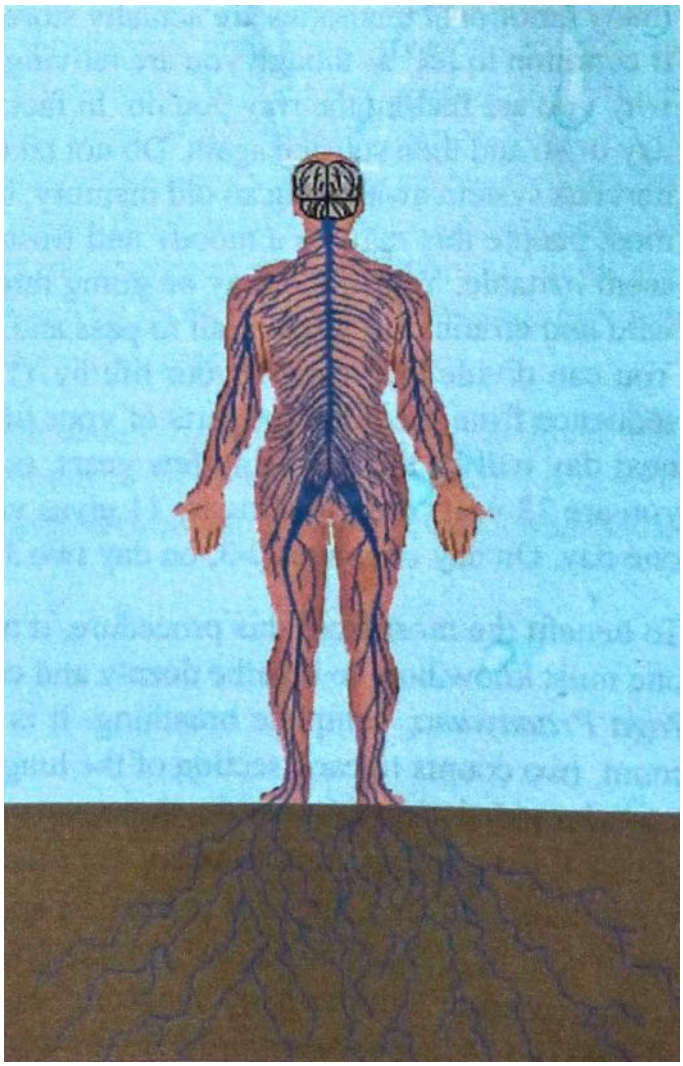
***Matsya asana***, the fish, is done from a cross-legged position by going back onto the elbows, hanging the head back until the top of the head comes to rest on the floor. The chest is arched up, and in the complete posture the hands hold the feet. Breathing is deep and tends to go into the mid-section of the lungs. Remember to squeeze out as much air as possible before you take in each breath. If the cross-legged position cannot be done, then try it with legs straight out. #32

Now sitting on the heels or cross-legged, bring the shoulders forward, up and around, breathing in as the shoulders come up and exhaling as the shoulders go down. Now while holding a deep breath, move the shoulders up and down, forwards and backwards. Feel what is going on and innovate some moves. Very good for loosening the area and expanding the chest, allowing more room for air.

Maha mudra is a movement done from the thunderbolt sitting position by taking a very deep breath in the upright position, then bending forward and down while expelling the air. Hands are clasped behind the back, and as you bend forward the arms are raised up as high as they can go. Head is brought to a point where the forehead comes to rest on the floor. Pay specific attention to exhaling all the air, squeezing it out. When you come back up, try to take a complete deep breath as much as possible. One big problem many people have in their normal breathing habits is that the upper lungs are never completely emptied, so they cannot receive fresh air. Asthma comes from this problem over a long period. #38

***MAHAT YOGA PRANAYAMA:*** <u>Complete Deep Breathing.</u>

This constitutes complete deep breathing and is the base of most of the breathing techniques practiced in the science of yoga. It combines the three previous methods of sectional breathing to form one complete cycle, inhalation and exhalation, where the lungs are both filled and emptied from the bottom up. Take the same sitting position, in *vajrasana*. The abdomen is pushed out as the diaphragm is lowered to pull air into the bottom of the lungs; then the rib cage is expanded out to the sides to fill the mid-lungs; and finally the whole chest is raised up to pull the air into the top lobes. Exhalation follows the same sequence: the diaphragm is raised and abdomen pulled in to squeeze the air out of the bottom lobes; ribs are then pulled in towards the center, forcing the air up and out; finally the chest is dropped down, forcing the last of the air out of the top lobes. Try to make a habit of breathing in this manner, as it will greatly help to promote immunity and increase vitality … you will **know** if you practice.



***Mukha bhastrika***, the cleansing breath, is done from *vajrasana* by expelling the breath through the mouth either in one rapid "whoosh," or in a series of short cough-like spurts by forceful movement of the diaphragm. When doing breathing exercises, of any physical exercise or movement, carbon dioxide is released from the cells of the body into the bloodstream. This cleansing breath is a good way to eliminate it from the blood via the lungs and mouth.

## GROUNDING PRACTICE

Used for solidifying our connection to the earth, discharging negative energy (stress etc.), for strengthening our 1st chakra, personal stability and empowerment.
Begin by standing on the earth, preferably barefoot, with feet a little ways apart so that you feel stable and balanced. Visualize your nervous system as the roots of a tree, spreading down throughout your body, down your legs and feet. Now extend and feel those roots going down into the earth. Imagine it, see it, and feel it until you sense that you are a tree. Look at Fig. 1h, before starting if you need, to help you imagine what it looks like.

Now with the in-breath feel a stream of energy coming up through the roots, up into the 1st chakra level of your body. Hold there and apply Mula Bandha. With the exhalation let it go and let the energy flow back down into the earth. Continue with this until you feel as rooted as a large tree.

## *EKADASI KRIYA:* **11-day activity**

Here we have a profound pranayama technique which takes 11 days to perform and is aimed at going deeply into the layers of the subconscious to clear out energy blockages. Most of these have been created through emotional experiences that were unresolved in the past and need to be settled to create peace of mind for the advanced practices of yoga. I say "most" here as a general statement; it depends a lot on the individual and what he or she has experienced in life. For many, blockages are mostly emotional in nature, but for some there may be a lot of physical trauma as well. Then there is the mental side which may be full of fears and strange expectations resulting from all the movies, other visual impressions and all the "bad news" we have read.

This breathing technique is specifically for clearing out the nervous system. If you look at the nerves as wired which connect the brain to the body, you will quickly realize how moving energy through those wires will have an effect on both the body and mind. In fact, with the new realizations coming through alternative therapies that involve bodywork, people are beginning to see how many emotional memories are actually stored in the body. As things are reawakened you may find it common to feel as though you are reliving certain emotional experiences without

understanding why you are feeling the way you do. In fact, old physical pains (even toothaches) can return for a day or so and then subside again. Do not take these symptoms seriously at this time, it is only your nervous system awakening an old memory; best not to react to anything until after the 11 days. For most people this may be a moody and frustrating period, and in many social situations you may seem irritable. Your mind may be going through all kinds of confusing thoughts, dreams may be wild and erratic; just allow it all to pass and maybe keep a journal of what you are going through. You can divide the years of your life by 11, and look for a chronology of events to come up in sequence from the different parts of your life. The first day will be the first few years of life, the next day will be the following few years, etc., until today is reached. For an easy example, when you are 33 years old, dividing by 11 gives you three years – each of which will be represented by one day. On day one: ages 0-3, on day two 3-6 etc.

To benefit the most from this procedure, it needs to be performed well and accurately. First of all one must know how to breathe deeply and correctly in all these sections of the lungs using *Mahat Yoga Pranayama*, complete breathing. It is done as a sequence, by breathing in deeply to a six count, two counts to each section of the lungs so that you end up completely filled. Follow this by a similar exhalation through the three parts until you are completely empty – I repeat, completely empty. It is very important to squeeze all the air out, at least as important as filling up completely. Immediately go into the next inhalation and continue until you have taken the third successive breath, and hold that one for a slow nine count, at least. At this point you must know how to do a proper retention, with relaxed chest and shoulders. Then you let the breath out any way it wants to come out. Pause momentarily if you wish, without breath, before beginning the next number sequence.

- Take three successive breaths and hold the third.
- Take five successive breaths and hold the fifth.
- Take seven successive breaths and hold the seventh.

This is what must be done on the first day of the technique. On the second day you repeat this whole sequence, (3-5-7), two times. On the third day you do it three times. Keep adding them up day by day until you reach the eleventh day. It might take you only five minutes the first day, but by the end it takes an hour or more, depending on the length of your retentions and pauses.

The time of practicing the technique should be the same each day. For the first four days at least, it could be done twice a day to get the process jump-started. Following that it is acceptable to do it only once per day.

While it is being done twice a day there needs to be a minimum of six hours between times, otherwise they will add up to the wrong number of rounds for that day. Another thing to consider when doing this breathing technique is the time cycles

you are in. To make it most effective it should be done at the right time of year for the latitude in which you are, and should be started no a 1 karmic reactive cycle. Consult a Yantra Yogi for your best time. When done in groups, the personal karmic cycle need not be applied, as the group influence is stronger.

The technique works by stimulating an energy flow through the three main areas of the nervous system. In Sanskrit these are called *ida, pingala*, and *shushumna*, and they correspond roughly to the sympathetic, para-sympathetic, and central nervous systems. In the yogic system the energy flows are considered more real than the nerves, so that most of the Sanskrit terminology is not talking about the nerves but rather the flows conducted by those nerves. Energy travels through the system in impulses, so when you take three breaths it makes three impulses; likewise the five and seven. These specific numbers of impulses will direct the energy to specific areas and create the desired results (time tested and approved over the last several thousand years). Now your test is to perform this experiment and make observations on your mind, emotions and body.

After the 11 days are over, it is necessary to stop disturbing effect and balance things out. Savitri breathing technique should be done for a minimum of 20 minutes, twice a day for several days, so as to accomplish this by calming down the energies churned up with ekadasi. Ekadasi can be done every three months.

## Muladhara Chakra Routine

The exercises for developing the first chakra will tend to put you in touch with the most physical part of your being. Some of these exercises come from the Hatha Yoga Dandhal department and are for the purpose of building and strengthening the musculature. Muscles are directly connected to this energy, so working with the various muscles and feeling them in their strength is a key to centering at this level. Its energy feels like gravity, the earth element, a pulling together towards the center.

1. Sitting in ***vajrasana***, the thunderbolt position, do three rounds of cleansing breath.

2. Follow this with the A-U-M done with the three sections of breathing.

3. Seven rounds of complete deep breathing done with full attention.

4. Warm up with some tiger and prancing tiger. # 33, 35

5. Squats done from a standing position with feet apart. Inhale at the lower position and push out the breath as you push yourself up. Continue until you feel the effort, and the muscles in your legs start to feel fatigue. Follow with several rounds of breath. Now single squats on each side.

6. From the same standing position bend forward with the back straight, with your hands on the floor go from one foot to the other, feeling the stretch from the knees up into the tail bone. This will stretch out the muscles that have just been contracted, thereby de-stressing them and preventing stiffness. # 94

7. Imaginary weight-lifting, using the arms to life the weight up from the shoulders till the arms are straight. Push out the breath as you push up, feel muscles working. Shake out the arms.

8. Still using the imagination, do some curls and triceps moves.

9. Rapid twisting with emphasis on exhalation. Arms are flung around you. # 98

10. Bring yourself back to feeling the muscles and do the imaginary spear-throwing. Feel all the muscles of the body tightening as you do this in slow motion with deep breathing. Loosen up with some bouncing.

11. One cleansing breath followed by vigorous abdominal breathing, *mula bandha*, may be added to this.

12. ***Ekapada, dwi pada uttanasana***, single and double leg lifts. Lying down on your back, do single and double leg lifts. Then bring one leg up and cross it over the body to bring the foot to the floor beside you. Shoulders stay flat on the floor. Inhale on the up-lift and exhale on the down; continue breathing deeply if you stay down. # 54, 57, 58

13. ***Paschimottanasana***, the forward stretch. You pull your head down to your knees from the sitting position, exhaling as you do so. Inhale up. Add some movement and variations if you like. #72

14. ***Navasana***, the boat posture, is done by sitting up from the lying down position, straightening the legs and back, lifting the legs up until the toes come into alignment with the nose. Hold the position and breathe as deeply as you can. #61

15. ***Nava Kriya***. The row boat is like the above, but then you grab an imaginary pair of oars and try going across the river; three strokes to the in-breath and three to the out-breath. # 62

16. Roll onto your stomach and do push-ups either from the toes or from the knees. Again you push up the body as you push out the breath. Do as many as you can, followed by resting with your head turned to one side, with very deep breathing and retention.

17. Do ***bhujangasana***, the cobra, with a turn to each side from the up position. # 47

18. Come to a cross-legged sitting position and do a spinal twist, going side to side.

19. Sitting with a straight back, breathe in the ratio of 8-8-8, being sure that the 8-count retention is done with the chest and shoulders relaxed. Mula bandha, the root lock, is applied here too. While it is applied and the breath is held, tense up the muscles you have been working with and feel the gravitational force of the first chakra.

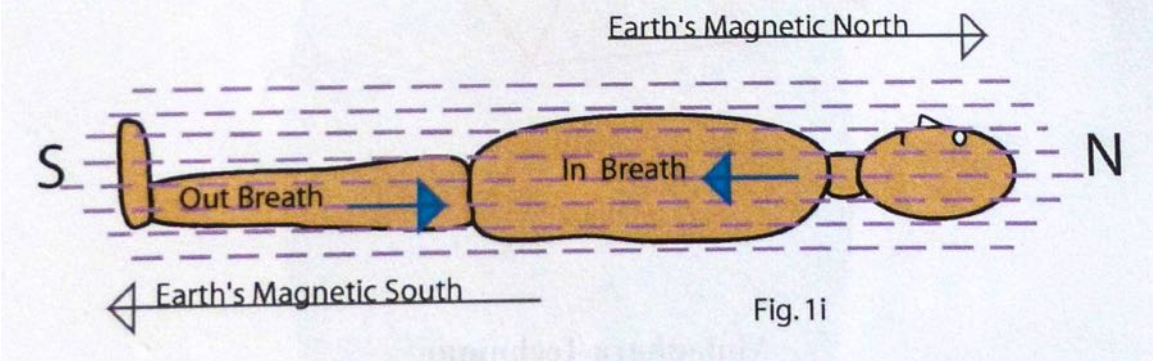


Fig. 1i

## Polarization

Follow with relaxation in the form of polarization. Lying down in a straight line with head to the north and feet south, wiggle your feet, hands and head around until they come to rest in a comfortable place. Then begin breathing to the *Savitri* rhythm, finding a pace that is appropriate for you (8-4-8-4 is ideal, unless you are doing *Ekadasi*, in which case you drop the retentions). Now with the in-breath feel a wave of warm golden energy coming through you from the head to the feet, and right out through the feet, (Fig. 1i). With the exhalation, imagine and try to feel a flow of cool silvery energy coming up through your feet, passing through your legs, torso, up and out through your head. With the held-in or held-out breath, you simply extend the distance outward beyond your head or beyond you feet. Continue this process for 15 minutes. At the end of that time you relax the breath, and simply feel yourself, plugged in and highly energized. Breathing should be very deep for maximum effect. You man also imagine these energy flows in other ways that are appropriate to you. The important thing is to stay in touch with feeling the flow sweep back and forth through your body. Every cell in your body, every molecule, atom or quantum, has its polarity. This is part of the universal structure of things. By this process of

sweeping the energy to and fro, adjustments and realignment occur at the cellular and molecular levels; also, of course, in *Pranamaya kosha*, the energy body. In any area of the physical body where something is out of alignment, there is a blockage of energy flow, and this is where problems will develop. This technique can be used to align the five bodies and bring many aspects of your being into alignment and into harmony.

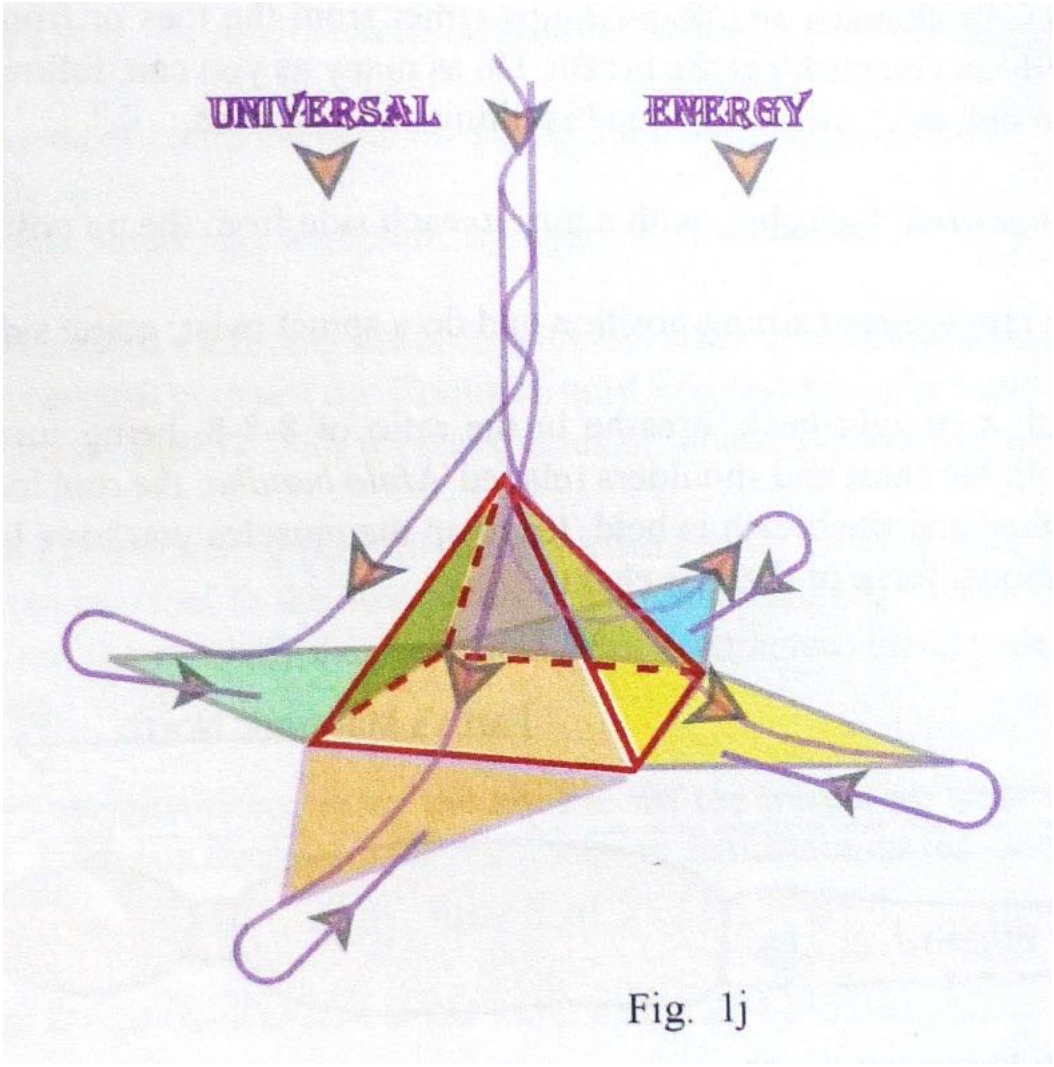


Fig. 1j

## Muladhara Technique

Sitting in a cross-legged posture, full lotus if possible, begin by setting your breathing pattern in *Savitri*. Now with the in-breath visualize and feel energy coming down from the universe, through your body to the base of the spine and from there moving forward several feet in front of you. Allow the energy to move in an arc rather than straight perpendicular lines. With the held-in breath, feel the energy continuing to flow that way and filling a large triangle or lotus petal in front of you, (Fig. 1j). On the out-breath the energy is pulled back in to the base of the

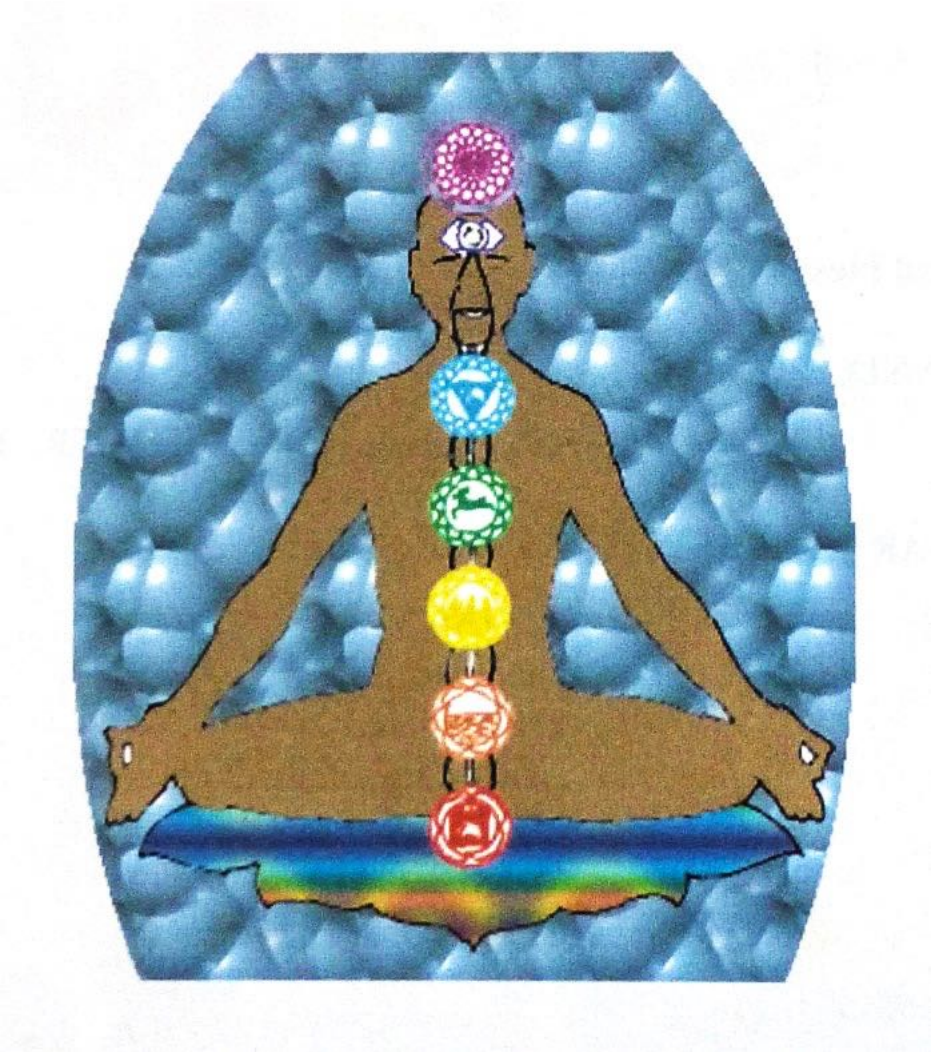
spine with a progressive application of *mula bandha*. With the held-out breath, the *bandha* is held tightly as you visualize all the energy being drawn in to this point. If you want to advance the technique a little further, you can add four wave-like contractions to the *mula bandha* as you hold out for a count of four.

With the next breath you move the energy from above, down through your body again and out to the right side of you, filling up the triangle or lotus petal, hold and then pull it back in as above.

The third breath brings the whole energy movement down and behind you, then back in to the base of the spine.

The fourth breath takes it out to the left side and back in. Then you continue going around yourself in a clockwise rotation, each breath being on of the directions. Once you are familiar with the mantras, you can add them to each of the directions as well. (Level 2)

For the time being practice one step at a time, first regulating the breath, then adding the visualizations, then the feelings.



SYNOPSIS of MULADHARA CHAKRA

**ELEMENT**: Earth

**YOGA**: Hatha Yoga

**GENDER**: Masculine

**FORCE**: Gravity

**MEDITATIVE DIRECTION**: Down

**YANTRA SYMBOL**: Yellow square in four-sided mandala

**ENERGY COLOR**: Red

**SOUND**: Lung

**SENSE PERCEPTION**: Smell

**ACTION**: Feet

**NERVE PLEXUS**: Sacral Plexus

**PHYSIOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS:**
**GLANDS**: Gonads **ORGANS**: Muscles **OTHER**: Bones

**PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERSTICS:**

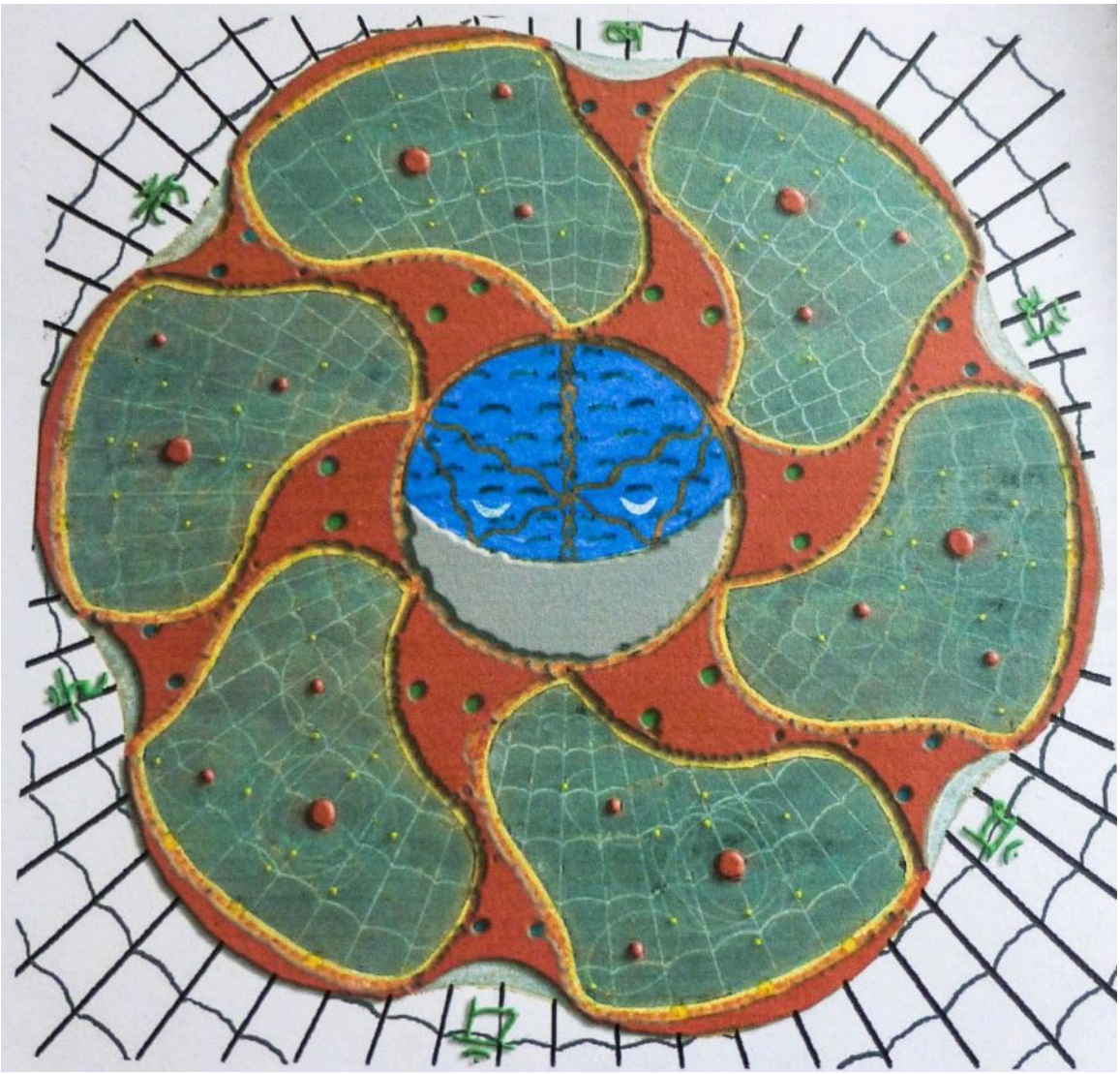
**POSITIVE:**
Individual
Original
Pioneering
Independent
Strong
Witty

**NEGATIVE:**
Dominant
Self-centered
Demanding of attention
Unsympathetic
Materialistic
Crude

# Swadhistana

# Chakra

## the Water Element



# CHAPTER 2

## Swadhistana Chakra

*Dwelling abode of the Self*

- Swadhistana is the energy of cohesion, a force that gently pulls together and unites.

- At the molecular level it creates the bonds between atoms to make the molecules of all the known substances in nature as well as in the synthetic world.

- It is a flowing energy that allows flexibility, adaptability and change. This energy, added to the solidity of the first, generates the ability to move, creating living matter rather than rock. At the universal level it creates the flowing orbits of moons around planets, and of planets around suns. It is the movability of the entire system.

- At the physiological level the energy of the second chakra creates bonds between hemoglobin and O2 and CO2, and among various nutrients, to create protein and complex molecules. As well, it is responsible for thousands of chemical bonds which occur at the neuro-peptide level of body and brain chemistry.

- At a psychological level this force pulls people together to share energy, emotions, ideas etc. It is the social energy on which society is based.

## ELEMENT

**Water** = the energy/power of cohesion or covalence. Like the first elemental force, the water element also attracts, but is a much more flexible molecular force that bonds the oxygen and hydrogen atoms together in order to make a water molecule. This energy pulls or attracts atoms that are of compatible energy fields and bonds them together in a variety of molecules, (including water). The combination can be rearranged, where the atoms are interchangeable. For instance, the hydrogen in the water molecule can be replaced by carbon to make CO2. The same force applies in hemoglobin when its iron molecules give up oxygen and take on CO2, a process that is continually going on within our body chemistry.

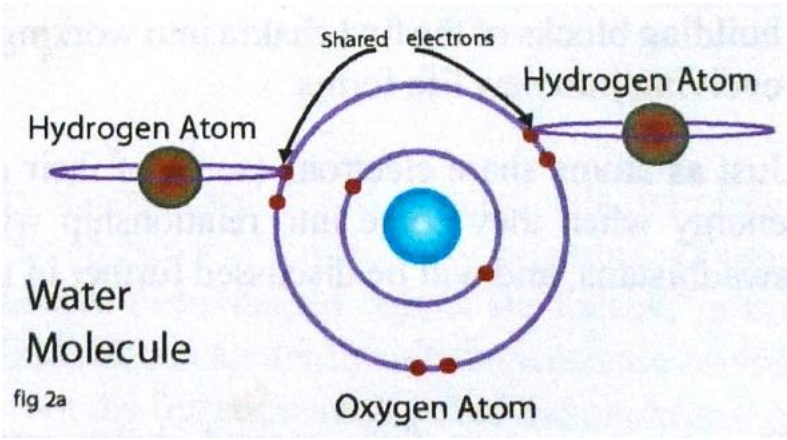


fig 2a

Water, the second elemental force, is called *Apas* in Sanskrit, or *Apana* when referred to as a prana. Here we are looking at a more subtle power than the first, yet its overall energy is responsible for much of what we find in nature. This element is accountable for most of the compound substances that make up the world. Very few

things we see and experience are made of simple elements; almost everything is made of combinations. These complex arrangements of atoms into molecules are all held together by the force of *covalence*, a variable and pliable bond that keeps the elements in relation for a while, yet simultaneously allows for motion and flow. In the theory of chemistry this fluid arrangement occurs when compatible atoms share some of their electrons.

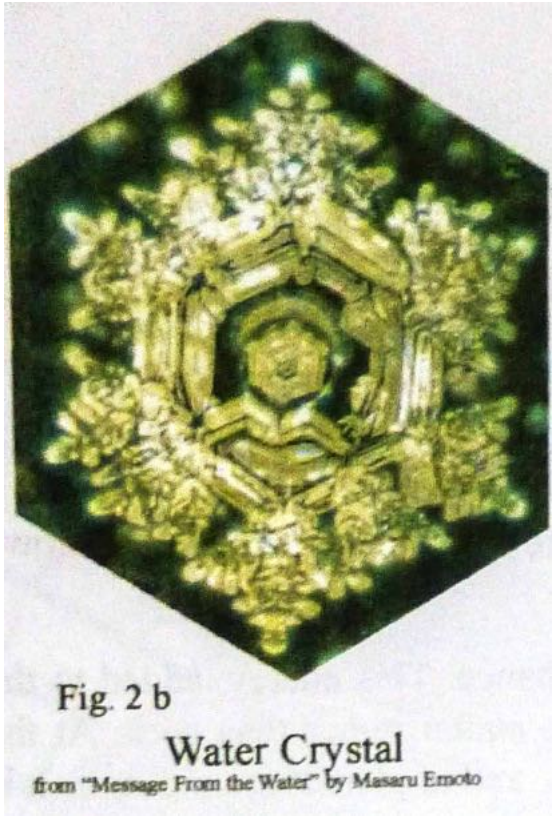


Fig. 2 b

Water Crystal

from "Message From the Water" by Masaru Emoto

Everything fluid in nature is continually in motion. Things do not fall apart, however, as they are held together in a bond that has a certain strength and yet a flexibility that allows us to move and plants to bend in the wind. Water makes up 80 to 90% of plant and animal bodies. The fact that water molecules stick together, forming a pool or even a drop of water, is a direct result of the attracting energy of the second chakra. Cohesion is a fundamental characteristic of this force, without which we might only have some water vapor in the air. In its free state water likes to remain in motion, a characteristic that we see in the ocean as it forever flows from shore to shore. It is part of a perpetual dance that we see in nature and sometimes feel within ourselves. When the temperature drops, water molecules fit themselves into a pattern of six as seen in any snowflake, or in the freezing water crystal in fig. 2 b on the left. The 60 degree angle reflected by these flakes is a demonstration of a geometric reality, one which gives us the materialization of fluid. In the first element the angle of intersection of the electromagnetic lines (waves) measures 90 degrees, while for the second element that angle is 60 degrees. The lessening angles take us from solid to liquid.

This elastic covalent bond goes beyond water: it is the same bond which makes up most of what we see, wood and every plant, people and every other creature are composed of and sustained by the second elemental force. Swadhistana is the nurturing power that brings life to matter by uniting the building blocks of the first chakra into working combinations that are moldable, variable and forever evolving into new life forms.

Just as atoms share elections (some of their energy) when they come together, so do people share energy when they come into relationship with one another. This social element is one aspect of Swadhistana, and will be discussed further in the section on mental direction.

The energy vortex of the second chakra revolves around the **hypogastric plexus**. Although its energy reaches down to the sacral area, its center can be felt above the sacrum and it is much more active and constantly flowing throughout the abdominal area. In this region, the hypogastric nerves are monitoring and directing many of the secondary aspects of digestion, such as the absorption of nutrients from the intestines. It is a very sensitive plexus, highly receptive to all internal processes and provides conscious and sub-conscious feedback to our brain. It thus has a lot to do with how we feel physically and emotionally. This vortex has direct connections to the endocrine glands known as the adrenals. This every also influences all of the body fluid and any organs that deal with these fluids.

ENDOCRINE GLANDS

The **adrenal glands** are small curved glands laying over the top of each kidney. Although they appear to be joined to the kidneys, they are separate glands. Each glands appears to be one organ, though each one is actually made up of an outer and an inner part, weighing about ¼ ounce each (7 grams).

The **adrenal medulla** (inner part of zona glomerulosa) is an agent of the sympathetic nervous system stimulated directly by nerve impulses. In yoga this part of the nervous system is called ***pingala***, and is considered to be the solar current; that is, the active force that stimulates activity. The adrenal medulla secretes the neurotransmitters epinephrine (adrenalin) and norepinephrine directly into the bloodstream. When the sympathetic nervous system reacts to intense emotions, such as fright or anger, large amounts of these neurotransmitters are released. This may cause a “fight or flight” reaction, in which blood pressure rises, the pupils widen, and blood is shunted to the most vital organs and the skeletal muscles. The heart is also stimulated.

The **adrenal cortex** (the outer part, or *zona fasciculata*) is stimulated by adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH) sent out from the pituitary gland. It

responds by secreting two hormones, cortisol and aldosterone. They help the body respond to stress by rebalancing the energy levels and are essential for life. Cortisol, an energy generator, regulates conversion of carbohydrates into glucose and directs reserves to the liver. It also suppresses inflammation. Aldosterone regulates the mineral and water balance of the body. It prevents excessive loss of sodium, and by so doing prevents the loss of water through the kidneys and maintains the balance between sodium and potassium in the bloodstream, subsequently in a ll cells throughout the body. This balance is important for all cells.

Ida Nadi is the energy channel related to this phenomenon, known to have a relaxing and healing effect on body and mind when it is flowing.

## OTHER PHYSIOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS

### Kidneys

The kidneys are responsible for filtering toxins, wastes, ingested water, and mineral salts out of the bloodstream. They are also responsible for regulating the ph factor of the blood by excreting alkaline or acid salts when necessary to maintain balance. The two bean-shaped organs are located in the posterior (back) part of the abdomen, flanking the vertebral column approximately between the twelfth thoracic and third lumbar vertebrae. Within the kidney are the filtration units called the nephrons, of which there are more than a million within each kidney. In general, blood, which passes into the kidney, transmits soluble waste which filters through the nephrons, and the liquid, called urine, is passed down the ureter and into the bladder to await discharge. Sometimes the mineral salts filtered out can precipitate and solidify into stones too large to pass through the ureter. In order to prevent these conditionals it is necessary to work the area of the second chakra so as to increase circulation of the fluids within the glands and organs. In yoga there are very effective methods of putting pressure on the kidneys and releasing the build-up, with the result that the stones get flushed out. These need to be done periodically as a measure of preventative maintenance.

### Lymphatic System

The lymphatic system and its fluid are directly connected to the second chakra. A subsystem of the circulatory system, the lymphatic system collects interstitial fluid and recycles it to the blood. It is considered to be part of the circulatory system since lymph comes from the blood and returns to the blood by way of the lymphatic vessels. Lymph carries some nutrients around the body, especially fat. It also distributes germ-fighting white blood cells; this distribution is one very important part of our immune system. Lymph resembles plasma (the liquid part of blood), but is more diluted and contains only about 5% proteins and 1% salts and extractives. It is formed from blood plasma and other body liquids, (called interstitial fluid or tissue fluid), that is present in the spaces between cells. Some of the interstitial fluid

goes back into the body through the capillary membrane, but most enters the lymphatic capillaries to become lymph. Along with this interstitial fluid, the lymph also picks up any particles that are too big to be adsorbed through the capillary membrane. These include cell debris, fat globules, and tiny protein particles. The lymph then moves into the larger lymphatic vessels and through the lymph nodes and eventually enters the blood through the veins in the neck region. Within the lymphatic duct system are a large number of one-way valves which allow the fluid to circulate one way only, ensuring that there is a periodic passage through the nodes and spleen for filtration. The lymphatic system is thus a secondary transport system. Fig. 2 c gives some indication of how extensive it is. Lymph has no pump of its own, however, and thus its flow depends on pressure from movement of the muscles. Therefore, physical movement is required for its circulation, such as we have in some flowing forms of Hatha Yoga, Tai Chi and dance. With the yoga postures and certain amount of pressure is put onto specific regions of the body, targeting certain glands and organs. The pressure pushes out the fluids, or moves them along, then when the pressure is released, circulation resumes with fresh blood and lymph entering the area. The lymphatic fluid is moved along by the motion and pressure in one direction only because of some one-way valves within the lymphatic system. With the release comes a flow of fresh fluid along with some interstitial fluid which has been forced from the spaces between the cells. The effect created is like a flushing of our internal system.

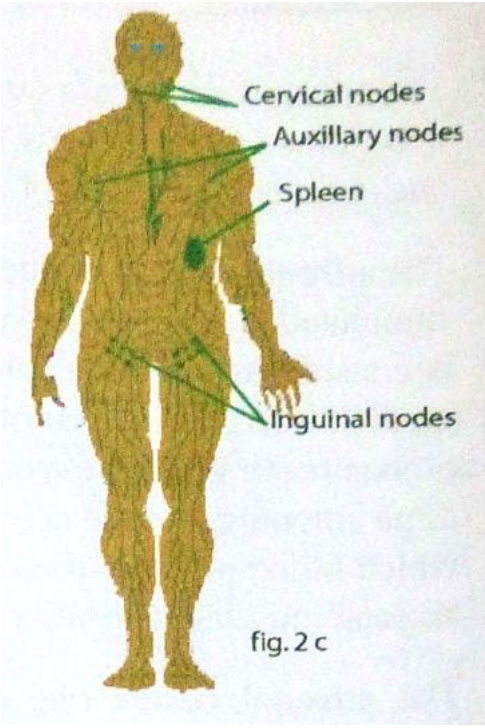


fig. 2 c

The **spleen** is closely associated with both the circulatory and the lymphatic systems. It is an abdominal organ which lies on the left side of the body behind the stomach and close to the diaphragm. It plays a role in the quantity of lymphocytes in

the blood, and in the production or programming of some white blood cells. It is also involved in the removal (filtering) of blood cells and bacteria from the blood. Because of its location, movement of the diaphragm directly influences it, particularly when we do deep abdominal breathing.

**Lymph nodes**, or lymph glands as they are sometimes called, are small oval structures normally the size of small kidney beans. They generally are located in clusters near veins at strategic points along medium-sized lymph vessels at the knee, elbow, armpit, groin, neck, abdomen and chest. The fluid part of the lymph is cleaned and filtered in the lymph nodes, and germ-fighting cells which reside there are gathered in quantities during illness. This filtration process helps prevent bacteria, cancer cells, and other infectious agents from entering the blood and circulating through the system. The lymph nodes are the centers for production and storage of some of the while blood cells, namely the lymphocytes and monocytes, which are important elements of the body's immune mechanism. During infection, the nodes enlarge in their area, due to the multiplication of lymphocytes in the node. It is important to keep circulation active during this time and even more important to keep a high level of oxygen in the blood and lymph to assist in the battle. The oxygen is an automatic booster for the whole immune system. Deep breathing and movement need to be applied once again. The other point to remember is that the lymphocytes cannot function when blood sugar is high.

## Liver

The liver is the largest of the body's organs and is responsible for several important functions, not to mention hundreds of others; according to some medical texts over five hundred have so far been identified.

One of the very important functions of the liver is detoxification. There are a multitude of types of detox that it performs. It has the ability to take substances that are quite poisonous and render them harmless through some kind of chemical re-configuration. Think of the molecules as a child's building blocks, which can be arranged and rearranged into many different structures. This molecular combining is typical of the energy of the second chakra, utilizing that power to rearrange and recycle innumerable molecular pieces of toxic or waste material into useful nutrients, so that we in fact require less from the outside. Consequently it is considered quite important in yoga to keep this organ functioning and to help it along with various postures, movements and breathing techniques. It is understood in yoga that when this organ is functioning at peak efficiently it becomes like our own vitamin shop. In the yogic view it is considered quite possible for this amazing organ to recombine amino acids into needed vitamins, and indeed re-cycle and re-arrange body chemistry so that we become more like perpetual recycling organisms. (Noted Saints in India who have become breatharians are amazing examples of the

recycling power of the liver). Another of its most interesting abilities is that of regenerating itself when damaged; the liver is somewhat unique in that it can re-grow sections of itself.

## JNANENDRIYA

The sense related to this chakra is that of taste. Here we find a multitude of palatable tastes created for our civilized appetites; yet, when we examine this phenomenon more closely, we discover that there is very little actually to be tasted. Most of what we consider to be taste is really the aroma coming to the sense of smell. The tongue itself has only five distinguishing tastes: sweet, sour, bitter, salty and pungent. So much of our gourmet taste buds are an illusion from the world of smell. In some tests performed during psychological studies, the sense of smell was totally blocked off and when the blindfolded subjects were given apples and/or onions to eat, they could not tell the difference. (mentioned in the section of Smell, chapter 1). Nevertheless, we have created a sensational world of flavorful foods that can keep us touring the world to check out different restaurants. All of this has little to do with the actual foods that our body needs; in fact it can tae us a long way off track. The pastime of eating for pleasure and judging by taste rather than nutrition has helped bring our state of health to where it is today. The world of pleasure is one of the results of our creative cooking habits. One of the names given to the second chakra is the “pleasure center.”

Once upon a time when the world was young, and we were still living in a garden, our taste buds were there to tell us what our body needs were. We had an instinctive knowledge about berries, herbs and a variety of natural foods. When we ate something, its taste would trigger just the right digestive process. Now, much of this has been lost to our civilized appetite.

## KARMENDRIYA

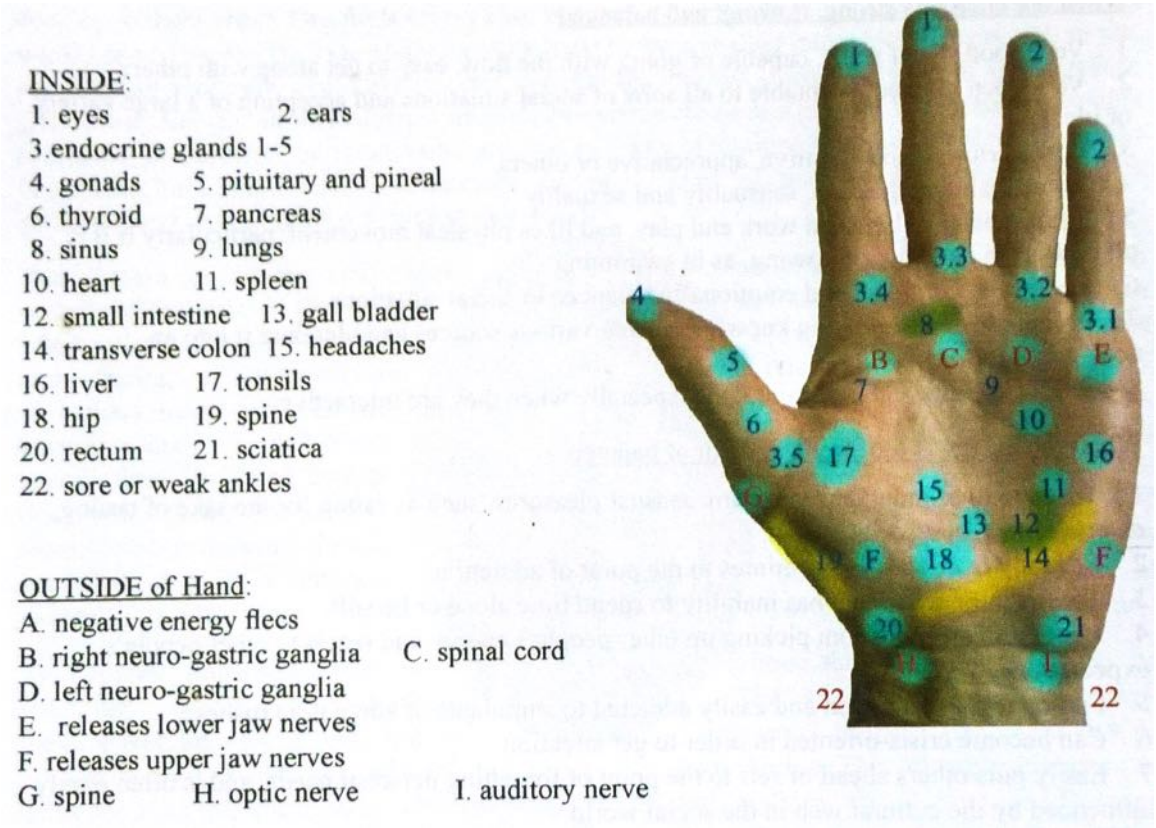
The karmendriya (organ of action) connected to this pleasure center is that of the hands. How much have we learned to do with our hands? It seems like a great deal of creativity is expressed through our cultured use of the hands. Consider the arts: music, painting, sculpting, etc.; much of our expression depends on learning to use our hands in a refined and sophisticated way. Think about modern times and how much our hands are used in communication, with keyboards in virtually everyone’s homes. In the Hindu depiction of this chakra, Saraswati is here as the goddess of the arts and music; she is generally shown playing a veena, an Indian stringed instrument which requires dexterity and skillful use of the hands.

In most of the depictions of the various deities in Hinduism or Buddhism, the hands are either holding special objects, or else they are placed in certain positions. These positions are called ***Mudras***, and are considered hand gestures which have special significance or create a certain effect. In the science of yoga this is studied in detail at a deeper level by looking at the energetics of our nervous system. As we know from basic anatomy, there are nerves and nerve terminals throughout the body. Certain areas, like the hands, have an extra abundance of these nerve terminals, the result of which is to produce much greater sensitivity and dexterity. Where there are nerves, there is energy (hopefully flowing). The nerve terminals are highly conductive to the energy, easily producing energy currents through the slight stimulation of touch. What happens when we touch the tip of the forefinger to the tip of the thumb is called connection. This connection creates an energy flows which feeds back to the brain, resulting in a calmer state of mind, for instance. Anywhere we make a connection in this way a circuit of energy is completed, and our brain reacts with some type of energy response. These have been observed and noted for millennia. Since it was known that our energy extends well beyond the hands, we can find many examples where the hands are also in open reception to forces from the outside, or else projecting energy patterns for specific functions.

In this teacher's course we will learn some of the basic finger and hand positions, as well as some hand to body positions, and we will discuss their effects. It is recommended that the student practice some of these mudras with the breathing techniques that call for it, and with an observing mind. These practices are particularly suited to concentration, contemplative and meditative techniques. In this way, the knowledge about the effects of mudras becomes a reality and not just a theory. Granted that the effects of mudras may be more subtle and harder to distinguish than the immediate effects of breathing, but the serious student needs to develop the sensitivity and awareness anyway, so the time invested in this practice will be quite beneficial.

Some of the other benefits stemming from these neurological connections are the calming of the entire nervous system; the effect can be great for pacifying nervous disorders, even for halting nervous habits like nail biting or finger tapping. The hand preoccupation with cigarette smoking is another problem that can be treated, but should not need serious consideration for students on the yogic path. As with the feet, these nerve terminals are connected to various body parts, and stimulating them through touch can help activate certain glands and organs. Hand massages are part of yoga chiketsa as well as of reflexology, and such actions have proven to be very healing.

Here is a reproduction of one of my original diagrams from Ananda Ashram in 1971, with the nerve terminal points as taught at that time.




These points may or may not coincide with all reflexology points from other systems; they do however seem to be related to the areas mentioned. In yoga chiketsa the precise points are not as important as the energy flows themselves, and these flows are determined by the level of prana that the therapists accumulates, or is in touch with. More about this in Chapter 4, which deals with the healing energies.

## CHARACTERISTICS

As mentioned earlier, the second chakra does not have energy of its own, just as its symbol, the crescent moon, has no light of its own. Both the energy and the light are reflected from somewhere else. This fact must be kept in mind when considering the characteristics of this chakra; for instance, a person with a strong or open second chakra is virtually a strong reflection of the social situation in which that person is, or has been immersed.

When the energy is strong, flowing, and balanced:

1. Very good social skills, capable of going with the flow, easy to get along with others.
2. Very open minded, adaptable to all sorts of social situations and accepting of a large variety of ideas.

3. Very nurturing and sensitive, appreciative of others.
4. Comfortable with touch, sensuality and sexuality.
5. Finds a balance between work and play, and likes physical movement, particularly if it is playful, as in dancing, or flowing, as in swimming.
6. Feels safe, confident and emotionally balanced in social situations.
7. Is capable of assimilating knowledge from various sources and blending it into an acceptable format.
8. Enjoys the arts and entertainment, especially when they are interactive.

When the energy is too strong and out of balance:

1. Tends to over-indulgence in many sensual pleasures, such as eating for the sake of tasking, entertainment, and social gossip.
2. Sexually over-active, sometimes to the point of addiction.
3. Too socially active and has inability to spend time alone or be still.
4. Becomes confused from picking up other people's energy and reacts to other people's expectations.
5. Full of self-gratification and easily addicted to stimulants or adrenaline rushes.
6. Can become crisis-oriented in order to get attention.
7. Easily puts other ahead of self to the point of forgetting personal needs, and is often overly influenced by the cultural web in the social world.
8. Emotionally dependent on others and easily co-dependent.

When the energy is weak or depleted:

Physical body may become tight and rigid with no sense of fluid movement.
Displays inability to go with the flow and is not adaptable to change.
May seem emotionally cold or impersonal, socially incapable of relating; sexually frustrated (these first three have to do with too much chakra 1 energy and no balance from chakra 2).
May be withdrawn and fearful in the social world, feeling insecure and displaying little interest in communicating or inter-acting. Self-esteem is low socially.
May be indecisive, passive and have no social boundaries.
Slow to take action and easily procrastinates with any projects.
Lack of passion, sensuality, and not expressive of feelings.

## MENTAL DIRECTION

The direction of mind here is **south**. This energy shows itself in our social development influencing all our relations and interactions. Its attractive and covalent power is evident in the way in which we pull in the people we need to have in our lives, as well as in our ability to learn certain things from a while variety of people and put this information into our own mental structure. When this energy is

flowing, we gather pieces of information from others and put them together into our own picture. In the flow, this energy leads to an unfolding of many social skills that seem to develop without effort. One finds it very easy to get along with others, to learn from them. Just as water has not shape of its own, easily molding itself to the container into which it is poured, so we, socially, can put on any mask, like an actor, and play the role that is expected of us in any situation. Oftentimes, though, the mental structure that comes from others as a cultural web of belief systems is difficult to break free of. It can keep us bound to a way of thinking that was never really ours to begin with, but socially acceptable amongst our peers. Herein lies the danger of getting list in the social act and forgetting who we are as individuals.

The symbol of the crescent moon represents the way in which this center reflects part of the light of the sun. in the social world people often reflect each other's energy. Like two atoms coming together and sharing an election, in relationships people share energy in various ways. We motivate and inspire each other at times, bouncing ideas off each other. The motivator is often using energy from the third chakra while the recipient will reflect that same energy back with vibrations added from their second chakra. Students should also contemplate how energy is amplified when it is reflected back and forth in groups, at parties, rallies, and how powerful this force can become.

Yet another important point is how this chakra may also be reflecting various perspectives. The knowledge coming through these reflections may or may not be universal truths. The moon has no light of its own; it can only reflect light from the sun. This principle applies to us in the social world, where we so often talk about "truths" and "realities" that we know, not from our own experience, but have heard or read. Second-hand information that we reflect in our social life is like the reflections from the moon. Our second chakra, in a sense, is almost not ours but rather the reflection of all the thoughts and feelings that have been passed onto us from others. Consider it as a social web of mental and emotional activity, one in which we are a small part thus our influence is correspondingly limited.

Within the web, we learn to play different roles, to wear various masks or put on certain personalities that fit with what we are doing or who we are communicating with. In this regard there are six specific categories into which these “personas,” (Greek for mask), can fall, depending on whether we are in a position of authority or subservience or equality. (fig. 2 f) For example, when we are little we look up to our father as an authority figure, yet when we are parents later on in life we become those authority figures and play that role towards our children. With our lover yet another, perhaps more charming, role is required; the power of attraction working here is nature’s way of renewing life in the ongoing cycle of generations. Most of our friends fall into the category of brother or sister depending on whether they are of the same sex or not. With the mother role, we have a looked up to our mothers for nurturance one time or another, but not all of us get to play that persona. Authority and nurturance are balanced between the roles of father and mother.

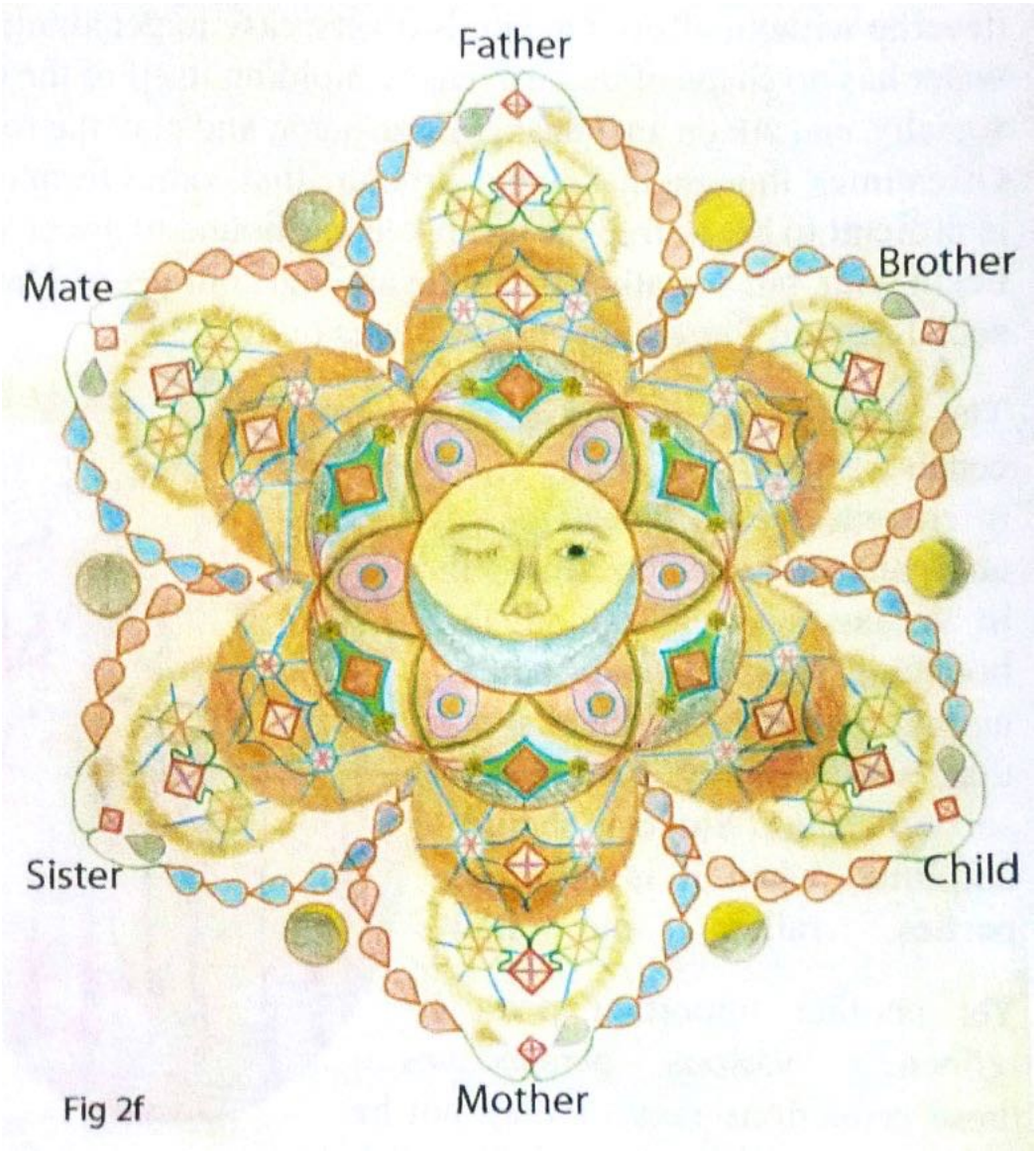


Fig 2f

Discrimination is required here to screen the flow of information that has come through our ancestors, parents, teachers and other people we meet. With the eye of discrimination (coming from the sixth chakra), we can see more clearly what is true, what is opinion, theory or gossip. As with a crescent moon, you only see part of the whole. You cannot see the motivation of others, nor the influence of the subconscious mind, (the largest part of the mind (90%)), which contains and reflects the social influences running below the surface of our conscious mind, i.e., expectations and opinions of others governing our thoughts, speech and actions. Also to be considered, like the dark side of the moon represented here, is the dark side of people's minds. These unseen portions of the psyche are so often the unwanted aspects of their minds and memories—a lifetime's storehouse of conditioning, memories, traumas, unresolved conflicts, fears and unfulfilled expectations which may have been swept under the carpet for many years.

The aspect of this chakra we need to be aware of is the communication that goes on here at the psychic level. Usually below the perception of the conscious mind, there is transference of energy and information which then filters in slowly through our subconscious mind. I am referring here to a vast amount of empathy and telepathy that is ongoing at this level of the second vortex. Our conscious mind is only a small portion of the mental picture. In Western thought, telepathic abilities fall into the realm of superstition or the bizarre. In the yogic view these methods of communication are as obvious as thought itself. Swadhistana is a feminine, sensitive and receptive chakra that is constantly feeling and reading other people's vibrations. It can facilitate our knowledge of others considerably, if we are aware, or else it can lead to feelings of confusion in social circles, and a sense of being overwhelmed by other people's energies, if we are not aware. Confusion arises because we cannot always distinguish our own thoughts from those of others. If we are centered and comfortable, however, we can go with the flow and blend into a crowd like a drop of water merging with the ocean.

There is also a lot of emotion involved with this center, since relating to people always evokes feelings of one kind or another. Ideally we are born out of love and fed on it through most of our younger years, in which case we are used to having positive feelings coming through relationship; when there are not there we feel the vacuum, a sense of void and incompletion. This emptiness creates a need for feeling nurtured, which for most people launches an almost endless search for relationships which provide them with nurturing feelings. The problem is greatly compounded if we entered a lifetime where even the childhood situation was lacking in love and attention. The solution lies in learning to give attention and loving acceptance to oneself, as well as others. Also realize you are only partly responsible for what you are. The empowerment process that yoga takes you through can well empower you to be responsible for what you are now becoming. In this case, letting go of past beliefs and other people's expectations is usually a great help. On the more positive side, it is possible to have people's support to help you greatly along your path. The influence of others can be a help or a hindrance; it all depends on whether they

understand what you are doing. Because yoga has not come from the West, there is often resistance or doubt about it which might hinder or discourage you. In the East it is common to go to an ashram to get involved more deeply in the practice. This provides strong reinforcement from your immediate social environment.

*Namaste* is a greeting from India that means "I see the divine essence in you." The divine picture comes through everyone, the divine seer wears many masks. We need to open our eyes and see it – it's all in our perception. Letting things flow and going with that flow is a great part of this energy. It is gregarious energy, as water molecules hang out together but are not struck. Part of the characteristic of this energy lies in tis ability to stay connected but not attached or rigid.

***Makara***, the sea monster, is one of the symbols used in India to represent the nature and power of the second chakra. As an individual you might not have much of a chance against it, especially when you are swimming out in the ocean. You are not in your element in the ocean---the monster is---and you cannot run away. It is important to be centered on home ground and not venture too far out into the ocean. That is to say, from a mental perspective, remain with what you know to be true within your own belief system as you explore the vast world of possibilities out there. The multicultural world of today has a lot of conflicting philosophies that make you question your own beliefs, so hold on to what you know to be true in your own experience. Sometimes we need a support system in order to do this, as it can take a lot of energy to maintain your stance when large waves are trying to push you over. While surfing in a philosophical ocean, the shirt from Western thought to Eastern philosophy can be a quantum leap capable of pulling you under the surface, into a realm of the unknown sanity – the realm of the monster.

## YAMA/NIYAMA

**YAMA: Aparigrabha** (non-overindulgence)

Moderation is applied to all fields of endeavor: eating, sleeping, sex, entertainment, talking. One must restrain oneself from over-indulgence of any kind. Excess of food, sex, pleasure, work or any other worldly things, consumes too much energy and therefore inhibits mental and spiritual growth. When you cater to the desires of the sense you not only expend your energy chasing after the desired things, you also set patterns of behavior which then become habits. These are hard to change. By living according to need rather than desire, you will tend to eliminate greed and selfishness from your character. When this is done, you will find it easier to be eager and determined to share with and give to others, helping them as the opportunity arises, without expectation of direct or indirect personal gain. Then the gently satisfaction and positive feelings which come from sharing and giving are much more rewarding than gratification of the senses, and also much more lasting. One should consequently give with no strings attached, and likewise one should not accept any gifts that have such strings attached.

When the ego brings thoughts of indulgence for pleasure or personal gain, you must remind yourself of how short-lived sensual pleasure is and how lasting the karma. No matter how much you enjoy a sensual experience, such as stuffing yourself with a gourmet meal for instance, your body will be suffering the consequences for days after while trying to eliminate all the excess. If you make a habit of it, then your body simply cannot keep up with all this cleansing, and as your poor body grows old and weak from yours of overwork, you automatically lose any thought of evolving to a higher state of existence. If your body is reasonably clean already, you will notice after most indulgences an obvious lack of motivation. So heed this first warning and maintain good relations with your physical self.

**NIYAMA: Saucha** (cleanliness)

One should strive to be clean mentally and physically. The easiest dirt to see is the one that sticks to the surface of the body. It is also the easiest to clean off by taking a simple bath. The importance of being clean shouldn't be underestimated, since even the dirt and pollution you are not aware of will affect you subconsciously. You should therefore choose your environment carefully; clean air and water are fundamental requirements for yoga practice. Once this is done it is possible to proceed to other phases of cleansing. Daily bathing, hair care, teeth care, etc., are simple requirements for the outer world. For a cleansing of the inner world, we start inside the body. You might be polluting the inside of your body with all the good-tasting garbage food that you know your body doesn't need. You can begin by eliminating such foods from your diet and then add all the cleansing foods, like fruits and vegetables in their natural state. Respecting the needs of your body in this way will keep the internals clean and flowing. Various cleansing and fasting techniques, to make sure all the old garbage has been eliminated, can assist. Because the modern diet contains so many strange elements – from synthetic chemicals to genetically altered foods – it may take a little while to cleanse them all from your body. Just the act of breathing deep begins a systematic elimination of these unwanted pollutants; enhance the process with a variety of detoxification programs.

Emotional cleanliness requires somewhat more effort, but with the knowledge of pranayama and the assistance of willpower, it is not really difficult; it may however be a long and more tedious process. Negative thoughts and emotions should be brought up into consciousness, examined, understood from source to consequence, and then erased with the appropriate technique. When you find these negative thought patterns, try to put yourself in the shoes of whoever offended you, so that you can come to understand their perspective. You might find others of great assistance in doing this if you encourage freedom of expression from those around you so as to let in a little light from the members of the opposition. Accepting other people's points of view about yourself and your behavior will help to rid your mind of its cobwebs of preconceived ideas. In your associations it is also important that

you express yourself freely. If you have many thoughts about another person, whether these thoughts are good, bad or ugly, express them whenever the time is right. Out with the old, in with the new. The practice of Swadhiyaya, as mentioned in Chapter 1, is required here. Your mind can be as devious and as clever as you, so take the time to truly observe it. Try tuning in to the compassionate mind and developing a helpful attitude towards everyone.

## JNANA YOGA

This form of yoga develops wisdom and understanding of the mind. In practice it comprises relaxation techniques that produce a phenomenon called ***pratyahara***, which is literally translated as sense withdrawal. What it means is a withdrawal of awareness from all of the attractions which the senses draw us towards – something that smells good, looks good or whatever. All of the "attractions" are considered distractions from the perspective of the yogic spiritual path. It is when we pull our awareness back inward, to the inner journey, that we can become wise to the wanderings of the mind, and we see how we are led astray by the world of sensual gratification and desire. These withdrawal practices are temporary windows through which we become awakened to the true nature of the mind, its perceptions and projections. This process allows us to detach from the constant turmoils that can keep us constantly busy. Peace of mind follows, the new can pursue meditational practices. Once we have seen the beauty of the inner world we can come back out to see the beauty of creation again – in fact it will seem more beautiful. Discovering the inner beauty puts more beauty in the eye of the beholder.

Perhaps one of the greatest teachers in this domain was Gautama the Buddha, who saw through all the games that the mind can play. He taught his students to disregard all the attractions and repulsions created through desire, and simply remain aware of consciousness as that aspect of ourselves that goes beyond the body and beyond the mind. This is the attitude of jnana yoga; an attitude that develops understanding of how the sense pull the mind in so many directions as we think about this and analyze that. All of these wanderings keep awareness involved in so many things that we forget that this awareness is a silent witness to the drama of life, or death for that matter. The many techniques of *pratyahara* are meant to pull us out of the business of all worldly activities, bringing us back to that peaceful place from which we can experience life from a place of freedom and observation rather than complete entanglement in each event and scene that presents itself before us. With some of the advanced techniques we can bring our consciousness up to a place of seeing it all as a dream, and we easily lose our attachment to the dream when we see the reality we can wake up to.

When the mind does become calm through detachment and relaxation, meditation becomes a possibility. Meditation is not something you can do by force; it is more

like something that happens to you when you have prepared yourself. Emptying the mind is as important for meditation as having an empty cup into which you pour yourself a drink. If it is already full of something else you will not succeed in experiencing the new taste. Similarly with meditation, you will not feel the bliss of being the silent witness in the creation of life if you are busy thinking about the ten thousand things you need to do. This "silent witness" is called the Atman in Sanskrit; it is the observer of all life's activities, an observer that remains in the audience even though she/he may be directing what is happening on stage. There comes a very deep relaxed happiness to those who realize we do not create the universe, but it is unfolding as it should.

## *Meditation*

*"Meditation is the continuous flow of one thought of the Supreme. Concentration opens the inner chambers of love and is the sole key to the realm of eternity."*

-Swami Vishnu Devananda

**Meditation and Mantras**

Meditation is attained through the disciplined practices of swadhiyaya (self-study), contemplation of thought processes and concentration techniques. Meditation involves a daily practice of witnessing the mind. After self-observation and contemplation one focuses their attention is one-pointedness to prepare the way for stilling the mind. In the quieting of the mind one can begin to move into the higher states of blissful consciousness.

It is very important to set aside a regular time for meditation each day. The amount of time may be short in the beginning. One may start with a practice of perhaps 10-15 minutes and as time goes on one may be inspired to meditate much longer. A good time for meditation is between 4:00 and 6:00 am. This is a time when the meditator can attune more easily with the cosmic universe. According to Swami Gitananda and the teachings of the science of yoga, before the rising of the sun in the East the universe is blessed with a special energy called usha Shakti. If one is meditating at this time one's practice, visions and affirmations are more enhanced.

Swami Vishnu Devananda, in his book on *Meditation and Mantras*, reminds us that the early morning meditation is a more sattvic time of day where one's thoughts are uplifted to the realm of purity, truth and the divine nature of the universe. He says that once the sun has risen, the activities of the day are in motion and one is in the presence of the rajasic nature of the universe. These forces of the universe called the gunas (tamas, rajas and sattvic) are discussed in the yoga manual. Of course if one does not arise in these early hours one can begin meditation before the day's activities.

After sunset or before retiring for the evening is also a good time for the practice of meditation, though, at this time one usually requires a period of contemplation first, as the mind will tend to review the events of the day. The activities of the day have come to a completion and the setting of the sun in the West provides the opportunity to take one's attention more inward, contemplate one's thoughts and take the time to connect with the sacredness of the universal reality.

Devananda speaks of the samskaras in the philosophy of yoga. He describes samskaras as thought waves that are formed in the mind. He says that these thought waves can be either positive or negative habits. Every time the mind has a thought to do something and acts on the thought over and over again, he says, the thinker is creating a neural pathway in the brain which is turn creates a habitual action of that thought. These habitual patterns become part of the energy knots or obstacles called grunthis, in the science of yoga. These are the barriers (energy patterns) situated along the chakra centers which impede one along their spiritual path. One of the ways in which these negative, habitual energy patterns can be changed is through the practice of concentration and meditation. Taking the time to choose a particular form of concentration such as focusing on the breath, a positive thought, a mantra, a Yantra symbol, the image of a deity or enlightened master, the heart chakra, ajna chakra or the supreme nature of the universe, one is creating new neural pathways which are positive and uplifting for the mind, body & spirit.

Meditation helps to dissipate and remove the negative memories and conditionings of the ego-mind. The Tibetan Buddhist's Masters and other spiritual teachers name the poisons of the mind as pride, desire, anger, jealousy, greed, lust and hatred. Through the practice of meditation as well as japa (mantra chanting) one can overcome these causes of suffering and awaken to one's inner wisdom. Through a daily practice one will open up to their unique divine essence through the gateway of Anahata (heart chakra) and connect with their compassionate nature of unconditional love and bliss: *Om Mani Padme Hum.*

*The purpose of meditation is to return to the understanding and wisdom of the purusha, one consciousness and to realize one is not a separate being but part of the essence of the supreme, cosmic energy.*

-Swami Devananda

*Meditation is the only royal road to attainment of freedom. It is a mysterious ladder which reaches from earth to heaven, from error to truth, from darkness to light, from pain to bliss, from restlessness to abiding peace, from ignorance to knowledge and from mortality to immortality.*

-Swami Sivananda
*( Bliss Divine )*

*Meditation is not something you do, but rather what happens to your awareness when you are prepared.*

-Swami Gitananda

## Benefits of Meditation

In his commentaries on meditation Swami Devananda talked about the vibration of thought. He said that every thought gives off a certain vibration. This vibration can be negative or positive depending on where the person's state of mind is seated. He said that when a person is uplifted one can feel a pleasant vibration in their company. On the other hand he said that when a person hold themselves in a judgmental and negative state of mind one can feel the lower vibration that is being transmitted. Through the practice of meditation and mantra yoga one's thoughts are changed and lifted into a vibration of gratitude and spiritual awareness. In holding this vibration one may attract many pleasant and fortuitous experiences. Devananda said one who meditates daily develops a magnetic and dynamic personality.

The practice of daily meditation has many physical, psychological and spiritually-evolving benefits. Below are a list of some of the rewards of daily meditation.

**Physiological benefits:**

- Relaxes the heart & respiratory rate
- Raises the vibration of the molecular body
- Slows the process of aging
- Increases the ability to concentrate
- Increases the memory process
- Increases the alpha brain waves which are important for relaxation
- Slows the release of hormones in response to stress
- Balances the sympathetic and para-sympathetic nervous system
- Increases the flow of pranic life force in the energy body

- Lowers oxygen consumption
- Improves the functions of the immunity system; permits longevity
- Improves palpitation & abnormal rhythmical patterns of the heart
- Improves many chronical conditions such as insomnia, menopause, chronic fatigue & hypertension
- Helps to lessen migraine headaches, heart disease and other ailments

**Psychological benefits:**

- Meditation slows down the mind chatter
- Helps one to remain calm and centered in the midst of chaotic or traumatic situations
- Helps to create inner strength and balance in one's being; inner peace; joy; trust
- Meditations eases depression; helps to raise the serotonin levels in the brain
- A prolonged meditative practice instigates a de-programming of old belief systems and negative conditioning of the sub-conscious mind
- Helps with the abuse of alcohol & drugs
- Breathing patterns of meditation lessen the feelings of worry and fear
- Helps to diminish feelings of grief, anger and low self-esteem
- Increases feelings of self-confidence; increases motivation in life
- Helps to diminish negative habitual thought patterns and actions
- Increases one's creative abilities; creates a balance between the intuition and intellect
- Enhances visualization techniques

**Spiritual benefits:**

- Energizes the Kundalini-shakti at the base of the spine; energizes the chakras
- Uplifts one's consciousness to the divine consciousness of the universe
- Helps one attune with the cosmic forces of the universe; attunement with the saints, sages
- Helps one hear the voice of their own inner guru (teacher): guru haridya mans
- Creates higher levels of spiritual awareness; opens one up to spiritual guidance
- Deepend one's compassionate nature; helps create santosha (contentment)
- Enhances the practice of loving-kindness; unconditional love; trust
- Help's one along their spiritual path; helps define one's purpose in life

*Meditation is a powerful healing force. During meditation there is generally a tremendous acceleration of energy to the individual cells. Just as negative thoughts pollute them, positive thoughts rejuvenate them and retard decay. Penetrating all the cells, the vibrations can prevent and cure disease. Meditation is also a powerful mental and nerve tonic. The soothing waves that arise, exercise a favorable effect on mind and nerves, resulting in a prolonged, positive state of mind.*

-Swami Devananda

Devananda pointed out that just as heat and light can be transformed into electricity, so can anger as well as other negative patterns be transformed into spiritual energy. The teachings of yoga remind the student of meditation that, in addition to new sensations and feelings, one acquired new ways of perceiving life. One may develop a certain awareness of the cosmic universe as well as a feeling of unity, harmony, peace and happiness. Through the prolonged practice of meditation one may be liberated from the bondages of the past and material world. The meditative state is a blissful union with nature and the divine energy of the universe.

## Misunderstandings About Meditation

Meditation is not a particular religion but you will find the practice of meditation in certain religious traditions. Meditation is a spiritual practice which embraces all religions and backgrounds.

Meditation is not contemplation. The practice of self-study, ***swadhiyaya***, (see end of this section for technique), is actually the practice of allowing thoughts and memories to come up freely to the mind to be run-off or contemplated for further analysis or resolution. It is important for one to look at one's habitual patters, relationships and actions in order to understand the dynamics of one's life and create awareness around how to make positive changes where necessary. This practice of self-study begins to prepare one for the art of meditation.

Meditation is not concentration. As laid out in the 'eight limbs of yoga' , dharana is the disciplined practice where one focuses one's attention solely on a particular object, image of a deity, a mantra, a chakra, or at a fixed point in ajna or Anahata chakra. These concentration techniques actually prepare the mind for a deeper state of mediation. When the mind becomes truly still through the prolonged concentration in one-pointedness, the mind loses consciousness of the self and there is a sweet calmness of uninterrupted thoughts and inner tranquility.

As well, pratyahara is not meditation but again it is the preparation for the deeper states of mediation. As mentioned in the material on the 'eight limbs of yoga' pratyahara is the withdrawal of the five senses away from the diestractions of the material world. From here the mind moves inward to focus on the perceptions of the inner world and the divine self. When the fleeting sensations of the mind are calmed and the major senses are withdrawn one can begin the practice of dharana, (concentration).

In the practice of dharana one practices one-pointedness; in the practice of dhyana one moves into a state of peaceful meditation.

## Experiences in Meditation

In a meditation practice different experiences may occur for the meditator. In his book, Meditation and Mantras, Swami Vishnu Devananda shares some of the teachings of his spiritual teacher, Swami Sivananda around the deeper practices of mediation.

Sivananda points out that in the realms of meditation one may hear particular cosmic sounds. These are the unstuck sounds within the center of Anahata chakra. They are the inaudible, undulating, symphonic sounds of the universal energy field. Swami Gitananda mentioned on several occasions various sounds that are recorded in both Hindu and Tibetan scriptures: drums, bells, undulating waves, high treble static etc. In my own experience, (David), I hear a symphony of harmonic sounds which resemble synthesized new age music. I have been hearing these since before synthesizers were invented, and only in the quietest places. We will be playing some of these for you.

In the third eye, Ajna chakra, one may see flashing colors and lights or one may view a symbol, such as a circle of light, a moon, a sun or a particular sacred Yantra, (mandala).

In deep meditation one may see beings or objects from the astral world. Sivananda says one should not attach one's self to these visions nor make the mistake of believing one has reached a state of Samadhi, superconsciousness. In regards to the appearance of masters or deities from the Lokas (other dimensions of the universe), one is reminded to listen to the advise of the wise ones. Sivananda encourages the meditator to receive these visitors with honour for they come to help one along their spiritual path.

In the yogic teachings one is also taught that if beings appear as wrathful deities one should stay focused on the divine nature of the universe and try not to reach in a frightful manner. These beings will leave if one remains the witness. To calm one's

mind the meditator may begin to chant the sacred mantra AUM which is considered to be the great mantra of protection and is the sacred sound which dissipates all negative energies.

When seeing many colored lights or symbols one is advised to accept them for what they are and refrain from the need to create an egotistical attitude around these experiences. One is taught to witness these experiences and visions from a place of detachment. From here one may enter into sensations of peace and blissfulness.

Swami Devananda points out that 'during deep meditation the aspirant may forget the external world, then the body; the idea of time disappears and the feeling of rising up is a sign of going above body consciousness'. (Meditation and Mantras)

*By regular practice of pratyahara one achieves habitual withdrawal of the mind from the realm of sense perception and fluctuations. The mind learns to internalize and becomes absorbed unto itself. Consciousness is infinite: the mind makes it appear finite. Through the mind, consciousness becomes imprisoned in the individual consciousness of 'I', 'me' and 'mind'. Pratyahara helps the individual consciousness bring about a central state of mind by developing in it a habit of withdrawal from the phenomenal world. Through dharana, the mind is fixed and stilled. Through dhyana, the mind achieves tranquility. When this tranquility becomes a habit of mind it enters into the 'sheath of bliss' and remains submerged in the ocean of nebulous bliss and knowledge; samadhi*

-Harish Johari
Chakras: Energy Centers of Transformation

## The Practice of Meditation

There are some helpful details to consider for the practice of meditation. The following list will enhance your practice.

1. Firstly, setting aside a regular time period for our meditation practice creates a positive habit. This regular practice conditions and prepares the mind to slow down the daily activities to get ready for its meditation practice. Of course if you get up in the early hours of the morning the mind is already in a semi-meditative state unless you have had a disturbing sleep. The mind and body will begin to look forward to these habitual regular practices. As mentioned before, the rising sun and after the

setting of the sun are prime times for meditation. During these hours the cosmic atmosphere is imbued with sacred energies.

2. Begin with a short practice of 10-20 minutes and then increase your time as you begin to enjoy the practice of meditation.

3. Create a space where you can do you regular meditative practice. It does not have to be large but it is good to have a place that is your private corner of the room. You may want to create an altar with flowers, water, incense, candles, mala beads, statues or images of some deities as well as a mat or cushion for your sitting posture. You may also sit with a straight spine in a chair as well. Remember that this is your sacred space. You will create a serene, peaceful feeling here which you will look forward to returning to. In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna mentions the sitting place (yoga mat) and its rightful preparations out of natural materials; he also mentioned that it is to be used only for meditation.

4. The chanting of a mantra may be done before the practice of meditation. Mantra chanting helps to still the busy mind as well as uplift one's consciousness towards the divine nature of the universe. Chanting the sacred '*AUM*' mantra is a traditional practice. Other forms of chanting include the chanting of the chakra bija mantras or the recitation of one of the maha (great) mantras such as that of the *Gayatri Mantra, Om Mani Padme Hum, Om Namah Shiva, Shri Ram, Om Namo Bhagavate, Hare Krishna are Rama* and so on. (see chapters V & VII)

5. Meditation is enhanced by specific pranayama techniques such as alternate nostril breathing as well as savitri breathing.

6. According to the science of yoga the direction of the world in which you face will also affect your state of concentration. For example, sitting facing the West direction will allow one's thoughts to move more inward and one is able to focus on certain concentration techniques. The South direction tends to stimulate thoughts about one's relationship in the world. The East direction tends to stimulate one's creative ideas. As well the East direction, home of the rising sun, is great for visualization techniques. In the North direction one may tune into the universal library, the home of the akashic records. It is the direction which stimulates the intellect and inspires one's thoughts and questions.

7. A vegetarian diet is recommended to enhance the practice of meditation. Stimulants and animal hormones make it very difficult to tame the unruly mind; without peace of mind meditation is not possible.

8. It is not recommended to try to skip the steps of *pratyahara*, *swadhiyaya* and *dharana* before moving into the practice of *dhyana*, meditation. These steps are necessary to clear the wandering mind and bring it to a place of stillness.

9. Choose a fixed focal point for your meditation practice. This fixed point may by looking upwards towards the third eye, looking forwards to the tip of the nose or focusing on the heart chakra.

10. For inspiration, it is helpful to remind oneself of the many physiological, psychological and spiritual benefits of a sincere, meditation practice. Take the time to refer to the 'eight limbs of yoga' for the practices of pratyahara, dharana and dhyana.

*Samadhi or superconscious state is the highest goal which one can attain through meditation. It is not a thing that can be attained through a little practice. Hidden psychic and occult powers are awakened by understanding and realizing the powers of the mind. One can see distant objects, hear distant sounds, send messages to any part of the universe, heal people thousands of miles away and move to distant places in not time. There is no limit to the human mind when one has learned to merge with the Cosmic Mind.*

-Swami Vishnu Devananda

May your practice of meditation deepen your connection and union with the spiritual, universal awareness.

## **Traditional Meditative Mantra** (example)

| | |
|---|---|
| *Sarvesham Shantir Bhavatu* | May Peace Be Unto All |
| *Sarvesham Svasti Bhavatu* | May Prosperity be Unto All |
| *Lokah Samastah Sukhino Bhavantu* | May Happiness Be Unto the Whole World |
| *Sarvesham Shantir Bhavatu* | May Peace Be Unto All |

*** AUM SHANTI SHANTI SHANTI AUM ***

*Brahma looking in the four directions. (Malaysia)*

## SWADHIYAYA TECHNIQUE

In the Yogic system of self-study it has been found to be as important to divide the mind into its various parts as it is to divide the body into many components. These are divisions within the ***mind*** and not the brain. Like the body and its many organs, the energy body with its many nadis and chakras, the mind is divided, but into six basic directions. Knowing what these are can greatly help us to see just what is going on in the different areas of our lives. The four cardinal directions that we mentioned in chapter one, adding above and below, give us the six main directions of mind. For the purpose of examining and getting to know what lies in the far reaching corners of our minds, yoga employs this analytical technique. Our normal mind, functioning in the material world, moves out into the four directions of that world. Each of those is a distinct area of thought and although we normally think at random and pay little attention to where our thoughts come from, or where they are leading us, it is possible to narrow down the scope of our seemingly infinite ideas. This method takes advantage of the four types of energies which are known to be attributed to each of those directions (four of the chakras), by actually facing those directions and observing the influence each has on our stream of thought. It is required that the student pay specific attention to how each thought is originating. Prior to this one must slow down the mind with a breathing technique such as Savitri, focusing on the breath until one finds the spaces between thoughts (where we can simply feel the breath moving in or out).

- **West** – we look to see our own self-image. What do we think about how we are living our lives, how do we feel about it, how do we feel physically and

emotionally? This is the direction of the setting sun, the day is over and we go into the darkness. Here lies the subconscious, and our past

- **South** – how do we stand in all our relations? Are we on good terms with everyone we know or are there unresolved problems, unspoken thoughts needing to be expressed ? Do we feel present, blissful and flowing with others?

- **East** – the direction of the rising sun, the coming day and what is coming up for you. Where is your life going, what's your vision and how active are you in manifesting that vision? What is your level of optimism and vitality? Are you stuck in old habits? What changes are needed?

- **North** – Intellectually how do you look at life? Does what you know support what you are doing with your life – or does your head contain conflicting theories about any of it? Theories and concepts abound in this direction.

The directions above and below are of course heaven and earth. The former pulls us up into the realms beyond this world and into feelings of eternal bliss, the latter pulls us into the moment of here and now with tis body sensations. All of these together make up the river of thoughts of which the Buddha spoke, only a few of which reach the surface of the mind (awareness). During this practice you may become aware of the depth of the river and how much it is flowing. The directions can greatly help us to understand that source from which our conscious thoughts arise.

Yogini "Apsara" dancers from the Temples of Angkor Wat.

**SAVITRI PRANAYAMA:** the rhythmic breath.

Breathing ratio for relaxed evolutionary learning.
For balancing the entire nervous system.
Calms emotions and stabilizes the mind.
This breath is used as the basis for all prana jnana kriyas, (relaxation), pratyahara, (sense withdrawal), and the dharana, (concentration) of Raja yoga.

Savitri is the goddess of rhythm in the Hindu symbolism. This breath is named after her because it creates rhythmic energy flows through the nervous system. Automatically, the tension and stress present anywhere in the nerves is ironed out.

The breath is taken in and let out to the same time cycle, and it is held in and out for half of that time. Four parts are required for each breath: in, held, out, held out. Both the inhalation and exhalation are equal in duration, while the retentions in and out are also equal; in this way it creates perfect balance. A suitable time cycles for general purpose is 8x4x8x4, at one second per count. Energy and oxygen are drawn in and absorbed during the inhalation, *Puraka*, absorbed and pushed out to all parts

of the body during the retention, *Kumbhaka*, let out and released during the exhalation, *Rechaka*, and sucked or drawn out during the held out breath, *Shunyaka*.

The gently rhythmic surge of energy out from and into the central nervous system, created by this breathing, has a powerful effect on the entire system, moving energy through all areas, then releasing the energy flow to relax the entire being. Our basic breathing impulse is a strong governing force that influences all other energy flows in the nervous system. In fact it is used, along with the heartbeat, to set the basic pace for most body functions. Our feelings and emotions also work through the breath. For instance, when fear hits us, we hold our breath. When happy we laugh (using the breath), and when we are sad enough we cry – another action totally dependent on the breath. It follows then, that taking control of the breath leads to control of the feelings, emotions, (fear, joy, sadness), and of the energies that produce these feelings. In regulating the breath with the Savitri rhythm, what we take in and what we let go, become equal and the same. The held-in and held-out breaths are times of absorption and discharge, both are equal length.

When practicing the technique, pay particular attention to all parts of the breath, completely filling and emptying the lungs each time. On the retentions be sure to relax fully. Ten to twenty minutes is a good starting time; it can be done for hours. This is a gently technique which can safely be taught to people of all ages – allowing students to follow their feelings with the retentions and not force anything.

***MOKSHA JNANAKRIYA:*** a liberating relaxation technique.

<u>This kriya should be divided into four parts:</u>

1. The recall of a negative event or happening.

2. Visualizing the person responsible for the hurt.

3. See the part played by yourself.

4. Visualize the perfect self-image.

After doing at least nine rounds of Savitri pranayama, relax with hands at your sides, palms up. Recall some hurtful experience and think about it, visualizing it on your hands, until the hands become heavy. One a deep in-breath, raise the hands skyward and then with the exhalation blow the memory away out of your life. When the hands become light, flop them back to the sides, palms up.

Next, recall the person who was responsible for the hurt. See that person as clearly as you can in your mind's eye, placing that person in your hands again. With a deep inhalation, raise your hands high up to the sky, then blow them away. When the hands become light, flop them back to the sides, palms up.

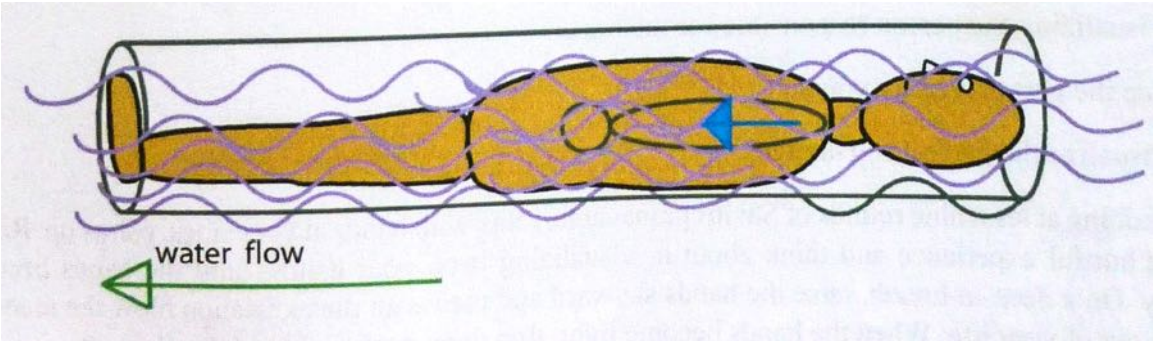
Now recall the part which you played in bringing about this hurtful event; take as much blame as possible. Then put this blame out into the palms of your hands and with a deep inhalation once again raise your arms up into the sky and push the blame away out of your mind, while pushing out the breath. Drop the hands down again.

Finally, create the best possible self-image that oyu can of yourself as happy, healthy, self-sufficient and spiritually evolving. Put this image into your hands, raise them up to an inhalation, hold your breath in while trying to let go of the image. As you let go of the breath, allow theimage to flow down your arms back into your while body. Then relax the arms back down slowly, and take a few relaxed but deep breaths, Savitri-style, reintegrating that image back into yourself.

**NADI JNANA KRIYA**

This kriya is called the "run-off" because it cleanses the nervous system of memory impulses which keep bubbling up form the sub-conscious, just as a stream cleanses the creek bed of any debris and leeches it away in the spring run-off.

Imagine your body to be a long, hollow tube, (a bamboo tube, concrete pipe or a conduit of some type). Rumbling down through this tube is dirt, cinders, muddy water, gravel, rocks, oil, black or grey substance or any similar negative symbol. After a minimum of nine rounds of Savitri pranayama, let the breath become light and shallow, (sukshma pranayama), and continue visualizing this run-off as it slowly becomes more clear. Gradually it comes to the point where only clear mountain stream water is flowing through you. Then just relax completely.



# Active Practice

## Swadhistana Chakra Routine

Fluidly and lack of stiffness, even lack of form, are some of the feelings that predominate in this area. Imagine yourself as water in a plastic bag while you are moving from one pose to another. The movement of body fluids creates feelings within us, so feel that process. When in touch with this chakra energy, the flow becomes like a dance, and with adequate deep breathing, the feelings generated through that dance become quite blissful.

1. Begin with a warm-up routine that includes bending forward, backward and to the sides, but now do it in a way that is focused on the movement rather than the position. Move around in the pose so as to wiggle your way further into it. Breathe as usual.

2. A-U-M done with the three hand mudras, after cleansing breath.

3. Now work with some of the serpent postures, ***sarpa kriyas***. Lying on the abdomen, head is lifted up first, then neck, shoulders, and chest, with the arms by the side, and the clasped together behind the back as a further extension. Add some side-to-side motion when you are in the lifted pose. Follow these with the cobra, coming up to an in-breath and turning side to side to look at your feel. #50

4. ***Dridhasana***. Lie on your side with your head resting on your forearm; with the in-breath raise the upper leg straight up, sliding your hand up to grab your ankle and then pulling the foot up over your head. Feel what is stretching. Do both sides #70

5. From the abdominal position, ***salabasana***, the grasshopper, is done lifting one leg at a time. Each leg is kept straight; the movement up and down is synchronized with the movement of the breath. Focus on feeling the area of the lower back. #46

6. Come up onto all fours and do some tiger breathing, then the tigress. Feel the bend, starting from the tailbone and moving up the spine. Make sure the motion remains fluid and you're focused on that flow. Check your breathing to make sure it is deep. #33, 34

7. Sit-cross-legged and do a twist to each side by crossing one arm over to the opposite knee and continuing to turn in each direction. Exhale each way and feel your spine.

8. ***Paschimottanasana***. Sitting with your legs out front, go into a forward stretch while exhaling and sit back up with the inhalation. Do both variations of this one, trying to bring your head down to your knees, and the second one where you keep your back straighter to provide a greater stretch to the lower back. Now make it more flexible by moving gently from side to side and getting in touch with your fluidity. #72

9. Stand up for some more flowing bends. This time innovate movements and keep doing them until you feel you have no rigid structure left. Get your while body involved in this twisting, turning, bending dance. Do this for 10 minutes or more.

10. Sit in *vajrasana* again and do some abdominal breathing for a couple of minutes, then go into the abdominal lift, ***nauli kriya***. Observe how it feels to put pressure in there and then let it go.

11. ***Parighasana***, the locked gate posture. Come up onto the knees and place one leg straight out to the side. Inhale deeply, then bend over the extended leg wile letting the breath out and sliding the hand down that leg. Once you are down there, turn your body from the side bend into a forward bend by twisting your hips to the side. Move back and forth with it, then come up with the breath and change sides. Remember to stay in motion. #110

12. ***Kakasana***, the crow. From the squat, place your hands on the floor in front of you with fingers spread. Lean forward onto your hands by placing your knees onto your bent elbows and shifting your wright forward until your feet come off the ground. There is a need to develop balance here. Shake out your hands after this. #78

13. Sitting on the heels again, place your fingertips in front of your knees with palms facing away from you. Move your body weight forward onto your hands so as to stretch your hands and forearms. Stay for a while, breathing deep and letting go of the tension with every exhaled breath. At the end, shake out your hands again until they feel totally loose.

14. Cleansing breath three times followed by the corpse posture and *Savitri pranayama*. Once you have been well established with the breath for a period of time, let it go completely and begin *Nadi Jnana kriya*, the "run-off" technique. This is a method of cleansing the nervous system of conscious memory impulses.

## SYNOPSIS of SWADHISTANA CHAKRA

NAME: Swadhistana
YOGA: Jnana Yoga
GENDER: Feminine
ELEMENT: Water
FORCE: Covalence, adhesion
MEDITATIVE DIRECTION: South
YANTRA SYMBOL: Crescent moon in six0sided mandala
ENERGY COLOR: Orange
SOUND: Wung (W is between v and w)
SENSE PERCEPTION: Taste
ACTION: Hand actions
NERVE PLEXI: Hypogastric plexus
PHYSIOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS:
GLANDS: Adrenals
ORGANS: Kidneys, Bladder
OTHER: Lymph and other fluids

PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

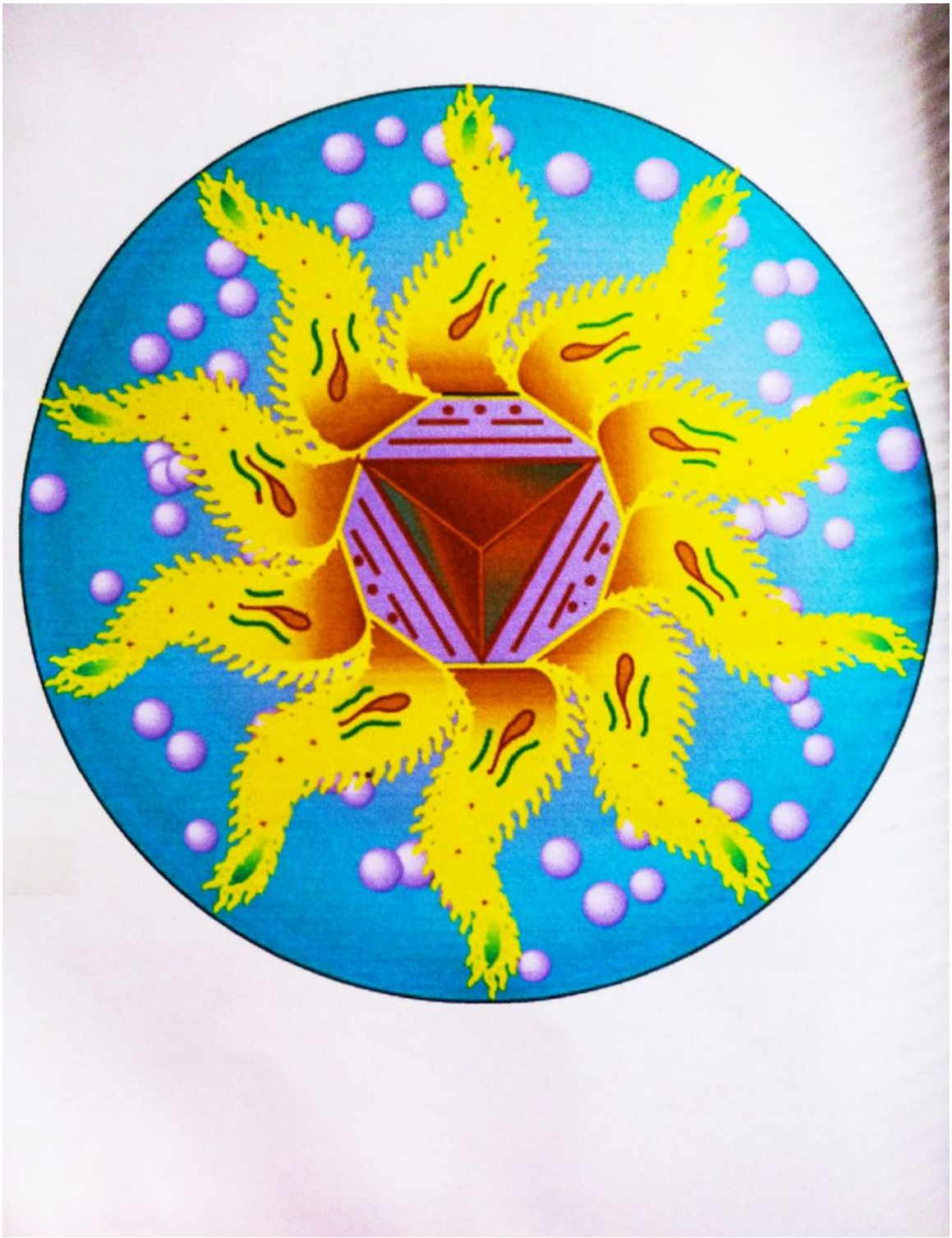
POSITIVE
Diplomacy
Good social skills
Open-minded
Appreciative
Sensitive
Nurturing

NEGATIVE
Procrastination
Lacking practicality
Indecisive
Passive
Overly influenced

# Manipura

## Chakra

## the Fire Element



# CHAPTER 3

## Manipura Chakra

*City of Jewels*

- Manipura instigates change and transformation in the manifest world. It is the force that breaks apart some of the bonds created by Swadhistana energy and brings about a subsequent liberation of energy which we perceive as the fire element.

- At the molecular level the force of Manipura moves into the realm of quantum physics, instigating the liberation of energy from the quanta of energy that make up the atoms.

- At the universal level this fire element is the energy we see as light and feel as heat, whether from a campfire, a light bulb, or the sun. Manipura is energy that has been liberated or released from matter, or matter that has been transformed into energy.

- At the physiological level it is responsible for the transformation and liberation of energy from the food we have eaten. This includes the destruction of what we eat so as to enable digestion, and the subsequent changing of some of those nutrients into energy for motion and action.

- At the psychological level it motivates change, action, creativity (especially visual) and spontaneity. People dominate with this force are often perceived as non-conformists.

## ELEMENT

**Fire**: the energy/power of combustion and transformation. This force triggers the release of one atom from another, liberating heat and light. Energy lines from the universe cross at an angle of 36 degrees to create the elemental force that we most easily recognize as energy itself. When the electromagnetic lines that are weaving the fabric of the universe intersect at such angles, they spark the element of fire. It's another holographic part of the illusion. We don't need to look far out into the universe to see this one: the sun itself is the most blazing example of this transformative firepower. With this power, matter is changed into energy which we see as light and feel as heat. Without it we would not see anything at all, nor would any organic life exist. Just as the sun provides the heat for things to grow on the planet, within the microcosm it is the solar center of each atom, the radiant nucleus that gives life and light to each atom. This fire element gives each cell its heat and

energy; it is the transforming power of the digestive process that breaks down the food into components required for building and energizing the body. Taken too far however, and without the balance of the other elements, this fire can dry and wither things, evaporating the water out of them and thus destroying the life that was originally there. At the cellular level it can create too much heat and terminate cell activity, as in a high fever. Fire in tis destructive nature can burn.

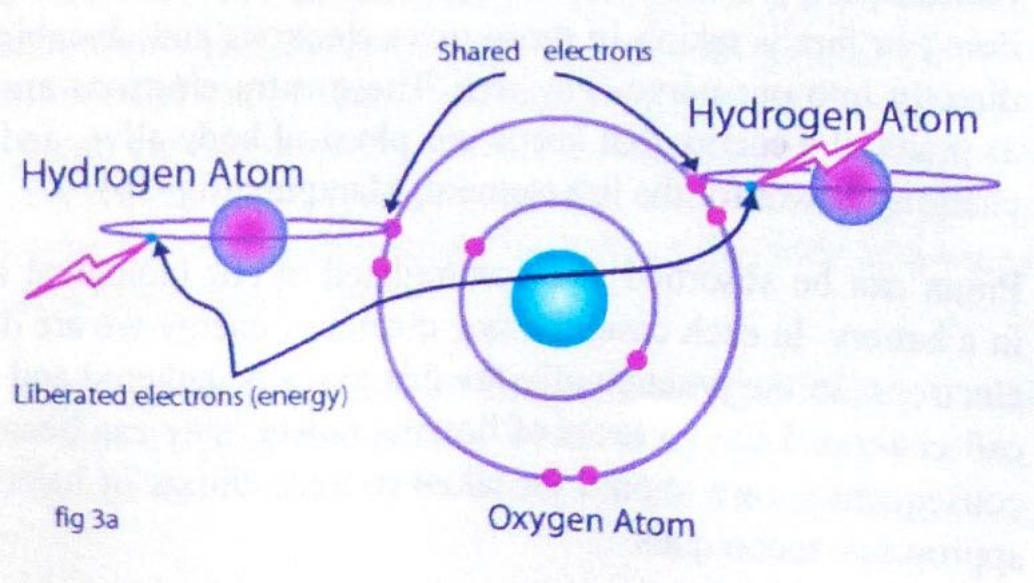


fig 3a

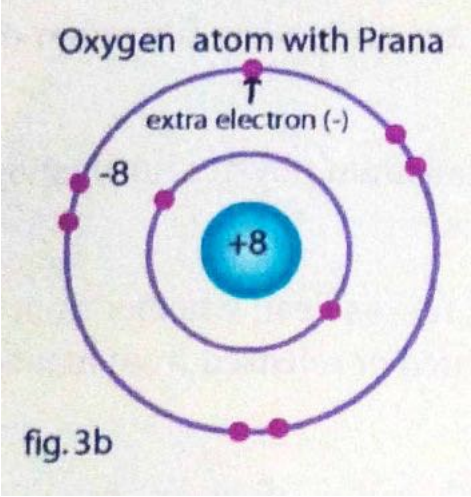


fig. 3b

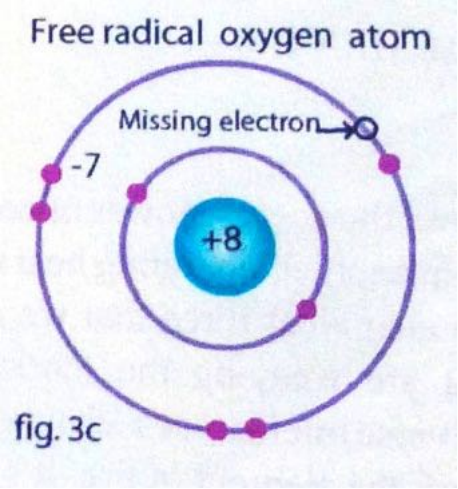


fig. 3c

Transformation is a key word in all the chemical reactions which take place within the digestive process, as well as throughout the body. We are like laboratories, where organic chemical changes are continuously providing us with energy in the forms of heat and activity. In the laboratory we can produce the simplest of these changes: for example, we make a water molecule by bringing together an atom of oxygen with two atoms of hydrogen. In that process the atoms involved join together and begin sharing some of their electrons. That leaves an excess of electrons, which are then liberated and leave the new molecule as radiant heat, or

light, or if it is within our body that energy can become power for activity. Of course the multitude of chemical changes that occur in the process of digesting even a simple meal can be considerably more complex than the formation of water, but the basic principle remains the same: electrons are liberated from atoms and become energy.

As I have been pointing out, chemical reactions are manifestations of Manipira energy. When we look at the changes that occur in these reactions, we can see that the electrons play a major role in joining atoms together, or in separating them. In another way, these electrons by themselves are semi-independent energy quantum that have a strong influence on our whole system. Looking closely at the ionization process, we find that an atom or molecule that has an extra electron has an extra charge of electricity. Throughout the atmosphere we can find ionized air in many places, usually in rich quantities by the seashore or else in the forest. These are charged particles (with extra elections), and in Chapter 1 we looked at how we absorb some of the "charges" through our olfactory system when we breath through our noses. What we are doing in fact is taking in those extra elections and absorbing them directly into our nervous system. These extra electrons are known as prana, the energy that keeps our physical body alive, and are the charging power for the fire element, Manipura (fig. 3b).

Prana can be absorbed and accumulated in our biological system just as electricity can be stored in a batter. In each case, the raw quanta of energy we are dealing with is the same, both consist of electrons. In the practice of yoga this prana is gathered and accumulated in the energy reserves we call chakras. Like vortexes of flowing power, they can become highly charged, even over-charged; consequently care should be taken to keep things in balance, through awareness and the use of appropriate techniques.

One of the side effects of our normal body chemistry, with all of its reactions, is the production of atoms that also have missing electrons. These are the opposite of prana, and of course, have the opposite effect on our energy. These atoms and molecules have come to be known as "free radicals" (fig. 3c) and are known to cause damaging effects on the healthy cells within our bodies. Even oxygen, one of our most vital nutrients, becomes a free radical and detrimental to us. Free radicals literally such the electrons they need from other cell components, thereby weakening the cells and causing cellular deterioration. This only happens when we are deficient in prana, which, unfortunately, is the normal state of many humans in today's world. These free radicals can be neutralized through contact with other substances that have extra electrons – substances which have come to be called anti-oxidants.

Oxygen itself is obviously another substance we absorb through deep breathing. When we do this deep breathing in a natural environment changed with prana, we gain two-fold. Otherwise we gain at least the oxygen required for metabolism, the basic fuel to keep ourselves warm and moving. Students of yoga should keep these

aspects of prana and oxygen in mind to motivate them when they practice pranayama.

The cosmic fire principle is symbolized in various cultures as an inverted red triangle. The triangle is red because that color is the lowest frequency of the spectrum, symbolizing the material world – the solid part of it, in the state of combustion. The triangle has its point down to show that the energy is directed downward from here. The digestive process is an as example of the downward energetic motion, where the food we eat is broken down into the building blocks for our physical body (chakra 1), and also becomes the fuel for energizing and activating it. Energy moves from here down to the lower chakras. The three sides and three points of the triangle also indicate the trinity of these three lower chakras, the forces that keep life happening at the body level. It is in this trinity of forces that most people operate in "normal" material existence. Outside of that triangle is a ten-sided mandala in yellow representing the flames of the fire element. This material part is the substance being unraveled, as when a solid fuel is being burned to produce fire. This is *transformation*; matter is being changed to energy. Things consumed by fire are not destroyed but raised in speed of vibration until there is a spontaneous release of energy which we perceive as light and heat; both of these are electromagnetic waves, once again liberated from the confinement of matter. This spontaneous combustion spreads automatically, from atom to atom, from one thing to another until everything is burning; for everything burns if you raise the temperature enough (the speed of vibration). In the sun, matter hardly exists except in a state of transformation.

Manipura chakra is that power, well centered in the nerve group of the **solar plexus** – your personal sun center. In the Hindu version of this vortex we find the deity Shiva – the god of transformation, sometimes seen as the destroyer of outworn forms. In order for something to change it needs to cease being what it was. This element of transformation can be found from the fire energy of the digestive system, transforming food into energy, out to the mitochondria (those microscopic powerplants), in every cell in your body. It can be felt as a radiant glowing force around your stomach are during times of activity; it can also be felt in a more subtle way throughout the cells of the body as a warm tingling sensation during times of relaxation after deep breathing.

In the solar plexus it is more than just tingling, as it develops into hunger, a stronger feeling that is not just an experience by itself but brings with it a reactive tendency which is usually overpowering. Thus hunger leads to eating; we rarely ignore this for long. The energy of Manipura leads you to react: the reaction of eating when hungry may be very natural and instinctive, not one that we easily ignore. ***What*** you eat is a question of past experience and old habits, which is another powerful side of this chakra, energy moving along its own path in the same old patterns. This is a powerful energy, but we need to understand that it can be tamed and harnessed; it can be directed (or re-directed) as we change our habits from destructive to constructive. We can learn about which foods actually nourish our cells, then make

it a new habit to choose that type of food. Hunger is a very basic impulse letting us know of our physiological need for fuel. Only our civilized appetites get in the way and take us on detours of pleasure. When our hunger is satisfied and we have our fuel, then it provides us with the energy required to perform the actions of the day. These actions are all part of this chakra. The energy of activity awakens in this center as a spark, an inspiration in the mental part of the energy flow. That spark then ignited the fire within the cells, the metabolism within the muscles that generates activity and movement. It may begin in the mind as a gently thought of something we want to do (or need to). Then **willpower** ignites to create the reality of doing it in the physical world.

In this ancient papyrus scroll from Egypt we can see the twin serpents of Ida and Pingala coming from the mind element (circle symbol) in the third eye; below that are the two eyes of outer world perception. The triangular symbol of the pyramid is itself a representation of will power, that which raises the energy from the base up to the mind. Egypt is very rich in its symbolic description of mind, energy and the play of the chakras in between. The serpent Kundalini is also seen coming up in many places.

## ENDOCRINE GLAND:

The **pancreas** lies just behind the lower part of the stomach. It is the second largest gland in the body and is both an endocrine and an exocrine gland. An endocrine gland by definition secretes its hormonal fluids directly into the blood stream, to be circulated to its destination. An exocrine gland has a duct through which it transfers its fluids to a very specific destination. In its exocrine function the pancreas produces digestive juices (pancreatic juices) and releases them through a tube, the pancreatic duct, to the intestine. The juices are made up of thousands of enzymes used in the digestive process. There are groups for these enzymes, one group which may act specifically on soy proteins for instance, then within the group are several specific types that target specific products, tofu, or tempeh or soy milk, etc. These clever chemicals have a molecular structure that enables them to enter molecules of the food we eat and cause them to break apart. This destructive nature is part of the transformation procedure that is necessary for liberating energy in the body. For those of us involved in the practice of yoga, it becomes possible to enhance these digestive functions by increasing the amount of energy in the third chakra. The right breathing techniques and movements (as well as sounds and visualizations) will stimulate the gland to produce more enzymes as needed. When traveling to foreign lands and encountering new foods for instance, new enzymes are needed to digest them. With an abundant amount of free flowing energy in this chakra, this will happen automatically. This would also mean that energy would be flowing freely through the imagination, enhancing the mind/body connection.

The endocrine function of the pancreas is to control the amount of sugar in the blood. The cells that control blood sugar levels are the islets of Langerhans. These islands are microscopic clumps of cells scattered throughout the pancreatic tissue among the other cells, but concentrated somewhat in the tail of the pancreas.

There are two kinds of cells in the islets: alpha and beta. The alpha cells secrete a hormone called glucagon and the beta cells secrete insulin. Insulin and glucagon work as a check and balance system regulating the body's blood sugar level. Glucagon accelerates a process of the liver by which the glucose stored in the liver cells in the form of glycogen is converted to glucose; [this process of conversion also goes the other way, (glucose to glycogen), depending on the body needs]. The glucose then leaves the liver cells and enters the blood. This process tends to increase the concentration of glucose in the blood. Insulin is an antidote to glucagon. It decreases the amount of blood glucose concentration by accelerating its movement out of the blood, through cell membranes, and into cells. As glucose enters the cells at a faster rate, the cells increase their metabolism of glucose, thus providing us with more energy.

All carbohydrate foods, such as bread, potatoes, cereals and sweets, are broken down into glucose through the action of saliva and the enzymes mentioned above. In

this form they can be absorbed by every cell in the body, including the cells in the liver, one of whose major roles is to store sugar. Cells everywhere in the body absorb glucose and burn it in structures called mitochondria, using the energy it contains and producing carbon dioxide and water as by-products. This burning-up process is the body's principle source of energy. It cannot take place without insulin. Diabetes occurs when the pancreas fails to secret enough insulin and as a result the body cells are not triggered to take in glucose and burn it. The blood sugar remains too high, while the cells run out of fuel. Also to note, in the complexity of our body chemistry, such things as vitamin B, is also needed to convert sugar into energy. Delicate balance of substances is essential just as the delicate balance of energies required to keep functions in order. Because yoga techniques can easily boost production within the islets of Langerhans, the situation can be changed rather quickly. However, before this can occur there is a major resistance that needs to be overcome at the mental level, in the form of the belief system around the disease. As one enters the realm of mind over mater, or body/mind medicine as it is called these days, the role of our mental belief system is seen to be very significant.

## OTHER PHYSIOLOGICAL FUNCTIONS

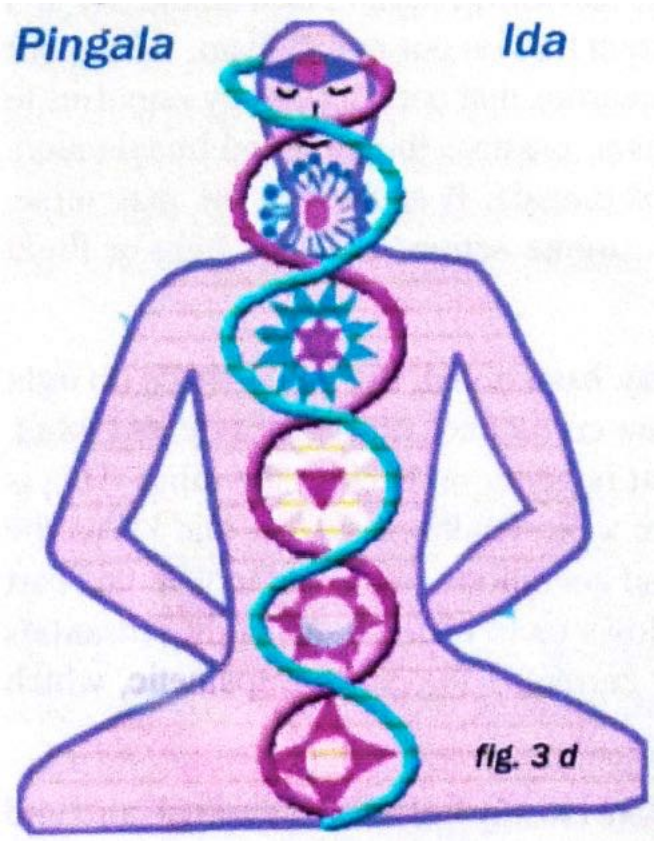
The digestive system is responsible for processing food, breaking it down into usable proteins, carbohydrates, minerals, fats, and other substances, and introducing these into the bloodstream so that the body can use them. The digestive, or alimentary, tract begins at the mouth, where the teeth and tongue begin the breakdown of food, aided by saliva secreted by the salivary glands. Both the enzymes in the saliva and various vitamins are important in this process, which goes from the mouth all the way through the digestive system. Vitamins are often the catalysts through which other chemical processes occur. Most carbohydrates require thorough chewing and mixing with saliva, which needs to happen in the mouth; this is a major part of the digestion. The chewed food, combined with saliva, is swallowed, carrying it in peristalitic (contractile) waves down the esophagus to the stomach. In the stomach, the food combines with hydrochloric acid, which further assists in breaking it down. All of this breaking down utilizes the power of the third chakra, the energy of transformation: for something to change into a new sybstance it must stop being what it was. In this way the forces of destruction are often seen as part of this energy, and very much part of digfestion. At various points in the digestive tract, the stomach, the pancreas, liver, and gallbladder secrete enzymes, which aid in the digestive process. When the food is thoroughly digested, the fluid remaing, called chime, is passed through the pyloric sphincter to the small intestine and later to the large intestine. Within the long, convoluted intestinal canals, the nutrients are absorbed from the chime into the bloodstream, leaving the unusable residue. At least this is the way it words under normal conditions when the food has been properly chewed and digested. After all the breaking down through the fire element, it is of course the water element which takes the nutrients

around the body to be distributed to the cells. The residue that has not been absorbed passes through the colon (where most of the water is absorbed into the bloodstream) and into the rectum, where it is stored prior to excretion. This solid waste, called feces, is compacted together and, upon excretion, passes through the anal canal and the anus.

The liver is the largest of the body's organs and is responsible for many important functions. Weighing about three pounds, the red-brown organ features a high degree of vascularity, that is, it contains a high concentration of blood vessels, which gives it a dark color. Located mostly on the right side of the abdominal cavity, just below the diaphragm, the liver aids in the digestion of fats by secreting bile into the duodenum. The liver also destroys worn-out red blood cells; forms urea from ammonia, for the excretion of nitrogenous wastes; forms fibrinogen, used in blood coagulation; stored glycogen; helps in the metabolism and storage of vitamins; and produces protective and antitoxic substances, among its many function. This is one organ that runs on the energy of both the second and third chakras. One of those important functions is the removal of old red blood cells. Not only are they removed but also taken apart and their components recycled and used in the production of bile, while the iron is taken from the hemoglobin and stored for use in future blood production. Excess amino acids from the hemoglobin, as well as from all the other proteins that are broken down, are either used by the versatile hepatic cells for building new proteins or are further broken down to provide energy. It is even known (in some Eastern schools) that some amino acids are recombined to produce vitamins.

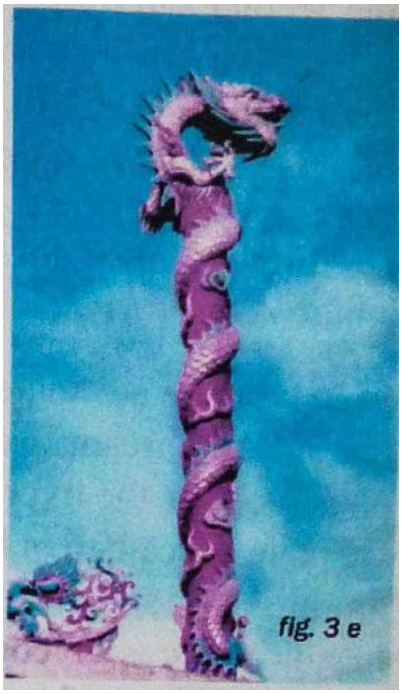
In India there are some rare people who become breatharians, taking no nutrition other than from the air they breath; part of the explanation for this possibility, from the perspective of Western physiology is the liver's amazing ability to recycle – providing whatever we need from whatever we have, (breatharians living is not recommended for beginning yoga students). Some amino acids are broken down in the liver and converted into the sugar glucose, which is then stored in the hepatic cells as glycogen, ready for turning back into glucose and energy. The hepatic cell also serves as a bank for vitamins A,B,D,E, and K, excess amounts of which are stored for a rainy day. The size of these vitamin stores can be so enormous that a well-nourished person can go fro months without vitamin A and two to four years without vitamin B12 without sign of deficiency, even in normal people. (Vitamin B12 is part of the elaborate B-complex, a family of about 22 B vitamins). The ability to change things is a natural function of the combustive energy, breaking things apart, while in the liver it works in combination with the second chakra energy, which recombines the pieces into needed nutrients or other body components. One of the other recycling functions of the liver is that of taking lactic acid, produced by working muscles, and changing it into glycogen. This process required the addition of oxygen atoms to change the chemical nature of the acid. In order to fulfill its functions, the liver has a high need for oxygen, one of its basic fuels. When this is supplied through pranayama yoga, the liver becomes more capable of re-combining food elements into what we need, and we in turn become less dependent on such a

variety of foods. Did you ever wonder how a cow can have all the vitamins, minerals and proteins that it requires when it's only eating grass? If cows can do it, how much more capable are humans? Also consider that these "greens" the cows are eating must in fact be a fairly complete food.




## NADIS AND PRANAMAY KOSHA:

Nadi is the Sanskrit word for energy pathway. Within our energy body (auric field), which is called pranamaya kosha in yoga, are many pathways along which that energy flows, as well as many patterns into which it forms itself. These paths have been well defined in old texts and diagrams, and always with reference to the three main paths that seem to be the principle routes. These are called Ida, Pingala and Shushumna. Students with a Western education will often tend to think of these in terms of the nervous system, but it is important to understand that they are not the same thing. Although nadi means duct or conduit, in yoga it refers to the patterns in which the energy flows. Just as the traveler can wander off the path, so can energy move without a conductor. In fact it is well known in yoga that energy flows is what creates the path, like travelers walking over the same ground a number of times will make the path.




As we have see with the chakras, universal energy does tend to form itself into geometric patterns we have come to know as mandalas. As this is the nature of universal energy, it Is also reflected in the way our energy moves from brain to body and vice versa. These flow patterns have been experienced for eons and often expressed through drawings. Regarding the three main ducts or channels of energy, these drawings depict them as criss-crossing wavy lines, with the central channel being a large straight vertical shaft. These two-dimensional drawings are attempting to illustrate an energy flow which moves in a three dimensional world (See figure 3 d). In the real world, the energy waves are actually spirals, and just as the chakra vortexes are spiraling around the spine, these main energy pathways are also going around the central nervous system like a spiral stairway. Fig. 3 e shows a Chinese version of this type of energy where the three dimension aspect of the spirals is more obvious, and where the serpent Kundalini has a dragon head.

In the words to describe the flowing of these energies it is written that the solar current flowing through the pingala moves to the right, while the lunar current moves to the left. That does not mean one side and the other. Remember that we are talking about spirals; so, they are either flowing to the right → clockwise, or to the left ← counter-clockwise.

Yogis who are working directly with these forces can feel them moving in these ways, and come to realize that when the energy spirals to the left, it goes downward, when spiraling to the right, the energy moves upward. In those places where the up and down spirals meet we find condensations of these energies into vortexes known as chakras.

The solar currents of pingala are clearly connected to the solar plexus and the third chakra energy. Its power is dynamic, activating, creative and brilliant. Just as the sun brings light to turn on the day and awaken the creatures of the world, so does the inner solar current turn on our metabolism. Within our nervous system there are activating functions like the motor neurons that conduct energy impulses to make us move; other impulses stimulate digestion, metabolism, creative thinking and imagination. All of these functions are plugged in to the solar current of pingala. It equates to the masculine, the door. Our sympathetic nervous system, which triggers extreme action, as in the fight or flight response, would also be connected to this solar current.

Ida, on the other hand, is called the lunar current. As you may have noted, the moon sheds no light of its own, it simply reflects the light of the sun. Since the sun current activates the body and mind, what does the lunar current do to reflect that? It reflects what is going on back to the mind. This is the receptive and perceptive aspect of our energy flow – like a bio-feedback system that keeps the brain well informed about all the details of body processes and conditions. We could look at this part of our energy flow as the sensitive, feminine, aspect that allows us to observe our body sensations and actions. Part of the nervous system related to this lunar current is the para-sympathetic, which functions to relax our actions and metabolism.

The third division in our energy flow is Shushumna. More closely linked to the spinal cord and central nervous system, shushumna is lie the polar axis of all the universal structures. It is the central axis around which the chakras swirl. On the planetary scale – the north/south polar axis around which the earth spins. In the overall egg shape of pranamaya kosha, shushumna is the central upward flow through which greater and greater amounts of energy are garneted with yoga practice. Usually a significant proportion of our energy is moving out around the periphery of that egg (aura), in ida and pingala, and in the peripheral nerves in our bodies. With the more advanced yogic practices energy is re-channeled to the center, and these more potent flows create blissful feelings and higher states of consciousness.

## **JNANENDRIYA** (sense perception)

The outer world sense connected with Manipura is that of seeing. This means that there is a neurological connection between the eyes, the optic nerve and the solar plexus; the optic thalami are involved here too (two large oblong masses of grey matter forming a part of the mid-brain). Fasting is something well known in many spiritual traditions as a technique for raising one's energy to a higher level, often used as prerequisite for a "vision quest". The neurological reason is simple: the energy that goes into the digestive process is now used at a higher level by the optic

thalami for an extended inner vision process. Normally, though, it is with the eyeballs that we see the world and are drawn into it. This chakra is our solar center and it is with the light of the sun that our eyes can see what is out there. There is an obvious connection here between the sun (the third chakra of our solar system) and our eyes. When the sun lights up our day, our eyes open and we see the world around us; we cannot just walk around with our eyes closed during the day. Our eyes are opened by the force of this energy and we are drawn out into the world. Out there the eyes help us to orient ourselves and are responsible for developing many of our survival skills.

Once our eyes are opened however, we tend to let them wander around in the world in search of whatever is most alluring. Because there is a strong connection between the wandering of our eyes and the wandering of our minds, yoga emphasizes taking control of the old sacred texts of India, it is recommended that the yogi focus his eyes at the tip of the nose for concentration. In another part of the same text, gazing up at the root of the nose is suggested. Both of these techniques utilize control of the physical eyeballs themselves in order to gain control of an unruly mind. Students should spend some time practicing these methods and observe the results. Practice only for short periods at first so as not to strain the eye muscles; then lengthen the time as you become comfortable with it.

## KARMENDRIYA

The organ of action related to this vortex is the anus. Not something we consider being particularly active in general; however, we can say that there is a relation between eating and defecating. This is the end point of the digestive tract, and the control point for letting go. In a healthy state we are using this action every day for bowel movements. In yoga practice there is more to be done than meets the eye – the technique known as ***Mula Bandha***, for example, can be very transforming and in fact can be a key to bringing our energy into a while new direction. Through this technique, the force of the first chakra is amplified.

As we discussed in the first chapter, Muladhara energy draws in to itself at the base of the spine. From there however, it follows natural pathways that tend to pull us out to the four directions, through the senses of each chakra and the related desires we have accumulated in our minds, out to the material world to experience it. In the application of Mula Bandha, the root lock, the energy is pulled back in to the base. This process is begun with a simple contraction of the sphincter muscle, tightening the anus, an action applied to certain breathing and movement practices. Later it progresses into more elaborate and advanced practices (Level 2). This technique can have an awakening effect on dormant forces within the body (*Kundalini*), sometimes arousing too much energy within the nervous system, so should be practiced with moderation in the beginning. It is a very creative energy and can

easily create amplified desires when not directed properly. This is particularly true of the sexual desires and for that reason the yama and niyama need to be applied as guidelines.

For the purpose of this course, mula bandha is generally applied on the expiration of the breath and sometimes on retentions. Awareness should be directed to feeling the sphincter muscle as it contracts, and observing the containment of energy at the tailbone. Visualization of the first chakra mandala can be added to the feeling, so that two senses are involved simultaneously. The technique is quite grounding at the physical level. One of the main benefits in the beginning, is that it strengthens the first chakra, giving solidity, endurance and stamina to all body cells; these effects then influence glands, organ and our whole body. As this becomes a physical reality, it influences our character and mental stability (See the section on Bandhas later in this chapter).

## CHARACTERISTICS

The third chakra is our sun center. As such it gives power and action energy to our physical body, and light and inspiration to our mind. With this as a dominant energy, people are usually active go-getters in the material world, often the initiator of plans, and motivators for others.

<u>When the energy is strong and balanced:</u>

1. Amicable leader with lots of ideas about where to go next.
2. Likes to take action and make things happen.
3. Friendly disposition in the social world, lively, with a good sense of humor.
4. Responsible, conscientious and generous in most situations.
5. Has a good sense of self and is confident in his/her abilities.
6. Individual with good creative expression.
7. Strong will-power but with healthy manners.
8. Successful in planned projects.
9. Healthy and active physically with good zest and vitality for life.

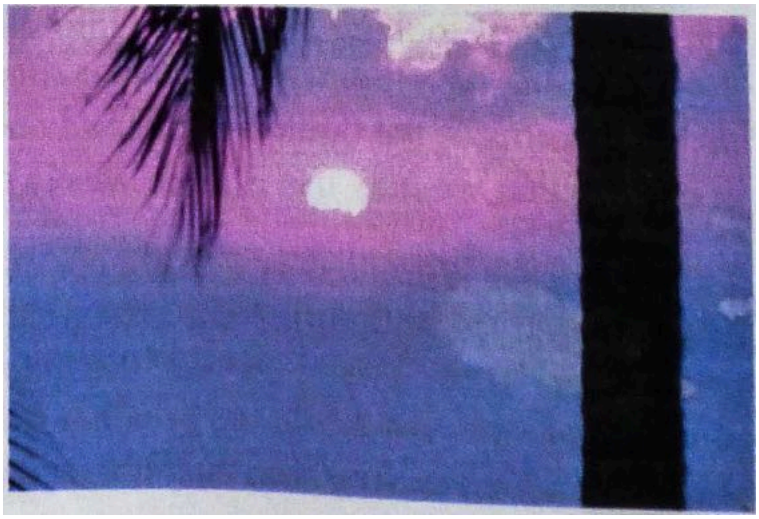
<u>When the energy is too strong and out of balance:</u>

1. Can become intolerant, argumentative and controlling; inflated ego.
2. Might be bossy, stubborn and tendency towards aggression; challenging authorities.
3. Lack of consideration for others, especially if they are in the way of the individual's plans.
4. Tendency to be careless and overly daring.
5. Single minded, perhaps tunnel vision ambitions that lead to workaholism.
6. May be deceitful or manipulative to attain goals.

7. High metabolism, may have too much energy and have a difficult time relaxing or slowing down, as well as difficulty harnessing the mind.
8. Scattered in creative ideas; pleasure seeking to the point of indulgence and addiction.

When the energy is weak or depleted:

1. Lack of motivation and will-power, no desire to take action; easily stuck in old patterns.
2. Physically not active; may feel a sense of fatigue or tiredness; digestive weakness or problems.
3. Not very high in self confidence or one's abilities; doubtful about skills or talents.
4. Does not have a strong sense of self or individuality, maybe quite indecisive.
5. Little creativity, and quite shy of doing anything out of the ordinary.



## MENTAL DIRECTION

**East** is the mental direction of this chakra. This is where the sun comes up, and when it does, we automatically move outward to experience the world. The sun lights everything up for our eyes to see in the obvious daytime. From our solar plexus comes the energy of daytime activity, vision, creativity, and productivity – a fiery active energy that leads to free expression, if not to uninhibited action. As an expression of oneself it tends to be direct as well as creative, and has been known to cause upheavals in polite social circles. Because of its active nature it tends to drive one to action, from the mental flash of what to do, to the act of doing it. It is an energy that needs to be let out of the mind through artistic expression of any type, or action. If it is suppressed, on the other hand, it will create a negative emotional state with head-spinning frustration. Trying to contain it is like trying to contain fire in a cardboard box.

This direction of the rising sun is the one from which your day is beginning; what is the image in your mind for the coming day? This powerful energy needs to move, to go somewhere, to do something, so if it is not directed by the higher mind, it falls into old behavior patterns from the lower mind automatically and directs your day according to previous programming. This is why it is considered important on the spiritual path to be up before dawn so as to direct this force in a positive way. Here is the way to create what you want out of yourself and for yourself; and it begins by changing those aspects of your daily activities that are not in harmony with your present belief system about how you should be living. Any conflict between what you are doing and what you think you should be doing will inhibit empowerment of this chakra.

The journey of your spiritual being needs sunshine to grow into the reality of the present day. Imagination is one of the faculties empowered by this energy; it is one of the potent tools our mind has to work with. An image held in the mind is an energy pattern and that becomes the directing force for our energy flow. When not used as a tool this imaginative faculty can too easily work against us, creating fantasies and illusions that have little to do with an achievable reality. In yoga the force of imaging is utilized in visualizing positive results in our practice of stretching, and healing. Just imagine the health you are striving for; if you can't even imagine – you have a problem. The same methods are used to visualize what we want to achieve in the material world, and to imagine how we can attain it.

***"Imagination is more important than knowledge."***

*-Albert Einstein*

## RAJO GUNA

In the Sanskrit description of the forces of the universe, that which empowers this *grunthi* is called ***rajas***. In the first chapter we discussed the force of *tamas*, or what we called inertia. The raja we need to deal with in this chakra could be called momentum by comparison. It is the energy movement of the universal forces that simply want to keep moving. In our nervous system, we have created many pathways for the energy to flow by repeatedly going over the same moves and actions. This becomes the path of least resistance for our energy flows, and that energy will continue to flow along the same lines until something makes a change.

One of the methods used to overcome the forces of resistance that hold us back from evolving is a technique called ***Uddhyana Bandha***. It is one of the classic "locks" of yoga and as such tends to lock our energy inward and prevent it from flowing out into these habitual patterns. As mentioned earlier, the grunthis are like knots in which our energy patterns have been tied up. The bandhas are the methods of locking our energy into different internal patterns that re known to enhance our evolution and development. Once that energy is re-directed to the inside, it no longer gets tangles up in the knots f the outer world. The benefits of the locks lie in freeing up our previously tied-up energy so that we may use it more wisely on our spiritual path.

This technique is applied by doing a complete exhalation, then sucking in the abdomen in a couple of ways: first the abdominal muscles are tightened and pulled in to help squeeze the air out of the lower lobes of the lungs; second, the diaphragm muscle is sucked up by expanding the rib cage outward and upward while the breath is held out. In so doing, a vacuum is created internally. One should focus on feeling that vacuum, and the emptiness that is associated with it. We often associate hunger with that empty feeling, and by producing it in this way we can learn to change our reactions to the feeling in such a way that we become more directed and less reactionary beings. Of course this takes place at the psychological level; physiologically the action of uddhyana bandha creates a pulling effect on an area of our torso that is all too often full and trying to push things out. The result is a change in pressure, which can be very beneficial for the whole abdominal area since it helps break up blockages and dense areas within the intestinal tract. Meanwhile we can harness this with the psychological aspects and decide to make dietary changes that may be appropriate.

## VISHNU GRUNTHI

One of the biggest stumbling blocks to our evolution sits firmly at the top of this chakra. It is called Vishnu Grunthi, and has much to do with habitual behavior. Most of what we learn in a lifetime – from walking to eating to social behavior – becomes relegated to an area of the brain called the cerebellum. This small mass of gray matter picks up on the actions we perform and makes an auto-pilot function out of them. For instance, when we first learn to walk it is a tedious task to keep our balance and carefully place one foot in front of the other. But with practice (repetition), it starts to come easy, and then it becomes automatic. We no longer need to concentrate on placing one foot in front of the other; we only need to think about going somewhere and the rest take care of itself.

This automatic function works out well to our advantage in many ways; however, once we step onto a spiritual path and need to change our habits, it works against us. For instance, when we want to stop eating French fries and eat salad instead, our

stomachs will growl at us in protest; desire will try and overrule our decision. Look at the cigarette-smoking habit and how difficult it is to change into a deep breathing habit. Much will-power and effort are required. Addictions are all based on this habitual nature.

## YAMA/NIYAMA

### YAMA: **Ahimsa** (non-violence)

One should not be violent in thought, word, or deed. This means not directing aggression towards any other being or toward oneself. The first step is to eliminate violence from your actions, since these acts are the easiest to become aware of, and these acts are what cause the violence that eventually comes back to you. But while doing this, you may find your words and tone of voice become sarcastic, cutting and violent in expression. This will indicate that the aggression actually goes deep into your thought and consequently must be explored within your mind. Violence generally begins in thought and terminates in action. Through suppression the action is inhibited and the aggression might only come out at the vocal level. If vocal expression is suppressed, the aggressive tendencies are kept within your mind, and if, further, you even censor your thoughts, you will end up with all these violent urges accumulating in your subconscious reservoir. Consider then that one must find the roots of the aggression within one's own mind, find the cause of it being there, eliminate the cause, and then proceed to a more peaceful state of mind, speech and action. Therefore, if you have violence in your thoughts, study it … don't suppress it. You may have been exposed to violence in the innocence of your childhood, whence your mind absorbed it, or perhaps it just came from TV, in either case you are not responsible for it. Understand how it entered your being and you will allow it to leave; it was someone else's aggression, so let it go. It may be that you harbor a lot of frustration; if this is the case use the analysis of Swadhiyaya to see what it is all about. Take the appropriate methods to release it, like some kind of aggressive actions aimed at a punching bag.

You do not have to imitate the behavior you witnessed as a child, so in your present behavior, and without suppression, do not act aggressively, speak aggressively, or think in an aggressive manner. What words much better than trying to stop the old thought patterns is changing them into new ones: Send out peaceful loving vibrations to everyone instead of aggressive thoughts. Imagine becoming fiends with someone towards whom you have hostile thoughts.

NIYAMA: Tapas (self-discipline)

Self-discipline needs to be applied to the practices of yoga. The techniques learned need to be put into action not just thought about. One should apply discipline to the practices that lead to mental development, and do them with zeal. Self-discipline is the only power by which one can gain control of the mental faculties. This discipline is achieved simply by the application of willpower to overcome lazy tendencies, and to transform negative desires into positive action. The ego will come up with a thousand reasons to procrastinate and not do the practices (because those practices will dissolve this same ego). Effort is the key.

Once a seed is planted, it will grow on its own with just a little daily reinforcement. You need only get yourself off the ground and the rest is easy flying. Therefore, one should be regular and punctual in practices, and each time you get some insight into a better way of practice, it should be applied immediately, in this way we feel good about what we have done. You may quickly notice that the feelings you gain from the practice are rewarding and even blissful – as a result, motivation to do it is increased. Remember that here and now is the only place to live. Be wise to the ego's thinking – "do it tomorrow". Discipline is also required when faced with temptation – something you know is unhealthy or harmful, yet it gives you sensual pleasure. Each time you say no, you make it easier to say no the next time; each ti9me you say yes, you make it easier to say yes next time. Each time you use willpower, you open the gate to let more in. Your nervous system learns well with repetition, both for the elimination of the negative and for the development of new habits. The development of will is so easy if done gradually and consistently. Apply it only in small quantities at first, to all the little things that require change. It begins early in the morning, as soon as you wake up. Part of you wants to be lazy and another part knows you should get up immediately; decide at that very moment which part of you is going to rule the day. The early bird gets the worm, but if you are a hawk, you may get the cobra (*Kundalini*).

## PRANAYAMA YOGA

Pranayama yoga deals with energy control, and is thus intrinsically related to Manipura chakra which is all about energy. The solar plexus is our fire center, the area in which we change food into energy. Having some control over the direction into which this energy moves is required for the yogic spiritual path. Otherwise, every time energy moves through the digestive system, we simply react by eating. As we have seen with Vishnu grunthi, habitual patterns of all sorts are tied in with this energy, and changing habits required conscious effort.

Conscious control over the breathing function is used in pranayama yoga as a method of gaining influence over the way our energy moves. Breathing is a very strong reflex pattern that is considered impossible to stop. Being a deep

subconscious pattern that is crucial to life, it is well protected. However, we can have significant influence on the way we breathe, that is, how deep, how fast etc. In our normal lifestyle all these aspects are governed automatically through a variety of subconscious reflexes. It is all contained within the self-regulating functions of the autonomic nervous system.

One important consideration of the breath is about the "prana" aspect, most of which is absorbed through the nose, (chapter 1). When we do begin to change the way we breathe, we are in fact stepping into the realm of the subconscious, into a realm that contain everything about ourselves. If we re-direct the energy circuits at this level, there are reactions in the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual aspects of our being. Anyone who has begun a serious practice of pranayama yoga will attest to this. It is a powerful transforming tool, which takes us much further than the simple act of expanding our lungs and increasing our oxygen levels. These effects are there as well, and have positive consequences on our physiology, but the deeper results we gain from regulated deep breathing have to do with regulating and transforming energy patterns, and transforming ourselves.

The impact of controlling the breathing impulse has been understood for centuries, millennia in fact, and during the course of that time observations have been made and noted. As a result of those observations, yogis have innovated a wide variety of techniques for breathing, using different times for inhalation, exhalation, and added breath retentions in and out. The internal effect of these on our nervous system and energy flow have been carefully mapped out so that they could achieve specific results.

In Chakra Yoga, dozens of specific pranayama techniques are used for detoxification, purification, balancing, charging and calming. Some of these will be used throughout the level 1 teacher's training course and will be described, explained, and discussed at the times of practice. In fact some techniques may have disturbing effects on our emotional and mental states, and should be done with supervision and counseling. Generally, slow deep breathing is recommended as a safe practice anyone can apply without adverse effects. Level 2 will go further into Pranayama Yoga.

## BANDHAS

The Sanskrit word '*bandha'* translates as lock or hold. In the practice of yoga asanas as well as pranayama breathing techniques, certain parts of the physical body are held and contracted into position for a period of time to help create or direct specific energy currents; these locks are called ***Bandhas***. The three primary bandhas we will talk about at this time are *mula bandha, uddiyana bandha* and *jalandhara bandha*. We will define each bandha as well as talk about the purpose and benefits of each in

the chakra yoga system. You will also come across a review of each of these bandhas in the specific chapters on the related chakras.

## Mula Bandha

In the Sanskrit language mula bandha translates as root lock. (*Mula* means root in Sanskrit and *bandha* means lock). This is a contraction and a pulling upward of the muscles around the perineum. The perineum is the area between the anus and the external genitalia.

Action: while sitting in *vajrasana, padmasana* or *ardha padmasana* one pulls upward and contracts the sphincter muscle, around the perineum. Another classical posture to perform the mula bandha technique is *prasad siddhasana*. This is done by pressing the perineum (*yoni nadi*) with the left heel and placing the right little toe on the inside of the left thigh. Mula bandha kriya may be performed in *kumbhaka* (held-in breath retention) or *shunyaka* (held-out breath retention).

In the action of mula bandha kriya, *apana vau*, the vital energy in the body below the navel begins to ascend and come into union with the *prana vayu*, the vital life force up towards the fourth chakra. Apana vayu, whose flow is usually in a descending motion, is directed upwards by the action of mula bandha. As apana vayu rises upward its energy increases the gastric fire and when it fuses with the fire energy of Manipura chakra it unites with the prana vayu at the region of the heart and lungs (Anahata chakra). The author Harish Johari, says that the mixing of the positive ions of prana vayu and the negative ions of apana vayu creates an extreme heat and is acutely awakening for the Kundalini energy as the union moves through the main spinal nadi channel of *sushumna*.

**Benefits of Mula Bandha Kriya:**

- This bandha helps to activate and awaken the powerful, pranic life force located at the base of the spine known as Kundalini-shakti
- Helps one to maintain the vow of celibacy (*brahma charya*) by raising the sexual energy up the spine to be utilized by the higher chakras
- Stimulates the nerve groups along the base of the spinal column
- Energizes Muladhara chakra
- Tones the muscles and organs of the genital area and reproductive system; tones pelvic wall
- Stimulating for the action of the small and large intestine
- Energizes Muladhara chakra
- Tones the muscles and organs of the genital area and reproductive system; tones pelvic wall
- Stimulating for the action of the small and large intestine

Cautions:

For the beginner student of yoga in the practices of mudras, mantras, asanas and pranayama breathing techniques it is important to be moderate in applying the mula bandha technique for one does not want to push the awakening of Kundalini energy until one has taken the time to purify the mind and body of toxicity and negative thought patterns. If Kundalini is awakened pre-maturely there may be dangerous side effects for the *sadhaka* (practitioner). One is advised not to be in a hurry but to awaken the Kundalini energy gently along their spiritual path. This advice applies to the other bandha kriyas as well.

**Jalandhara Bandha**

In the Sanskrit *jalandhara bandha* translates as 'chin lock'. By sitting in vajrasana, padmasana or any of the classical seated postures with the hands on the knees, this bandha is performed by jutting the neck forward, bowing the head downward and resting the chin at the top of the chest. The shoulders may be rolled forward thereby concaving the upper chest cavity. This bandha contracts the throat and closes of the trachea and may be done on the held-in or held-out breath retentions.

According to yogi, Harish Johari, this particular bandha cuts of the circulation of fluids to the head. This impediment of fluid circulation creates an independent circuit of energy channels whereby the downward flow of fluids from the palate is creased. In the traditional yogic texts this fluid that flow from the cavity of the palate is called *soma*, the nectar or elixir of the divine being. It is written that this fluid is composed of various chemicals and hormones that enhance a majority of bodily functions. It is known to improve growth and development, rejuvenate the cells, glands and organs as well as slow down the deterioration of the entire physical being. Normally these fluids flow downward into the body and are unfortunately burned up in the gastric fire. Also, Harish points out that if the soma nectar is prevented from flowing downward by the technique of jalandhara kriya, the nthe flow of energy through the *ida* and *pingala* nadi channels which flow along the side of the spinal column is constricted thereby causing the prana to flow through the primary nadi channel of sushumna. Pranic life force moving through the sushumna is very awakening for the consciousness of the yoga student. (see chapter 6 – ida, pingala & sushumna)

## Benefits of Jalandhara Kryia:

- Rejuvenating for al bodily functions; prevents dis-ease in the physical body
- Creates longevity in the physical body; anti aging technique

- Slows the heart-rate ; relaxing for the mind and body; relives feelings of stress and anxiety

- Enhances the functions of the thyroid and para-thyroid glands

- Prepares one for meditation

Cautions:

It is important not to inhale or exhale until the head is raised up straight and the chin lock is released. As well, people with high blood pressure or heart problems should refrain from doing this kryia unless one is gently guided by an experienced yoga teacher.

Benefits of the Primary Dandhas

The three primary bandhas namely *mula bandha*, *uddiyana* bandha and *jalandhara bandha* help to improve the overall functioning of the physical body through the inner massage of the internal muscles, glands and organs, activating the circulation of all bodily fluids as well as stimulating and regulating the nerve groups along the spinal column.

The bandhas also have an influence and effect upon the action of the chakra energy centers while the breath retentions causes prana to accumulate in specific areas of concentration.

The execution of the bandhas begin to release the grunthis (knots of spiritual energy, barriers) along the spinal column. These particular grunthis actually impede the flow of prana through the sushuma nadi channel thus keeping one stuck in old habitual patterns and preventing the ascension of Kundalini energy. In the release and dissipation of thesekn ots, pranic life force may move through the sushumna more freely thus raising the consciousness of the yoga practitioner. The bandhas help re-direct the flow of energy in the body.
(see chapter 1 – grunthis)

When these three primary bandhas are practiced together with mudras, chakra mantras, asnas and pranayama breathing techniques the higher psychic sense of the yogi is elevated and one may move into a meditative, blissful state of consciousness.

Caution:

For the beginner student of yoga it is important to practice each of the bandhas in isolation of each other. Later as one begins to advance in their practice one may moderately combine the three bandhas with mudras and pranayama techniques. It is advised to stay attuned to he guidance of your inner teacher and take the time to purify the mind and body through the practice of the various forms of yoga as well as eating a healthy diet with the addition of periodic cleansing fasts.

## HANG-SAH KRIYA

The “Hang-Sah Kriya” is a concentration technique that uses a combination of breath, sound and visualization to clear the mind for meditation. This ancient yoga practice gives you the ability to de-program the brain cells, thereby letting go of old negative energy patterns and making way for more positive inspirations.

To begin, chant the **Om** mantra internally as you breathe in and out a couple of times, to attune yourself with the sound of the vibrating universe. Then visualize your head being inside a pyramid, with the base of the pyramid being at the bottom

of the brain and the side coming form a few inches outside of each ear and going up to a point about six inches above the head.

Next, as you take a full breath to an 8 count, internally chanting **Sab**, visualize a wave of energy moving across the floor of the brain from the base of the pyramid outside the left ear across to the base outside the right ear. Pause, and then exhale for a similar 8 count, but this time internally chanting the sound **Hang**, moving a wave of energy across the floor of the brain from outside the right ear to outside the left ear. Pause, then repeat the process: the in-breath with the sound Sah and the out-breath with Hang…continually moving back and forth across the floor of the brain. As you do this you slowly move upwards following the shape of the pyramid. Very gradually, over a 20-minute period, you direct your way up the pyramid dropping the 8 count as the breath gets shorter and shorter (but keeping a slow, steady, pace), until you reach the point at the top with no breath and an empty mind. You can also use this Pyuramid Kriya Technique to envelop the whole body – best done sitting cross-legged (or in the full lotus, since this gives you a pyramidal base).

Regular practice with this technique will clear the mind. The Sanskrit sounds Hang and Sah are used because Hang is a vibration associated with individual ego – which we let go with the out-breath. Sah is the sound of incoming energy from the universe, so we take this in with the breath. What we are doing is letting out the old and taking "inspiration."

This pyramid, with the breath and sounds, begins to disempower negative energies and when done with a focused mind Hang-Sah Kriya has the ability to detach you from past karma and allow you to move forward on your spiritual path.

## PRANAYAMA TECHNIQUES

***NASARGA BHASTRIKA***, the bellows breath, done through the nose. This breath as I was taught it in 1971 was done with the mid-chest breathing for 108 rounds. Sitting in *vajrasana*, inhale at a good speed in the mid-chest area and then exhale more vigorously through the nose; repeat this as many times as you can handle. Over a period of a few weeks you can add a couple or rounds per day until you get to 108. Start at ta speed of about one per second; once you have reached at least 30, try to double the speed. When (if ) you start to feel strain or muscular discomfort, or you get too dizzy, stop, take a slow deep breath and let it out slowly. Eventually, when you reach the optimum number of rounds, exhale completely and take the last inhalation as a slow and deep complete yoga breath, then follow it with a lengthy *kumbhaka*, retention. The locks, bandha trayam, are held in place (this is the application of Mula bandha, Uddiyana bandha and Janadhara bandha all at the same time), and you visualize a ball of golden energy in the solar plexus (*kushala kriya*), like a sun shining, as big as you like. You may also move this ball to any area of your body where healing may be needed. Try to feel the energy as well as see it. Another

addition to this is to take that energy out from the arms and hands through the fingertips, as you tap all around your face, for example, moving prana into that area. You can do this with any area of your body.

Once you have mastered this part of the technique, you can try the second variation taught in later years at Ananda Ashram, by using both the mid-chest and upper breathing and going rapidly up to 120 rounds of breath. When finished you collapse into *nishpanda asana*, the tensionless pose on the ground by simply falling forward out of the sitting pose.

**BENEFITS:**

*This is a very charging and empowering technique
*Stimulates and charges the 3rd chakra.
*Clears the lungs and strengthens the power of breath.
*Clears nasal passages, eliminated congestion.
*Can be a good healing technique when the prana is directed to affected areas.

***KAPALABHATI***, the skull cleanser. Sitting in *vajrasana*, the breath is rapidly pulled in and out, deeply, but at two cycles per second, through both nostrils. The first breath is very deep, filling the lungs, then on the out-breath, the diaphragm is pushed upward and the abdomen pulled in as in *uddiyana bhanda* (#153). On the in-breath the abdomen is relaxed and falls outward. Concentration should be held on feeling a flow of energy is through the forehead, along the base of the brain to the back of the head, with each inhalation. Then with the exhalation, feel the energy go up the back of your head, over top and out into space through the top of your skull. First you must master the breathing with the diaphragm and the abdominal muscles; when this is done easily, add the concentration in the brain area. Gradually, build up the number of breaths daily until you reach 120 rounds, within a one minute time frame. Afterwards do a cleansing breath, *mukha bhastrika*, if your head hasn't spun off into some strange orbit (orbits can be fun too). This kriya is to control and cleanse the *Pancha Bhutas*, the five elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether, at their mental level as well as their physical counterparts in the head area. Earth here stands for the physical matter of the brain and consequent materialistic thoughts and ideas. Water stands for the cerebrospinal fluid and all thoughts about flowing together with other people in the sea of emotional involvements. Fire stands for the nerve energy passing through the association fibers and connected nerve tissue and cells, and subsequent ideas of doing, acting, changing, and indulging for pleasure. Air symbolizes the actual air cavities in the skullcap and various areas of your head, which mentally exist as feelings of both pleasure and pain. Ether stands for the electromagnetic energies that your brain is tuned into and in particular these subtle energies as they pass through the arachnid and sub-arachnid cavities of the brain, mentally perceived as truths, theories and untruths about life and the universe.

BENEFITS:

*Charges all the chakras and moves energy up through them.
*Clearing technique for the brain and mind, moves prana through the cerebral cortex.
*Stimulates digestion and elimination.
*Strengthening the diaphragm.
*Helps awaken dormant forces.

## EYE DRILLS

The eye lens is controlled by four active and two passive muscles, which determine the shape of the lens, depending on the distance of the object seen. Tension that is held in these muscles for extended periods of time causes a certain type of eyestrain. Constant tension in the muscles that control eye movement creates strain that can actually distort the shape of the eyeball. Both of these conditions lead to poor focus and the necessity of using glasses, like crutches, to be able to focus accurately again. When the shape of the eyeball is distorted over a period of time it is made permanent by the hardening of mucous in the eyeball socket. There are also many psychological factors that influence vision (not wanting to see certain aspects of life etc.), and these must be dealt with before physical vision can be restored.

When doing the following techniques it is important not to do them while thinking about something else, but rather feel the process, focus all your attention on that area. Notice how you look at objects. Is it with sharpness and focus on detail. Or is it just looking while the mind is drifting through scenes in the memory? Are you seeing the beauty in things, and appreciating it, or just looking for something else? Try looking for detail and beauty as a focus.

**Some good restoration techniques are as follows:**

1. Sun gazing: In a comfortable straight-back sitting position, facing the sunrise, begin rolling the head from side to side, as far as it will go each way. Keep the head tilted slightly back and the eyes on the horizon, blinking all the time. If the sun is over 15 degrees from the horizon the eyes should be closed. Deep breathing should be done with the rolling. The turning of the head stimulates the arteries leading to the eyes, allowing for a flesh flow of blood. Breathing also provides a rich oxygen supply, and the sun's rays stimulate the retina.

This technique can also be done standing, with the whole body rotating from side to side.

2. Palming: Following the above, or other eye exercises, rapidly rub the hands together to stimulate the nerve endings (you can feel the heat) and then cup the hands as if to hold water. Then place the hands over the eyes to create a lightproof cup. Lean forward until the elbows rest on the knees, or the ground, and let your head rest in your hands. In this position the pranic flows may be felt from the solar plexus through the nerves of the arms to the palms and through to the eyes – acting there as a tremendous healing force. The *bija* "eeeeem" is chanted in a high pitch so the vibration can be felt in the eyes as the prana flows through. This can be done for any length of time, and can also be done at any period of the day to relax the eyes. The weakest eye should always be covered first.

3. When coming up from the palming position the eyes should be opened by fast blinking to accustom them to the bright light. This, in fact, prevents photophobia, aversion to light, and should be done whenever coming from dark to light.

4. Holding the hands out front, between the sun and the eyes, the left palm faces the eyes with the fingers interlaced, the right palm faces the sun, absorbing its rays. Direct sunlight is allowed to come through a tiny hole between the second finger, and the resulting light beam enters one eye at a time. *Surya namaha* is chanted 12 times on each side, and you finish with palming.

5. When the sun is very low and red, or if higher and brighter but peeking through the clouds, both eyes can look directly at it, widely opened and blinking frequently. Then one eye at a time can be covered. Then the eyes can be crossed, looking at the nose, so that two sounds are seen. Finish with palming.

6. Gazing at objects that are at different distances from you: Begin by staring at the tip of the nose, then blink and look at an object 5 feet away for 10 seconds, then, blinking, adjust your focus on to an object 20 feet away, then 50, 100 and to the horizon. Then come back in, one step at a time, until you are as close as you can focus. Repeat this procedure half a dozen times, then

one eye at a time. Finish by doing the eyes together again, and then palming. I have found it very helpful when doing this to choose something like a detailed mandala to gaze at in the close-up, something that is beautiful and attractive.

7. Control of the eyes and their movements is important. They must be made to follow where they are directed. To learn how to direct them, various geometric symbols can be used, drawn externally at first, and then mentally. Both eyes may be used, then one at a time, then both. The geometric forms should include vertical lines, horizontal lines, crosses, squares, rectangles, triangles, crescent moons, circles, infinity signs, and wavy lines. Each of these should be well done, not just loose and sloppy. Breathe deeply while doing these and finish with palming.

8. *Kushala pranayama*, finger tapping, can be done with the focus on the occipital area at the base of the skull on either side of *aprakasha bindu* in the brain stem. The body areas around the eyes may be tapped also and the eyes themselves very lightly.

9. Eye washing can be done with tired eyes, using cold and/or saline water. The use of urine (Murine) can be quite helpful if there is a hint of infection.

10. Fine print reading at a distance where it is seen best is helpful in improving the vision. Blink frequently.

# Active Practice

## Manipura Chakra Routine

Power, strength and action are characteristics of the energy from the fire center. Willpower is the major force and the higher mind had best be governing what you use your power for.

1. Cleansing breath followed by the A-U-M.

2. ***Surya Namaskar***: the sun salutation, done at a reasonable speed with vigorous breathing so as to stimulate metabolism. #134

- Stand with hands in *namaskar* facing the rising sun.
- Inhale while raising the hands and back bending.
- Exhale while bending forward and down till the hands are flat to the ground beside the feet, and the forehead touches the knees.
- Exhale, throwing the left foot back and holding the body up in an inverted V.
- Retain the breath and lower head, chest, and knees to the ground.
- Inhale, and life into *bhunjangasana*, the cobra
- Exhale while raising the buttocks high off the ground.
- Inhale bringing the right foot between the hands, head up.
- Exhale, bring up left foot and straighten legs.
- Inhale, lifting, raising hands and back bending.
- Come to the original position.

3. Eye exercises: rotating them in big circles, making squares, crosses, and infinity signs. Do some palming afterwards, and add the <u>eeeem</u> mantra. When you open your eyes again add the near and distant focus.

4. ***Vira badra***: the <u>warrior positions</u>. #138

- With legs wide apart, feet at 90 degree angles to each other, the hands begin in *namascaram* in front of the chest, bend the knee of the foot which is pointing away while coming down over that foot, keeping the back straight and bringing the hands high overhead. Inhale as you come down and the hands go up.

- The third position begins from the same place, taking a deep breath while bending back and stretching the arms overhead then going forward till the chest touches the knee and the arms parallel to the ground. Exhale as you do so.

- The fourth one is similar, taking in a deep breath as you stretch up and back, then go down and forward with the hands pointing to the horizon. Now the hands are placed on the ground besides the foot and the head placed on the hands, fully exhaled at this point.

- The fifth posture is done form a standing position balanced on one foot lifting the opposite leg behind, leaning forward pointing the namascaram is the opposite direction to the lifted leg. Breathing can be vigorous while holding the pose. Return to standing. All postures done on both sides.

- Standing with feet two feet apart, knees bent, hands formed into fists, and brought up beside the chest, elbows pointing back, and fingers on the up side, inhale, then exhale turning the right fist over and downward while pushing / punching it forward directly in front of solar plexus with hand opening out, palms down. This is done with a fast out-breath. Then return to the in-breath. Follow with the other side.

- Next you turn to each side, bend the leg on that side as you go down over it, the punch is thrown out to each side, crossing the body so the right arm goes out to the left side. Go from one side to the other, always exhaling vigorously to the punch.

- Standing with legs apart & turned to one side, lean back shifting your weight onto the back leg. Arms come up as if blocking someone's fist, then kick forward while the body and arms swing back around in a counter-balancing movement. Fast exhalation to the kick. Several times on one side, then on the other. Breathing is maintained deep and fast.

- Surya Namaste Warrior Pose: Standing position with feet wide apart (45 degree angle), inhale while bringing the hands together in Namaste greeting and stretching the hands upward toward the Sun, then exhale with the hands opening outward and down while the body moves into the warrior pose (bent knees) towards the earth, torso remains vertically upright. From here inhale / hands in Namaste and repeat posture from beginning.

- All postures are done on both sides.

5. Sitting for ***Nasarga bhastrika***, the rapid breathing technique. Try working your way up to the 108 rounds. When you have gone as long as you can, exhale completely, take a slow deep breath and hold it as long as possible. Make sure you are not holding your chest and shoulders up, but that they are relaxed over the locked-in breath. While you are holding, focus your mind on visualizing a warm ball of energy centered in your solar plexus. Two locks, mula bandha and jalandhara bandha, are held at this time. At the end of it you can collapse over to one side and just lie there for a while.

6. Shirsh janu asana, head to the knee pose. Begin with hands in namaskar and inhale; stretch the arms up as high as they will go in the in breath, then go forward as you exhale and take hold of your foot. Use your arms to pull your head down to your knees; work your way down into the position with side movements, then hold down and relax into it further with the exhalations. #74

7. ***Ardha matsyendrasana***, the spinal twist, is done with one leg crossed over the other knee. Then the opposite arm is crossed over that knee and the hand reaches for the foot in a way that uses the arm as a lever to pry the shoulder forward. Other arm goes around behind the back and the breath is let out. #85

8. ***Dhanurasana***, the bow, is done lying down on your abdomen and bringing the feet up. Hands reach back to grab the ankles and the feet are pushed back. This lifts the chest and shoulders off the floor and brings the body into the shape of a bow where the hands are like the string. Gentle abdominal breathing in this position will create a rocking motion. #88

9. ***Nava kriya***, the row boat is done by taking an imaginary pair of oars in the boat pose and rowing with vigorous breathing. You are balanced on the tailbone, legs and back are straight. #63

10. ***Simhasana***, the lion pose, is done with legs crossed, coming up onto the knees and hands, mouth is open wide, tongue hangs out, eyes open. Roar out the breath like a lion. #69

11. Cleansing breath, then alternate nostril breath, bringing in the breath through the right nostril and letting it out through the left. Right nostril is the solar, left is lunar.

12. Relaxation I the way of *Yoga Nidra*: After lying down and having done several minutes of Savitri, feel warm energy coming down through your head and into the solar plexus; then feel cool energy coming up through your feet and settling in the same area. Now from there begin a circular motion with the energy counter-clockwise, starting with a very small spiral and expanding it slowly outward until your while body is enveloped in it. Then wind it back in, clockwise, until you are back in the center.

## SYNOPSIS of MANIPURA CHAKRA

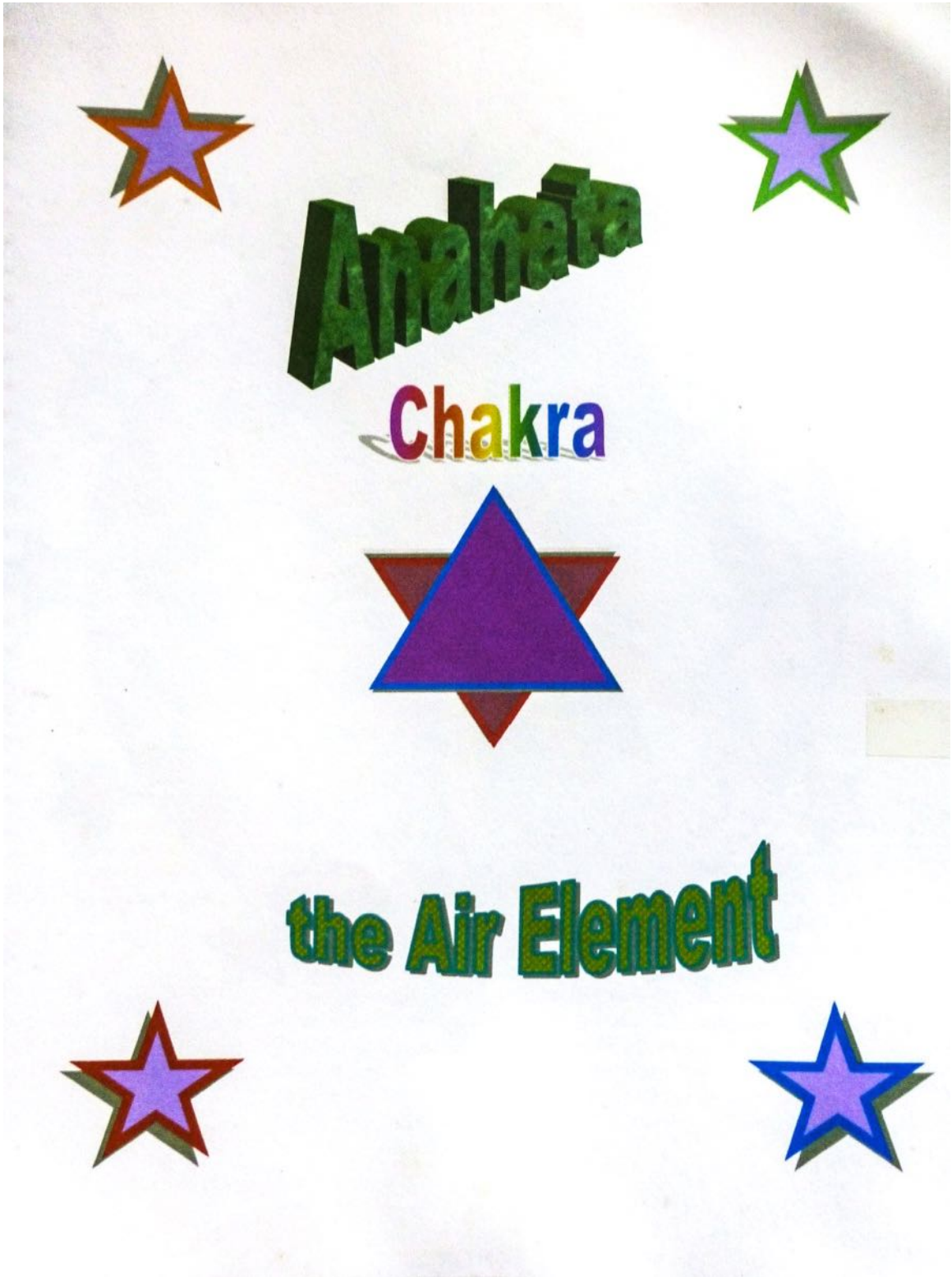
NAME: Manipura
YOGA: Pranayama Yoga
GENDER: Masculine
ELEMENT: Fire
FORCE: Combustion
MEDITATIVE DIRECTION: East

YANTRA SYMBOL: Red triangle, yellow ten-sided mandala
ENERGY COLOR: Yellow
SOUND: Rung
SENSE PERCEPTION: Seeing
ACTION: Excretion
NERVE PLEXI: Solar Plexus
PHYSIOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS:
GLANDS: Pancreas
ORGANS: Stomach, Liver etc.
OTHER: Mitochondria

## PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

### POSITIVE
Self-expressive
Artistic
Confident
Generous
Lively
Physically active

### NEGATIVE
Intolerant
Careless
Argumentative
Extravagant
Pleasure loving
Shameless


Anahata
Chakra
the Air Element

# The Air Element

## CHAPTER 4

### ANAHATA Chakra

*Center of Unstuck Sound*

- Anahata energy is responsible for all expansion and most outward moving forces in the universe.

- At the physiological level the force of Anahata makes us breathe and keeps our heart beating. Its expansive nature creates healing of the body through detoxification and elimination of undesirable substances or residues that have accumulated in us, gently sweeping everything out of the body.

- At the molecular level it is the repulsion of like forces. Just as two north poles of a magnet will push each other apart, or as two rubber balls colliding will bounce off of each other, this force is acting on each molecule of air, pushing them apart to create the expansion of the air element.

- At the universal level this force is expanding the universe, moving every star and galaxy outward and way from each other.

- At the psychological level Anahata energy inspires the urge to reach out and help or heal people. The feeling of compassion and/or love motivates our actions when this energy is balanced and flowing.

## ELEMENT

**Air**: the energy or power of expansion. The force of Anahata is manifested through the air element and can be seen in the way air molecules push each other apart. This is an intangible force, far more subtle then the previous three. It is, however, a force that can be felt in the magnetic world when, for example, we put two north poles of a magnet together and witness the repulsion they exert on each other. Whereas fire has been a perceptibly obvious power ever since primitive times, the power of air is invisible. Consider what energy form makes a balloon expand when you blow air into it. The air molecules are pushing each other apart; like little magnets, they do

not want to be compressed. This gentle power likes to create space between particles of matter, (if there is such a thing as a particle in reality). We might also say that it is an expansive force that moves out form the center; the opposite of gravity. Anahata is the power that makes our lungs expand when they fill up with air, and also the force that moves oxygen throughout the body (out to the extremities) to nourish all our cells. This subtle force moves outward, distributing and expanding the atoms of our being and thus constitutes the essence of the energy that makes us grow. On a microcosmic level, this type of prana it is called Vyana, while on the macrocosmic scale, this energy causes the entire universe to expand, and is referred to as Vayu. It is a powerful force at least equal to that of gravity and is always counterbalancing that inward pull. We have said nothing here of the power of air as wind in our everyday world. Think for a moment about tornadoes and hurricanes and what power is there. The ancient Summerians venerated "Enlil," lord of air and wind, as their top deity.

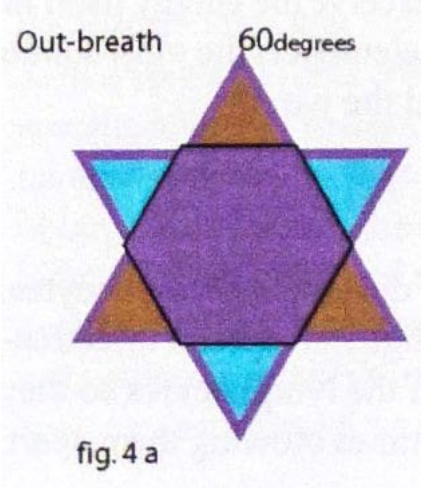


fig. 4 a

At the level of cosmic geometry, this force is represented by a division of the circle into twelve, (seen in many cultures as a 12 petalled lotus or geometric mandala of some type). In the old Christian cathedrals we can often find a twelve sectioned stained glass window, sometimes with the sun shining through if we are lucky. This 12 section division cuts the circle of 360 degrees into segments of 30 degrees each, the angle at which electromagnetic energies cross to manifest the air element. At the center of the created mandala, the energies merge in pairs, because of harmonics, and we end up with 6 angles of 60 degrees. Thus we have a six point star, made up of two interlaced triangles that have merged – the Yantra symbol for Anahata chakra.

When the third eye is opened, these triangles can be seen on the inside, at which time gentle observation might allow the yogi to witness how the triangles move apart with the in-breath and come together again with the out-breath. There is a tranquility that occurs when these triangles unite in Anahata, the fourth chakra. Though it may take training and effort to keep them together, perseverance can lead

to a very calm mind and blissful feelings in the heart. Patanjali mentions in the Yoga Sutras (ch. 2) that by the expiration and retention of breath the *mind can be brought to a standstill*. When one accomplishes that, one can experience inner sounds and inner feelings, because the mental thinking noise is not longer present. Also, aspiring yoginis should note that this is the same goal aimed for in Buddhism. In vipasana meditation for instance, one focuses on the breath without changing anything, and comes to notice the breathing impulse itself, perhaps even the heartbeat. The direct inner perception of either or both of these is a very blissful experience, accessible to those who succeed in stilling the mind.

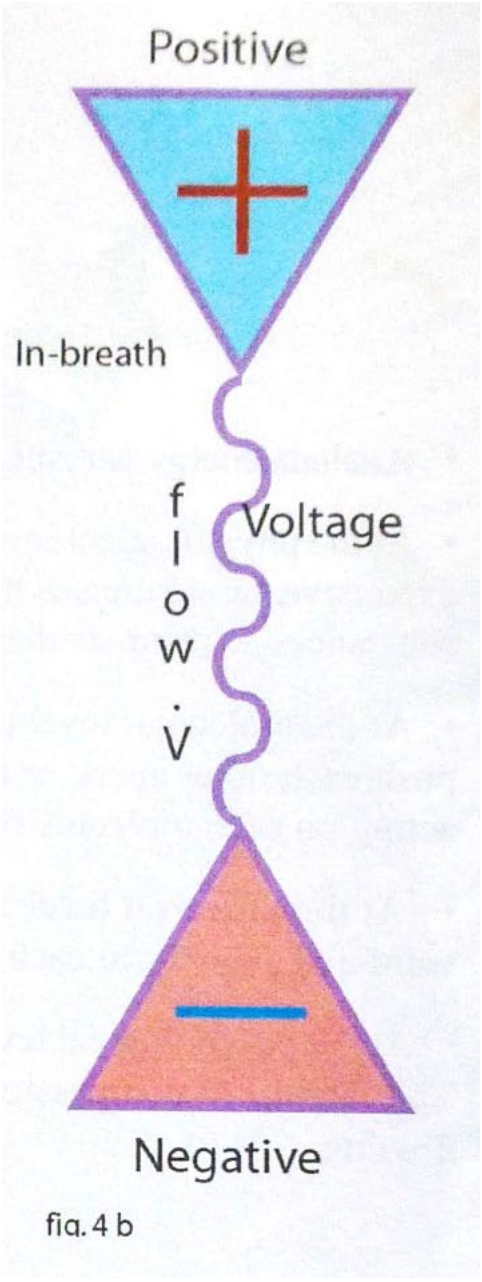


fig. 4 b

Turning our attention inward and calming the mind also opens up the doorway to a sound chamber filled with a symphony of music without musicians. Anahata literally means the center of un-struck sound—sound that simply exists without being made. Normally, sound is created by something that is vibrating; in the case of Anahata nothing physical is vibrating, we learn to perceive the energy itself in the state of vibration. The vibrations are of course very subtle, just as the air element is the most subtle of the first four; we cannot see it or taste it or touch it, (although we can feel the wind).

## ENDOCRINE GLAND

Overlaying the heart is the **thymus**, a twin-lobed gland consisting largely of developing lymphocytes. Lymph carries white blood cells to this organ, where they multiply and change into special infection-fighting cells. The thymus has the ability to code the molecular structure of the lumphocytes so they can plug into the molecules of invading bacteria, and neutralize them, sometimes blowing them apart. Because of this, it is known to have an important function which helps develop immunity against various diseases. Many researchers believe the thymus produces the original lymphocytes formed in the body before birth and continues to produce them after birth. The lymphocytes then travel from the thymus to the lymph nodes and spleen through the circulating lymph. It is also believed that the thymus forms a hormone essential for immunity. This hormone, known as thymic humoral factor (THF, or thymosin), must be present for a short time after the baby is born if he is to be able to develop any immunity. After puberty, the thymus generally begins to shrink in size. Its primary role seems to be development of immunity in the early years of life. It should wake up again when we need to defend ourselves against some new invader.

It seems however, that in many people it has become dysfunctional, at least form the perspective of yogic health. This is due in part ot bad breathing habits (suppressed breath), diets high in chemical additives, and the use of antibiotics, which attempt to replace the function of the thymus. In the practice of yoga, this gland is rejuvenated because of the deep breathing, allowing us to develop new antibodies for whatever comes our way.

White blood cells, called leukocytes, of which there are five types, are outnumbered by red blood cells 600 to 1. The main function of the leukocytes is to provide a deference against “foreign” material (infectious agents, foreign bodies, abnormal proteins). Leukocytes have an intrinsic ability to “know” what is biologically part of us and what does not belong. This *intelligence*, right down at the basic cell level, is originally coded in (or programmed) by the thymus gland, as mentioned previously. Yogic physiology once again points to the vibrating in harmony with that original recording are eliminated. Research done recently on the sounds of living cells has shown that cancer cells sound more like chainsaws than like the harmonious symphony of healthy cells.

In the presence of a foreign material, basophils and some lymphocytes release chemicals that cause inflammation by triggering the release of extra lymph from the blood vessels. The other leukocytes then take the foreign material into their own bodies and digest them. This process of digestion is called phagocytosis; the cells that digest microbes are called phagocytes. The most numerous of the phagocytes are the neutrophils. Rest assured that your defense system is like a military organization, capable of out-maneuvering bacteria, viruses and fungi, and eliminating them from the body. For this part of us to work efficiently, we need to be in good condition physically **and** mentally.

Lymphocytes are the white blood cells that form antibodies against disease. When microbes invade the body, lymphocytes begin to multiply and become transformed plasma cells. Researchers believe that the thymus hormone acts on lymphocytes, causing them to change into plasma cells, which then form antibodies that result in our immunity. Each microbe stimulates only one type of lymphocyte to multiply and form one type of plasma cell. The type of plasma cell formed is one that can make a specific antibody to destroy the particular microbe that has invaded the body. When a parasite or virus invades and begins to colonize, the reserves of white blood cells are released and the manufacturing of large quantities of the appropriate while cells begins; their count goes up dramatically when we are infected. This increased production is often accompanied by fever, partly due to a higher metabolism needed for their manufacture, and partly due to the higher activity of the battle itself. Just as muscle cells go up in temperature when we work them hard, so do our white blood cells, although it has not been proven as medical fact, yet. Another aspect of this higher temperature is that the heat can help destroy the virus, as they have low tolerance for any degree of temperature above the norm.

For this process to function properly, the thymus gland must be alive and well, and requires as surplus of oxygen. Since the world of microbes is changing with the times, it may be fairly important to keep this part of ourselves in good operating order. With the advent of pharmaceutical corporations and the drug era, microbes have become increasingly intelligent and devious. They have in fact figured out how to outmaneuver antibiotics by changing themselves so as to be immune to these drugs. It seems that the corporations cannot keep up with the changing forms of the bacteria. Our own lymphocytes can, but only if they are well supported by a healthy immune system. Here lies the greatest motivation for the practice of yoga at the physical level, since the whole science of yoga rejuvenates this system very quickly.

Red bone marrow continually produces white blood cells, and keeps a reserve ready in case of need. Lymphocytes and monocytes are coded by lymphatic tissue located in the lymph nodes and spleen. Before that time they remain more generic, like a certain type of clay that has yet to be molded into its unique shape.

This coding process is a very important part of the 4$^{th}$ chakra functions. The directives for the entire immune system depend on a strong and balanced energy

flow at this level; including the flow of energy and information between mind and body. There may be a great number of things which can interfere with this healthy flow, while the content of our subconscious, including our belief system about disease, is very influenctial in this department. Other very strong factos are: our mental conditionings, our personal belief systems, our attitudes toward ourselves and others, negative feelings such as guild and/or shame, etc.. Look in the section on mental direction (page 119) for more details on the psychological and emotional aspects.

## OTHER PHYSIOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS

### Lungs

Twelve green leaves are portrayed as symbols of the physiological function of breathing and our connection with the world of plants. The oxygen that we absorb through breathing comes from the green-leaf plants and algae in the oceans etc. We inhale this gas, absorb it, metabolize it and produce carbon dioxide as a result. Then, we exhale the carbon dioxide that the plants need to grow with; they take the carbon out and give us back the oxygen, completing the cycle of give and take. Within the leaves are the veins, which carry out the function of distributing carbon dioxide through the plant. This is followed by the absorption of the carbon and the subsequent release of oxygen. In us, our arteries and veins similarly are the pathways to distribute oxygen and take back carbon dioxide. Here is our intimate connection with the environment at level four, the air element; we share our breath with the green plants, and they with us.

The respiratory system is responsible for supplying oxygen to the blood and expelling waste gases from the body, gases of which carbon dioxide is the primary constituent. The diaphragm, a large, thin muscle below the lungs, and the intercostal and abdominal muscles are responsible for contracting and expanding the thoracic cavity to effect respiration: The ribs serve as a structural support for the whole thoracic arrangement, and pleural membranes help provide lubrication for the respiratory organs so that they are not chafed during respiration. The lungs themselves are two sponge-like sacs, which expand due to the vacuum created when the diaphragm moves down, the ribs out to the sides and the chest rises. These sponge-like sacs contain the alveoli, where oxygen and carbon dioxide diffusion replenishes blood cells. The lungs are divided into the right and left halves, which have three and two lobes respectively. The left middle lobe is missing or else very small, because the heart is in its place. Air enters through the nose (hopefully), goes through the nasal passages in the head (where prana is absorbed through the olfactory bulb), and comes back down to the throat. At the pharynx, the specialized respiratory organs diverge into the airways. The larynx, or viocebox, is located at the head of the trachea, or windpipe. The trachea extends down to the bronchi, which branch off at the tracheal bifurcation to enter the hilus of the left or right lung.

The lungs contain the narrower passageways, or bronchioles, which carry air to the functional unit of the lungs, the alveoli. There, in the thousands of tiny alveolar chambers, (fig. 4 c), oxygen is transferred through the membrane of the alveolar walls to the blood cells in the capillaries within. Likewise, waste gases diffuse out of the blood cells into the air in the alveoli, to be expelled upon exhalation.

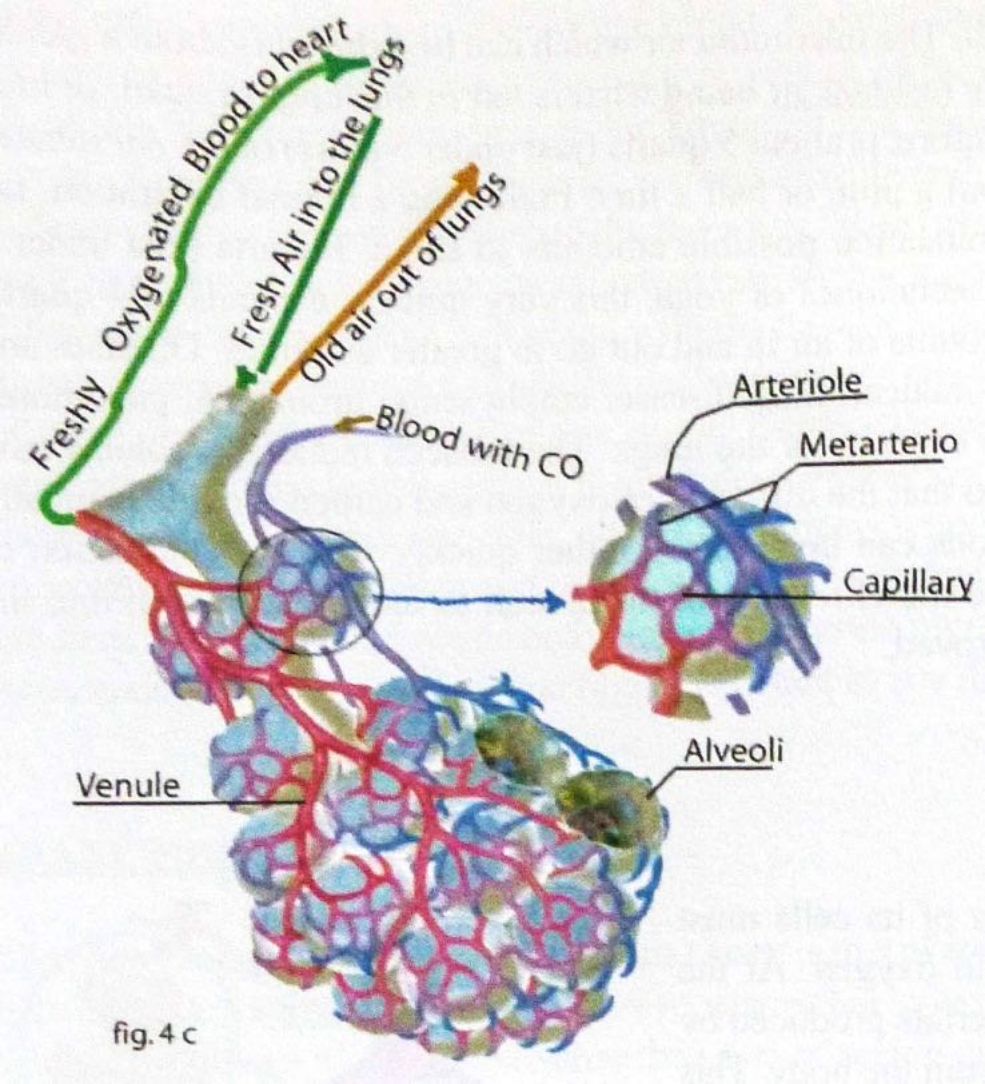


fig. 4 c

The alveoli are the tiny sacs at the ends (or "leaves") on the bronchial tree. Each small bronchiole divides into half a dozen or so alveolar ducts, which are the narrow inlets into alveolar sacs. Each large alveolar sac is like a grape cluster which contains ten or more alveoli. The whole structure is very much like an inverted tree, with the alveoli at the ends of the branches being the leaves. The walls of the alveoli are incredibly thin, as are the walls of the capillaries surrounding them (one cell thick), allowing for the passage of oxygen and carbon dioxide. Because the alveoli are filling up with air from outside the body, which may contain bacteria, they are particularly if there is any excess mucus. For this reason, yoga includes many techniques for clearing the lungs. Bacteria love to make themselves at home in sweet mucus, but if

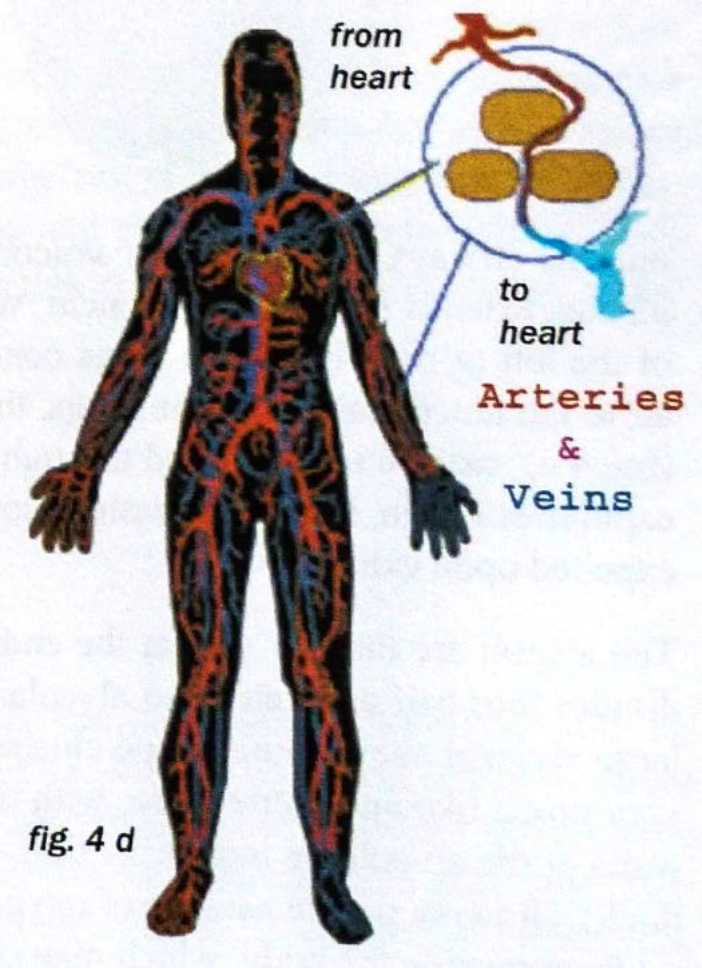
there is little of this in the alveoli they can't proliferate. With vigorous deep breathing and rapid breathing techniques, there is very little surplus of this gooey substance.

Our total lungs capacity is generally around 5 liters. This refers to all the air which can be exhaled from the lungs, plus any residual air left in the lung's chambers. One can never completely exhale all of the air form the lungs, as this would require the lungs, the bronchi and the bronchioles to collapse. Even then, some air remains in the alveoli. The maximum air which can be exhaled is about a gallon, or just under 4 liters, on average, with the residual air being what is left in the lungs (a quart, or liter, on average). The total lung capacity, there fore, is about 5 quarts (just under 5 liters) of air. Air inhaled and exhaled in normal respiration is about a pint, or half a liter. Following a normal expiration, the amount of air taken in by the deepest inhalation possible amounts to about 3 quarts (just under 3 liters). With training in the pranayama techniques of yoga, this very quickly expands to 4 quarts. All of these capacities change, as the amounts of air in and out go to greater extremes. Diseases and disorders of the lungs, such as tobacco-induced lung disease, emphysema, bronchitis, pneumonia and asthma, can drastically diminish the capacity of the lungs. The tobacco induced problems tend to coat the walls of the alveoli with tar so that the diffusion of oxygen and carbon dioxide is greatly inhibited. However, all of these conditions can be reversed rather quickly with the application of Pranayam Yoga, while at the same time the efficiency of the alveoli to move the oxygen into the blood is increased and circulation is improved.

## Heart and Circulatory System

In order for the body to stay alive, each of its cells must receive a continuous supply of food and oxygen. At the same time, carbon dioxide and other materials produced by the cells must be picked up for removal form the body. This process is continually maintained by the body's circulatory system. The primary circulatory system consists of the heart and blood vessels, which together maintain a continuous flow of blood through the body, delivering oxygen and nutrients to and removing carbon dioxide and waste products from peripheral tissues. The heart pumps oxygen-rich blood from the lungs to all parts of the body through a network of arteries and smaller branches called arterioles. The blood returns via similar small blood vessels, now called venules, which lead to the larger veins, and back to the heart. At this point the oxygen leaves the blood through the very thin walls of these tiny blood vessels, goes through the tissue fluid and into the cells. At the same time, carbon dioxide that has been produced during cell metabolism leaves the cells and finds its way back to the blood. Arterioles and venules are linked to even smaller vessels called metarterioles. Tiny blood vessels, now called capillaries, a single cell thick, branch off from the metarterioles and then rejoins them. The network of tiny capillaries is where the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide between blood and body cells takes place. Here again we find a tree-like structure, going form the large

arteries and veins at the heart down to the tiniest capillaries both in the lungs and throughout the cells of the body, (see diagram 4d). The average adult has over 60,000 miles of blood vessels in the body.




Red blood cells, called erythrocytes, carry 99% of the oxygen the body needs. Although plasma circulates throughout the body, it can only carry about 1% of the oxygen that the body needs. Red blood cells constitute about 45% of the blood. Their main function is to carry oxygen to tissues and remove carbon dioxide waste, a process that goes on 24 hours a day. In the yogic view of physiology, all of this is brought about through the attraction and repulsion forces working in turn through the forces of the first and fourth chakras. Carbon dioxide and oxygen have different rates of vibration, different energy properties which make them react with hemoglobin in unique ways. The hemoglobin itself has the ability to change its vibration rate so that it goes from attraction to repulsion as needed, following a certain rhythm and going with the flow of circulation. Somehow, when in the area of the fourth chakra, the hemoglobin adjusts its frequency to repel the carbon dioxide, turning in to the force of repulsion – a characteristic of this energy center. These energy "forces" are more closely linked with our energy body (Pranamaya Kosha). As we work with prana absorption and distribution, all of these forces with which

our cells, glands and organs work are significantly enhanced. As the forces become stronger, the glands and organs are also strengthened and their functions subsequently more efficient. In this way the whole body begins to operate more effectively and our health, as a wholistic phenomenon, becomes strong and highly resistant to any disease.

## JNANENDRIYA

The physiological sense connected to this center is that of **touch and feeling**. The sense organ involved here is the skin and all the various nerve receptors that have to do with perception of feeling throughout the body. This is a much bigger sense than that of seeing or tasting or smelling. It is not localized for one thing, and covers a broad spectrum of feelings that go from the most direct touch to the subtlest emotion. Though outer feelings are usually more noticeable, this may change dramatically when there is pain due to some kind of internal disturbance, like a toothache or digestive disturbance. Once we go inward, this sense of feeling can be developed and refined in its sensitivity until we perceive some of the subtlest processes of body functions. Generally, however we are extroverted beings and tend to feel things coming from the outside more easily than those within. (Seeing or hearing similarly have that ability to pull us outwards because those sensations are obvious, bright and loud.)

The roots of this chakra are branching out into space. It is as if the nervous system within our body becomes an antenna, fine-tuned for receiving the incoming energy of the stars. These energy flows come into the center of the chakra allowing us to link to the universe at the heart level. One of the techniques used in yoga is to simply feel the universal energy flowing in through your nervous system. As you develop the inner sensitivity to actually notice this flow by paying attention to all feelings from the most obvious to the subtlest, you will come to a deep level of understanding life through intuition (See Guru Haridya Manas).

## KARMENDRIYA

Because the sense involved here is feeling, we are moved to produce feeling through movement and appropriate actions. The organs of action are the genitals. Sex drive motivates us in that we long for the fulfilling feelings that comes through making love; orgasm is perhaps the most satisfying feeling we know. This is part of the great Force of life renewal. It is the creativity of life itself longing to continue along its blissful path. We could say that the desire to feel comes from this center, though we need to understand that desire arises at this level because we are not taking time to feel the inner experiences we have access to. The more we become aware of our

own feelings, the less we search for fulfilling feelings elsewhere. We have access to an overwhelming amount of blissful feeling when we go deep into Anahata; this is where meditation leads us. (See mental direction and Karma yoga).

## CHARACTERISTICS

The fourth chakra is our feeling center. Here we are put in touch with all of our feelings, from the most physical through the emotional to the most subtle and intuitive. It is also our healing center and as such tends to put us in touch with our compassion and a desire to help others.

When the energy is strong and balanced:

1. Healthy immune system, radiant glow, drawn towards the healing arts.
2. Very compassionate and empathetic towards all beings, tendency to emanate universal love.
3. Friendly and loving towards others; joyful expression; non0judgmental and accepting of all people.
4. Sense of self-love and confidence.
5. Takes pleasure in people and life; enjoys helping others.
6. Very intuitive and sensitive to other people's feelings and emotional states.
7. Practical, organized and analytical towards projects/goals; perseveres in life.
8. Reliable and dependable.

When the energy is too strong or the chakra too open:

1. May be smothering with affection for others, and may become overly dependent and needy in relationships.
2. Might be overly sensitive and become distrustful due to feeling too much subconscious influence.
3. May become antagonistic, demanding or bossy, with sarcastic tones.
4. Might become deceitful or manipulative in words and actions.
5. Perhaps burdened with subconscious feelings of guild or deep inner sadness; tangled in karmic subconscious negativity.
6. Tendency to go too far inward, getting lost in mental/emotional clouds.

Depleted or blocked fourth chakra:

1. Low immune system, poor health due to shallow breathing; may be asthmatic.
2. Sense of numbness; out of touch with physical and emotional feelings.
3. Lack of self-love, compassion and forgiveness.
4. No empathy or sympathy for others, even blaming others for problems.
5. Withdrawn when it comes to intimate relationships.

6. May become needy and co-dependent and have weak boundaries in relationships.
7. Can easily become fussy, suspicious, deceptive; self-pitying.
8. Discontented, negative outlook leading to depression.

## MENTAL DIRECTIONS

The direction is **west**. With the setting sun the mind goes into the darkness of the subconscious, that place where dwell our memories, innermost thoughts and feelings, and the realities of ourselves. When we get to know all that is within our own mind, we can go beyond it into the collective unconscious and the realm of **in**-tuition. However, the "stuff" that accumulates in the subconscious mind during only one lifetime can quickly build a wall through which we can see nothing at all. The totality of our experiences is stored here, from our time in the womb until the present. If we have not understood these experiences in the light of the education of our soul, then the misunderstood lessons will remain there as unresolved problems. These need to be cleared and comprehended before we can go into the realm of the archetypes where lie the visions and images of all possibilities, the cosmic patterns to which we can mold ourselves. Before we can access these higher visions, we must also penetrate the full truth of our ego-identity. With introspection we must get to know the many aspects of ourselves – our conflicts, worries, hopes and fears; our

subconscious motivations and propelling desires. Within our subconscious lies our whole karmic record – the memory of everything we have done, both bad and good, as well as all our intentions, there is no escape from this and leaving it behind. This part of our being follows us everywhere, even from body to body, until we have seen and understood the whole picture.

The yogic journey into the unconscious is physiological as well, beginning with taking control of the breath, which is a subconscious function in all beings. Once we step in and take control of this first subconscious process we open the door into the unconscious. We can then process, through feeling, into the realm of the body, exploring and discovering many of the processes of life. We learn to perceive the breath, heartbeat, pulse, blood flow to various parts of the body, going deeper into the functions of glands and organs, even down to the perception of cellular metabolism. This expansion of awareness down into the body creates a parallel expansion through areas of the mind, where many things are stored away or simply unknown. In the modern world of bodywork and therapy it is becoming recognized that memories are indeed contained within the different regions of our body. Yoga is the oldest known system that delves deeply into the body, going all the way down to the cellular level.

Until the mind is well known in all its directions, the intuition will rarely seem clear enough o be accepted with confidence, because doubts or conflicting information will bubble up form some dark corner of the underworld we call the subconscious. By far the greatest shield that stands in front of this in-tuition is everything we know about ourselves that is not in harmony with what we want in our life, or anything we are not being honest about with ourselves or with others. Another barrier to this intuitive nature is the skepticism and cynicism that is predominant in our culture.

Time itself is one of the aspects of the fourth chakra, since the beat of the heart is our personal measure of time; when the beat comes to a standstill, time comes to an end in our experience, as we enter a realm beyond the conventional passage of time. In that realm everything seems to be eternally in existence. Looking out at the stars all around us in the universe, we can see ourselves sitting at the center of this huge sphere of energy which seems to be revolving around us; it is like being at the center of the cosmic clock. From this point of view we can look around and see the whole circle of time revolving. But, when we are not seeing the whole, looking in only one direction, we find ourselves going around in that great circle, and, like the hands of the clock, we move along minute by minute in the passing experiences of life in the normal world.

The energy manifestation is divided into 12: the 12 hours on the clock, the 12 signs of the zodiac, and the 12 archetypal patterns into which humans fall. The 12 apostles and the 12 tribes of Israel reflect these personality types manifested through the energies of time, as do the 12 animals of the Chinese calendar. Most, if not all, ancient civilizations knew about the universal energies that mold our

personalities. As a student of yoga it is good to develop some understanding of these energetic connections we have with the universe.

## YAMA/NIYAMA

**YAMA: Brahmacharya** (sexual restraint)

One myst restrain sexual activities in the physical and mental planes. It isn't necessary to be celibate, but it is the other extreme that must be avoided. Sexual energy can be a very important source of power, or else it can be one of the most powerful distractions. As always the distraction begins in your mind and eventually leads you to physical activity. If you allow your mind, via sensual awareness, to absorb all the various sexually stimulating advertisements, pictures, people and things, your ego will automatically start to conjure up sexual fantasies in regards to all he suitable people you meet, or else you will simply imagine all these attractive mates. Eventually you may be forced into some kind of sexual satisfaction. Sex drive is an expression of the creative life force. It is quite strong, and if not consummated in some way it can become devious or perverted and push a person to sexually abuse another, as has been known to happen in cases of involuntary or forced celibacy. Sexual frustration can be a powerful creative force, creating fantasies that arouse desire and alter our hormones into sexually active mode. This is not healthy, although it may keep some adrenalin flowing to an excitement level; it is not healthy without resolution in sexual orgasm. If you have a mate, an active sex life is fine, but if not it all becomes a frustrating waste of energy.

Dissipation of energy via physical sex should not be overdone either, since the secretions of the sex glands are needed for the development of mental and psychic powers, even the youthfulness and efficiency of your body are dependent upon the conservation of these reproductive essences. Sexual power can be active, but sublimated and under the control of the will. If you do not look at sexually stimulating things, your ego will not have the fuel it needs to fantasize beyond your control, then it will be much easier to keep your mind free of such imaginings. This allows you to establish bonds of deeper communication and understanding with others instead of looking at them with sexual intent. Purity of thought is the only way to control the lower mind of desires; otherwise what power you develop will go to the ego and its desires for sensual gratification, which will eventually wear you out of physical existence.

The sexual drive is predominant in the male, and can be very extroverted and sometimes loud. Yet there is also a social drive for affection and for a partner that is predominantly female. This leads women to be more people oriented and social. Though more subtle, this longing to be with someone is also a distraction from getting to know oneself. As we devolve our sensitivity in the realm of feeling, we might find it rewarding to notice the breath flowing in and out; or we might notice that the heartbeat itself feels very orgasmic. Be aware, though, that sexual

distractions (or attractions) will often jump in your way when you attempt to go to these inner depths.

**NIYAMA: Santosha** (serenity)

Santosha means satisfaction and mental serenity, not being frustrated by what has happened to you and not being driven by desire – being happy and grateful for what you have. It is helpful to maintain a state of mental serenity even if in a whirlwind of activity. In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna advises Arjuna on the battlefield to remain calm and centered while the forces of the universe flow through him and do the work. This implies that you should not get over-excited about anything; however, it obviously doesn't mean that you should lead the boring life of a stone. Rather, it is better to stay cool and calm about what is happening than to get emotionally involved in the rush of events. This leads to greater awareness of the situation at hand due to a more objective outlook, taking the time to see the other persons perspective. But where action is required, obviously one must act. The rule is simple: emotional excitement should not govern your actions. Feel your emotions, but before you react to them, take an objective look and decide what would be the right action to take. In the meantime, keep your emotional feelings inside you; concentrate on feeling them without allowing them to make your head spin in confusion. Study your feelings before you let them control you; express their energy through breathing, movement, chanting and other positive ways that lead to calmer, happier states. Even in the most intense emotional experience, your mind should be calm as though settled in the eye of a hurricane. Remain at the center of yourself, where the breathing impulse and heartbeat are felt. Be aware of the here and now. Desires are the demons we must constantly be on guard against. They bring with them many emotions and promises of happiness. Only after you have followed these impulses many times do you begin to realize that the feelings of satisfaction and fulfillment they bring are short-lived, and you must go out looking for them again. Eventually you will see that it is better to be happy with what you have – your Self!

## KARMA YOGA

Karma is essentially a universal law of balance. Just as what goes up must come down, so also what is put out by us comes back to us. From the point of view of the Science of Yoga this is simply a logical result of the energy world; when you throw something upwards it takes a certain force, or energy, to make it go up, then an equal amount of gravity, another force, brings it back down. Being always true of physical objects, the same truth applies to the rest of the energy world, including the mental, which of course runs on energy. It was once stated by a very wise man that we should do unto others as we would have them do unto us; he saw clearly and understood that what we do to others eventually comes back to us.

This is states as the law of Karma. In yoga it is referred to as cause and effect, and is applied to everything we do in life, not just in our social life but also in relation to ourselves. For instance, deep-breathing creates a massaging effect on our internal organs, stimulating better circulation while at the same time enriching the circulating blood with oxygen. This causes certain metabolic changes which create a rejuvenating effect upon the cells; cause and effect. Creating good karma in such as way is the active role of karma yoga. We continue in this way, examining all areas of our lives – how we move, breathe, eat, think and behave socially.

Karma yoga then becomes the useful application of our understanding of cause and effect. We create healthy bodies by treating our physical selves appropriately. We create a good social life by good behavior with others. We create a better spiritual society by applying our spiritual values to the society in which we live. The Yama & Niyama are the guidelines for setting our behavior along an evolutionary path.

Since we have not always been living in perfect harmony with all of those ideals, there is often a backlog of effects coming from our past behavior. Perhaps we can see this in the present ill health in our bodies, or in strange social events in which we are entangled, but whichever way we see it, it is an effect that we have previously caused. It may take a little time to catch up on these circumstances we have caused, but one of the best ways to turn the tables around and bring "bad karma" to an end is through the positive and dynamic action of karma yoga – helping yourself and others along the spiritual path. This photo of Quan Yin represents a divine being who helps to nurture others; we affiliate ourselves with that divine nurturing essence which is the nature of the fourth chakra.

This type of yoga is often depicted as service to others, with the good reason that life can become a very beautiful experience when we spend out time helping others. We inevitably feel good when people are thanking us with the utmost sincerity. We can

feel their appreciation; it creates a nice feeling within our own hearts, thereby making it easier to be present in the heart chakra where all our feelings dwell. Remember that his is also the realm of the subconscious where our memories lie dormant like books on a library shelf. When we act with benevolence in helping others on their spiritual path, the memories created contain good feelings that we can easily live with. We can accept these, and without this clear acceptance of ourselves, it can be much more difficult to go to this inner realm and perceive the bliss of the vibrating field we know as love. If we have been spreading distrust and fear amongst our relations then those feelings will add up to build a wall of paranoia blocking the way in to those blissful feelings. Consequently karma yoga focuses on the creation of positive feelings through compassionate actions, each of which contribute to a foundation we can then stand on while exploring the deepest inner realms.

## Guru Haridya Manas

(The Inner Teacher)

Guru Haridya Manas is a secondary chakra within the realm of Anahata. It does not have an element of its own, but in the frequencies of the energy fields it lies between the vibrations of the fourth and fifth vortexes, combining the intuitive feeling of the

former and the cosmic knowledge of the latter. Feeling and intuition are primary attributes of this Harid Chakra, as well as inner sounds mentioned earlier. From here the intuitive voice speaks through the Anahata but cannot usually be heard due to the louder voice of the verbal thought process, not to mention the volume of sensations and sounds coming from the outside. Insights may sneak through in the beginning of this unfolding, and if we pay attention to these, and repeatedly turn inward for our source of information, the insights clarify into direct perception of reality in any given situation.

According to Dr. Swami Gitananda, physiologically this energy vortex is connected to the nerve endings in the lining of the pericardium, which contain the original impulses for the heartbeat. The pulsation is at 55 per second and begins around 27 days after conception, stimulating the heart to begin beating at about 92 days. These impulses are as gently and subtle as intuition itself, but they can be felt and contribute to the bliss of this chakra.

In the symbolism used for this center we find the serpent once again, the one that was sleeping in the first chakra. This time the serpent is in the shape of a full circle with its tail in tis mouth, representing a self-perpetuating energy, dependent on itself, consuming itself. This symbol also tells us the power of Kundalini is needed to enter this center. The perfect circle indicates it is under the control of the mind element, since the mind is symbolized as a circle. The voice that comes through this circular opening is an integral part of the intuitive mind. The teacher and the student are within one being, one feeding the other at the mental level.

When this center opens, it unfolds two outer petals first, which give the appearance of an eye; these are mauve in color, very close to the color of the two petals of the sixth chakra, telling us of the relationship between them. Note that mauve and purple are both made of two colors which unite to make one new color, indicating the type of blended union that opens this door. Here is the mind within the heart; the compassionate mind that understands with feeling. At this level, the logical and rational aspects are secondary and not always relevant.

On these petals are inscribed the sounds *HANG SAH*, stimulating ego consciousness and cosmic consciousness respectively. It is said to be the flow between these tow that supports life in this world. In The Serpent Power, John Woodroffe writes: ***"On the physical plane Prana manifests in the animal body as breath through inspiration (SA), or Shakti, and expiration (HA), or Shiva. Breathing is itself a mantra, known as the Mantra which is not recited (Ajapa-mantra), for it is said without volition. Also, the breath is generally taken without volition. The divine current is the motion of HA and SA."*** From the subtle mantra that is constantly flowing vibrantly through the universe, the technique of Hang Sah was intuitively developed to bring the practicing yogis in to this place.

Dwelling in this center puts one in touch with the source of the flow, so that one becomes conscious of all that is going on. Inside the two petals there is another

eight-petalled lotus with eight sounds on them: the sounds formula for the guru within. And within is a yogi sitting on an island under a tree. The yogi is the teacher within (this yogi is neither male nor female, any more than knowledge is masculine or feminine); the tree is the tree of life, its trunk being the spinal cord with its roots going out into the body. The foliage represents the brain, divided into two main hemispheres, each divided into two – four parts indicating four main ranches of knowledge that need to be understood: consciousness, mind, energy and matter. The inner truth of all these lies in the realization that awareness permeates all of them: all is one. When these two hemispheres work together we can have a very clear picture of everything in life. Though the inner intuitive side that comes through this center is based not on knowledge that is rational, nor on what is obvious to the senses, it can be verified by the rational. This knowing comes through feeling that can easily defy the intellect at times, yet if the intellect is patient, it can understood and explain what has been sensed with the intuitive side, (see chapter 6).

The tree on the center of the island is called the Kalpa Vriksha tree in Sanskrit. It is the "wish-fulfilling tree" of cosmic science. This tree contains the wisdom of the ages, the knowledge of mind over matter, and the deepest rewards on the spiritual quest. Here it is known that the heart beating in you is but a minor beat of the universe itself and both are breathing due to the flows of universal energy. Understanding how this energy manifests in the material world gives us a greater role in the creative process, and can in fact lead to the granting of wishes. The tree's energy is in a cosmic pattern that directs how life unfolds on earth; look at all the plants covering the surface of the planet, with roots in the earth and foliage reaching up to the sky. The human nervous system follows that same pattern with roots down in the body and foliage up in the head.

The island itself is made of jewels, symbolizing that the earth is beauty and wealth. Having attained the wisdom of this chakra gives one the wealth of the world in many ways: one of those ways may be prosperity as we normally see it. Another measure of prosperity is the state of consciousness achieved, which brings one to see beauty in every pebble, as if on a psychedelic journey, so that one experiences life as a luminous dream. Blissful consciousness is the private dwelling place of this yogi, and from this place he/she teachers wisdom through love and compassion. The fact that it is an island makes it a refuge from the turmoil of normal life on planet earth, far removed from the business of the mainland.

The yogi's teachings come directly from the universal reality; as well, he/she has an intuitive perception of those taught, and how they are interpreting those teachings. The clarity of vision and confidence allows him/her to teach with an authority that goes beyond scripture, tradition, or the laws of the land. The truth is made clear and simple and it is *obvious*. Yoga is taught from its original source, within, and not from any particular school or tradition. In this chakra dwells the wisdom of the divine, giving a knowledge that is certain. This is why the goal of yoga leads to the inner realm of the guru, and one comes to see the light within, and not follow someone

else's light; however bright that might look, and helpful as that might be at times, it can never be as colorful nor as fitting as one's own vision. Just as beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and just as the "kingdom of heaven is within", so also this inner guru is our ultimate teacher.

## *Pancha Sahita Pranayama*

The word pancha means five, and sahita means air in motion. This is a five-part mathematical breath designed to rejuvenate the physical glands of the body through stimulation of the chakra energies, the Panch Prana Vayus. (These have to do with the five forces of the lower chakras). Panch Sahita is done over a 45-day period, allowing 9 days for each section of the breath. With each of these sections, focus can be held on the appropriate chakra while a minimum of 9 rounds of breath is done (27 rounds would be better the first time the technique is done, and the minimum for anyone actually having physical problems in any one area).

These sections should be done in a sequence as they create a certain energy flow together. For instance, when doing section 3 for the digestive organs (Manipura chakra), three rounds of each of the first two sections need to be done first, then 9 to 27 rounds of the third. Best done in the early morning hours as an empowering preparation for the day, or else as an evening routine to review the events of the day from all the different angles.

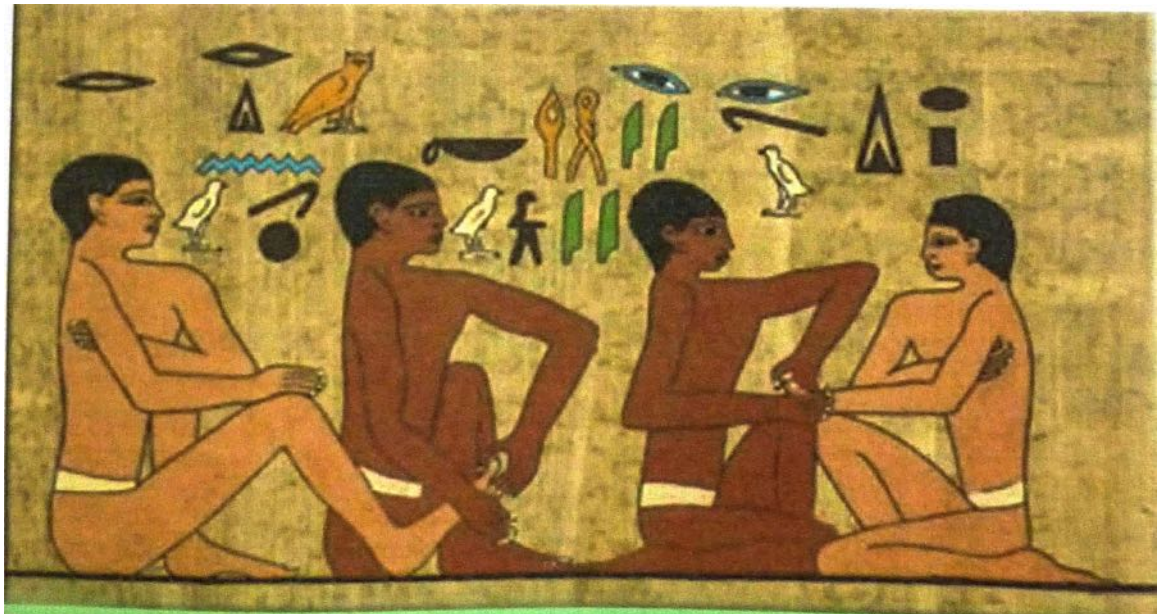
| **CHAKRA** | **ORGANS** | **PRANA TYPE** | **IN** | **HELD** | **OUT** | **HELD** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Muladhara<br>Anahata | Lungs | Prana reflex | 4 | 16 | 8 | 4 |
| Swadhistana | Liver | Samanu Vayu | 4 | 4 | 16 | 8 |
| Manipura | Digestive | Udana Vayu | 8 | 4 | 4 | 16 |
| Vishuddha | Elimination | Apana | 16 | 8 | 4 | 4 |
| Anahata | Heart | Vyana | 4 | 16 | 8 | - |

BENEFTIS:

- Rejuvenates the endocrine glands and connected organs, one by one.
- Stimulates energy flows through each chakra, unblocking nervous system.
- Unfolds a psychological review of the quadrants of the mind.

After the whole sequence of this technique has been performed once, it can then take other forms to become part of a daily routine. This is a more advanced method that incorporates the four directions with the psychological clearing of each of the associated chakras. In fact, while doing the sequence for those 45 days, it is a good time to apply the introspective techniques of Swadhiyaya. This leads to a discovery of the aspects of mind connected to each energy center and eventually to an empowerment of each.

The first breath is done facing **west** and looking into oneself.
The second is done facing **south**, looking into one's relations with others.
The third is facing **east**, looking at the direction one is going in life.
Next is facing **north**, looking into realities of the intellect and one's belief system.
The last one returns to the **west**, to settle the mind and perhaps enter the intuitive realm.



In this wall painting from Ancient Egypt the two darker skinned men (Nubians), are working with energy movement through the nervous system via hands and feet as in reflexology.

# Yoga Chiketsa (Spinal Therapy)

## Spinal Walk

1. Have the subject relax, face down, arms at the sides and head resting on the chin.
2. Stand balanced on your left foot on her/his left, so that your right foot can move up and down the spine from the neck to the coccyx.
3. Place your right foot on the 12th thoracic, so the arch of the foot is over the spine, heel on one side and ball on the other.
4. Exert pressure on the ball of the foot, then on the heel, rocking from side to side while breathing rhythmically. Work up (or rock up) to the next vertebra and do the same thing, and continue zigzagging up to the neck area with your foot. Then work back down to the coccyx area, then back to the starting point. Take a deep breath, retaining while applying added pressure to the back; let go of the breath and lift the foot off.
5. Have the patient relax for 5 minutes, or proceed to the next move.

## Thumb Walk

1. Have the patient relax, face prone as above.
2. Stand over the patient with one foot on each side and place your thumbs into the notches between the vertebrae on each side of the spine, beginning at the base of the neck.
3. Both you and the patient take a deep breath and exhale as you put pressure on the spine.
4. Next inhalation: move your hands down to the next vertebra and repeat the pressure with the exhalation.
5. Continue all the way down to the sacrum and finish in the little indentations therein.

## Cervical Stretch

1. Have the patient relax on his/her back.
2. From a position kneeling above the head, grasp the neck with both hands, and, rolling the head from side to side, manipulate from the 7th cervical up to the 2nd while pulling away from the body. With your fingers, life and lower the head to manipulate the 1st cervical.
3. Grasp under the skull with both hands, taking advantage of the skull "lip," and firmly and gently stretch the neck by pulling until the body moves.

4. Place the first and second fingers of the right hands on a point just under the eyebrows on either side of the nose to "set" the stretch. Hold for 20 seconds while breathing deeply. After 2 minutes, repeat from 3, and let patient relax 5 minutes.

**Head Rolls**

Part 1

1. Have the patient lie supine, with head projecting over the edge of a table so as to leave free play for the neck and head.
2. Raise the head directly up and gently push it into the upper chest area using both hands behind the head; repeat.
3. Raise the head level with the body and turn it facing left, with your left hand supporting the head and your forearm against the forehead. Your right hand is flat on the face keeping it level.
4. Move the head over to the shoulder until it touches, then back to touch the other shoulder with the back of the head.
5. Repeat from 3 going the opposite way with opposite hands.
6. Repeat 2, head lifting up to chest, and have the patient rest a couple of minutes.

## Part 2

1. Do the first two steps as above (head up to chest again).
2. Hold the head level with the body and turn to the left, supporting with the left hand and fingers towards face.
3. Place the palm of your hand on the lowest vertebra of the neck and pressure it, at the same time flipping (and turning up) the head with your left hand.
4. Move up through the neck vertebrae until they are all done.
5. Repeat on the opposite side.
6. Finish as in the first part.

**Stretches**

Torso (Lower Thoracic-Lumbar) Stretch

1. Have patient relax on his/her back.
2. Kneel or straddle the patient so as to be able to place the fingers on either side of the spinal processes of the $8^{th}$ thoracic (dorsal) vertebra.
3. Lift gently with the fingers and tug firmly and gently towards the feet.
4. Holding the tension created, repeat 3 in the $10^{th}$ and $12^{th}$ thoracic (dorsal) area and then the $2^{nd}$ and $4^{th}$ lumbar area.
5. Leave patient to relax.

Lumbar-Leg Stretch

1. Have patient relax on his/her back.
2. Straddling or kneeling over the patient, tug down on the 4th and 5th lumbar processes.
3. Grasp the back of the pelvic area and tug downward, flattening the pelvis if necessary.
4. Maintaining the tension, slide down to the knees, grasp and tug down till the body moves.
5. Slide down to the ankles and pull till the body moves.
6. Grasp both feet in your right hand near the big toe and hold for 20 seconds while breathing deeply.
7. After 2 minutes repeat from 5, and let patient rest 5 minutes.

Full Spinal Stretch

Dp the tprsp, lumbar-leg, and cervical stretches in that order, without waiting to do the re-stretching of the leg and cervical stretches. Repeat as required.

# Active Practice

## Anahata Chakra Routine

1. Cleansing breath followed by A-U-M. Focus on feeling the vibration as much as hearing it.

2. Let's work on the mid-section of the breath. Check it with your hands on your rib-cage, moving out like an accordion with the inhalation and compressing in with exhalation.

3. ***Purna usthra asana***, the extended camel, is done coming up from the heels, with head, shoulders and hands relaxed back. The hands are brought to hold the heels, and with the torso arched up vigorous breathing is done, in through the nose and out through the mouth. #23

4. ***Dharmikasana***, the devotional pose, is done by bending forward from a kneeling position until your head touches the floor in front of your knees,

forehead is touching knees, breath very shallow. Hands touch the feet, and you relax into it while you imagine your favorite color at that point of your head which touches the floor. #18

5. ***Poorna vajrasana***, full thunderbolt, is done by simply sitting between the heels instead of on them work you way down into the position by moving side to side. #3

6. ***Paryankasana***, the healing pose, is done from the above posture by going back and down until you come to rest your back flat on the floor. On your way down, lift your pelvis and tilt it back so as to minimize the curvature in the lower back area. Hands are brought up to *namaskar*, with the two thumb-nails touching the thymus area. Breathe deeply and feel the energy flowing into your with the in-breath and circulating through your arms and into the thymus with the out-breath. Imagine a green glowing energy there; feel it. #17

7. Try the tigress with the two variations, exhaling to each side and then holding the breath. #34

8. ***Sasangasana*** is upper back stretch done from the hero pose by clasping hands behind the head, bringing your elbows together and going forward down to the floor. When your elbows touch the floor, walk in with them, pulling your head in until the top of your head touches the floor. Feel the stretch in your upper back, neck and shoulders Change leg positions and do again. #40

9. ***Vilomasana***, the bridge, is done from lying on the back; bring your feet up behind your buttocks with knees up in the air. Hands are brought up over and tucked under the shoulders; elbows are up in the air. Now pick yourself up and drop your head down to the floor, the rest on your head. The whole torso is up in the air, breathing is deep and vigorous. If you are comfortable with this one, you can life up into *chakrasana*. #44

10. ***Paschimotanasana***, the forward bend, is done by bending forward from a position sitting flat on your buttocks with legs out front. One variation is done with the back curled and the head brought to the knees. Try this one with some side movements to loosen up; now do it with legs apart so that you can bring your head down to touch the floor between your knees and the non each side. Some breathing is done going side to side, but otherwise it is deepl breathe coming up and exhale going down. Finish by doing the straight-back version, where your face comes down to your shins. #72

11. ***Ardha matsyendrasana***, the spinal twist, is done by crossing one leg over the other knee, then the opposite arm is crossed over the knee that is up and the hand reaches for the ankle/foot in a way that used the arm as a lever to

pry the shoulder forward. The other arm goes around behind your back and the breath is let out. Breathing is quite shallow in this pose, but still, with each exhalation you can twist a little further. #85

12. ***Gomukasana***, the cow-faced posture, is done by sitting on one heel; cross the other foot over the leg, bringing that foot beside the opposite buttocks. One hands is brought over the head and down the back, so that the elbow is pointing to the sky. The other hands is brought up the back until the fingers can latch on to those of the first hand. Head turns to look up past the elbow. This loosens the arm sockets and stretches muscles in the shoulder, as well as opening up the rib cage. The posture should be done on both sides. Breathing deeply while holding this position will pull and stretch the arms and shoulders considerably. Very good for liberating energy from tight muscles in the area of the fourth and fifth chakras. #120

13. ***Bhujangasana***, the cobra. Pay specific attention to lifting the head, shoulders, chest and then torso – the object is not to over-bend the lower back but rather to attain flexibility and movement through the entire spine. Try this inhaling up and exhaling with the mid-section as you turn and twist your back to each side; your upper back and shoulders do the turning and twisting, not just you head, as you turn around to look at your feet. #47

14. ***Bhujangini mudra***, the serpent gesture, is similar to the above, except that you hiss out the breath on the way up. Make the sound loud and go up as high as possible, till you are looking up at the sky or ceiling. #48

15. ***Kukatasana*** takes off from the cobra by lifting the legs off the floor at the same time as the torso. Try lifting with the inhalation and then lifting with the exhalation; see if you can feel what the difference is. #49

16. ***Nava kriya***, the rowboat, is done by placing the hands under the thighs in the boat posture and rocking back down to the floor on the exhalation; with the inhalation come back up to a balanced pose on the tailbone. Requires delicate sense of motion and balance. #63

17. ***Halasana***, the plow, is done by continuing from the double leg lift, to bring the legs right over the head until the toes touch the floor beyond the head. Breathing is very shallow while there. As a variation you can add motion from side to side with the feet. #127

18. ***Shavasana***, the corpse posture, is done with ***Savitri pranayama*** for 10 minutes minimum, then let go of the breath and focus on feeling the light breathing impulses that comes back automatically. Feel the comfort there, as life takes care of you.

In the ancient temples of Bayon Wat in Cambodia, awareness of the four directions was considered to be of prime importance for enlightenment. They took the time to build 54 towers, each one having four heads facing each of the four directions. (216 heads is better than 1!) It was and still is a matter of knowing the four quadrants of the human mind, of knowing oneself.

# SYNOPSIS of ANAHATA CHAKRA

**ELEMENT**: Air **YOGA**: Karma Yoga

**GENDER**: Feminine **NAME**: Anahata

**POWER**: Repulsion

**MEDITATIVE DIRECTION**: West

**YANTRA SYMBOL**: Two violet interlaced triangles circled by a 12-sided mandala.

**ENERGY COLOR**: Green

**SOUND**: Yung (like young)

**SENSE PERCEPTION**: Feeling

**ACTION**: Genitals

**NERVE PLEXUS**: Pulmonary Cardiac

**PHYSIOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS:**
**GLANDS**: Thymus **ORGANS**: Lungs, Heart, Skin **OTHER**: Circulatory System

**PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERSTICS:**

**POSITIVE:**
Analytical
Sensitive
Intuitive
Loving Dependable
Practical
Persevering

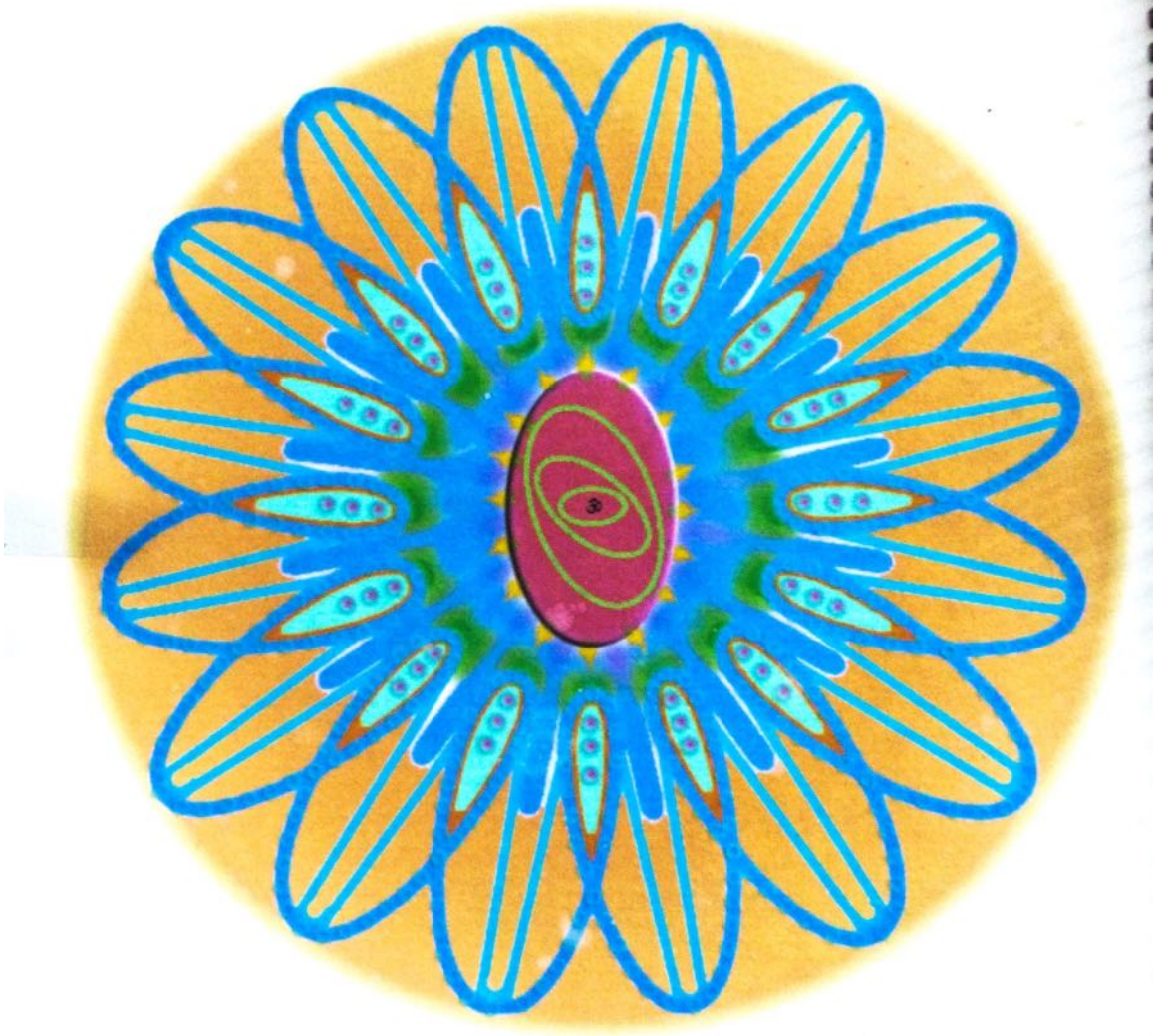
**NEGATIVE:**
Discontented
Self-pitying
Antagonistic
Looking for love

Suspicious
Lacking ambition
Overly meticulous

# Vishuddha

## Chakra

## the Ether Element



# CHAPTER 5

## VISHUDDHA Chakra

*Center of Great Purity*

- Vishhudha chakra brings us into the sea of vibrations. Its essence is a vast field of electromagnetic energy in a constant state of vibration at a wide range of frequencies.

- At the physiological level the vibration of the fifth chakra is what activates our metabolism, raising or lowering our metabolic rate according to the speed of that vibration. It also has an influence on the harmony or disharmony within cell groups in our body. Just as music can be harmonious or noise can be chaotic, the vibrations of Vishuddha directly influence and affect our internal environment. Fifth chakra energy also has an outward moving force which expands in the same way that sound moves out in all directions from any source of vibration.

- At the molecular level this harmony exists in the bonds and relations between atoms that make up our being. When that harmony is present, the atoms and molecules move together in a cosmic dance that creates the solid material world we perceive. When disharmony prevails we have disintegration and disease.

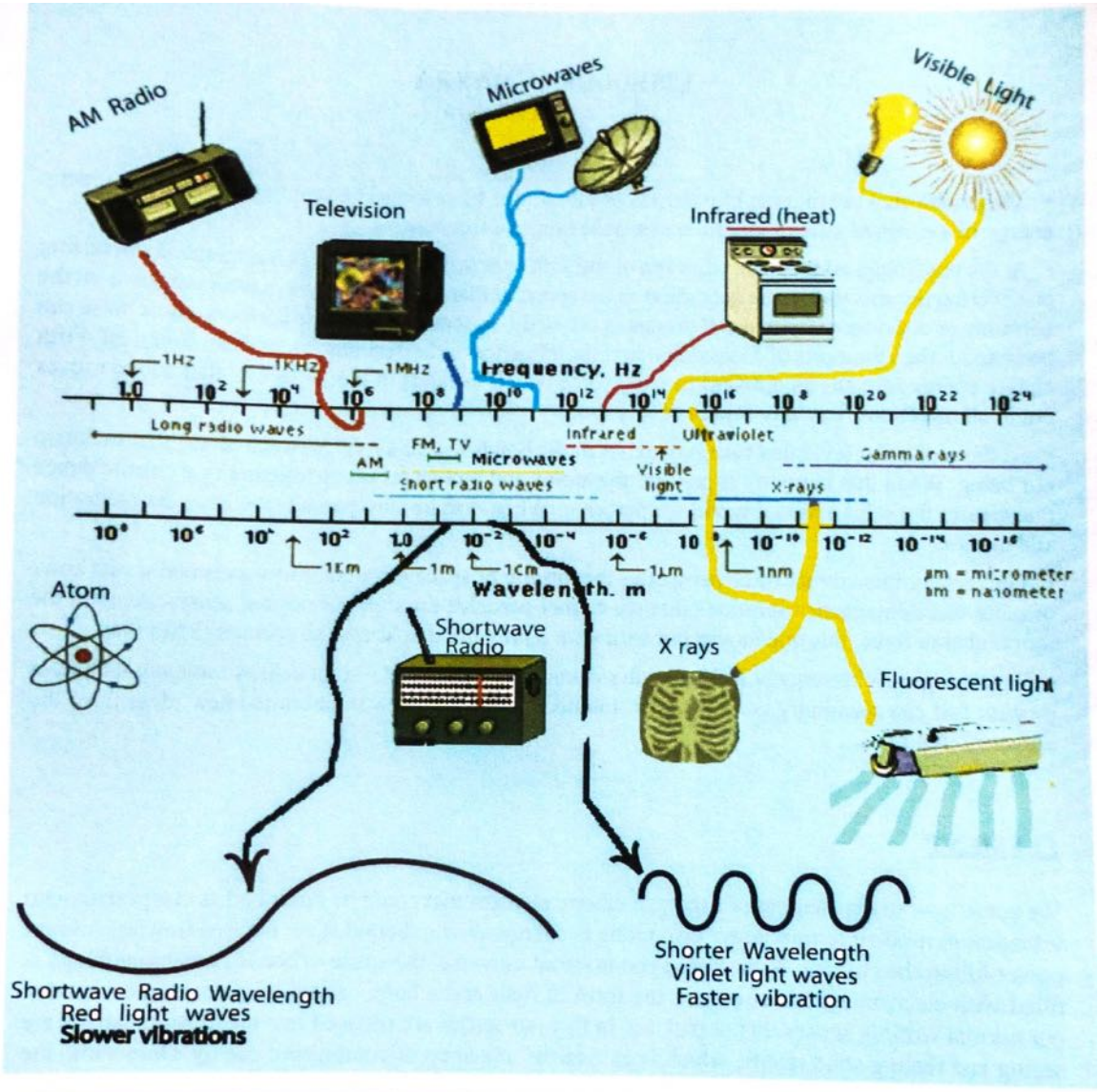
- Universally this vibrant force permeates the infinity of space through light-waves and a vast array of other electromagnetic vibrations that we cannot perceive through our normal senses. As with the fourth chakra force, this one moves outward with a pressure that keeps the cosmos expanding.

- Psychologically the energy of Vishhudha vibrates throughout our brain cells stimulating a thought process that can seemingly go on forever. Intellect comes to life with unlimited new ideas from the universal mind.

## ELEMENT

We come now to the element of Ether, an etheric element that could be described as electromagnetic vibration in modern terminology. Vishuddha is energy in its unbound state, the free-flowing, vibrant power filling the cosmos. In the perceived material universe, the space in between material things is filled with electromagnetic energy in the form of light and a large variety of other frequencies that our normal worldly senses do not pick up. In fact our senses are seduced into the illusion that we are seeing and feeling solid reality, which is in “reality” made up

of compressed energy. Drawn into the concept of being in a human body, we adapt for survival on this planet, otherwise we would perceive it too much as a dream and we would not take it seriously.




Electromagnetic energy is the main force, the main substance out of which virtually everything is made. In the last century we have learned to manipulate this energy for the creation of our present high tech civilization. Now that we all use it on a daily basis we take it for granted without ever stopping to think about what it is really. We have very little understanding of ust what power we are dealing with, yet we have the potential to control it through mind and consciousness rather than the tools of technology.

This fifth vortex is most definitely energy in motion, constantly vibrating and moving or radiating out form the center. Electromagnetic energy, when compressed, creates the semblance of matter: a perception from which the electromagnetic wave

appears to be spinning around itself in an atomic structure. Un-compressed, this energy expands and moves outward with a constant vibrant motion that fills the universe. Consider for a moment that when you look out a the stars at night, what you see is the millions of electromagnetic waves that are coming at you from those stars. (Visible light is only a small part of the spectrum). Our connection to that energy is Vishuddha chakra, and although physically that link at the throat level, it extends well out beyond the body, making it the largest energy field we have access to.

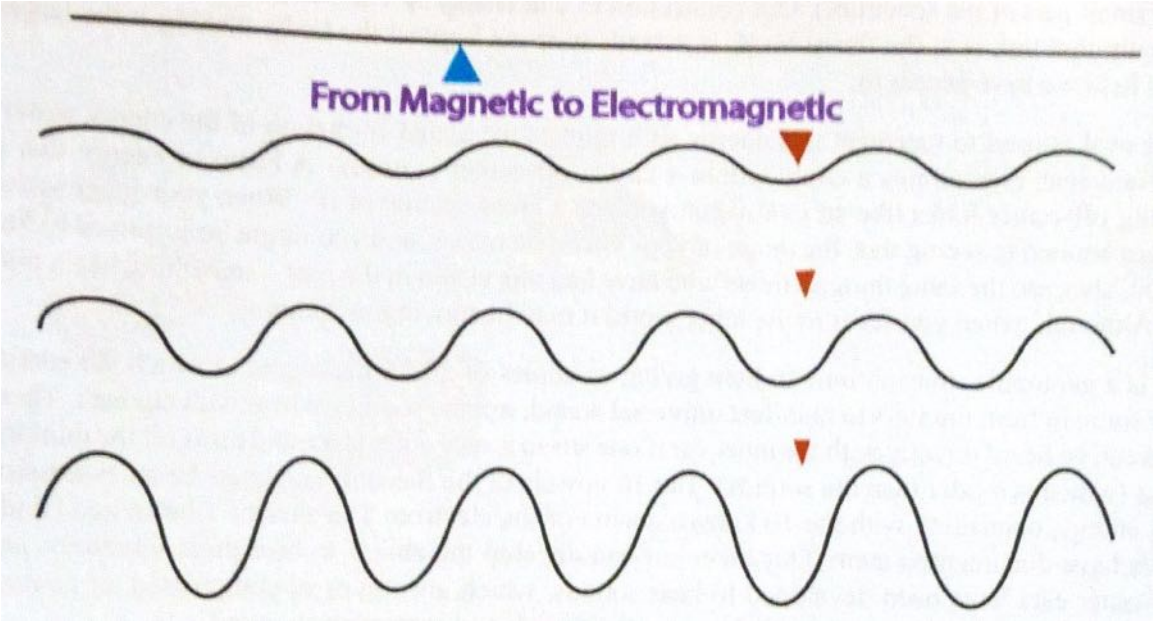
A pink oval is used to represent this energy as it reflects the actual formation of the energy patterns in the universe, (sometimes a circle within a circle, off-center is used). A beam of energy that is vibrating off-center looks like an oval when you see a cross-section of it. When your inner vision becomes attuned to seeing this, the range of your vision increases, and you might be surprised to find that you, also, see the same thing as those who have had this vision in the past – something like a pink oval. Although, when you see it in the inner world it may be moving or spinning.

There is a geometric division into 16 here giving us angles of 22.5 degrees, the angles at which the energy waves come in from the stars to manifest universal sound; not the sound we hear with our ears. These sounds can be heard directly with the inner ear if one sits in a very quiet place and turns off the thinking process (which is louder than the sounds). The 16 vowels of the Sanskrit language are an expression of this energy, coinciding with the 16 known quanta of the electron. The ancient Tibetan and Hindu cultures have documented them. Our inner ear can develop the ability to hear these vibrations just as our outer ears have been developed to hear sounds, which are waves of compressed air coming through the atmosphere that our minds learn to distinguish and recognize as sound.

These electromagnetic waves, when compressed, create the illusion of matter. When these waves cross at certain angles and become trapped in a spin around each other, an atomic structure is created. Or, as stated in the theory of relativity, when we are traveling at the same speed as the electromagnetic wave, it appears to us as an atom. Whether it is energy or matter depends on our velocity, relative to that wave. (We explore this more deeply in Level 2).

As nuclear physics probes deeper into the realm of electromagnetic vibration and quantum energies, it comes closer to realizing that everything is made of vibrating energy. Ancient knowledge of this chakra states that all is made of energy, and the frequency of that energy is what determines just how it is manifested in the material world. Among modern-day physicists are many who are looking into the “plasma fields” of the universe and realizing that these electromagnetic energy fields, filled with charged particles, are the predominant form of matter in the universe. These energy fields move as currents and are presently thought of as the primary force which sculpted (and is still sculpting) the cosmos.

Research done during the last decades on the electromagnetic fields around the sun have shown that it periodically emanates bursts of radiation. Because of its gaseous state the sun has several minor magnetic fields, and their interaction during the sun's rotation creates these out-bursts twelve times each year. It has been established that as these waves of electromagnetic radiation weep the earth, they influence DNA formation in the womb and hormone production in the pineal gland. There is quite a strong indication that these radiation waves are directly linked to the astrological sings of the zodiac.




These signs have come down to us through many ages. The Egyptians knew very well about the monthly pulsations, and being "sun worshippers" the yoften regarded the pulse times as fertility cycles. We are just beginning to re-discover their knowledge of electromagnetics now, after many centuries. They also knew it was important enough to build their amazing temples and pyramids in perfect alignment with these solar energies in order to capture their full potential.

In other interesting research carried out in just the last few years, the electromagnetic fields around the heart chakra have been measured out to eight feet, around the average individual. One of the experiments performed took an individual's dna and placed it in a testing lab fifty miles away. Then the person was put through emotional experiences and the DNA emanated electromagnetic responses instantaneously. The scientists had to conclude that there is some previously electromagnetic responses instantaneously. The scientists had to conclude that there is some previously unknown communication system – somewhere behind the veil of the electromagnetic ocean, an energy that moves faster than light, allowing for instantaneous communication – something which is conscious, (or consciousness itself). That consciousness is woven throughout the electromagnetic spectrum.

We can see that the fifth element known as ***ether*** over the last several centuries has now become the ground in which science is working. A substance that was considered etheric, mystical and intangible, and looked upon with superstition, has become our modern reality.

## ENODCRINE GLANDS

The **thyroid** and **parathyroid** glands are controlled by this energy vortex, and in turn these glands control the body's metabolism as well as the regulation of calcium in the blood. The thyroid gland is one endocrine gland, which lies outside of the body cavity. It is a small gland weighting about 1 ounce (28 grams) and is located in the neck, just below the larynx. This gland secretes two hormones: thyroxine and calcitonin (thyrocalcitonin). Thyroxine affects the growth rate and metabolism of all of the body's cells. It controls reflexes and regulates the rate at which the body produces energy and transforms food into body components. This hormone causes cells to speed up the release of energy from foods as needed by stimulating basal metabolism. Since all body functions depend upon the normal supply of energy, normal thyroid secretion is vital to the body. Thyrocalcitonin has the effect of drawing calcium out of the bones and into the bloodstream, while parathormone shifts it the other way, working to utilize the calcium in the blood by allowing it to enter cells and become part of our being, in the bones and in muscles for instance. In fact our bones act as the reservoir of calcium within our body, and the hormones control what we do with it.

Thyroxin also controls temperature by regulating the metabolism. Metabolism is the body's basic rate of power and activity, right down to the cellular level, so an increase in rate is like the accelerator in a car: it drives you faster from the inside. Manifestation of this might be through the body's urge to move and do something, or through the mind's hyperactive thought steam. Occasionally it raises the body temperature to a level of fever to burn off excess material or toxic substances, or even viruses that have invade the cells. At the mental level this can increase the rate of thinking to head spin, even to delusion and hallucination, but it rarely goes that far. The vortex of the fifth chakra usually keeps things adjusted.

Here we run into a diversion of concepts between Western medicine and the science of yoga. Where in the West it has been thought for a long time that the glandular production is what influences both body and mind activity, yoga's perception of mind over matter has long held that the mind's state of being is what determines the body's condition. Furthermore, it is known that he verbal function of the mind is what determines the rate of vibration, and this vibration at the different energy centers is what controls the glandular productions at each of the endocrine glands. In the mind-body relation of the fifth chakra, this energy is known to be in control of the thyroid, and by influencing this one gland, the body's chemical (hormonal)

balance will be restored. When it is underactive (vibrating too slow), the whole body may be sluggish or feel cold, emotionally, there will be no motivation, zero inspiration. (Possible solution: 9 power sun salutations done three times a day). If it is overactive (vibrating too fast(, the body will burn food into energy too fast, resulting in a wolfish appetite, pounding heart, high blood pressure, tremors, sweating and heat intolerance. (Possible solutions: 10 minute shouldstands with fairly deep breathing). Isn't it better to practice a little yoga to keep things in balance?

For an adept in yoga these changes in thyroid hormone production can be instigated through changing frequencies in the verbal thought process. (Level 2 training.) For the beginner, increasing metabolism at the physical level, with motion, exercise and breath, brings about these changes. It requires effort, and may require a breakthrough in the case of a blockage to the fifth chakra energy flow, but it is not really difficult. These blockages might manifest as feelings of fatigue in the body, and thoughts of giving up or a multitude of distractions in the mind and resistance – thoughts like "What's the point, I'll never succeed anyway". So in yoga, we learn to silence the mind, and to create positive vibrant body feelings. Even for beginners, much of this can be achieved through simple chanting of the Om Mantra.

Rather than going too much further into microscopic details of the body, let us come back to the central issue: At the level of the mind, much of the process of these glands is highly influenced by vibrations of energy in the brain. Modern research (1990s) has shown that many of the very normal thinking habits of people are in fact producing hormonal-type chemicals in the brain all the time; these have been called neuro-peptides. There seem to be many of them, and they get around enough to be found in various, if not all, parts of the body. Some of the latest observations put forward are that some kind of communication is going on all the time through chemical interactions between body and mind. Neuro-peptides are not only made by the brain cells, but can also be made by the cells in the body. It has also been seen that these neuroprptides, communicate with the cells by vibrating at frequencies that resonate with the receptors on the cells they are targeting. Mind itself is not *influenced* by this vibrating energy flow, it is the vibrant energy flow. In fact, it is controllable energy. Though magnetic influence (see Chapter 6), the vibrations of the verbal thought process can be slowed down, accelerated, directed, amplifies and silenced. But for most people it just rambles on out of control, as we say, "Oh, I was just thinking…" The majority of people who have gone through the educational system can't even turn off this thinking process when they want to go to sleep. From the yogic perspective this is like driving a car not realizing you can take your foot off the gas pedal.

## OTHER PHYSIOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS

This chakra's energy is centered in the throat area and governs the voice and elimination functions as well as metabolism. Feeling the essence of this elemental force is generally not a conscious experience except when you feel your own voice vibrating. Usually we hear our voice without actually feeling it. That vibration spreads outward in all directions with a force that propels sound waves at 1,000 feet per second. Inside us, the use of internal sound can accelerate the vibration of energy impulses in the nervous system and thereby increase metabolism throughout the body. It also influences elimination in a similar way, by amplifying the intensity of its outward moving force. Sometimes we can directly feel the power of this energy when the need to eliminate gets so strong that we vomit, for instance. The essence of this energy actually feels like that urge, but in a more pleasant context. In a more relaxed state, this energy simply keeps the body functioning at a normal metabolic rate and, while this is going on, the mind also thinks at its normal rate.

This verbalization of thought may be very relaxes and conducive to peace of mind, or may be overactive in non-stop thinking that is neither directed nor controlled. Either way this mental activity has a profound influence on everything that is going on in the body. In the practice of yoga one learns to control the vibration and in such a way take charge of the mind and influence the body. Such a process can begin as simply as when you control your voice: you can lower the pitch or raise it, go from loud to soft, etc. Voice training or singing lessons can also help with this. Within the mind the same procedure can be applied. Our thinking is also a verbal function, just like speaking, but we don't let it all out. Also, as with the voice, we can control these internal sounds (vibrating energy inside the brain), changing the pitch or the volume. We can even choose what to think as when we do affirmations, rather than letting words and thoughts bubble up from the subconscious.

## JNANENDRIYA and KARMENDRIYA

Obviously the sense connected to all this sound is that of hearing. As the sounds reach our ears they pull us out to the external world to hear much of what is going on around us. In reaction to this we tend to make sounds ourselves through the voice. This action of speaking (or singing), we take is part of another neurological link that keeps us busy in the karmic world. In the Hindu symbolism this process is controlled by the witch Shakini, whose inhibiting force keeps us in a reactive cycle of listening and talking without ever going inward to the discovery of the internal sounds, the cosmic symphony. In fact listening and really hearing what others have to say is often inhibited by our need to respond and speak in our Western culture. As with the other sense, there is the internal version of hearing – this one takes us into a direct perception of the electromagnetic frequencies that are everywhere present. Sounding like an internal symphony, it has been playing since the beginning of time. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God…."

## CHARACTERISTICS

A person centered in this energy will have an active intellect and usually be a progressive thinker, open minded and always interested in new ideas. He/she will be a seeker of a new life, very freedom-loving and fearless; travel and exploration are natural results of flowing with this energy.

When the energy is strong and balanced:

1. The individual will be expressive and articulate, truthful, with a rich voice.
2. Good with languages, a dynamic speaker; may move towards leadership.
3. May be academic, intelligent, and love knowledge.
4. Singing and acting come naturally; might be creative with sound and music.
5. Inspirational, loves to explore new ideas, and in touch with many of them through the *Akashic records*.(The cosmic library).
6. Drawn to travel and exploration of new places as well as ideas; nomadic.
7. Easily adaptable as well as versatile.
8. Bold and even fearless.
9. Easily develops technological skills.

When the energy is too strong and out of balance:

1. The individual may tend to excessive talking, and it could be loud.
2. Not very good listening skills, and consequently the tendency to be argumentative.
3. May not be truthful, so the need to talk leads to fabrication.
4. The need for recognition, or to be heard; leads to being an over-achiever.
5. Tendency to non-stop thinking; may be scattered with too many ideas and have a hard time focusing.
6. Always on the move, might have a problem being still.
7. Can easily become impulsive, indulgent, chaotic.

When the energy is weak or depleted:

1. Voice and expression might be blocked, weak or timid.
2. Problems in communication, lacking in creative expression even in writing.
3. Lack of self-confidence, no leadership; fear of speaking in public.

4. Resistance to change, travel or exploring new ideas; likes to stick with what is known and traditional.
5. Immoderate to the point of being a misfit.
6. Unforgiving when in conflict with others.
7. Difficulties with technology, even phobias.

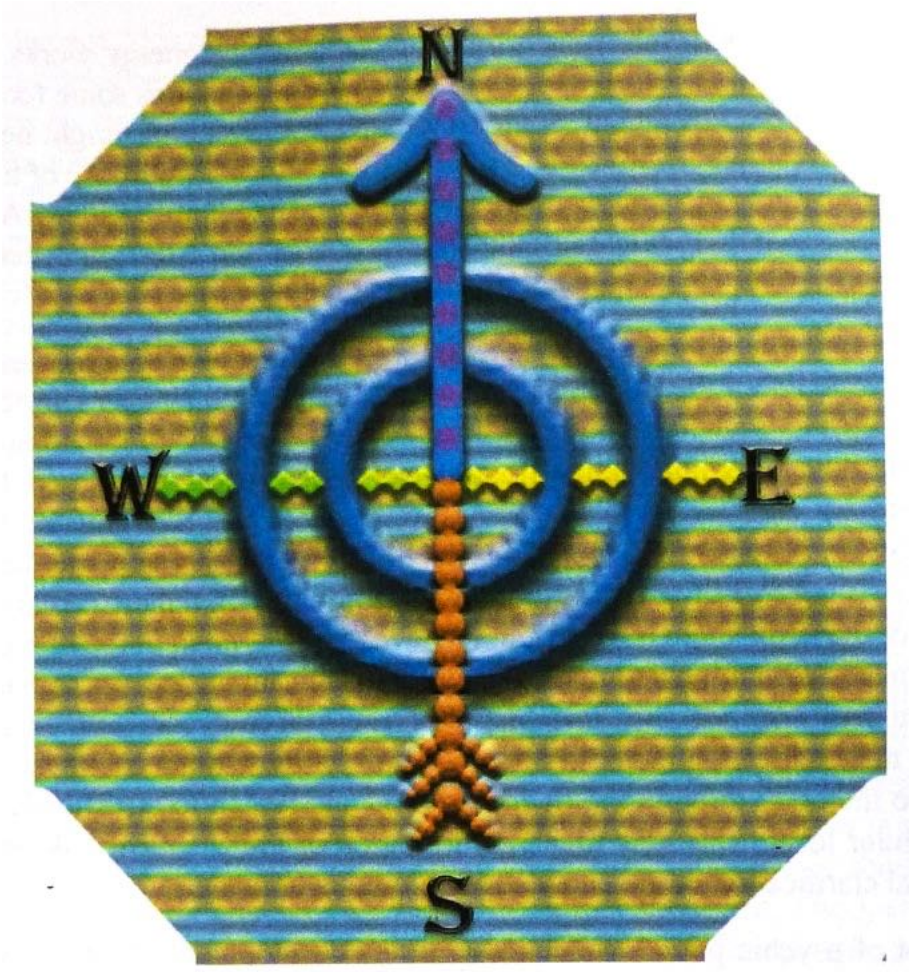
## MENTAL DIRECTION

The direction of Vishuddha energy is **north**. By facing north there is an alignment of the earth's magnetic fields with the vortex within our bodies, resulting in the empowerment of this chakra. Mentally it can be experienced as the intellect, that aspect of mind which is linear, logical and verbal. Here you will find a continual process of putting concepts into words; when left on autopilot this process can ramble on into infinity, re-arranging words into sentence after sentence while consciousness looks on in hypnotic amazement. In yogic development the energy of this center is taken under the direction of consciousness so that the power of verbal thought becomes affirmative thinking. Mantra, the constructive use of sound formulas, is used to tune in to the frequencies of each of the chakras, even resetting those frequencies to the proper rate of vibration. Quite literally, this is a way of doing a tune-up. From there you can utilize the power of sound to open doorways to the world within. In fact, the right sound formulas are like keys to those doors, and those energy vortexes we call chakras **are** doorways.

At the mind level, this chakra is the doorway to the higher mind. Cosmic mind, the intelligence of the universe, can be accessed through proper use of this energy. Working with sound and vibration, both inside the mind and vocally, can focus and direct the force in ways that are much to our advantage. The form of yoga dealing specifically with this is Mantra Yoga; while it is harnessing the power of the fifth element, it works with a combination of sound and music for elating consciousness to the seventh level, (or seventh heaven). In more advanced practice of Raja yoga the use of the voice with certain specific sounds at just the right frequency is applied to conduct energy along certain lines that are to our benefit and advantage, hopefully for the evolution of our consciousness. (We delve here into the realm of magic, which has not always been used in a benevolent manner). This is combined with visualization techniques to achieve results both in the body and out in the world. In the inner world of one's own mind and body it re-adjusts our nerve circuits by re-channeling the energy pathways, and by so doing, running up everything that is connected to the nervous system. (That means pretty much everything). In the outer world it has to do with expression and communications; just as modern technology has taken hold of electromagnetics and created a world of telecommunications, ancient cultures had taken hold of the mental aspect of those same electromagnetic waves, and guided the communication and visions of their nations. The Egyptians were some of the most adept I the use of sound in this way,

and id quite well with their empire for three thousand years that we know of. Of the time before that we just don't know.

Whether it is through the power of the mind that we control these energy waves, or through the use of technological tools that we manipulate it, the essential truth remains that it is by the control of this energy that we can alter, or even direct, reality.




The electromagnetic ocean has a vast spectrum, and within its totality is coded all the knowledge of the universe. This realm is called, in Sanskrit, *Akasha*; the information imprinted there is known as the *Akashic record*. Like a universal library where past, present and future are laid out, these records have been accessed and written about for thousands of years by prophets, seers and psychics; in fact, it is said that we all have access to them in our dreams. If we could only see things more clearly, we might also know the future. In this era of time we can more easily understand how information can be kept in various wavelengths, since we are now using these same weaves for communication, through telecommunication, television, etc. If we can tune in to Knowledge Network on TV and have information coming at us 24 hours a day, then it is not so far-fetched to think of the human brain

as a television or radio receiver that is capable of tuning in to many different stations. In regards to time, when we are watching a video, for example, we know that the end of the story is already recorded on the tape, yet we don't see it till the end. The story is recorded with electromagnetic vibrations, just like recorded music. So it is with history and, to a large degree, the future, except that we may have some editing powers with what is coming. It is more difficult to edit the past.

This energy/direction will stimulate a wealth of knowledge about life and the universe – a whole realm of knowledge that is quite real if kept in balance with the other directions. It is like an information network. Ideas may come by the thousands, and a lot of them may be great ideas. In some ways the fifth chakra is like a realm of unlimited possibilities. Many good inventions, especially in the field of electronics these days, come from insights about how this energy works. However, theses ideas are not always connected in a way that leads to wisdom; it requires some focus to harness the power of this direction to our advantage. Some of the greatest inventions might be really bad ideas---nuclear weapons for example. Cultivating a little wisdom about the purpose of life, and karma, is recommended before charging too deeply into the creative world of limitless ideas. Also be aware that without some form of concentration and grounding, this energy and direction generally lead to a lot of dreaming and talking about what could be, or what could have been.

The thirst for knowledge is stimulated by this energy, a thirst which often leads one towards philosophy. Knowledge about the mind can be the greatest thirst quencher. North is the direction we need to go to find the well. Within the spectrum of electromagnetic vibration is said to be the full range of cosmic thought, while the information can be expressed at the earth level through the human voice. There are eight nerve impulses used to control speech originating from this center, according to Dr. Swami Gitananda. Physiologically the cerebral nerves come down as far as the throat. Though there is not a great deal of neurological connection form these cerebral nerves down to the lower regions of the body, there is a lot from the level of mind-brain to the fifth chakra, making it an important bridge between mind and matter. Another significant bridge, (or perhaps it is more of a ferry), is the whole neuro-peptide phenomenon – that recent discovery about the thinking process in our heads being a major directing factor in the production of these brain chemicals, and the floating of these down into the body through the rivers of blood and lymph to direct body processes at the glandular and cellular level. This new found confirmation of the chemical link between brain and body is an essential clarification of the knowledge of mind over matter.

There is also a lot of psychic power associated with the development of this area through human voice and the verbal process, though in general this power is dissipated through idle talk, the habit of modern civilization. The Egyptian chronicles state that with the right sound formula at the right frequency, anything can be attained. They knew that by harnessing the verbal power of the mind, as in their practice of affirmative thinking, mental energy could be focused and directed

like the archer can direct an arrow. We know virtually nothing of the sound technology they used to direct this vibratory power out ot the material world, yet we can still see that they accomplished amazing things, and we know not how. Back in the "old" world, we also find the story of the battle of Jericho, where the walls of the city came down after 7 sounds of the trumpets. It makes one wonder just what kind of trumpets they used. In the Indian anthology of ancient wars they tell of flying chariots and the use of "thunderbolts" to destroy enemies, (sounds again).

In the Hindu version of this chakra, a white elephant represent its energy. In India a white elephant is sacred, never used for working in the world and usually ending up in a temple. The Hindus also view the power of the voice as something sacred, not to be used for talking about things of the world, but rather for the purpose of mantra and directing energy. Associated with the voice of truth, it should never be used negatively; as a tool of the spirit it can create karma quite easily. Just how much we actually create with our mental and vocal sounds would astonish most people. There are a large number of people who are creating negative karma with gossip, judgments and resentful thoughts and words. This is a long way from the TRUE Man of the Mayans and the affirmative thinking of the Egyptians – when benevolent thoughts were projected out to create harmony for all their relations, indeed, for the whole kingdom.

In the first few verses of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, Patanjali states that the mind needs to be brought to a standstill, and subsequently describes how it usually keeps us entertained. The first action the mind takes is that of judgment. This mental faculty evaluates all our experiences as to whether they are good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant, joyful or painful. Such evaluations are applied in a circumstances and situations; even when we are not conscious of them they continue at a subconscious level. Beyond this judgmental faculty there are five functions of the mind that are active and ongoing. These are: (1) right knowledge, (2) wrong knowledge, (3) fancy, (4) sleep, and (5) memory. Each of these is capable of keeping us distracted from a truly enlightened perception of life. They are regarded as modifications of the mind, tangled up with analysis and comparison; they lead us to think about our experiences so that our awareness is trapped in thought rather than the experience itself. Just as a young child is in awe about the beauty and bliss of life, so should our consciousness remain at the level of clear perception, of the moment – Here and Now – the present instead of the past and future. However, as adults we have learned too much about analytical thinking to the point of being enslaved in that process. Learning to free ourselves from the mind-trap leads us to liberation, the goal of yoga.

From our normal perspective we might consider the first of these functions of the mind (right knowledge) to be useful. We might have a lot of useful information stored in our brains, and we value that. Much of that may have come in through the sense and become part of our real life experience. It may be our way of knowing the world and our years of living add knowledge and wisdom to that. However, in the yogic view, being hypnotically gripped by that knowledge keeps our conscious

awareness away from the beauty of the moment – the direct perception of the "here and now." What we see is in fact our mental interpretation of what is there. It may be accurate and maybe not, either way our mind paints the picture in which our consciousness is trapped. It is in this cage that most educated people live. For those with less actual "knowledge" there might be a larger portion of wrong knowledge, mistaken facts and delusions about life. The mistaken information can not only create a similar cage, but also cause a lot of serious errors to be made in life, leading to karmic entanglements that may keep them busy for lifetimes, trying to make amends.

The third category of mind-stuff, "fancy," refers to our incredible imagination. As our greatest creative faculty, this one can take our breath away as we imagine ourselves in the most beautiful scenarios having all our desired fulfilled. Modern technology has amplified this to no end, in that now we can spend most of a lifetime in front of a TV watching everyone else's fantasies. (Note how deeply you breathe while watching a great video.)

The fourth mental category we find ourselves in is sleep. Although the dream-state is similar to that of fantasy, there is a deeper level where we do not seem to be conscious of anything at all. We spend a fair amount of time in that state, and although we certainly need to rest from the turmoil and constant activity of the mind, our awareness does not need to lose consciousness. When Buddha was asked by a close disciple if he slept, he answered, "My body sleeps but I remain aware." He was no longer distracted by the modifications of the mind. In fact his state of awareness was one in which the mind had come to a standstill.

The last category of mental stuff we need to deal with is that of memory. Here is where our educated Western mind can get lost in the maze. In our school system we were so focused on remembering so many things that we can remain in that compartment for more time than we have in one incarnation. There is no shortage of events and facts and history to think about. As we grow older we spend more and more time remembering and talking about the things we have done. It is kind of like being trapped in a library of books and videos – none of it is presently happening, and so we are no longer present.

Coming to an understanding of these mental phenomena can make us realize that we are missing the point of experiencing life as it is unfolding before us. The beauty and bliss of an infant discovering and experimenting with life becomes more appealing as we realize what we have lost in our "growing up." Yoga can then be applied to rejuvenate our perception.

## SATTVA GUNA

Sattva guna is third of the three forces responsible for unfolding of the universe. We find here the power of higher thought, as an energy that keeps on going and going. This level of thought is distinct and beyond the sensual reactive thoughts which keep us functioning at the worldly level, (I am hungry). It is rather a much more philosophical realm of ideation that resides in ***Sat***, truth, true knowledge about the universe. Because it is connected to true knowledge, it can lead to spiritual realms and enlightenment. But, it can also lead to many other things. Although we might not generally think of it as a force, it is the creative power behind life, as it is the inspiration behind all of the modern day inventions and technology. Being connected to the electromagnetic spectrum flowing through the universe, our minds fall into this pattern of an ongoing thought stream. It seems to be infinite. We quickly become addicted to he idea world, the realm of all possibilities from which the seeds for this material reality are sprouted. Moved by the on-going energy of the fifth chakra, this one becomes an obstacle through a thinking process that simply will not stop on its own. It needs to the directed by a decisive and affirmative consciousness. Raja Yoga is about directing the whole mind process.

A purely mental force in its essence (electromagnetic), it nevertheless has the ability to keep us in our dreamworld, sometimes inspiring the creation of great things in this world. The thought power manifested through this force keeps people ion their heads, making them not only dreamers, but also philosophers and poets; they become the thinkers who can see, plan and lead civilization on to higher realms and a more cultured way of life, sometimes in a very spiritual way. When balanced with the other forced it can manifest great things; when grounded it can create the world we have today.

## SHIVA GRUNTHI

Here is the third main barrier to our awakening of power. It is similar to the second (Vishnu grunthi) in that it is made up of a lot of patterns of behavior; however, in this case it is about mental behavior – our thinking process. The Sanskrit word *grunthi* means a knot, referring to one that has become tangled up and is difficult to undo. Within the neural network of our brains, this has to do with energy circuits that make up our thoughts and belief systems. When energy moves through these brain cells it will automatically follow the pathways that have already been established, just as electricity moves along a set of wires. This naturally stimulates the same thought patterns that originally set up these pathways. It's kind of like playing the same old tapes: every time you play the tape, it will come out the same. Re-recording the tape requires much more energy than just playing it.

The next related aspect to consider is the connection form the mind to the voice; the latter being an expression of the former. We always think and speak in the same language, and how often do we repeat the same phrases in the same manner? Habitual thought patterns coded in verbal dialogue are the ways in which our

energy gets looped and tangled. Mantra is a prime method of un-tangling and re-programming ourselves at this mental level by using the mind itself.

One of the more physical techniques used to help untangle this knot is called **Jalandhara Bandha**. As with *mula bandha* and *udhyana bandha*, this technique uses a certain lcoking method to close the throat. Physically it is applied by jutting the head and chin forward and then bending the neck so as to bring the chin down to the chest. The position of the head and neck will tend to restrict the throat. The technique is used during breath retentions to help lock in the air. One of the more subtle aspects of the move is to close off the windpipe and lock it closed so that no air can escape. The epiglottis is like a small trap door that actually closes the top of the windpipe. Once closed, it can be locked shit, while the neck position helps to keep it locked. During advanced breath retentions the impulse to take the next breath can be quite strong. Keeping the locks in place requires affair amounts of effort. Jalandhara bandha is useful at this time to help keep the air locked in. When practicing it be aware of that internal lock with the epiglottis, it is much more important than the external movement of the head and neck. Also note that the mind needs to keep focused in order to not let go of some of the breath.

## YAMA/NIYAMA

**YAMA: Satya** (truth)

*Satya* is turhtfulness to the point of not saying anything which you are not certain is true. One must not be untruthful in thought or speech. The implication here is that one should be aware of what lies are benig told in the internal dialogue (the verbal thinking process) and which of those are being passed on to other people in the outer world. Truth means something of which we are certain, so to speak only the truth one would have to eliminate many ideas which may only be suspected or theoretical, or if these are stated they should be labeled as such: “I think maybe…”. From the perspective of karma, giving someone information which is known to be false or which we are unsure of, will result in the same thing being done to you. This can cause confusion and waste of time, both of which should be avoided when walking the spiritual path of Yoga. If you are on this yogic spiritual path, consider that talking without a spiritual purpose might dissipate the energy of the fifth chakra. If on the other hand it is social conversation you could see it as sharing with others and maintain a compassionate attitude.

Within our own minds we need to become aware of how we sometimes shift facts to organize a truth and hide the opposition, a process which goes on continually as a kind of selective memory functioning at the subconscious level. The facts which do not correspond with what we presently want to believe are shunted into the back of the mind (subconscious); ego will sort out and assimilate the facts you need to

prove your own point of view, so that we may firmly believe whatever we like. One should be willing to look at all the facts, even if this entails changing one's opinion and admitting to having been wrong. By continually readjusting one's fundamental beliefs so as to absorb and comprehend any new observations and even contradictions, one's concept of the truth can grow and develop into something consistent and complete. To practice *satya* you must be willing to face the inconsistencies of the sense and be alert to how the likes and dislikes of sensual enjoyments color our concepts of life. >> So, be aware of your mental prejudices.

## **NIYAMA: Atman Pranidhana** (listening to intuition)

One must always make a strong effort to listen to the intuitional voice of the Guru within. The word intuition really means inner teachings, and that is what this concept is about. It is the inner voice we call conscience which tells us when we are doing something wrong and nudges us in the right direction if we let it. If we pay attention to this voice and eliminate the negative actions from our behavior, then this inner conscience begins to develop into a better guide, advising right action in all activities. All you really need to do is what you know to be right. Then it becomes possible to help others in the ways you feel to be right. This strengthens the inner voice of truth and allows the voice to flow outwards into your actions. The more you listen to what this guide tells you, the more will be revealed. There may be outer teachers and advisers, or even observance of religious rites, faithfulness and affectionate duties to a spiritual master, but all this is merely a symbolic calling to awaken the real Guru within. One must tap this inner fountain of beauty, wisdom and bliss, and allow it to flow outward to others.

However, there is a transition that one must be aware of. At first conscience will produce feelings of guild or shame if you have acted unwisely; then you begin to know before you act what is right action and what is wrong action, and you must apply this knowledge at the time tit comes to you. You are approaching the realm of instant karma, the center of "here and now." If you do not practice what you are intuitively taught, you will remain blind to how close you are to that more enlightened state. You may learn more and more about how you should be living and yet always plan to start living it tomorrow. As this knowledge accumulates in your mind, unpracticed, you will begin to feel overwhelmed. Consequently, to let these things off your mind you must start practicing them, or else allow yourself to become divided into the real you and the theoretical you. Practice what your mind preaches.

## **RAJA YOGA**

This form is known as the Royal (Raj) road. What we find on this path are the methods of working with the mind in a way that applies the age old axiom, "**Mind**

**over Matter**". Generally the 5th chakra energy stimulates the intellect, and the verbal thinking function; with Raja yoga this function is channeled into mantra and the process of affirmative thinking. A the same time, the visual process (from the third eye), is engaged to formulate and imagine the geometric forms of the chakras, or other appropriate vision. In this manner sound and light are used to create specific responses within our mind and energy field – thereby triggering the unfolding of the chakras.

Similar methods are used to instigate healing where it needs to be turned on, either in ourselves or in others. In a sense, it is the creative use of imagination to manifest what is is we would like in the material world. When our forces are harmonized and unified through some of the preparations we go through in the other forms of yoga, this Raja Yoga method becomes one of our main methods of operation. Magnetic forces of the 6th chakra are used to direct the electromagnetic energies of the fifth element, and to achieve re-molding of the other four elements.

Obviously this is not beginners yoga; the mind seriously needs to be purged of its negativity before harnessing and engaging these powers. This could include all the disease or accident ideas we have heard about or remember. If not, our own negative expectations can easily jump up in front of us and consume our lives. Check carefully with such techniques as Swadhiyaya, and look into the Karma Yoga section.

For the purposes of this course we use simple visual techniques that employ both inner and outer vision, using the latter to develop the former. Although this utilizes the focused attention of the third eye, (sixth chakra), it is a major part of the Raja Yoga, in that it changes the frequency of the electromagnetic element and directs it carefully along a specified path. Otherwise this energy is prone to vibrate in excess – leading to constant chattering of the verbal process and non-stop thinking. That is the nature of the energy. The goal is also to feel the energy, at all of its various frequencies. Each color and form instigates a specific feeling; they are like various types of bliss in a sense, each one providing us with vibrant emotional experience. These experiences are closer to the essence of the chakras – levels of vibrating bliss.

As you may have noted by now, each form of yoga connected to its chakra uses the power of the chakra above itself to transcend its own nature. For instance Pranayama yoga for developing the third chakra. Development in achieved through transcending or transmuting the energy of each chakra, raising it to a higher speed of vibration.

## Visual Technique:

The visual techniques we employ in Level 1 Teacher Training begin with concentrated focus on an external geometric form, with unwavering eyes, for a

period of twenty seconds. This is followed by closing the eyes and observing the afterimage which comes on the inside. What you see the inner image with is the inner eye, or third eye; it is the same one you dream with the imagine with. The images seen are then combined with a focused verbal sound in the mind, which can also be vocalized at times, and these can be unified with the feeling of the energy whirling around the spine. The beginning is simple, just to see the image on the inside, and try to observe it without holding on to it. Relaxed observation is the key. This method is applied to each of the chakras, and as the inner vision develops and becomes clear, it can be used effectively in a variety of visualizing techniques.

***Raja Yoga*** proceeds with such techniques, developing them into a wide range of powerful mind tools that are used in healing, evolutionary practices, and manifesting. As the ability to work with sound and visual tools increases, life becomes more easily directed through the mind, however, it is very important in the beginning to take the time required to purify the mind of all its negative thoughts and possibilities. Otherwise it could we be the most negative expectations that are manifested. For level 1 it is advised to work with some of the preliminary techniques and observe carefully what comes up in the mind. The simple methods in this course, and the mantras that follow are for this purpose.

## *MANTRA*

Working with the voice is of course one aspect of directing the energy of this chakra, or could we say re-directing. The following is a series of mantras, sounds formulas, that are known to have a strong influence on the way we think and feel. The "**Mantra Laya**" is designed to go with the visualization of energy spirals around the spine, and practicing it in such a way creates a vortex that moves energy up through the body and mind – clearing consciousness of its content. This should be practiced in the late evening, and followed with silence and mediation.

MANTRA LAYA

1
(V)WUNG SHUNG SHANG SUNG
2
BUNG B-HUNG MUNG YUNG RUNG LUNG
3
DUNG D-HUNG NUNG TUNG T-HUNG

DANG D-HANG NANG PUNG P-HUNG
4
KUNG K-HUNG GUNG G-HUNG NANG
CHUNG CH-HUNG JUNG J-HUNG NUNG
TANG T-HANG
5
ANG AANG ENG ING
UNG OONG RHING RHEENG
LING LEENG ENG AING ONG AUNG
NG H….
6
HUNG KSHUNG

## Vocal Warm-up Exercises

-Shoulder Rolls: Inhaling while raising the shoulders upwards and back, expanding the chest, 4th chakra area, lifting the sternum….exhale, relaxing the shoulders forward. ( optional to exhale with the sound "ah" … shoulder rolls and other vocal warm-ups can be done in standing position or sitting Vajrasana position) Repeat several times.

-Shoulder Drops: Inhale, raising the shoulders up towards the ears …tensing / scrunching the shoulders here …then exhale, dropping the shoulders quickly. Repeat several times. ( optional to exhale using the sound "ha!: )

-Neck Exercises:

-Inhale dropping head and neck backwards and exhale dropping the head / chin forward and down towards the chest

-Side Stretches on the neck: inhale in face front, neutral position then exhale bending side of neck , left ear towards the shoulder , feeling the side stretch on one side and compression on the other of the neck. Repeat on right side.

-Neck Twists: inhale .. face front, neutral position ..exhale twisting the neck to the left…inhale facing front …exhale twisting to the right. Repeat.

-Head Rolls: Inhale turning the head to the right towards the right shoulder…exhale dropping the head, (chin down) and rolling it across the front of the chest over and up towards the left shoulder …inhale…then exhale once again rolling the head down across the front of the chest and over/up to the right shoulder …inhale. Repeat several times.

-Sternum Lift: In standing position …inhale while opening the arms out and bringing the hands together in Namaste about head …exhale while opening hands out, moving the arms down to the sides of the torso/thighs…(optional to make the vowel sounds 'ah!' while exhaling …starting with low pitches, then moving up to higher pitches) Repeat.

-Face & Jaw Release:

-Massaging the face and jaw.
-While relaxing the jaw and dropping it open, move the bottom teeth back and forth quickly making the sound 'ah!'
-Relaxing the jaw and shaking the head back and forth rapidly, making the "ah" sound

Vocal Warm-up Exercises cont'd…..

-Neck and Head Roll: sitting on your heels, with forehead placed on the floor in front of the knees and elbows / hands placed on the floor outside the ears …inhale in this beginning position then exhale rolling up onto or beyond the crown of the head…stretching the back of the neck…inhale on the way back down to starting position then exhale rolling up onto crown again. Repeat.

-Tongue Exercise:

-Stretching the tongue outside the mouth and down outside the chin helping to tire this large muscle so that it does not drop back in the throat distorting your vocal sounds
-Relaxing the tip of tongue behind the back of the teeth especially on the higher pitches

-Diaphragm & Muscular Exercises:

-Inhaling into abdominal and lower mid-section of the lungs then slowly hissing the 'Ss' sound as you exhale … connecting with the oblique muscles which are attached to the bottom ribs … supporting the breathing exercise with these muscles as well as the diaphragm muscle

-Chanting the 1-OM, 2-OM, 3-OM etc. … on a slow extended exhalation

-Vowel toning on long, slow, extended breaths

-Practicing "humming" @ low pitches for warming up the vocal cords and exercising the diaphragm muscle.

-Practice Mouth Breathing:

-Inhaling and exhaling quickly through the mouth…moving abdomen out on the in-breath and inward on the out-breath

-Practice quick breaths by making a sound with different vowel sounds, for example with the vowel "ah" … sing short sounds (.5 sec.) then breathe ie: sing … 'ah' ..breath 'ah' .. breathe 'ah' .. breathe. .'ah' ..breathe and continue moving the abdomen out on the in-breath and in on the out-breath making the vowel sound 'ah' with quick short mouth breaths

Hatha Yoga Postures for Vocal Warm-up:

| | |
|---|---|
| Rapid Twists | No. 98 |
| Warrior Chest Expansion | No. 95 |
| Standing Maha Mudra | No. 114 |
| Sun-Flower with 'ah!' sound | No. 96 |
| Supta Vajrasana w/ 'humming | No. 15 |
| Vyaghra: Tiger | No. 33 |
| Ushthra Asana | No. 23 |
| Matsyasana: the Fish | No. 32 |
| Vyaghra Kriya 1 | No. 35 |
| Bhujangini mudra; cobra | No. 48 |
| Simhasana: the Lion | No. 69 |
| Ardha Matsyendrasana | No. 85 |
| Dhanurasana : the Bow | No. 88 |
| Viparita Karani: inverted pose | No. 129 |
| Halasana: the Plough | No. 127 |

**Musical Scales and Voice Exercises:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Western musical scale: | Do Re Mi Fa So La Ti Do |
| Musical notation numbers: | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 1 (8) |
| Indian musical scale: | Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni Sa (Svaras) |

The syllables of the Indian Musical Scale are called the 'Seven Svaras' – svara is the Indian term meaning tone – 'that which vibrates' … and the seven svaras in Indian music are also referred to as the "Seven Goddesses" ….with each syllable containing the vibration to invoke 'Sacred Divine Energy'!

The Indian musical scale in melody sounds the same as the Western musical scale but the texture and timbre of the tones in the Indian music is different (of course more Asian) than the texture and timbre of the Western music …

**Voice Exercises:**

**Three-tone exercise to practice the svara names (syllables) of the Indian Raga Scale:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Sa Re Ga | Sa Ni Dha |
| Re Ga Ma | Ni Dha Pa |
| Ga Ma Pa | Dha Pa Ma |
| Ma Pa Dha | Pa Ma Ga |
| Pa Dha Ni | Ma Ga Re |
| Dha Ni Sa | Ga Re Sa |

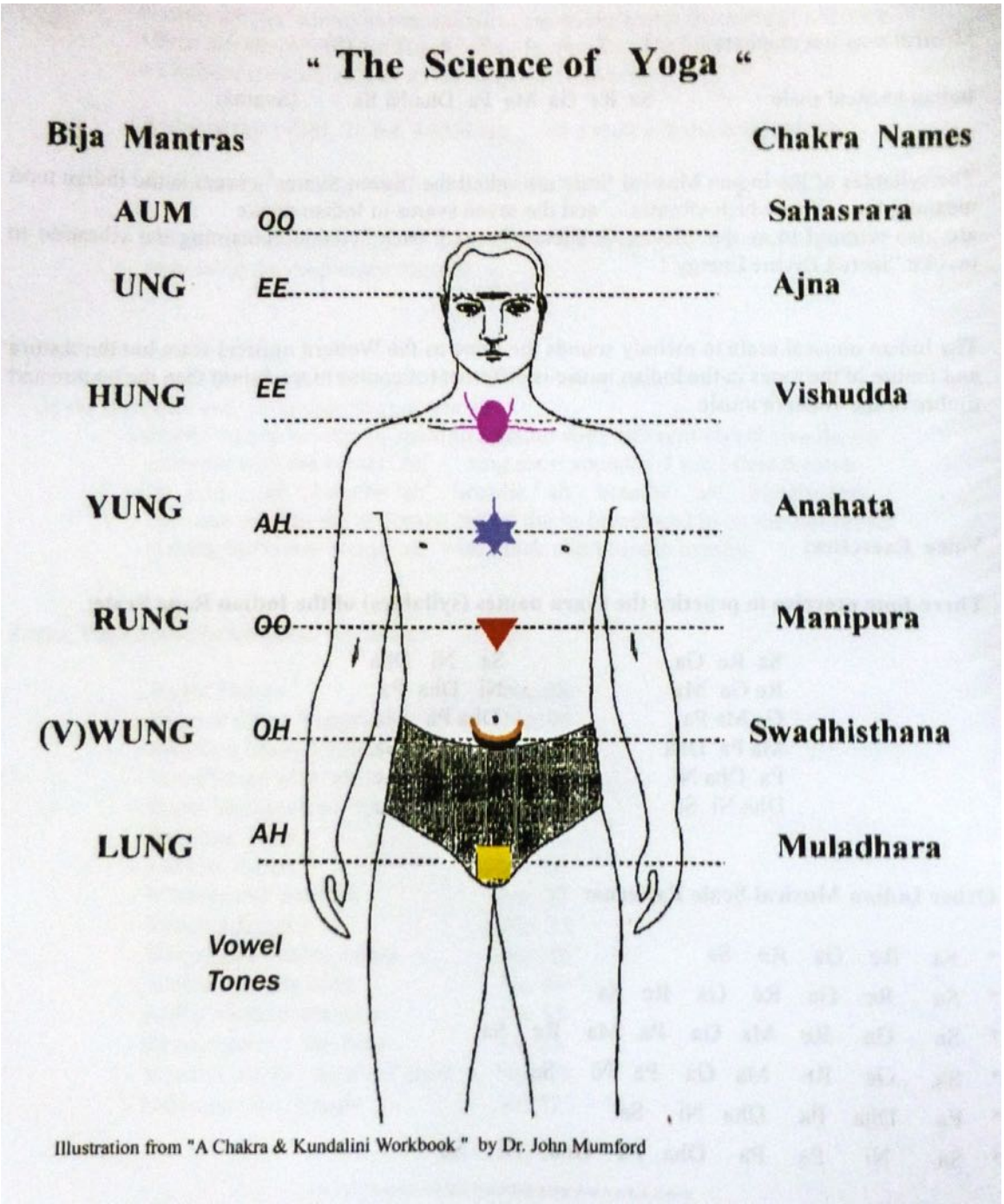
**Other Indian Musical Scale Patterns:**

- Sa Re Ga Re Sa
- Sa Re Ga Re Ga Re Sa
- Sa Ga Re Ma Ga Oa Ma Re Sa

- Sa Ga Re Ma Ga Pa Ni Sa
- Pa Dha Pa Dha Ni Sa
- Sa Ni Pa Pa Dha Pa Dha Ni Sa

**Raga Bhupali five-tone scale:**

Sa Re Ga Pa Dha Sa



**Raga Hamsadhuni Scale:**

Sa Re Ga Pa Ni Sa

**Western musical scale exercises:**

Sing the musical scale syllables ascending and descending:

- Do Re Mi Fa So La Ti Do / Do Ti La So Fa Mi Re D

( gradually moving the voice up in pitch)

**Five-tone exercise descending from So – Do:**

5 4 3 2 1
So Fa Mi Re Do
Mee Loh Mah May Mee
Vee Vee Vee Vee Vee
Mah ……
May……
So……
Lu……
My……

( move voice gradually up to higher pitches after practicing in lower pitches)

1 3 5 3 1
Do Mi So Mi Do
La La La La La
Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah

May…….

Ay…….

Vee……

Ee……

So……

etc…. on all the vowels.

Vocal Exercises Cont'd……

1 3 2 4 3 5 4 2 1
Do Mi Re Fa Mi So Fa Re Do

Ay La Ay La Ay La Ay La Ay

******

1 2 3 2 1
Do Re Mi Re Do
Ee Ee Ee Ee Ee
Ay Ay Ay Ay Ay
Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah

* same vocal – vowel exercise on 1 2 3 4 3 2 1

* gradually move the voice up in pitch these exercise

**********

1 3 5 7 5 3 1
Do Mi So Ti So Mi Do
La La La La La La La
Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah

* Variation: sing the above vocal exercise twice in a row on one full breath … gradually moving up in pitch!

**********

***It matters not whether one believes in Krishan or Christ, Mother Kali or Mother Mary.***
***A formless God or even a flame, a mountain, or an ideal such as world peace can be meditated upon while singing.***
***By letting go of the mind expand in the sound of the Divine Chanting, each one can enjoy the peace born of one's inherent divinity.***
***-Ammachi***

**********

***The one who learns to tread the Spiritual path must become as empty as a cup in order that the wine of music and harmony may be poured down into his/her heart.***

***-Hazrat Inayat Khan***

**********

***O Saraswati, you are the source of music.***
***The masters of music worship you and you fulfill their desires.***
***O Goddess of speech and learning bless me so that my music***
***Becomes melodious, rhythmic, colorful and expressive…***
***Bless me so that I will sing with a pure heart.***
***Aum***

***-Miyan Tansen***

## *CHANTS*

**1. Om Namah Shiva 3x**

**Shiva Om Namah**

(Salutions to the masculine energy "Shiva", Manipura '3rd Chakra' Sun Center, Fire Element; the energy of change, transformation, creativity, action, individuality! … Namah: to bow down to, greeting of respect and gratitude!)

**2. Om Mani Padme Hum**
**Om Mani Padme Hum (Hhri)**

(Hail to the Jewel in the Lotus ! Traditional Tibetan chant : prayer to awaken one's connection to their spiritual divine light within, expansion of the 'Heart Chakra' wherein dwells the jewel of enlightenment …happiness , peace and abundance. Chant to align one's self with the Sacred Energies of the Cosmic Universe. Om: the Primordial Sound of the Universe, Mani: Jewel , Padme: Lotus , Hum: I am, seed sound for Vishudda; Shri: Great One.

**3. Om Tare Tuttare Ture ShHa (Svaha) (So Hum)**

( Traditional Tibetan chant to the Goddess Tara ,( Green Tara) the Goddess of Healing and Compassion , (Whita Tara) ; the Goddess of Purity , Truth, and Forgiveness.

Tare Tuttare: names of Goddess Tara , Soho (Svaha or Swaha); Blessings , Salutations)

**4. Om Shanti Om Shanti Om Shanti Om !**
**Aum Shanti Om Shanti Om !**
**Namaste Aum Shanti Om**
**Namaste Om !**

(Sanskrit Chant of Peace and Respect… Shanti; Peace , Namaste: Greeting of Respect)

**5. Jai Ram Shri Ram**
**Jai Jai Ram Ram**

( Salutations to the "one consciousness energy" , Ram: aspect of the Sacred Universal Energy, a Spiritual Avatar who lived aprrox. 7000 thousand years ago in India the seventh avatar of Vishnu, masculine, powerful, peaceful warrior of transformation , Jai : Praise, Victory … this Ram Mantras are considered to be great "Healing Mantras"!)

**6. Govinda Hare Gopala Hare**
**He Prabhu Dine Dayal Hare**
**He Prabhu Dina Dayal Hare**
**He Prabhu Dina Dayal Hare**

( Chant; prayer to Govinda, Gopala which are aspects of the ' Krishna Consciousness' , a Sacred Universal Consciousness; Krishna; an Avatar who walked a spiritual path in India after "Ram" some 5000 years ago … this is a chant to invoke the compassionate spirit of Krishna, upon our Spiritual Soul, to dwell within our heats, within our lives.
Prabhu Dina Dayal Hare; Great Compassionate Spirit, Being )

**7. Aham Prema Aham Prema**
**Aham Prema AUM**

**Prema Svaha Prema Svaha**
**Prema Svaha AUM !**

( Chant to affirm the essence of our Divine Being which is the 'Spiritual Vibrations of Divine Love…. Aham: I am , Prema: Love Svaha (Swaha) : Blessings, Salutations )

**8. Aum Namo Saraswati Devaiya**
**Devaiya Devaiya Gayati Kamta Gayati OM !**

(Salutations to the Goddess Saraswati: Reverend Goddess of Music , Arts, Poetry , Creativity and Spiritual Wisdom… Namo: Namaha, to bow down to , greeting of gratitude and respect, Devaiya: Goddess, heavenly, divine , Gayati: Song Kamta: Love)

**9. Gayatri Prayer**

**Om Bhur Bhuvha Suvaha (Swaha) Om Bhu Bhuwaha Swaha**
**Tat Savitur Varenyam**
**Bhargo Devasya Dhimahi**
**Bhiyo Yonah Prachodayat**

Translation:

Bhur (Bhuh) : Earth plane
Bhuvaha: Atmospheric plane
Suvaha (Swaha): Solar region – "Sun!"
Tat Savitur Varenyam: That realm of truth which is beyond human comprehension !
Bhargo Devasya Dhimahi: In that place where all the celestials of all the spheres
have Dhiyo Yonah Prachodayat received enlightenment, kindly illuminate our
intellect …AUM!

AUM ! Splendid Sun
Thou art the Source of all Light!
Whose Rays Illuminate the World !
Illuminate My Heart * So that I too can do 'Your Work!'

********

We meditate on the "Effulgent Light of Divine Reality"
to purify and illuminate all worlds and out 'Being'!

**********

May there be peace on the mortal, immortal and divine planes.
I meditate upon the most brilliant splendor of the "Sun God ! ".
May he stimulate our intellect and inspire us to take the path of right action !

10. **Ya Devi Sarva Bhuteshu**
    **Buddhi Rupena Samsthita**
    **Namastasyei Namastasyei**
    **Nasmastsyei Namo Namaha**

(Salutations to the Divine Femine Energy of Spiritual Wosdom … Devi : Feminine Goddess, Buddhi : inner Buddha , inner teacher , guru , Namastasyei: Namaha , salutations, greetings of gratitude and respect)

11. **Shri Ram Jay Ram**
    **Jay Jay Ramo (Ram Om)**

(Praise to the 'One Consciousness Sacred Energy of the Avatar Ram!")

12. **Aum Chandra Deva Jyotati Aum !**

( Salutations to the Goddess Moon … Chandra: Moon , Deva: Heavenly, Divine , Jyoyati: Shining )

13. **Aum Surya Namaha**

( Chant to the "Sun God"…Surya: Sun , Namaha: Namaste, greeting of gratitude & respect)

14. **Tryam Bakam Yaja Mahe**
    **Sugandhim Pushti vardhanam**
    **Urdvha Rukha Miva Bhanda Nam**
    **Mrityor Mukshiya Mam Ritat**

(Markandaya Healing Mantra * Translation :

O Three – Eyed Lord Shiva Shelter Me
Bless me with health and immortality
And sever me from the clutches of Death!

**15. Jaya Jaya Devi Mata Namaha Aum! (2X)**

(Praise to the "Divine Mother"… Jaya: Praise, Devi: Goddess , Mata:Mother , Namaha!)

**16. Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare**
**Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare**

**17. Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaiya**

(Salutations to the Sacred Universal Energies, and the teachings of this Divine Energies; the Vedic texts – Bhagava Gita)

**18. Om Namah Shivaya Om Namah Shiva Om ! (2X)**
**Shivaya Shivaya Nataraja Shivaya Om Namah Shiva Om! (2X)**

( Namaste to the Dancing Shiva … Nataraja : Dancer )

**19. Bhaja Mana Ma Ma Ma Ma (2x)**
**Ananda Mayi Ma Ma (2x)**

(Chant to the Divine Feminine, the Divine Mother of Bliss)

**20. Amaram Hum Maduram Hum**
**Amaram Hum Om Mata Om !**

( Amaram Hum : I am Beauty Madurum Hum : I am Bliss
Om Mata : Om Divine Mother Om ! )

**21. Aum Asatoma Sat Gamaya Lead me from untruth to truth !**
**Tamasoma Jyotir Gamaya Lead me from darkness to light !**

**Mrityor Ma Amritam Gamaya Lead me from death to immortality(eternity)!**
**Aum Hari Om ! Aum Divine Spirit Om !**

**22. Om Shreem Maha Lakshmiyei Namaha**

**23. Om Shreem Lakshmi Swaha Swaha**
**Om Shreem Lakshmi Swaha**

**24. Saraswati Maha Lakshmi Durga Devi Namaha**

**25. Hanesha Sharanam Sharanam Ganesha**

**26. Gate Gate Para Gate Parasam Bodhi Swaha**

**27. Shambha Shivo Jaya Shambha Shivo Jaya**
**Shambha Shivo Jaya Shambha Shivo**
**Om Mata Om Mata Om Shri Mata Shambha Shivo**

**28. So Hum So Hum So Hum Mata Hum So Hum Shivo Hum**

I Am That I Am

A U M !

# The Voice

In the Sanskrit language the fifth chakra, **Vishuddha**, translates as the center of great purity. Since this chakra center is connected directly to our throat, voice, and hearing, it is natural to use sound, singing and listening as ways to open or balance this energy.

In our chakra yoga classes, as a group, we have an opportunity to explore the voice with basic breathing and toning techniques. As well, I, (Marina), have always encouraged students to treat themselves to the gift of private voice training. It is wonderful to do this, even for a few months, to discover one's unique, pure voice. I do recommend classical voice training as opposed to pop or jazz vocals as classical voice training has the technical exercises necessary to reach the authentic potential of the voice, expanding the upper and lower register of your persona sound. You can then take these techniques and use this training in any style of singing.

Discovering the potential of your authentic voice is a truly uplifting experience. It expands the soul, increases creativity and self-confidence as well as creates more joy in one's being. Singing or working with various types of vowel toning, harmonic overtoning or chanting is also very healing for the body, mind and spirit. This practice can reach into the very depths of our being.

Purity, in the translation of Vishuddha, refers to using this chakra energy in its purest form. Through pure sound, affirmative thinking, pure thoughts, pure words as well as pure conscious listening, this chakra energy can remain open and balanced. If in the early stages of development a child is suppressed by fear or shyness of making sound or communicating his or her truths or creative ideas, this chakra center is inhibited and can weaken in its potential to be open and expressive.

In developing the voice through voice lessons, vowel toning and other forms of sound one will find that their voice is very much connected to their emotions. By developing one's own voice one can experience a lot of personal growth. One releases pent up emotions such as anger, worry and/or other types of inner conflicts that may have been suppressed for a long period of time. In working with the voice one may gain confidence in one's self to communicate more clearly and effectively. One may gain the ability to stand in one's power to speak their truth and let go of habitual patterns of shyness or timidness once and for all. One may let go of the fear of being heard, being visible or being ridiculed. One may also gain the confidence to speak in front of large groups and be heard.

Through the practice of sound and breathing one may release certain emotions held in the cellular body. These emotions may be feelings of sadness, grief, fear and so on but one must realize that there is a purification taking place in the energy body through the power of sound. After one has cleared any negative, stagnant energy patterns one may experience the euphoric feeling of making vocal sounds as well as signing out loud. It is also a very joyful and healing experience to sing with a choir of voices. There is a lot of power in the harmonious sounds of many voices. Some people join community choirs or song circles just to sing for the pure joy of it.

Professional stage or film acting lessons are also a great way to develop the voice and overcome the fear of public speaking. Acting lessons teach one how to articulate as well as project one's voice to a group of people. The exercises and techniques learned in drama classes are invaluable for teachers, public speakers and all forms of public business operations. The ability to use one's voice in its rich form boosts one's confidence to present themselves in a very assured manner.

Reciting poetry out loud to another person or in front of a group is another creative method to develop the voice. Practicing to articulate the words clearly with dynamic tones and inflections is a very useful way to work with the voice.

The voice is totally connected to our breath. As we breath deep and release the sound in its full timbre we are opening the curtains to Vishuddha chakra. In his book, *The Mozart Effect*, Don Campbell says all forms of vocalization such as signing, chanting, yodeling, humming and mantra can be very therapeutic for the voice.

It is also very good to warm up the voice through humming, vowel toning and other vocal exercises before going into a full creative expression of song. Taking the time to massage the face, release the jaw as well as exercise the neck and shoulders will help one reach the true quality of their unique voice.

In her book, *Eastern Body Western Mind*, Anodea Judith speaks on the psychology of the chakra centers. She points out that if one has trouble speaking or expressing one's self in the midst of a confrontation with a partner, parent or friend then they are probably experiencing a block in the fifth chakra. She says it is a great exercise to write out exactly what we would have like to have said and find a supportive friend to read this letter to. You may choose to read two different drafts of the letter. The first one may be totally unedited and the second one may have less emotion reaction around it. You may even then choose to give the letter to the person you were in confrontation with or not. You may find from doing the exercise that you are able to speak more readily to the person you are in conflict with.

John Bradshaw, author of the book, *Healing The Shame That Binds You & The Homecoming*, offers some similar exercises in his work with original family pain. In his workshops he encourages people to write a letter to the living or deceased person that you may have unresolved issues with. He suggests you write this letter with your left hand in order to connect with the authentic inner child who may be holding the suppressed emotions. You may then take this letter and read it out loud to a friend to connect with the deep emotions behind the words. This can be very powerful back with your right hand, while playing the role model of the person you were in conflict with. In this letter you would write the kind of words and feelings that is healing for the inner child. This is very effective and healing for the fourth and fifth chakras. It is very important to clear inner conflicts and speaks one's truth in the healthiest way possible.

# Affirmations

Affirmations are positive words or short phrases said in the present tense. These phrases are repeated over and over again like the chanting of a mantra to send the positive affirmation deep into the subconscious mind. The repetition of the affirmation helps one to manifest these experiences or feelings in one's daily life. One may call it self-hypnosis or the power of mind over matter. Many people find this practice to be a very powerful and life changing. As well, practicing affirmations as opposed to speaking or thinking in a negative manner is also using the energy of Vishuddha in its pure form. It is said that the ancient Egyptian Pharaohs were very

attuned to the power and sacredness of the voice (fifth chakra). Apparently the Egyptians practiced the power of affirmative thinking to direct the nation. In the teachings of the science of yoga and the power of the mind and thought is deeply investigated. Thoughts are vibrating energy and can manifest in the material world. Teachers speak of our thoughts creating our reality so one must be mindful of one's thoughts, desires and wishes. They may manifest!

Visualization with affirmative thoughts is also a good practice to help manifest the desired wish. American author, Louse Hay, has had a great influence with her books and audio meditations on the power of affirmations to help heal and ailing body or change the habitual conditioning of the sub-conscious mind. It is very important to say your affirmations in the present tense for if one speaks of the positive thought in the future tense then it may never manifest. It will remain as a wish in the future. According to research the subconscious mind only responds to the present as opposed to the future tense of language.

I am healthy. I am whole*. (not) I will be healthy. I will be whole.*

I open and receive the abundant flow of the cosmic universe.
*(not) I will receive … ….*

The sub-conscious mind does not respond well to negative phrasing as well such as :

*I do not have cancerous cells anymore.*

(instead say) My cells are healthy and whole. My liver is rejuvenated.

*I am not in conflict. (not)*
(instead) I am peaceful. I am centered. I live in harmony with all beings.

Affirmations are one way of working with the fifth chakra and the busy mind to create a more positive and peaceful reality in life. The affirmative thoughts will absorb and weaken the power of the doubting, fearful and negative thoughts.

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# Toning

In 1959 a woman named Laurel Elizabeth Keyes discovered for herself the power of the voice by producing sound to release feeling from her body. Her voice became

her healing instrument. She called the process of making love, elongated, sustained sounds with the human voice, toning. After much research into the nature of sound used by ancient civilizations and indigenous peoples she said, “Toning is an ancient method of healing which restores people to their natural, harmonic patters:.

Author of the book, *The Mozart Effect & Musician Physician: For Times to Come*, Don Campbell, describes toning as the conscious, elongation of sound using breath and voice. As well, in her book, The Healing Voice, Joy Gardener-Gordon says toning is utilizing the vibratory power of the voice by making long, sustained sounds without the use of melody, beat or rhythm. Toning is also devoid of words and phrasing and therefore does not require any musical ability. It is pure sound!

In our discussion on the sacred power of sound and mantra in chapter seven we learned that according to the psychic channeling of Edgar Cayce, the ancient Egyptian priests apparently practiced the power of sound by singing a succession of particular vowel tones to attune their vibration with the higher vibrations of the cosmic universe, invoke celestial divine energies as well as activate the chakra centers within the body. In Indian music, raga is the central concept of music and melody. Svara is the Sanskrit term meaning tone. In the Indian musical scale the seven svaras (tones) “sa re ga ma pa dha ni (sa)” are referred to as the seven goddesses. Singing these tones over a sustained period of time is said to invoke the divine presence of the mystical universe and fill one’s cup with creative inspiration and divine love. The western musical scale is sung in the same tonal melody with sounds, “do re mi fa so la ti do”. The muscle scale attunes the hearing and creativity of the singers and musicians.

In his book, The Secret Power of Music, author, David Tame says Indian writers have always taught that the epitome of music belongs to the ‘voice’. The voice is thought to be the essential expression of the cosmic universe and esoterically associated with the aspect of the Mother-Goddess. The voice has a direct spiritual connection with the symphony of sound constantly vibrating in the magnificent universe. Tame said that the ancient civilizations regarded the phenomenon of sound with great reverence. It is said that people could access sacred energies through the tonation of pure sound and create a channel between the divine and human beings on earth.

Groaning, sighing and releasing long sustained sound are all forms of toning. Vowel toning is the discipline of choosing a vowel such as ‘AH’ as in father or ‘EE’ as in she, taking a deep breath and vocalizing that vowel tone in one long, sustained sound. Here it is helpful to practice good vocal breathing techniques where one can manage their air and not let all the air to of the lungs at the beginning of the sound. These exercises of sound and breathing are very healing and therapeutic for the body, mind and spirit.

The practice of free-hand journaling is also a very good exercise to do after sustained periods of toning. This free syle writing helps one to analyze or understand any memories or emotions that may have arisen during or after toning.

As well, similar to the effects of mantra chanting, toning absorbs the busy chatter of the mind and can bring one to a calm place of clarity and centeredness.

In many traditions and forms of sound therapy the voice is recognized as the highest healing instrument of sound for the voice resonates deep inside the cellular body and directly affects the physical and emotional being. Sustained periods of vowel toning greatly oxygenates the cells, energizes prana and helps to harmonize the physical and emotional body. As well toning induces the alpha wave activity in the brain which is very good for connecting with the sub-conscious mind, relaxation, visualization and reciting affirmations. In his book, Healing Sounds, author & teacher, Jonathon Goldman says that according to scientific research different brainwaves are measured in cycles per second called hertz. Hertz is the measurement of the frequency of a sound wave. One hertz is equivalent to one cycle per second. For example the note A on the piano above middle C is measured as 440 hertz or 440 cycles per second.

## The four categories of brainwave rates are :

Beta waves which range from 14-20 hz. This brain activity is normal wake consciousness.

Alpha waves range from 8-13 hz. This brainwave is brought about by slow breathing, relaxation, meditation, vocal toning, mantra chanting or listening to harmonic frequencies.

Theta brainwaves range from 4 -7 hz, which occurs in deep states of meditation or sleep Delta brainwaves range from a very low vibration of 0.5 – 3 hz. This brainwave is deep sleeping or meditative states.

We can easily change the vibration of our brainwaves through the process of toning and chanting.

Through much research with his colleagues, sound therapist and author, Fabien Mamam had great results in experimenting with sound produced over cancer cells. He said that the combination of the human voice and the musical scales caused some Hela cancer cells to explode. In his manual on The Healing Power of Sound, Simon Heather shares his research on Fabien Mamam's work with sound. He said that Mamam and his colleague, Helene Grimal, in their many experiments found that sound frequencies between the note of 'A' (440 Hz) and the note of 'B' (493 Hz) would break down the structure of an isolated cancer cell within 21 minutes while the healthy cells remained strong and intact. In their experiments with volunteer breast cancer patients, Mama and Grimal found that in toning the whole scale for 21 minutes 3 ½ hours per day for one month one woman's tumor completely disappeared. From his experiments Maman found that the human voice, with its

added quality of color, intention and spiritual nature, had a great impact on the results of sound therapy to heal human dis-ease.

**Benefits of Toning**

There are many physiological and psychological benefits to the practice of toning. These benefits are very similar to those of mantra chanting discussed in chapter seven. I will mention a number of the benefits here but I also encourage you to review the those listed in chapter seven.

**Toning:**

- Increases the levels of oxygen in the body and brain
- Energizes prana; helps to activate the chakra centers
- Resonates and helps to rejuvenate the cells, bones, glands & organs
- Gives an inner massage to the body and brain
- Improves circulation of all bodily fluids
- Stimulates brain activity; enhances memory and decision making; induces alpha brainwave activity
- De-stresses the physical body; induces the relaxation response
- Calms the emotions & busy mind; lowers blood pressure & respiration rate
- Helps to alleviate chronic pain
- Supports over all health of the body & mind
- Helps to awaken and raise one's consciousness with the higher vibrations of the spiritual universe

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**Chanting**

Chanting is the repetitious singing of words, phrases or short songs with or without musical accompaniment. The words of the chant or mantra can be an affirmative phrase, though or prayer. Many traditional cultures such as the Africans, Native Indians, Hawaiians and so on practiced chanting in their particular ceremonies for healing, planting, harvesting as well as the cycles of the seasons.

Long sustained notes such as the Sanskrit mantra 'AUM' (OM) are sometimes called chanting as well as toning. This repetition is voiced in more of a monotone sound as opposed to a melodic style of singing.

Some of the traditional mantras form India and Tibet are recited in a basic monotone drone as well. Other chants such as the Gregorian chanting are sung in accapella voice which is voice without musical accompaniment.

In his book called Chanting, Robert Gass says, “chant is singing our prayers”. Also he notes that chanting is ‘vocal meditation & discovering spirit in sound’.

The benefits of chanting are many. These benefits are very similar to all the benefits listen for toning and mantra, for they are all forms of chanting. Chanting can alter the brainwaves of the left and right hemispheres of the brain inducing states of relaxation as well as enhancing clarity, memory and one’s creative flow of energy. Chanting opens the doorway to the heart chakra creating feelings of joy and compassion. As well chanting is releasing and clearing for Sishuddha chakra on many levels. This vocal practice boosts the immune system and is a good discipline in maintaining the health of the body, mind and spirit.

## Harmonic Overtoning

“The universe is alive with sound and within all sounds are the harmonics. Harmonics are a phenomenon of nature that occurs whenever sound is created.”

-Jonathon Goldman ( Healing Sounds)

In his book, Healing Sounds, author, healer & teacher, Jonathon Goldman shares his knowledge and research on the power of harmonics. He reminds us that almost all tones produced by an instrument, a voice or other sources of sound, such as the dripping of water into a steel basin, are a mixture of the pure tone or first tone which is called the fundamental tone and other subtle frequencies called partials. He says the lower frequency is called the fundamental tone and all the partials higher in frequency from the fundamental tone are referred to as overtones. Another name for overtones is harmonics.

As mentioned earlier, sound is vibrational energy scientifically measured in the form of waves. These waves are measured in unites of cycles per second (hertz). For example if we play the note middle C on the piano, it is measured as 256 hz. Here C is the fundamental tone which is clearly heard but when one listens intently one will hear all kinds of other higher tones resonating as part of the musical scale of C. Goldman points out that he most obvious overtones are called formants. These are tones like the major $3^{rd}$ or $5^{th}$ of the scale. There are more subtle tones between these intervals. Overtones contribute to the quality of sound, color and timbre of an instrument of voice.

According to Goldman’s research, vocalization of long sustained tones produce overtones which are extremely healing for the brain and body. As well, listening to harmonic overtones is very stimulating and charging for the cortex of the brain.

Harmonic overtoning is heard in traditional forms of Tibetan chanting. Some of these chant masters sing what is called the 'one-voice chord' which is the process of singing three notes of a chord at once. Harmonic overtoning is found in the singing of Tuvian throat singers, Gregorian chanting and particular styles of harmonic vocal toning.

Goldman says he was first introduced to the effects of harmonic overtone singing by the incredible recording of David Hykes vocal ensemble. Two of these recordings are called Harmonic Meetings and Solar Winds. At this time in 1981 Goldman was blown away by the transforming effects of this style of singing. This sent him on a huge process of creative research to find out the many benefits of harmonic singing.

When I met David in 1995 he had a copy of David Hyke's tape, Harmonic Meetings, which he was using for his sound therapy sessions with people. I listened to this recording and felt and instant connection to this style of singing. It is hauntingly mystical!

By listening to certain harmonic overtones one's consciousness is altered and transported to another realm of existence. Through his research Goldman said it is probable that listening to particular styles of harmonic overtoning and well as vocalizing these sounds can actually create an opening or gateway between the many levels of consciousness.

The Australian aboriginals use the didgeridoo to create healing and induce higher states of consciousness. The one-voice chord made by the Tibetan chant masters is similar to the sound of the didgeridoo.

Scientist & author of the book, The Conscious Ear, Dr. Alfred Tomatis shares with us his knowledge of 50 years of research in the function of the human ear and how it affects the entire human body. Dr. Tomatis is a specialist in otolaryngology and has made incredible discoveries in the power of sound and listening. Goldman also introduces Tomatis' work in his book, Healing Sounds.

Tomatis believed that there were two kinds of sound. There is sound that creates fatigue in the body and then there is sound that vitalizes the energy of the brain and body.

In his talks with Jonathon Goldman, Tomatis shared his opinion on harmonics. Tomatis says that high frequency harmonics such as those found in Gregorian and Tibetan chanting actually charges the cortex of the brain. Apparently, Dr. Tomatis was known to sleep less than four hours a day. He said this was accomplished by listening to sound rich with harmonic frequencies during his waking hours.

His discovery of how the brain is charged by the high harmonics in Gregorian chanting happened when he worked with a group of monks who practiced chanting.

He speaks of this story in his book, The Conscious Ear. He tells us that when he went to investigate the life of the monks at one particular monastery he found the normal routine of the monks was to sleep approximately 4 hours per day, practice their chanting about 6-8 hours per day and the rest of the time they accomplished their daily tasks around the monastery. There was a time when a new Abbott came to this monastery and decided that the chanting took up way too much time, so he put a limit on the chanting practice. After a certain period of time all the monks, one by one, began to feel tired, lose energy and fall ill. The Abbot was perplexed by this phenomena so he brought in different specialists to find out why the monks were so weak. After many ideas from these specialist there was not much success until Dr. Tomatis decided to take it upon himself to monitor the monks daily activities. With his knowledge on the re-vitalizing and charging effects of sound Tomatis put all the monks back on to their normal chanting practice of so many hours per day and one by one each of the monk's became well again. Tomatis discovered that the high harmonics in their Gregorian chanting charged the entire brain and body enabling them to sleep less and be very healthy and productive throughout the day.

Tomatis also found that the music of Mozart especially his violin concertos were also rich in harmonics. He said that if one played Gregorian chanting or Mozart concertos in the background, while studying, writing or working one would feel more awake and alert. He pointed out that the harmonics in this music would stimulate brain activity.

During his discoveries on the power of sound and the incredible functions of the human ear Tomatis invented the "electronic ear" to help meet his client's physiological and psychological needs and ailments. In his research, Tomatis found that almost all of the cranial nerves lead to the ear. The ear being neurologically connected to the optic and oculomotor nerves have an affect on one's vision and movement. The vagus nerve which is connected to the ear is one of the largest nerves in the body and affects many areas of the body including the larynx, heart, the bronchi, the intestinal tract and so on. There fore what we listen to has a great impact on the physiological functions of the body. Sounds pollution, such as chainsaws, tire the body whereas soothing relaxing music calms the mind and body.

Dr. Tomatis also made great discoveries in the affect of sound on the baby in utero. He studied many cases of autistic children, children and adults with speech impediments, people suffering from dyslexia and stuttering, only to find out that the mother's voice as well as her thoughts and surrounding sounds affected the psychological behavior of the baby inside. You can read about his in his auto-biography mentioned before, The Conscious Ear. It is very fascinating research. By utilizing the electronic ear and the human voice Dr. Tomatis helped many people with various problems. He helped people who were considered to be tone deaf, many people with speech impediments, stutters and dyslexic people, autistic children as well as people with various forms of depression. The electronic ear enhanced the learning of various languages in a very short period of time as well as the musicianship of many opera singers.

Tomatis also pointed out that he voice can only duplicate what it hears so in order to improve one's singing ability or quality of voice the hearing of the individual must be firstly improved. Tomatis said as one listens to the high frequencies of harmonics the actual tone and quality of one's voice will change.

In his interview with Goldman, Tomatis said that one of the basic functions of the ear is to provide, through sound, the charging of the brain as well as 90-95% of the total charge of the body. Tomatis said that Tibetan chanting, Gregorian chanting as well as particular styles of throat singing contained all the frequencies of the voice spectrum, approximately 70-9000 Hz. He also told Goldman that a good part of the healing effects of listening to high frequencies is in the conduction of the bones which are stimulated by 2000 Hz.

Goldman says, "bone conduction actually amplifies the sound through resonance of the cranium and the skull. According to Dr. Tomatis bone conduction stimulates the stapes muscles of the ear, which he believes is the key to charging the cortex of the brain."

Listening to harmonic overtone singing is also a great practice for meditation.

According to research, harmonic signing and listening has many therapeutic effects on our physical, emotional, and spiritual being. It is similar to vowel toning except one can change the shape of the mouth and lips as well as the positioning of the tongue. Some suggested sounds and tones from Jonathon Goldman's book are:

Elongation of an 'EE' sounds changing to an 'OO' sounds with deep breathing and repetitive cycles.

Nonsense words such as 'MOOR' 'NUUURRRR' 'WOW' 'HHHHUUUURRREEE'

It is fun to practice with a group. The high pitched spirals of sound you hear as the group is toning are the high frequency harmonics.

Pure sound is healing for the body, mind and spirit!
Marina

## ACTIVE PRACTICE

### Vishuddha Chakra Routine

1. Begin with the Pranava A-U-M done in ***vajrasana***; follow it with three cleansing breaths. #1

2. Go down into ***dharmikasana***, head to the floor in front of the knees. Place your hands out on each side of your head and roll up onto the top of your head. Your body needs to come up off your heels to do this. Make sure you do this gently, using your hands and arms to stabilize and support you as you feel the stretch though the neck and upper shoulders area. Best to exhale as you come up into the stretch and inhale as much as possible in the down pose. As an extension you can try rocking a little from side to side while on your head. Hum with the out-breath. #20

3. Come back up to the sitting position and work the shoulders up and around with the breath; up on the in-breath, down on the out. Now raise the shoulders up as high as possible with the in breath and just drop them down as you release the breath. Follow up on that with head movements back and then forward down to the chest; exhale forward. Now go down each side, then turn around each way. Let the breath out with a sigh each time.

4. ***Supta vajrasana***, the reclining thunderbolt. Recline back to rest your hands and elbows to the floor, then drop your head back until the top of the head touches the floor. Chest is arched up and the head is tucked in under as far as possible. Breathing is deep particularly in the upper chest area. Feel the stretch in the neck and its effect on the thyroid. Use the sound "hung" with exhalation. # 15

5. **Janu shirsh asana**, knee to the head pose. Starting with the knee bent, grab your toes and inhale as you straighten your leg and pull it up to your head. Mantra: *lung*, externally and internally. # 75

6. ***Nikunjasana***, the baby pose, is done from an all-fours position by bending the elbows and coming to rest the chest on the floor; slide forward until you are not on your chin or neck, then turn your head to one side and breathe deeply in the upper chest. Do it again with your head turned to the other side. Feel that each breath is lifting up the weight of the body, strengthening the breathing muscles. Try a low frequency hum in the position. # 37

7. ***Simhasana***, the lion. Come up onto the knees while in a cross-legged position and place your hands out front to make a four-legged pose. Now open the mouth wide and hang out your tongue; eyes are alos wide open. Proceed to roar like a lion with a deep expelled breath. Feel how deeply this affects your throat. # 69

8. ***Sarvangasana***, the shoulder stand, after three double leg lifts. Simply continue the lift until your feet are up over your head and almost down to the

floor; now place your hands on your back for support and straighten the legs upward. Breathing remains fairly deep. You can now try some of the variations by bringing one knees down to the forehead while the foot rests on the other thigh, one side at a time. Right leg down stimulates the liver and left leg down stimulates the spleen. Mantra: *hung*. # 130

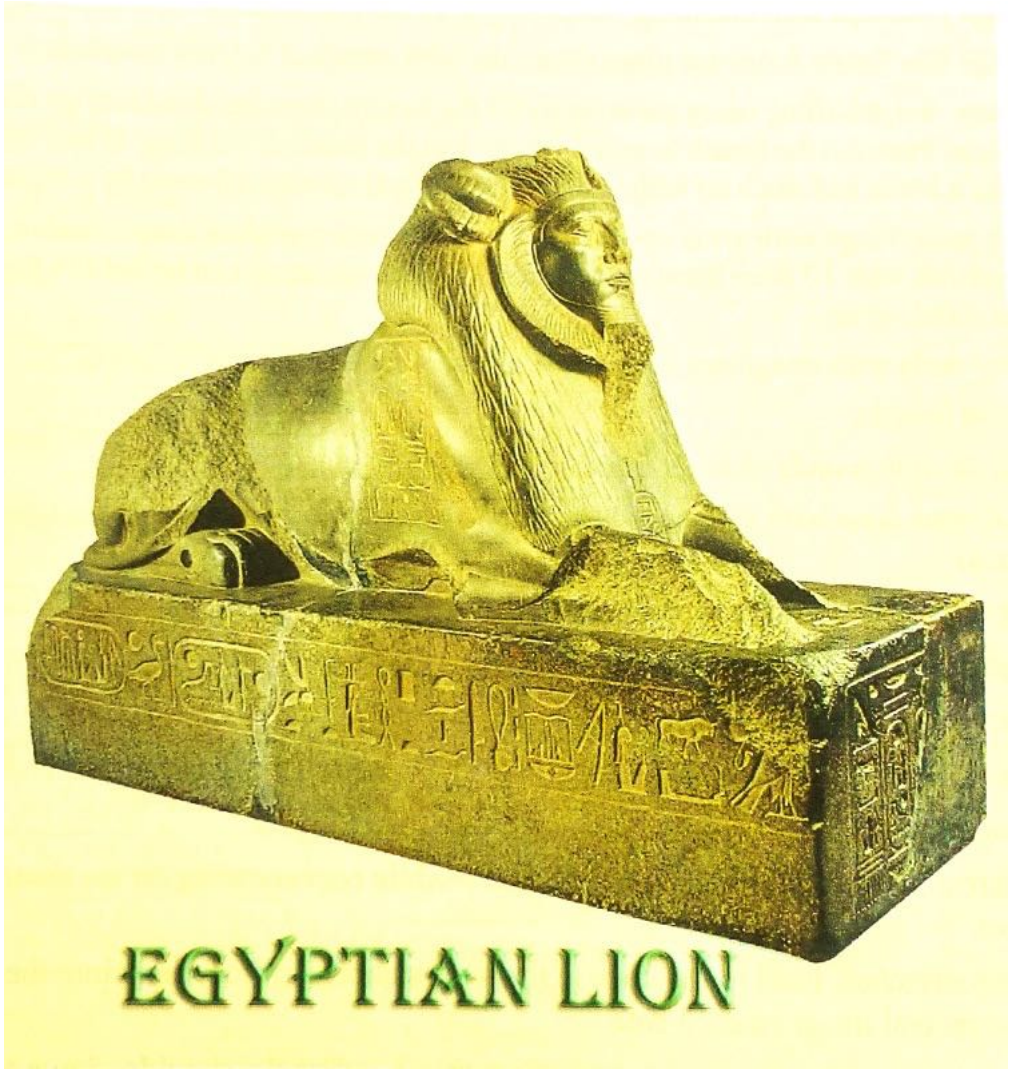
9. Back down on the floor, roll over onto your belly and do ***bhujangini mudra***, (# 48), that version of the cobra where you hiss out the breath as you go up. From here go into ***singha nada kriya***,(# 51), by lifting the head only and making a loud snoring noise. Do you suppose this is a good for the throat?

10. ***Parighasana***, the locked gate: Move up onto your knees, straighten one leg out to the side, inhale deeply and bend over to that side while exhaling; each side. Mantra: *wung, wung*. # 110

11. ***Vajroli*** 1: Starting from *shavasana* (corpse posture), do a straight-back sit-up, using the hands on the ground as support. In the sitting position blast out the breath in one fast *bhastrika*, apply the *bandha trayam*, place the hands behind the back for support and raise the legs straight up over the head, balancing the body on the tailbone and hands. This is maintained for a 32-second held-out breath, until the *Shakti* flows at the kunda, shaking the body. Feel the energy flow in the spine.

12. ***Amaroli*** 1: Sitting in *shakta chelana*, a complete deep breath is taken, followed by the application of the *bandha trayam*, and held for a 64-second count. Head is then raised and the breath blasted out so that a 32-second held-out breath can be done. You might want to take a few days to work up to this.

13. Relaxation: After several rounds of *Savitri*, follow the movement of the breath right through the body with the sound AUM, both on the in-breath and out-breath.




## POWER ROUTINE

1. Take six breaths, followed by a couple of cleansing breaths
2. Forward and back bending with breath.
3. Flying Eagle done 27 times with breath, then retention.
4. Ten yoga push-ups with breathing, followed by 10 deep breaths and one retention.
5. Egyptian Sun Salute done nine times each side, with retention holding the pose.
6. Imaginary weight-lifting using the arms to lift the weight from the shoulders up till the arms are straight. Push out the breath as you push up; feel the muscles working. When you have had enough, take a break and catch up with your breath. Severla rounds followed by a retention.

7. Warrior pose; lunge with arms up at a pace that supports complete deep breathing. Then hold the position with 10 deep breaths and retention. The retention can be held in the position or else standing up.
8. Standing curls with imaginary weights; integrate your breathing.
9. Cleansing breaths.
10. Sitting, do nine rounds of super breaths with a retention and mula bandha.
11. Sarpa Kriyas done with the hands behind the back and the legs lifted as the head and torso life. (15 times).
12. Then come up on all fours and do some tiger breathing with a retention.
13. Boat and rowboat with vigorous breath followed with a retention in the lying down position.
14. Forward stretch, then cobra.
15. Squats done 27 times, breathing deeply, with 5 breaths and retention at the end.
16. Cleansing breaths.
17. Rapid breathing for 108 rounds plus retention while concentrating on the contraction of body muscles.
18. Do some stretches: head to the knee in the wide stance. Go from there into the Egyptian Sun Salute – several times on each side.
19. Now do a spinal twist from a lotus position, then bending the shoulder down to each opposite knee, with right hand on right knee, or left hand on left knee.
20. Cleansing breath.
21. Sitting in the Thunderbolt posture, do a three-part breath, where the length of the in-breath, the retention and the out-breath are all the same duration: an 8 count.

## SYNOPSIS of VISHUDDHA CHAKRA

**ELEMENT**: Electromagnetism (Ether) **YOGA**: Raja Yoga

**GENDER**: Masculine

**FORCE**: Expansive, vibratory

**MEDITATIVE DIRECTION**: North

**YANTRA SYMBOL**: Pink oval, in blue 16-sided mandala

**ENERGY COLOR**: Blue

**SOUND**: Hung

**SENSE PERCEPTION**: Hearing

**ACTION**: Speaking

**NERVE PLEXUS**: Laryngeal

**PHYSIOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS:**
**GLANDS**: Thyroid, Parathyroids **ORGANS**: Voice box **OTHER**: Colon

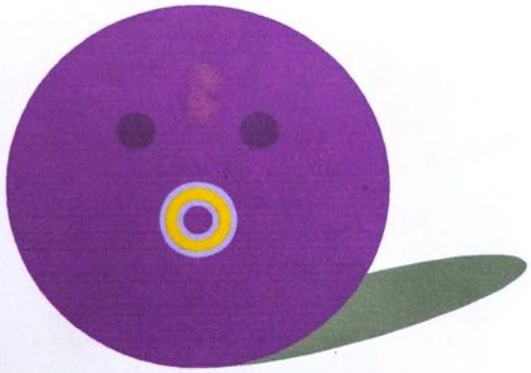
**PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERSTICS:**

**POSITIVE:**
New life
Adjustable
Investigative
Diversified
Nomadic
Fearless
Generous

**NEGATIVE:**
Indulgent
Immoderate
Disagreeable
Impulsive
Chaotic
Unforgiving
Misfit

# Ajna

## Chakra



## the Mind Element

# CHAPTER 6

## Ajna Chakra

*Command Center*

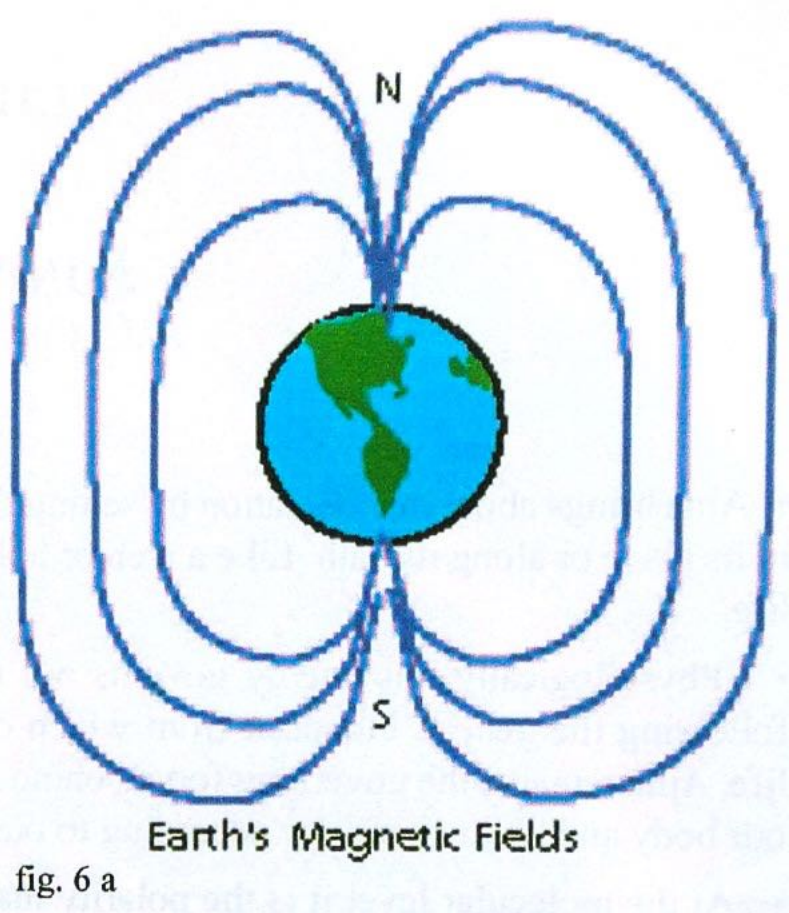
- Ajna brings about manifestation by setting the magnetic pattern which holds every particular or wave in its place or along its path. Like a web of holographic image, it is the mental/energetic blueprint for life.
- Physiologically this energy governs our unfolding body as we grow from a seed to an adult, following the genetic blueprint from which our personal manifestation originates. Throughout our life, Ajna remains the governing force behind the old axiom "mind over matter", constantly directing our body and brain chemistry according to our beliefs and expectations.
- At the molecular level it is the polarity that runs through every atom and molecule. A magnetic force, establishing the magnetic guideline for every electromagnetic wave, Ajna is at the core of every "thing".
- The universe also has a pattern of magenta fields, one which keeps the position and motion of all the parts in balance. These universal gridlines make up the webs that weaves our manifested reality.
- At the psychological level this chakra is our command center, the site where we make decisions and govern our thoughts, actions, and even feelings.

## ELEMENT

The 6th chakra, called Ajna, is the element of the mind. Within the realm of the energy world, this "elemental" force of the mind is known today as magnetism. To the scientists and physicist in our modern world, magnetism can be detected or observed as lines of force, found virtually everywhere as magnetic fields. In the last chapter we looked at electromagnetic energy – an intangible, non-substance that permeates the entire universe. Now with the mind element, we peek into the center of those electromagnetic waves and see magnetic lines that act as guiding forces around which spinning electron energies from the spirals we perceive as electromagnetic energy.

During the last century, science and technology have raced ahead of wisdom and put these insights into practical applications. Magnetism has been researched and worked with extensively. The sub-atomic world of the electron has been taken will under control. Since it was discovered that pulsating magnetic fields produced a flow fo electrons that we call electricity, the world has been turned onto a while new wave of creativity. Generators utilize these pulsating fields to give us the electricity we now use in a million ways, and often simply take for granted that it should always be there for us to use. Electromagnetic fields have become the base for just about all of our technology. Meanwhile, the nucleus of the atom is being untraveled

to create a phenomenal transformation of matter into energy in such proportions that we can now blow up cities, and produce enough electricity to light up the world. As the light gets brighter, however, some of us see that the purpose of doing such things becomes questionable.



Earth's Magnetic Fields
fig. 6 a

At a deeper level, this magnetism can be found everywhere we look. The earth, for example, has a magnetic field that we all learned about in school. --- the North Pole is up in Canada and the South Pole is down in Antarctica, (fig. 6 a). Around these magnetic poles, the physical earth spins incessantly. We have utilized these poles to navigate our travels with the use of compasses. The reason compasses work the way they do is because they also have north and south poles; in fact everything does. Thanks to technological tools we can now look more deeply into the material side of things. Scientists armed with this probing capacity have delved into the structure of the smallest particles of matter to discover that these particles also have magnetic fields, even down at subatomic levels. These fields seem to be an intricate part of the universe. When we look out at the larger side of the universe, we find that the sun also has this magnetic polarity, as does the solar system and the galaxy. If we could see the entire universe at a glance we would likely find the same magnetic pattern.

One of the interesting aspects of these magnetic patterns is that they tend to line themselves up, as can be seen when a compass needle automatically points north. Alignment allows for a flow of this magnetic energy, while a lack of alignment tends to create a disturbance in the magnetic fields. In figure 6 b, for instance, there is an alignment of one magnetic field with that of the earth. The result is a connection of the fields with the lines of force flowing in parallel. In the yogic view of energy, this connection is understood to facilitate greater conductivity in whatever substance we are dealing with. This also applies to our body substance: the tissues and cells of various organs and glands, other fibers of nerve tissue. Energy flows freely through us when the magnetic axis of our own cells is in alignment. Experiments in physics have shown that a magnet placed in reverse of the earth's magnetic field stays with its own "mini" field, out of the general energetic flow, and that neutral points are created where there is no magnetic force, because the fields neutralize each other. The points marked with an X in the diagram 6 b& c, illustrate these neutral zones. It may be fine in a lab with mental magnets, but when this occurs within the cells of our own body it created a high resistance to the energy flow through that area. This resistance can result in these cells becoming disconnected energetically from the surrounding tissue. They then go their own way, or *grow* their own way, creating chaos in the otherwise harmonious functioning of glands, organs, etc. When this effect begins to influence an area we feel disturbed, and if it continues it becomes manifest as dis-ease.

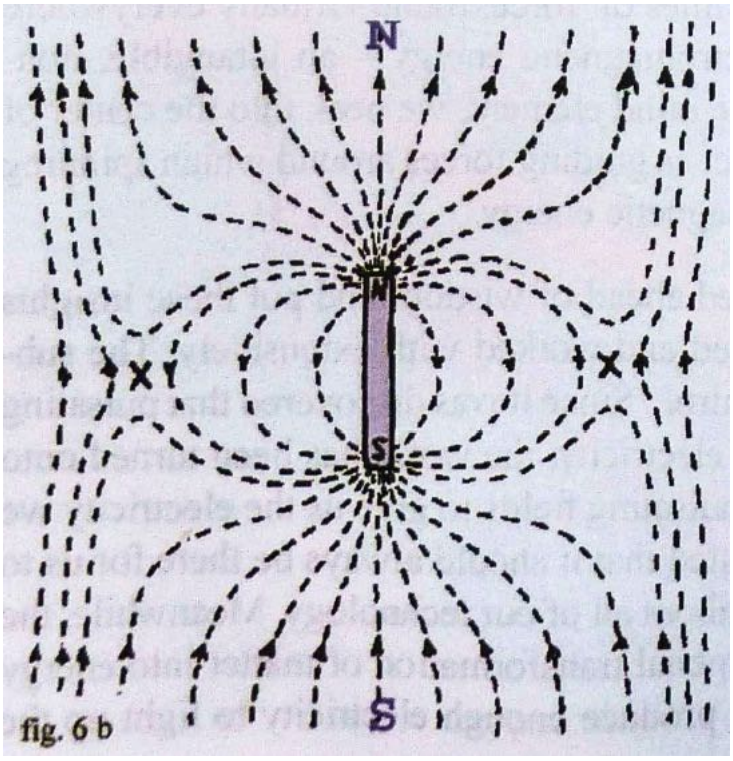


fig. 6 b

Such techniques as polarization have been developed to change these situations and bring about a reconnection of cells right down to their molecular level. Magnetism as the principal force of the mind is used in much the same way that an iron magnet

is used to produce a magnetic flow in another piece of iron (see the "Polarization" techniques in Chapter 1).

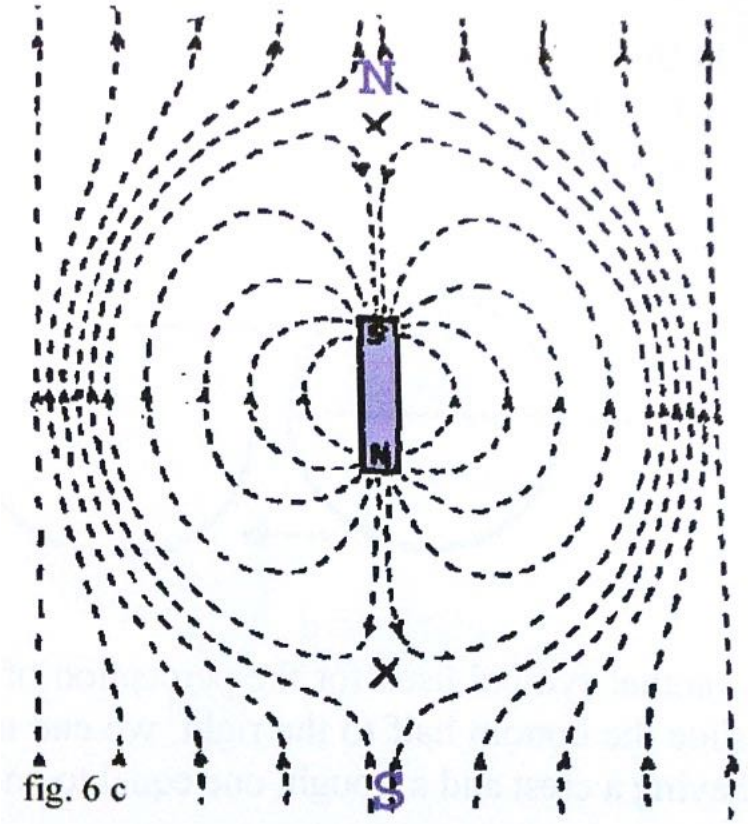


fig. 6 c

This magnetic line can be straight as an arrow (silence) or can be wavering and vibrating to make the sounds that become thoughts. When the magnetic line of force begins to waver and vibrate, it becomes an electromagnetic wave. (fig. 6 d) This wavering may occur as the magnetic lines cross each other at a variety of angles, causing interference patterns which result in undulating electromagnetic waves. As such, the patterns manifest as part of the electromagnetic spectrum we looked at in Chapter 5. In this whole spectrum we find the various frequencies that produce the phenomena we perceive as the five elements of the lower chakras, (the building blocks that make up earth, water, fire etc.). These frequencies also produce the energy vortexes along the spine that govern our bodily functions. The vibrant lines of electromagnetism, and the force that are created by the various frequencies of these vibrations, create the six forces out of which our physical body and world are made. As mentioned, the angles at which these lines cross each other determine the type of force manifested and the characteristics of each of the chakra energies. What we need to understand at the level of the sixth chakra is that these lines all interweave to form certain patterns in our mind, (the holographic images that make up the seeds in our mind), and that these are in fact the guidelines that weave together the fabric of the universe. Some of these patterns, mostly projected subconsciously, make up the pictures we project as reality. Some of them are

conscious, but that is a small minority, said to be 10% as compared with the 90% that is considered to be unconscious. The goal in yoga is to become conscious of both sides.

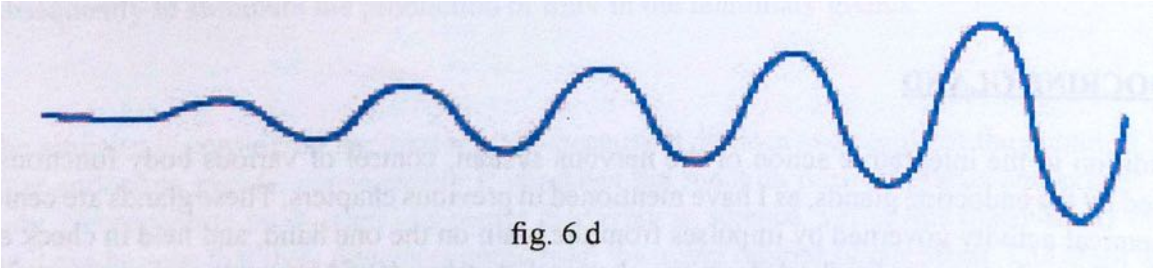


fig. 6 d

The full moon is one of the symbols used in Yantra Yoga for this chakra: only one side is full, the other side is dark. The fullness of the light on the one side, compared to the crescent moon used in the second chakra symbol, indicates the greater perception which can be achieved at this level. Duality begins in the realm of the sixth chakra, reminding us that both the light side and the dark side of every thing is important. Above this chakra we find the one universal energy field that makes up the electromagnetic ocean: a continuum of magnetic, interconnected lines. As our consciousness expands in these higher chakras our perception becomes more unified and we see the larger picture of the universe. But at level six we begin to focus, and that means looking at one part to the exclusion of the rest, examining a piece of the puzzle, or one piece at a time.

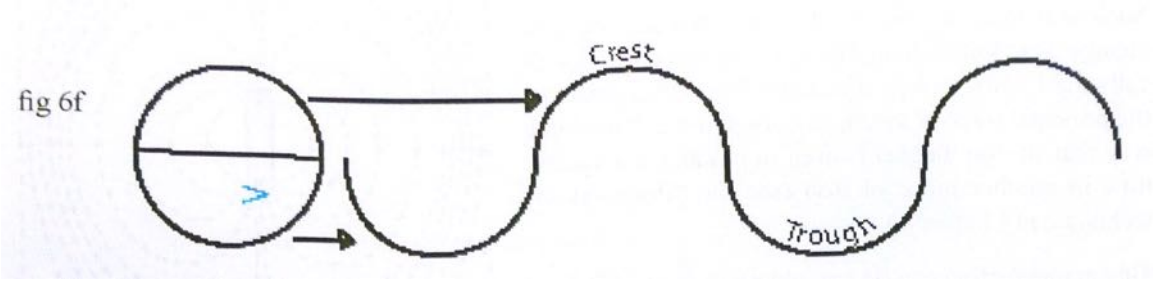



fig 6f

Another symbol used for the perception of the mind is the full circle. When we split the circle and slide the bottom half to the right, we end up with what looks more like a sine wave in electronics, having a crest and a trough, one equal to and opposite the other. (fig. 6 f)

The crest and through balance each other out --- a balancing act that is always part of the sixth chakra. Because energy inevitably moves with this balancing of forces, the yin and yang of it are always back to back, hand in hand. (In fact if you take this wave and stretch it out far enough, it becomes a straight line, also called a flat line. When flat, the line goes back to being a magnetic line of force.) Meanwhile, what we have here is the beginning of duality. The side of the wave that us up turns into the positive, while the side that is down can only become the negative. Opposites are born, leading us into this world where everything has its opposite: day/night,

black/white, male/female, up/down, past/future, proton/electron, etc. In the Chinese view this is represented by the Yin/Yang symbol. In the Hindu version of the chakras we find androgynous Shiva, a deity half male, half female.

What we find as the first division in the mind is that of conscious/subconscious. What has happened in the Western educational system, with its high emphasis on logical, rational thinking, is that our feeling and intuitive aspects became mostly subconscious. This is our feminine nature, the half of our mind that has remained in the dark. Fortunately, the times are changing, the feminine element is reawakening, and the West is on the way to becoming more balanced.

## ENDOCRINE GLAND

In addition to the integrative action of the nervous system, control of various body functions is exerted by the endocrine glands, as I have mentioned in previous chapters. These glands are centers of chemical activity governed by impulses from the brain on the one hand, and held in check and balance through constant feedback from the chemical storehouse of hormones and neuroprptides that is flowing through the body at all times. An important part of this system, the pituitary gland, lies at the base of the brain. The energy of the sixth chakra governs the pituitary. This master gland secretes a variety of hormones which have a direct influence on all of the other endocrine glands, including the following:

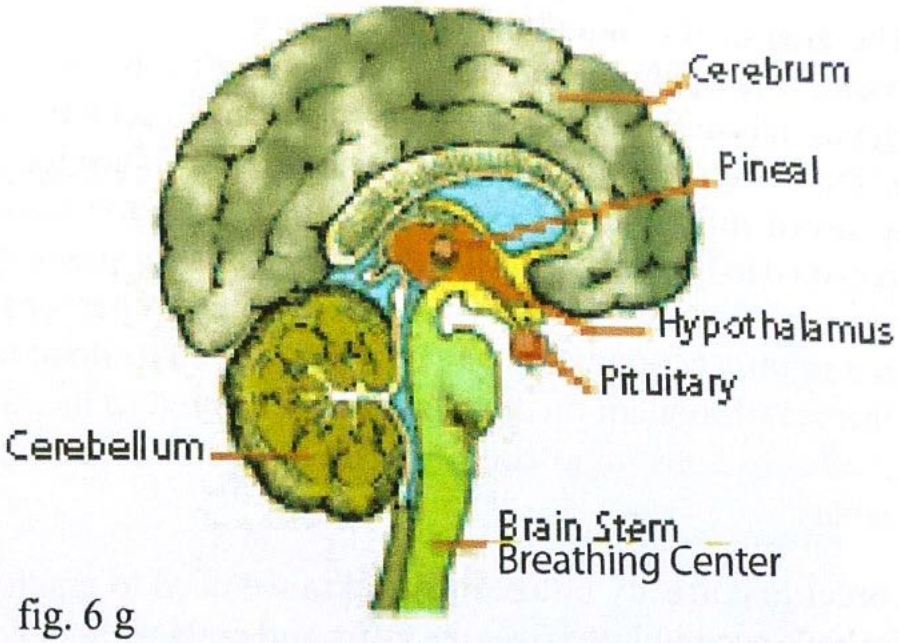


fig. 6 g

(1) A hormone that stimulates the thyroid gland and controls its secretion of thyroxin, which dictates the rate at which all cells utilize oxygen, and subsequently, basic cell metabolism.
(2) A hormone that controls the secretion of hormones in the adrenal gland, which influence the metabolism of carbohydrates (ACTH), sodium and potassium, and control the rate at which substances are exchanged between blood and tissue fluid; one of the pituitary hormones regulates the retention of water by the kidneys. (ADH)
(3) Substances (neuropeptides) that control the secretion in the ovaries of estrogen and progesterone and the creation in the testicles of testosterone; (FSM, LH)
(4) The somatotropic, or growth hormone, which controls the rate of development of the skeleton and large interior organs through its effect on the metabolism of proteins and carbohydrates; this hormone controls growth by regulating the amount of nutrients taken into cells. The growth hormone also works with insulin to control the level of blood sugar.
(5) An insulin regulator, thereby indirectly balancing blood sugar metabolism.
(6) As well, the posterior lobe of the pituitary secretes vasopressin, which acts on the kidney to control the volume of urine, which results in the passing of large volumes of urine.
(7) The posterior lobe also produces oxytocin, which causes contraction of smooth muscle in the intestines and small arteries and is used to bring about contractions of the uterus in childbirth, and subsequently to stimulate the production of milk in the mammary glands.

The pituitary is considered the master gland because it dictates and regulates the output of all the other endocrine glands; consequently it regulates the function of most glands and organs in the body. Neuropeptide production is a recent discovery in science, yet as this discovery is mapped out it can be seen that their directives come from the upper regions of our being. The brain with its multitude of thought patterns has a high degree of influence on immediate brain chemistry, which then impacts our body chemistry. Body chemistry has more influence on how we feel physically and emotionally, feelings that cannot help but influence our thoughts. The connection between mind and body is inseparable, just as much as head and body are inseparable.

## PHYSIOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS

The area of the mind/body that is governed most directly by this energy vortex is out "thinking organ," the cerebrum and frontal sections of the brain, particularly a nerve group called the cavernous plexus. It is in this center that awareness can direct the actions of the mind, and from those ,the actions of the body. Some of these

actions are very conscious and determined, while others are directed by stored information from the realm we call the subconscious mind. The library of information contained in this subconscious includes all of our past experiences as well as fantasies that have come from other sources (TV, books, stories, etc.). It is perhaps unfortunate that the images recorded in here have an impact upon our state of mind as well as upon body functions. I say this mostly because the influence of modern media is generally slanted to the negative. This negative media influence upon the subconscious mind could potentially by changed into positive images by turning into the "Yoga Channel".

In order to correctly utilize this chakra we need to eradicate the negative expectations and beliefs we may have accumulated over the years and replace them with positive images and a belief system based upon the reality of the energy world. In this way we not only change our mental patterns but also affect our physiological functions through the electrochemical connections made at the chakra centers as well as the glands connected to each energetic vortex. Relations between thought patterns and brain chemistry are just recently being researched in the West though that link has long been known in Eastern thinking. What researchers are finding out about brain and body chemistry is truly fascinating as we realize that the neuropeptides, hormones and enzymes are really governing much of the processes occurring in our bodies and minds, as well as most of what we feel as emotions.

## JNANENDRIYA

In the sixth chakra, within the realm of the mind, is the brain with all of its varied functions. We could look at it as our central computer; the cerebrum in particular could be considered the center from which the commands are given. Here, all of the sensory information from each of the sense below is gathered and processed. Within this process we formulate a perception of the reality in which we find ourselves. What we see and experience in the outer world is in fact a fabrication made up of the sensory information, together with past impressions from our memory. There is as much expectation in what we experience as there is actual sensory perception of the moment. In our long process of growing up we learn to perceive life in certain ways, just as we learn to interpret certain sounds as a language. During the time we are learning to interpret, many patterns are formulated within the brain. After that time, most of what we experience tends to fall into our patterns of past experiences, so that we first recognize objects in the world around us, then we sit comfortably in reality, as we "know" it. Much of our experience of being "in this world" is held within, and manifested from, the expectations in our subconscious mind.

In the development of this chakra it is necessary to go deeply into the perceptions of how the mind works, not simply look at the results of our "thinking." There is a lot to it—the mind is like a very complicated computer – yet it does operate on some basic principles that can be understood. One of the first things we might discover about

the mind is the duality principle I mentioned earlier. It is here that we judge things to be goo/bad, pleasant/unpleasant, likes and dislikes and a variety of other categories. The senses themselves work much on this same principle, continually distinguishing between heat/cold, light/dark, etc.

Let us just go deeper into the senses themselves for a moment. In this photo from Thailand, we see the mind game portrayed as a charioteer with a team of five horses. Each of those horses represents one of the senses wanting to pull the mind its own way. The chariot is the mind, while the driver is consciousness. In the normal functioning of the world the senses do pull our minds in many different directions. We see something attractive, we look twice then we think about it, or fantasize, or compare it to something else etc. The new hear some music and it reminds us of a time when we were teenagers and we first heard it; again, we get lost in memories for a while. As we are walking along daydreaming, our feet trip over an object on the sidewalk and we swear at the person who may have left it there…and on it goes from one thing to the next. These are the horses pulling us all over the place. Consciousness is wandering around hypnotized by the constant stream of events that virtually has no end. This ancient chariot symbol is also used in the Bhagavad Gita in India, and was also an ancient Greek symbol. In yoga it is considered important to organize those horses into a team and steer them into one direction --- one in which you would like to go. In this way we stop paying attention to every distraction from the senses and focus our minds, thereby becoming the driver rather than sitting in the back seat in a vehicle that really has no driver at all.

According to the science of yoga there are 18 senses feeding the mind almost all the time. Eleven of those are external senses connecting us with the world out there; seven of them are psychic senses that give us a deeper inner knowledge about what

is going on at a more cosmic level. The external senses are as follows: **sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and tactile pressure, heat and cold, pain, muscular coordinators and balance, thirst, hunger, and sex drive**. Each of these senses is a perception in tis own right and requires reactions and adjustments, and sometimes will even stimulate awareness. If one of these senses does not awaken awareness, then a reaction may be made from a fully subconscious level. The sensation of cold, for example, will automatically create a response to generate more heat by increasing metabolism. We need not think about doing this; it comes naturally. We might notice it when it gets extreme enough to make us shiver---an auto-response that creates more heat. Another example is when hunger is felt and we react by eating. Our reactions to eating may be quite habitual, and the whole digestive process that follows is automatic and self-regulating.

All too often this happens to go a little too far and keeps us moving and behaving in the normal world as a conditioned being, moved by past-learned patterns or what are called *samskaras* in Sanskrit. These *samskaras* are what constitute our karma, or keep us walking along our karmic path. A simple analogy would be our tendency to eat certain foods, whether they are healthy or not: the karma created may be bad health, but in ignorance we continue doing it. By observation and discrimination applied in our "thinking organ," (brain), where all this information is processed, we can see what needs to change and initiate the required transformation.

The sense generated by this whole energy vortex is that of perception itself, literally the "sixth sense". When perception is focused on the ears, we hear; on the eyes, we see, on touch we feel. All of these come in to be perceived through the mind. This integrated sense is also the "third eye," the one inside, which can see right through whatever appearance we have before us. Externally this means noticing the sights and sounds of the world, but the inner version of perception becomes almost uncanny, because it seems to have no limit. In some cases this can lead to hallucinogenic states, and the individual may require some training to discriminate the inner from the outer world. Once the addiction to thinking has been broken, all of the more subtle psychic senses open up so that experiences can be observed through direct perception, without any of the other sense involved. A deeper understanding of life can then develop.

## INNER SENSES

In the Hindu version of this chakra they describe a six-faced witch called Hakini, who sites on top of the eleven worldly senses, inhibiting our awareness and preventing us from perceiving the seven higher senses. This is not to be seen as the wicked witch of the West by any means --- this feminine force represents, rather, the alluring beauty of the world and the attraction created towards that beauty. Hakini's six faces show us that she perceives the information coming in from the senses of all six chakras. She keeps us happily involved in the normal world to the point where

we are quite busy responding and reacting, and don't notice the more subtle seven sense that might give us a whole different idea of what is going on at any given time. This has a very positive side because if we were looking at the person in front of us and suddenly saw them as a mass of vibrating molecules it would be very hard to relate to them. The vibrant molecules are closer to the truth explained in quantum physics, but not a practical way to be perceiving daily life. In higher meditational experiences this may have its place, and if we can make it past Hakini's powerful inhibiting force, we learn to perceive the innermost senses – and these higher senses have much more to do with the development of the higher mind than do the sense of the body-mind. This state of higher perception generally requires guidance as we see the normal world melt down into the various frequencies of the energy world. In the mean time, Hakini and the other "witches" of the chakras are there to keep us sane and functional. The seven senses she inhibits are part of the mind that does not attach itself to the body, so in our perception of these senses we are not limited to the normal space-time that contains the body and lower mind.

The sense Hakini inhibits are: **clairvoyance, clairaudience, inner taste, inner balance and movement, a psycho-sympathetic sense having to do with feelings and impressions about people, a sense of identification with others which produces sympathy and empathy, and a sense of higher compassion**. The inhibitive power said to be Hakini's is in reality a force working within our own minds to keep us busy processing all of the inputs from the world in which we live. There is always a lot going on in the lives of most people, and it takes a lot of mental energy to figure it all out and keep an integrated picture of the scenes we are involved in. The more subtle senses require a higher state of awareness and a calm mind that is listening. This level of listening is what is achieved in a state of meditation, but so many people don't take the time for that. We are generally captivated by the loud turmoil of activities and don't notice the gently voice of feelings and telepathic impressions, intuition, or the subtle sounds of the universal energy fields. Besides, we have never been taught to truth those kinds of feelings, nor have we been taught that they even have any value. These senses are often very alive in women, in fact have been referred to as "women's intuition", and often dismissed as such by prevailing masculine ideology. The lower senses are much more tangible and explainable to others --- there is no question when we stick out hand in the fire we feel the heat and the pain. But when you feel someone else's pain or have an intuitive feeling about them – how do you know the truth of it?

A little more familiarity with these higher senses might be in order here, since these senses will gradually develop with the practice of yoga.

Clairvoyance is a very visual sense that has always been associated with the "third eye." It is not limited to the present, and comes to many people in their dreams, though as such it is often mixed in with a lot of mental processing. It is an eye of perception that is not have limited tot his world; it has a connection to Guru Haridya Manas, the inner teacher (see Chakra 4).

Clairaudience is a similar internal sense to that above, but this one is auditory, coming as words or a voice – just like thinking. It is like a third ear. Telepathy is one of the words used to describe this sense in the West. As such it can be a very confusing sense – when we hear other people's thought, for instance, without knowing where it comes from. This one also can be connected to Guru Haridya Manas, but it requires some training. *Please note that both of these senses sometimes develop spontaneously, leading to confusion and perhaps a label from "professionals" of schizophrenia, when a person starts seeing or hearing things which are not there*. Whereas in the East the evolution of these inner mental faculties is highly respected and cultivated with careful guidance from an enlightened being, in the West it may be considered a mental disease and suppressed with drugs. As a result of this kind of thinking, yoga students are cautioned about talking to just anyone about their inner experiences. The same discrimination is used in Eastern training where one is advised to speak of such matters with fellow students or the teacher.

The inner taste refers to our internal knowledge about the foods we eat and their effect on our health, an instinctive feel about herbs, berries, and the medicinal properties of such foods. Because of our civilized appetites and overindulged taste buds we have lost most of its intuitive input, e.g. pastries, fried foods, chocolate bars and pop.

Inner balance and movement has to do with our orientation in the mental world, a sense that develops with such techniques as the pancha sahita and its directions, or in other centering techniques.

The psycho-sympathetic sense is like telepathic feeling we get about people ,as to whether they are telling the truth or not, for example.

Sympathy and empathy are basically one sense that allows us to feel what the person we are with is feeling. That feeling may be emotional or it might even be quite physical; the sense can develop to fairly high accuracy. It too can be confusing at the beginning and one must be careful not to "take on" the feelings of others as one's own.

The last sense of higher compassion stems from the sympathetic side, going beyond feeling sorry for someone to feeling compassion, with a higher awareness of what they are going through on their spiritual journey.

This spiritual journey is an awareness-expanding process that lasts many lifetimes, requiring conscious decision and action on our part. Without our participation, life can go on for a long time at a mostly subconscious level. We are generally assessed as being about 10% conscious, while the realm of the subconscious is granted a significant 90%. A good reason for this comes back to the question of focus. Looking at the mind as our central computer, we will see that there is a lot of information coming in rom each of the senses all the time. Imagine if we were aware of each cell of every muscle we were using as we walked along a busy sidewalk, each cell

contacting and lengthening with every step. The sensations would be overwhelming, since there are zillions of cells in our body. At the same time we might be hearing all of the conversations going on around us, clearly seeing everything in our field of vision, smelling each flower, plant and person's scent, while tasting the muffin we were chewing. We would be so overloaded that we could not function.

The universe has designed us with certain mental capabilities that allow all of these things to be happening at the same time. One of these other aspects within the mind, represented by the orange six-sided figure in the mandala, is called the reticular activating system (depicted as the six-faced witch Hakini in the Hindu version of the chakras). This small conical part of the brain is what censors the information coming into the brain. Without it we would not be able to concentrate on anything at all, being constantly bombarded by a constant steam of impulses from each and all of the 18 senses. So the function of this system is to allow only what is relevant to our present choice of awareness to enter the conscious realm; other sensory information is shunted into the subconscious to be death with by the autopilot.

In our physical brain this automated function (autopilot) is delegated to the area known as the cerebellum, and which is called the brain stem. Manipura chakra, with its action and learned behavior, is considered to govern this section of the brain. Among the many functions of this subconscious autopilot are such things as heartbeat, breathing, metabolism, digestion, etc. As we grow up and learn to do more activities, the actions also become automated and we only need to decide to do them; the process remains largely subconscious. For the majority of us this has gone too far. In our educational system there was so much emphasis placed upon "thinking" and gaining knowledge that we have allowed almost everything else to go unnoticed. Most of the sensations of the moment go by us with a judgment of insignificance because we are too preoccupied with contemplating "more important" things. It is great that we have learned to focus so well on thinking and memory, but is has been at the expense of feeling our bodies. In fact it has been more costly than we realize, since all of this mental focus has often caused us to hold our breath (without even noticing ). These unconscious breath retentions formulate unhealthy breathing patterns and create an oxygen shortage, which leads to a multitude of physical problems.

In the field of Hatha Yoga the focus is turned back onto our physical bodies so that we may not only enhance body functions but also learn to enjoy the feelings with which it provides us. Simply breathing deeply and feeling that action can be very pleasant and rewarding, in fact it develops into something quite blissful.

The Yantra symbol for this chakra overall looks like an eye with a circular center and two sides taking the shape of petals. These two sides represent the left and right hemispheres of the brain at the physiological level, while at the mental level they stand for the intellectual and intuitive aspects, the masculine and feminine, thinking and feeling. Built into the thinking (left) side of the brain is rational thought, logic, language, mathematics and geometry. On the feeling (right) side of the brain is the

direct perception of energy movement, which creates all the feelings we have, from the most sensitive touch to the more subtle psychic senses that can let us see right through people. The mathematical side is not blind either, as it allows us to see the universal structure of things through the forms of the geometric mandalas whose energy patterns are the basic blueprint for the manifested world. With the right use of both complementary halves of the mind everything can be known and understood, so that true wisdom develops.

Thinking and feeling can complement each other quite well, but generally they tend to stand in opposition because of our one-sided "thinking" education. Many males, who go far with their thinking tendency and theoretical ideas, have largely lost touch with their feelings. This creates an imbalance which drives them to search for some kind of feeling experience. For the longest time their only social outlet for feeling has been sex. Nothing else was socially acceptable for Mr. Macho. The resulting society, divided into thinkers and feelers, has reached a point where communication between the two is difficult because each one is so far out on a separate limb that it is hard to see they are on the same tree. This division can be seen from the center where the power of a unified mind combines the perceptions of thought and feeling into one experience. Thought and feeling are poles apart, and mind does not function well as a polarized entity in opposition to itself. The magnetic force of the sixth chakra is what pulls the poles back together.

KARMENDRIYA

Keeping in mind that Ajna is the mind element, we will now consider the actions we perform with our minds. As we saw in the sense perceptions, jnanendriyas, there is a lot going on here, as compared with the uni-sense of each of the lower chakras. Ajna chakra is by all means and by all definitions, the sixth sense. Just as the intake of perceptions is multi-faceted, so the actions and reactions of this mind element are

many sided. In fact, the seven senses that receive information, also transmit it. The "third eye" is as much a movie projector as it is a camera.

In developing this center and its transmitting qualities, many cautions have been noted down through the ages because of the (possible) perilous nature of actively projecting our own thoughts. Many of us have grown up in a non-enlightened society, afflicted by disease, dishonesty and violence, and now we see so much of this on TV that the overall impact of this on our minds is radically different from the influence of the yogic civilizations of the past. As a result, there is a fairly high instance of disease thoughts, accident thoughts, and crime scenes (from TV) in the minds of our fellow beings. What happens when there are picked out of the subconscious reservoir and projected outward? We end up with the manifestation of those disease. Take a look around at the skyrocketing cancer rates in a society of educated people who "know" a lot about cancer. We firmly "believe" it is a real threat, not to mention how real the illness is. So what are our expectations as a result?

In the great temples of the ancient world, we can most often find clear reference to the introspective practices which they applies in their lives. Looking into the four directions of the mind came to be an integral part of what they all did, as a self study method necessary to penetrate the inner realms. In figure 6 I, we can clearly see the third eye of the Buddha-like figure. This is one of the 216 massive icons at Angjor Bayon in Cambodia, 54 of which look out in each of the four directions.

Great importance was given to the development of these inner faculties while the initiates, who went through the process, were raised to a higher status. At the top of the ladder was the kind, considered to be a divine being with a vision that could lead the nation to great places. These God-Kings, as they are sometimes called, were not tyrants who ruled slaves with whips and swords, but rather, enlightened beings who were loved and admired by the people they led. They were educated to be in touch with the divine order of the universe so that people looked up to them for light and guidance.

During the enlightening education they received, the divine rulers were not only trained in the sensitive nature of the inner psychic senses, but also guided in the finer arts of directed the nation by directing their own thoughts. SUchan education always proved to e a challenging endeavor; those who managed to conquer their minds had become masters of themselves and were highly respected as advanced beings with powers required for making deicisions and leading people. Of course, they could also influcen and direct other people's minds when necessary. Such were the God-Kings of old: the Kinds of Thailand and Cambodia, the Rajas of India, the Pharaohs of Egypt, the Prophets of Israel, the True Man of the Mayans, the Chiefs of Native America.

One of the practices used in Egypt is referred to as affirmative thinking. It is similar to doing affirmations in modern day language, but then the mind was trained to

think in a way that involved directing the thought process with as much control and attention as one drives a vehicle in 21st century traffic: you don't let go of the steering wheel. These thoughts were carefully put together and projected with an energy that gave them power to manifest in the material world. This is a very different form of thought from the random thinking of modern day people. If our random thoughts were constantly manifested before our eyes most of us would be in serious trouble much of the time. This goes for our verbal thoughts as well as our visual thoughts. The skyrocketing cancer rates are an example; we read about it, hear about it from people we know, we wonder about it in ourselves, fear it, and the possible expectation is there. Then there are the accident scenes form TV…, they may be subconscious for the most part, as everything is recorded in the subconscious, but when these pop up into the conscious mind at what it deems an appropriate time – manifestation!

The two aspects of mind can work as well together as our two hands, but obviously we need to clean up our act. Once that has been accomplished we can begin using our visual process to "imagine" a certain event, healing for instance, sending that "image" to the recipient in need, propelled with the power of sound.

"As the fletcher whittles and makes straight his arrows

so the master formulates and directs his thoughts."

*(Buddha)*

The Buddha knew about this, as did the Yogis, and those rulers we just mentioned. The power of the mind is nothing new; it has always worked for us – or against us. We just need to realize that this projection-like function of the third eye is just as real as the seeing ability of our other two eyes. With two eyes we perceive the world, with the other we partake in creating it. When we come to that realization in our own experience we can assume the responsibility to direct our lives and what "happens" to us in a positive and productive way. On the Yogic path we begin very simply by visualizing ourselves as healthy humans, putting that together with active techniques to make it happen. Intuition will step in and show us what we need to see and feel about ourselves, also any corrections or improvements we need to make. Following that, we can imagine making the changes – and the results, back that up with the required physical condition and create the results we want.

“Imagination is more important than knowledge.”

*Albert Einstein*

Knowing that the root of the word imagination is “image,” reminds us that these images we create in our minds are, or can be, more significant than just passing fantasies. Through yogic techniques, (and other methods), they can be empowered to the point of manifesting in the reality of the material world. This can begin with creating better health for ourselves, proceed to manifesting abundance and on from there. The methods of empowerment involved here are directly related to the sixth chakra, of course, and are elaborated upon in the level 2 & 3 Teacher’s training, once the student has cleared the subconscious mind of its weeds.

As an illustration of the above method of using imagery, let me give you an example from my own experience. Back in 1985 I had the experience of cutting into my left foot with a chainsaw while working on a log building project. The chainsaw went down to the bone of my big toe, teaching away the flesh, tendon and nerves that were in its path. (Perhaps I had environed this possibility while working twelve hours with a dangerous tool). At any rate, my friends rushed me to the local hospital to be stitched up, at which time it was near midnight. The doctor on call said she could stitch up the skin but that the tendon would require further surgery at a larger hospital if I ever wanted to move that toe again. The chainsaw had ripped a chunk out of the tendon and left two rayed ends that had spring back to almost an inch apart. They would need to be pulled back together and re-attached. In Western medicine it is not considered possible that it could re-connect and heal by itself. For me, a practicing yogi of sixteen years at that point, the idea of going for surgery did not fit in.

What I did instead was go back down to my little cabin in the woods, with my new crutches, and begin visualizing the tendon growing back. First of all I imagined it being there, then brought prana to it by feeling the energy flow along the tendon to the toe on the in-breath, and back to the foot on the out-breath. This practice I did several times a day for perhaps ten minutes each time. The other technique, also practiced several times a day, consisted of imagining going in there with a needle and thread and pulling it through each part of the tendon, then pulling it tight so the ends would come together.

During this period I did not tell anyone what I was doing, I simply focused on doing it and had no doubts in my mind that it could be done. If I thought of moving my toe I would instantly get sharp pains right through it, until the end of the two weeks, when the pain no longer came and I could move the toe again. As a result of this

chainsaw episode, I came to realize the power of imagination. I had the foundation of years of a very strong yoga practice, and during that time had cleared many fears and doubts, allowing for the development of a strong belief system.

This system of beliefs needs to be built from the ground up in yoga, founded on the scientific knowledge of the energy world; then, we can come to that deep understanding that Mind **is** over matter.

## CHARACTERISTICS

The sixth chakra endows the individual with a competent mind, good perception and observation skills, while also providing intuitive insights in all situations. The drawbacks may be in seeing too much of the unexpressed and wanting to understand everything.

When this energy is flowing and balanced:

1. Good balance of intellect, intuition and insight, very perceptive.
2. May have a good understanding of life, be level-minded and calm, and have good memory.
3. Imagination can be very good, leading to inventiveness and inspiration.
4. Good creative visualization and capability of manifesting into reality.
5. Aware of feelings as well as thought.
6. Usually quite forgiving and compassionate.
7. Capable and reliable.
8. Psychic senses easily developed, often with good balance.

When the energy is too strong and out of balance:

1. Mind too active in analysis, judgment and comparison of everything.
2. May be too psychic and unable to process the information coming in; can lead to mental imbalance.
3. Inner vision leading to delusion and hallucination; paranoia may arise.
4. Dream world may be too strong and boundaries with reality unclear.
5. May be stubborn and ungovernable with an unforgiving attitude.
6. May become disagreeable, with a personality that is snobbish and “superior.”

When the energy is weak or depleted:

1. Poor imagination, probably nor very creative.
2. Not much ability in visualizing or comprehending things.
3. Dull of mind, memory not great in intellectual content.
4. Poor intuitive and psychic skills, not very in tune with people or situations.

5. May be indecisive, incapable, unreliable.
6. Concentration may be difficult to achieve.

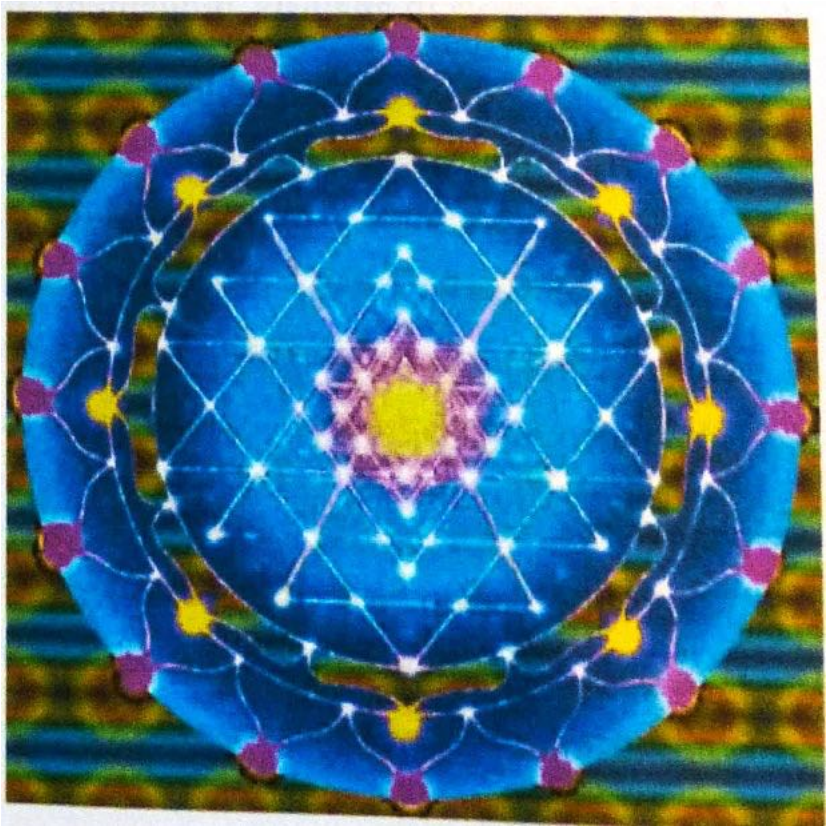
## MENTAL DIRECTION

The direction for Ajna chakra is **up**. Sky, heaven, your person ceiling – however high that may or may not be – is where this energy takes you. Have you ever heard the sky is the limit? Well, beyond the sky you can see the entire universe, so consider what the universal vision is for humanity and compare that to your self-image. Consider how much impact the mind and its images have on the entire body. In the light of modern research in endocrinology, it is well worth looking into your expectations for yourself. Every thoughts counts: conflicting thoughts may cancel out each other; harmonious and compatible thoughts may develop into something very real. Become aware of what your mind is doing. Are your thoughts about yourself in harmony with your feelings about yourself? Are you so busy thinking that you cannot feel your own heartbeat? These are the type of concepts that need to be resolved in the chakra of the mind. Balance should be attained between the feelings and perceptions of the body and emotions, and the thoughts and ideas of the intellectual mind. What can result is harmony and peace at a deep internal level, at the center of your being, your <u>whole</u> being. The type of yoga best suited for this energy enfoldment is Yantra yoga which brings a deep understanding of the energy patterns, time cycles, and a structure of the unfolding universe, leaving one trusting in the process of life and free from worry.

## YANTRA YOGA

A Yantra is often depicted as a geometric form of interlaced triangles, as in Sri Yantra. The yoga which works with such geometry is called by that name: Yantra Yoga. It has its source in energy patterns formulated by the multi-intersecting magnetic and electromagnetic energies of the universe. These energies are forever converging into changing patterns we call Yantra or mandalas. Study of the geometric details manifested by these inflowing waves of energy is at the heart of Yantra. It is really sacred geometry, or we could say it **really is** sacred geometry. As this energy moves into the world and crystalizes into matter we can sometimes see the patterns of this cosmic geometry --- in crystals for example, or in the gentle unfolding of flowers, or the weaving of the spider's web.

Just as in the West geometry is closely linked with mathematics, the geometric forms in Yantra are seen to be composed of lines, curves and angles which have measurable distances and values. The times and distances that electromagnetic waves travel can be calculated, the angles of intersection observed; the frequency of vibration for the waves can be known, their effects noted and predicted. This has led, over the millennia, to a calendar system that lays out the forces with which we have to work, year by year, month by month and day by day.



Different types or frequencies of energy have different effects on us. Though it becomes complex due to the variety of intermingling forces affecting us most of the time, there are nine basic forces that work through us. In their simple aspects we can come to know and understand them. These are the forces the Mayans referred to as the nine lords of time.

**1. Seeding time**. The starting point; this si the first year (or month or day) of nine, time to start something new. There is a drive to do something at the physical level. It is good to note that whatever is begun has nine cycles to complete. Now you are planting the karmic seeds for what you will harvest later. It is a very positive time, ambitious, creative, pioneering. There is a tendency towards worldly activity.

**2. Germination**. This time of spreading out is one of association, when the sprout reaches out to touch and make contact with the surrounding environment. In human affairs this energy moves us into relationships, form individuality to being part of a social structure. Progress may seem slower and less dynamic than in the first cycle, but things are expanding out ward rather than upward. During this period we are influenced by other people's energies and thoughts more than usual. Our individual energy and creativity may seem lower, or dependent.

**3. Manifestation**. A time of expression and leaping forward. Transformation or change of old patterns is the key phenomenon during this time. It may be positive, or it may seem negative when we need to let go something from the past. Creativity

and optimism run high, new vision and possibilities present themselves (sometimes too promising). Number three energy takes a downswing during the second half, so tread cautiously as over-optimism can cause a crash at that time. The force is moving outward, extroverted and towards physical action, then turns inward for testing and analysis. Don't over-invest in the first half as it may lead to disappointment. The vision may not materialize until the 5 cycle.

**4. Testing period**. Examination and introspection are the keys; pulling the weeds out of the garden. Time of healing and cleaning up our act, and looking at the little details that may be obstructions. Growth seems to be at a standstill, the vision fades. Feelings are more prominent during this time – check with your intuition on a daily basis, if not moment by moment. Karma is coming from the past – turn inward and face it; only this can bring intuitive breakthroughs and long-term progress. The body leans to inaction and healing; fasting and breathing are the actions to take. Associations with others may be more difficult during this time. Stay in touch with the world of inner feelings as this can lead to a wonderful state of being – in the moment.

**5. Rapid growth**. New visions, ideas and experiences; putting forth new branches. A year of change and doing what we have wanted to do over the past few years; an energy that carries up up and away. Inspirations may seem unlimited; but some effort may need to go into staying realistic. Nevertheless, a dynamic time when much can be accomplished – climb out of the rut and go for it. Often a time of travelling, moving, or going in new unforeseen directions. Expression in the way of communication needs to flow at this time, but watch the intellect which may present too many possibilities.

**6. Budding time**. Decisions, and balancing the mind – looking at both sides of the picture. In the active world it is a time to settle unresolved issues, finances or family affairs. The energy of 6 wants to understand more tan think and come to a feeling of resolution. Intuition and intellect both work to see where we are going with our projects. In the plant cycle, this is the time when the buds are out, so we can clearly see that something is developing, but not yet there.

**7. Materialization**. Blossom time in the plant world. Now we can see the beauty of what is being created, though it is not yet practical. This is the Sabbath time – time to relax and enjoy some peaceful, non-active moments. Its can be a very inspired time to read, write, or enjoy music. In the material world, the first half may be a little unsettled because not much is happening; in the latter half, as the energy moves upward into the 8 cycle, everything becomes more rewarding and active.

**8. Fruition**. All the other cycles, form the seed onward, have been leading up to this. Now we have the fruits of our actions. Whatever we have been working to develop is now a final product. Materially it is a prosperous time, investments pay off well, time to buy and sell for the best deals. A lucky or fortunate time. The influx of

rewarding energy from the universe also brings unexpected gifts, perhaps be an inheritance at the earth level or blessings of another kind at a higher level.

**9. Harvest time**. Time to reflect, when the cycle is complete and our mind tends to ponder over the whole process; in this completeness we can see more clearly the oneness of it all. A good time for contemplation and meditation, not a particularly active one. However, it is a good time for planning the actions of the next full cycle of events.

At the completion of the cycle, it all starts over – seemingly going in circles for those who are not on a spiritual path, and spiraling upward for those who are.

These short interpretations of the influence the energies have on us are but a brief summary of the impact of the whole energy field. There are many different aspects to these powers as they weave the universal reality into manifestation, and it may take a long time to understand the depth of this reality. As we move through this book, you will see more information unfolding into the concepts of these energies that are the essence of the chakras.

Back at the more practical level we can start to look at the method of calculating our basic energy centers. Yantra uses a base nine mathematical system where each number you look at needs to be reduced to a single digit, (from 1 to 9). For example the number 12 is made up of 1+2=3. Now with that in mind let us take a persons birth date and see what it can numerically tell us about the energies that be:

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| January | | 25 | | 1963 | | |
| 1 | | 2+5=7 | | 1+9+6+3 = 19, 1+9=10, 1+0 = 1 | | |
| 1 | + | 7 | + | 1 | = | 9 |

From this birth date we arrive at three numbers, and we add these up to make a fourth. This fourth number tells us that the ninth Chakra is the predominant force during this person's life. The three previous numbers tell us that three other Chakras are going to be flowing during the course of that life, for certain periods of time. The main number (energy) -9- is called the Dharma Marga in Sanskrit, or in English it is called the Birth Path. A more expanded definition of Dharma Marga is: the spiritual duty that the individual has come into life to fulfill. This is the driving spiritual force moving one through life. If one is on a spiritual path it will indicate what type of path you need to be on to be in the flow, in the Tao.

The three numbers used to calculate this path are the composite energies that run through the development of life, each one having its influence for a certain period of

that life. Consequently there are three periods to consider, each one with a name and purpose, as well as the overall period with its influence:

| First period (month) | Second period (day) | Third period (year) | Fourth (total) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0-27 years | 27-54 | 54-81 | Life |

From the numbers of one's birth, the Birth Path is calculated; to that number you add 1 and it will give you the cycle year into which you are born. If you are a number 5, you are a completed 5 at birth and the cycle you enter is the next one (therefore + 1 = 6). The following years progress mathematically, going up to nine and starting over gain, until you come to the present year. This cycle tells you which chakra energy is flowing through you, and moving you, for this year.

Now if we take the Karma cycle for any given year, it can be used to work out what cycle influence is predominant in any given month of that year. Begin by taking the month of July; it is in the middle of the year and it automatically takes on the characteristics of the year cycle. So for the year 1996 in the previous example for instance, the month of July would be a 7 cycle. August would follow as in mathematics, by becoming 8, the month before would also be the number before → 6. In such a way all the months for the year can easily be determined. These cycles are the primary energies which move life to unfold in specific ways. There is also a secondary force to be considered, the Karmic Reactive Cycle, which has more to do with our past karma, our attitude, and our reaction to what is happening. It is something like a delayed reaction to the moment, and the closer we are living to the moment the less influence this may have, but the type of influence remains the same. This reactive cycle is determined by adding he cycle year to the cycle month; for example July would be 7+7 = 14, the 1+4 = 5. The result is a compound number 7/5, where 7 is the cycle energy and 5 is the energy we react with.

## YANTRA YOGA CHARACTERISTICS

The energies of the chakras are seen in their geometric patterns, and these patterns are calculated with mathematics. Within that math, each number represents one of the energies. Things change with time because energy is always moving and changing. The math of Yantra takes this into formulas with which you can calculate the energies that were present when you were born, how they will change through life, year by year, month by month etc. Each energy vortex has certain qualities that unfold specific characteristics in a person's development, and through changing cycles of time.

Here is a very brief sketch of how the energies help to form a person's character:

- Is positive, dynamic, independent pioneers and builders in the material world.
- Awareness is centered in the self, physically.
- Grounded in the world and often materialistic.
- Individual and pioneering.
- Strong and original, can be a bit domineering.
- Masculine energy keeps one together, and generally ensured stability.

#2

- Is sensitive, harmonious, easy going and tactful and usually likes to have fun.
- Social element, this energy makes one live in association with others.
- Networking abilities, easy to learn from others, trusting.
- Adaptable and flexible like water, accommodating.
- Feminine energy, sensual and sexual.

#3

- Is self-expressive, confident, ambitious with a magnetic personality.
- Masculine warrior energy.
- Always taking action, sometimes disregarding others.
- Outgoing and expressive.
- Likes change & transformation.
- Artistic and creative.

#4

- Is a steady analytical personality with patience & a strong sense of feeling.
- Feminine, very sensitive and compassionate.
- Intuitive, centered in feeling.
- Analytical and practical.
- Introspective, sometimes too introverted.
- Detail-oriented and systematic.

#5

- Is a seeker of new life and very freedom loving, promotional and fearless.
- Intellectual and loves the world of Ideas.
- Verbal, sometimes too wordy.
- Tendency to try new things, drawn to travel and new places.
- Masculine.

#6

- Is a visionary personality, reliable, resolved with a commanding authority over others.
- Likes to see both sides and understand things.
- Visionary and studious, intellectually curious.
- Mentally versatile but sometimes self-opinioned.

- Expansive and inventive, perhaps too headstrong.

#7

- This person is placid, refined, mild of manner and expression.
- Awareness moving in all directions.
- Interest in many things, intellectual, musical, spiritual.
- Reflective and refined.

#8

- A personality exemplifying justice, mercy & charity.
- Tendency to be mystically in touch with the Universe.
- Good at the receiving end, seems natural to have things flowing in.
- Fortunate in business, usually just, but when negative can be insidious.

#9

- Typifies universal love & understanding; they are affable & sincere.
- In touch with the source of life.
- Idealistic, congenial and musical.
- Can become over-indulgent and luxury loving if spiritual side not developed.

## ***Kundalini***

In the Sanskrit language '*kunda'* is translated as coiled and '*lini'* means serpent. *Kundalini* translates as a coiled serpent.

In the mystical teachings of the Science of Yoga the masters speak of a powerful energy contained and bound at the base of the spine. The base of the spine is the home of the root chakra, *Muladahara*. Metaphorically speaking, this energy is described as a three and a half coiled serpent called Kundalini. Another name for Kundalini is Shakti. In the ancient Sanskrit language the word *Shakti* means 'power'. In the East this powerful force of pranic energy is considered feminine in nature. According to the teachings, this feminine energy is the creative power of the universe and it is also called *prakriti*. The pure consciousness of which prakriti is an aspect is the masculine energy of the universe which in the writings of the Yoga Sutras is referred to as *purusha*.

In his talk on Samkhya philosophy (*The Yoga Matrix*), yogi Richard Freeman refers to purusha as the seer of pure consciousness; the silent witness. He then refers to prakriti as the unlimited creative form of pure consciousness. Freeman poetically speaks of the yogic body as a beautiful flower continually unfolding and expanding just as the inner heart of prakriti continually unfolds and expands to reveal the presence of purusha. One could also say that Kundalini-shakti, upon gently awakening, dances and unfolds to reveal and unite with her beloved, purusha.

Thomas Ashley-Farrand in his discourse on the '***Power of Mantra'*** speaks of prakriti (Shakti) as the energy that creates the earth, makes the planets and trees grow, creates movements of the planets, moves our bodies and basically is the inherent creative force in all of nature.

Ashley-Farrand adds that in the West we naturally think of power as a masculine force but he notes that the Eastern teachings speak of the 'nature of power' as feminine. He says the mystical teachers take the element of fire as an example to explain this phenomena. In the East they consider the idea of fire as masculine but the power to make the fire burn is feminine. They point out that without the Kundalini-shakti energy, fire is an unmanifest idea. Again just as purusha is unmanifest form, prakriti is movement and manifested forms of energy.

In the Hindu mythology, purusha, cosmic consciousness, is given a masculine trinity under the names of Brahma, Vishnu & Shiva. Brahma is considered to be the creator of the universe, Vishnu is recognized as the sustainer or preserver, and Shiva is

known as the powerful transformer of energy, the cosmic mind. It is believed that in the last several thousand years there have been nine incarnations of *Vishnu* consciousness on our planet earth. To name a few that you may be familiar with there is *Rama* (7th incarnation) , *Krishna* (8th incarnation) & Buddha who is taught to be the 9th incarnation of Vishnu. In the Vedic scriptures the teachings name *Kalki* as the tenth incarnation yet to come. Shiva is also referred to as pure consciousness, and according to the ancient teachings, it is in the union of Shiva & Shakti that enlightenment, Samadhi, is reached.

Again, in Hindu mythology, the creative feminine source of energy falls under the trinity of *Saraswati*, *Lakshmi* and *Durga*. Saraswati is highly revered in the Vedas as the Goddess of sound, speech, poetry, mantra, music, fine arts, education and spiritual knowledge. Another aspect of the feminine trinity is Lakshmi who is honored as the Goddess of goodwill, good fortune and abundance. A third aspect of the trinity is Durga who is an aspect of the Goddess Kali. Durga is considered to be the protector of all light beings as well as the destroyer of all evil.

Ashley-Farrand also mentions that in the mythologoical stroesi one can read that Brahma, who is referred to as an aspect of cosmic consciousness, has the thought and desire to create. After contemplating this thought, his feminine nature, Saraswati, appears before him. Saraswati is the representation of the Shakti power, the creative force of feminine power ot manifest the wishes and desire of the creator, Brahma. Here Saraswati, (Kundalini-shakti), entertains and manifests the thoughts of the cosmic mind, Brahma. In the Vedic texts Saraswati is the highly esteemed Goddess who creates the universe through the power of the divine word. As mentioned in chapters five and seven, many of these ancient cultures believed that the universe was created through the vibration of sound, the divine word or mantram. Hence, back to the scriptures which say, “In the beginning was the word!” Saraswati is revered, in the Vedas, as the Goddess of Mantra who takes people along their spiritual path.

In the teachings we also hear more about Shiva, a deity highly worshipped in the Hindu culture, and the most popular aspect of the masculine trinity mentioned earlier. According to certain mythological teachings, Shiva does not appear in manifest form upon the earth but he is recognized as the most powerful masculine aspect of the cosmic mind, of pure consciousness. He is the energy of change and transformation, the destroyer of the veils of ignorance, that pushes the ego to move beyond the karmic lessons, and beyond the material world. Shiva helps the jiva (being) to evolve along one’s spiritual path. Symbolically, he is considered to be the embodiment of pure consciousness.

## Types of Shakti

In his dissertations on mantra Thomas Ashley-Farrand also discusses the six different aspects of the feminine Shakti energy. Just to give you a brief idea of these they are as follows:

*Para Shakti*: the force which permeates the entire universe and is usually associated with heat and light

*Nana Shakti*: the power of the intellect in the material world as well as the higher psychic sense

*Iccha Shakti*: the power of will; taking actions; creativity; will-power

*Kriya Shakti*: the power of manifestation

*Mantra Shakti*: the power of thought, sound, vibration; mantram; speech

*Kundalini Shakti*: the power inherent in all of nature; vital pranic life-force; electricity

It is obvious from a lot of the mystical teachings that it is the balance and union of the masculine and feminine energies that make up the body of the entire cosmic universe. The feminine and the masculine are the one consciousness, the cosmic mind. It is through the practice of the various forms of yoga that one can activate and balance the energy flows of the masculine and famine energies.

## Hatha Yoga: Pingala, Ida & Shushumna Nadis

According to the traditional teachings of the Science of Yoga, within the human body are thousands of subtle, etheric energy channels called *nadis*. Some texts say there are 100,000 nadis while others say that there are 300,000 nadis. It is generally agreed upon by the knowledge of most awakened teachers that there are 72,000 nadis in the human body. It is said that the seers have seen these nadis in the subtle body. Of all of thee nadi channels the here nadis that are of utmost importance in the world of yoga are the primary nadis called *pingala*, *ida* and *shushumna*. The energy flow of these nadi channels are stimulated, calmed, as well as cleared through the various forms of yoga which include pranayama yoga, kriya yoga, mantra yoga and hatha yoga.

As you know, *Hatha Yoga* is one of the most popular forms of yoga in the Science of Yoga – Chakra System. Hatha Yoga is related to the root chakra, earth element. In the Sanskrit translation of hatha, '**ha'** refers to the positive current of energy running along the right side of the spine and is associated with the **pingala nadi**. It is called the solar, sun energy of heat and light. It is recognized as the masculine principle

that is active, electric, extroverted, and full of vitality. This masculine energy is dynamic as well as rational.

The syllable '**tha'** in Hatha refers to the negative current of energy running along the left side of the spine and is associated with the **ida nadi**. It is represented by the lunar, moon energy and it is recognized as the feminine principle of energy in the human body. This current of energy is cool and dark like the moon. It is receptive, psychic, intuitive, introverted, magnetic, creative, visual as well as sensitive and emotional. One could also relate the characteristic of this nadi to the subconscious mind and the pingala nadi to the conscious mind.

So here we have these two primary energy channels called pingala and ida which are masculine and feminine, positive and negative energy currents which govern the characteristics of the human body, mind & spirit. According to the teachings it is said that ida and pingala start at the base of the spine and terminate at the bridge of the nose close to the third eye. This is the home of the sixth chakra called Ajna Chakra. It is said when one unites the sun and moon channels one helps to remove any blockages between them thus arousing the feminine Kundalini energy at the base of the spine.

Yoga comes from the Sanskrit word 'yuj' which means to unite or come into union. This may refer to the union of the masculine and feminine energies coming into balance to create inner states of joy and peace. At the higher levels yoga implies the mystical union of the individual self with the divine energy of the sacred universe.

In some forms of yoga the pingala nadi represents the right breath or sun breath, meaning the breath of oxygen and prana which flows in and out of the right nostril. Oppositely, ida nadi represents the left breath or the moon breath. There are several pranayama breathing techniques which teach different forms of alternate nostril breathing to work with these positive and negative currents of energy.

The third nadi channel which is considered to be the principle nadi in the human body is called sushumna. This nadi channel flow through the central axis of the spinal column. Sushumna is the masculine principle and is considered to be the passageway through which the awakened kundalini-shakti energy travels, piercing the chakra energy centers along the way.

In his book, *Chakras – Energy Centers of Transformation*, Indian scholar, Harish Johari says that sushumna nadi pierces through the soft palate at the base of the skull called the talu and unites with the crown chakra, sahasrara. Sahasrara is the seventh chakra in the yogic system and is represented as 'the thousand petalled lotus' in all awakened beings. According to Johari, in the sacred teachings, the crown chakra is also called the 'Cave of Brahma' or the Tenth Gate – *Brahma Randhra*. It is that hollow soft spot between the two hemispheres of the brain at the crown of a newborn's head. Johari notes that in the ancient scriptures it is said that one who

leaves their body through the crown chakra achieves liberation (mukti) from the karmic wheel of death and rebirth.

In his book, *The Theories of the Chakras*, Dr. Hiroshi Motoyama points out the correlation of ida, pingala and sushumna to some of the acupuncture meridian pathways as laid out in the science of Chinese medicine. Dr. Motoyama points out that one of the main meridians in the body which is called the governor vessel (GV20) corresponds very well with the sushumna nadi. He notes that the energy flow of the governor meridian begins at the base of the spine, ascends to the crown of the head at a point called 'hyaku," after which this energy flow descends back down to a point just below the navel. In some teachings of the Kundalini energy they speak of the Kundalini energy ascending up through the spine to the crown of the head and later descending back down to the base of the spine. After this journey of the Kundalini energy through the sushumna nadi it is said that the consciousness of the individual is totally transformed. Motoyama also notes that this GV20 meridian is said to be a yang energy which is what is said of sushumna. As well in the theory of Chinese medicine the vital life-force energy in the human body is referred to as 'chi' and this same vital energy in the Science of Yoga is referred to as 'prana'. In the practice of acupuncture it is said that the chi energy flows in and out of the hyaku point at the top of the head. This corresponds well with the yogic teachings which speak of the prana energy flowing in and out of the *Brahma Randhra* (tenth gate) at the crown of the head. Motoyama also says that the ancient teachings put forward that the prana for the entire body enters from the astral planes through the *kandasthana*, a spherical region around the navel enclosing the Manipura Chakra (3rd Chakra). The prana is then transformed into energy for the physical body. He adds that a "chakra energy words as a center of interchange between the physical and astral body as well as between the astral and causal dimensions." He notes that through the chakras, subtle prana in the astral body can be transformed and made ready to give essential life-force to the physical body.

In regards to the nadis, Dr. Motoyama points out that the urinary bladder meridians which lie on either side of the spinal column and terminate at the base of the nose are similar to the positive and negative energy currents of pingala and ida.

Meanwhile, in the research of Harish Johari, we learn that the Muladhara chakra is considered to be the meeting place of the three primary nadi channels (ida, pingala & sushumna). In the vedic Sanskrit teachings this meeting place is known as Yukti Triveni. Yukta means combined, tri means three and veni is translated as streams.

Johari says that from this meeting place of the primary nadis in the root chakra there can occur a stirring and awakening of the Kundalini pranic energy. The energy flows of ida, pingala & sushumna ascend the spine and come to a new meeting place at the base of the nose forming what is called a 'gently knot' at Ajna (6th chakra – third eye). Johari notes that this meeting place of the three streams is called Mukta Triveni. In the Sanskrit language mukti means liberated, so here we have the liberation of the primary nadis and the awakening of some Kundalini energy.

In the traditional teachings the yoga masters metaphorically speak of the ascension of Kundalini up through the sushumna nadi and coming into union with Shiva (pure consciousness) in Ajna chakra. In Hindu mythology, at the point of Ajna chakra, jundalini-shakti is referred to as Goddess Parvati. In these mythological stories Parvati is recognized as the beloved soul-mate of Shiva and they have two sons, Ganesha and Skanda. In some of the Yantra mandalas of the yogic teachings of India you will find a picture of an androgynous being, half male and half female in the third eye. This Yantra mandala represents the union of the masculine and feminine, Shiva and Parvati, in the Ajna chakra. Ajna chakra has two petals and is considered to have the aspects of both the masculine and feminine energies, whereas chakras one through five are either masculine or feminine but not both. Here in the awakened state at Ajna chakra the yogi or yogini is transformed.

In his research on the theories of the chakras, Dr. Motoyama said, "according to tradition, Lord Shiva, who is worshipped by yogis as the deity who releases human beings from this world, created yoga and the asanas." The ancients texts (*shastras*) speak of Shiva as the principle teacher of the hatha yoga asanas and it is written that he taught all of these postures to his believed, Goddess Parvati. Some of the mythological writings say there were 84,000 asanas. Motoyama said that after thousands of years no more than a few hundred of these asanas have come down to the present and only 84 of the classical asanas are written down in the sacred scriptures. He also adds that the first elaborate written text describing the classical asanas were recorded by the great teacher, Goraknath, who lived in the 10$^{th}$ century AD. In the Yoga Sutras written by the awakened teacher, Patanjali, approximately around 500 BC, there are only a few of the classical asanas mentioned and one of them being padmasana, the full lotus. Padmasana was taught in order for the yogi to sit in deep meditation (*nirvikalpa Samadhi*) for long periods of time. Motoyama notes that in 'the ancient tradition, the practice of hatha yoga was taught to release one from the bonds of karma'. The practice of hatha yoga frees the blockages of the pranic life-force at the base of the spine so that it can flow into the sushumna nadi. Before the writings of Goraknath the knowledge of certain forms of yoga were revered as 'the secret teachings' and only bestowed upon sincere and dedicated seekers of the truth.

From hos research on the nadis Johari says that in the meeting of the three primary nadis (mukta triveni) in the Ajna chakra the yogi is said to be liberated from the bondage of the worldy senses. It is said he/she is beyond the elements of earth, water, air & fire but is still subject to changes of mood and perception according to the activity of one of the gunas (force of nature). In the practice of deep meditation the yogi can ascend the streams of energy upward and out through the crown chakra, Sahasrara, where the symbolic thousand petalled lotus is opened in the enlightened being. Her eonce again is the beloved union of Shiva & Shakti which is in itself the awareness of Prakriti & Purusha, the source of one consciousness energy.

"When a yogi in meditation establishes himself at the mid-point between the eye-brows in the Ajna Chakra (third eye) and transcends the prana into the Brahma Randhra region, he is beyond time. He becomes trikala darshi )knower of the past, present and future). In Ajna Chakra he goes beyond time, and death cannot touch him. Functions of the physical body come to a standstill and the process of aging is stopped." -Harish Johari

According to the research of Johari, it is said that when the Ajna chakra is opened one is awakened to the truth and meets his/her own divine self. Secondly, when the Sahasrara Chakra is opened one can leave the physical body and enter the higher planes of the mystical universe.

You will hear stories of people like Paramahamsa Yogananda leaving his body at will while sitting in padmasana and even after more than 20 days his physical body looking well intact. Yogananda, the great teacher who came to the West in the early 1920's, was said to have taught and lectured over 100,000 people in the teachings of the Science of Yoga. Yogananda, as mentioned in my foreward, was the founder of the Self-Realization. Fellowship in the United States of America. Having completed his dharmic path, Yogananda, while in deep meditation sitting in padmasana, left his body in March 1957. He predicted that in the future of mankind, the teachings of the yogic chakra system would sweep the nations of the West. Today more and more people are interested in these esoteric teachings of the ancient Vedic scriptures.

The masculine and feminine energies exist in all of creation. The ancient texts refer to the male as deva and the female as devi, although, in the celestial realms of the sacred universe, the gods and goddesses are generally referred to as the devas. In her book, *Kundalini – Yoga For The West*, Swami Shivananda Radha says that pure, unmanifest cosmic energy is sometimes called the source of light and is masculine in nature, whereas the emanation of this source of light is the manifest form of energy and is feminine in nature (Shakti).

*"Shakti is the great mother. She hold the child, the seeker, the aspirant in her womb, which is the world. She is the form, the ideal, the power and Goddess of the spoken word. Shakti is life, breath, and existence itself.*

*The snake around the neck of Sada Shiva and the Trident in his hand indicate for the first time the possible stirring of Kundalini – Shakti energy. The fire he hold reminds us that ignorance is burned in the fire of wisdom. Such then is Kundalini fire. It is the fire of awareness which burns ignorance."* -Swami Sivananda Radha

All beings have a small amount of jundalini energy awake in the body. This is enough life-force to run our bodily functions, nervous system, movement, breathing and so on. In the East it is taught that a great amount of Kundalini energy is naturally awake in women as opposed to men and that men need to do more

practices to awaken this feminine energy. Thomas Ashley-Farrand sas that there was a time in the tantric practices of the Brahman priests where they would take a woman as their consorts and perform sexual techniques to try and take on some of the Kundalini energy of the feminine. It is said that his practice was not so effective and very derogatory towards the consorts of this time. Having this energy subtly awake, gives the answer as to why the feminine is a naturally intuitive and psychic being.

In view of the masculine and feminine genders in our present lives, one can see how the balance of these energies direct incredible dreams! The make and female may have the desire to create a child and it is the feminine who bears the child. In past generations the man has been the main material provider of the family and the woman has been the main caretaker of the many duties in the home. Things are somewhat different today but one can see that in the raising of children there is a creative inter-play of the masculine and feminine energies. As well, a man may build a beautiful house or business and it is usually a woman's touch that will adorn and beautify the home. A man may have certain incredible ideas or visions and sometimes it is the woman who will help him refine and manifest these ideas. The masculine is the risk taker, the motivator, the pioneer and the feminine may be the creative support and manager. In some cases these roles are reversed but nevertheless it is obvious that when there is a good balance and sharing of strengths between the masculine and feminine, great things can happen!

Clearing the energies of the chakra centers as well as the nadis through the practice of the various forms of yoga is of utmost importance before one attempts to fully awaken this powerful Kundalini-shakti energy. Without proper preparation and purification, the pre-mature awakening of Kundalini can be very disturbing to the mind and body. The body holds within its cellular memory all of its past negative karmic patterns and deep sub-conscious conditioning of fear and ignorance. These patterns need to be cleared in a practical manner before one things about doing many of the advanced practices of yoga.

**Disciplines to Stimulate Kundalini**

Some of the disciplines to activate the sleeping Kundalini serpent (pranic energy) at the base of the spine are:
**Hatha Yoga**: the practice of various asanas to balance the positive and negative energy currents in the body.
**Pranayama Yoga**: specific breathing techniques such as the various alternate-nostril breathing techniques, bellows breathing, rapid abdominal breathing, breath retentions, breathing techniques with mantra and mathematical sound formulas and more.
**Kriya Yoga**: specific concentration techniques to direct the flow of prana in the energy body.

**Raja Yoga** specific concentration techniques with chakra yantras sometimes practiced with breathing exercises and bija mantras.
**Mantra Yoga**: the repetitious chanting of various bija mantras or mantram sound formulas; maha mantra chanting such as that of the revered Gayatri mantra.
**Meditation**: various meditation techniques (chakra meditation, focused breath meditation, mantra meditation etc.)
**Creative Dance**: long periods of trance dancing with breathing, sufi whirling dervish spinning.
**Shakti Phat**: the intentional transmission of Shakti power from an enlightened teacher (guru) to a student.

## Symptoms of a Kundalini Awakening

Kundalini may awaken in a person in small doses over a long period of time, even lifetimes, or there can be a full awakening as a result of some of the dedicated practices of those yogic disciplines mentioned previously.

*Some of the symptoms of a Kundalini awakening may be as follows:*

- Visions of light or intricate patterns of the divine form
- Opening of perceptions in the third eye; deep insight; wisdom; higher intelligence awakening to the teachings of the higher levels of consciousness
- Enhancement or noticeable development of the higher psychic senses such as clairvoyance, clairaudience & telepathy
- Development of the power of healing touch; awakened healer
- Progressive development in creative &physical abilities
- Increase of heat in the body; change in body temperature
- Change in dreams; psychic dreams
- Feelings of blissfulness & joy; love of the divine; contact with the celestial realms
- Euphoric feelings; love for all of humanity; compassion
- Recognition & awareness of the divine in all beings as well as the impermanence of all matter

Evidence of experiencing the negative symptoms of a Kundalini awakening may be total confusion, feelings of fearfulness, remembrance of traumatic memories, depression, fragmented mind recall, physical pain and general upheaval in one's life. These negative experiences may occur if the student has not done the specific yoga practices to prepare the energy body for such a high voltage of Shakti power. Daily practice of the various forms of yoga, right thinking, right livelihood and good diet begins to prepare the aspirant for the ascent of Kundalini-shakti.

# Pranayama Techniques

**Nadi shoddhana** is a nerve cleanser in which the breath is moved rapidly through alternate nostrils. The in-breath is pulled in through the right nostril and the out-breath is pushed out the left; the hand gesture of *Vishnu mudra* is used to close the nostrils. The cycle is begun with an 8-8 count, and the speed slowly increases until you are breathing a couple of times per second, while still effectively taking in and expelling quantities of air. Having sped it up to that point, you reverse the trend and gradually slow it back down to where you started. Expect to take several minutes to do this procedure.

Taking air in through the right nostril stimulates an energy flow through the nerve channel known as pingala, or what corresponds to the sympathetic nervous system. This energy current stimulates activity and metabolism in the body. Letting the air out the left nostril discharges the nerve channel known as ida, or perhaps what Western medicine refers to as the parasympathetic nervous system. This part of our system usually relaxes activity in the body )as in the muscles) while stimulating other functions, such as digestion, or, when the stomach is empty, healing .By moving energy into one part of the nervous system and out the other, an internal cross-over flow is created which is said to move through the chakras in a way that purifies them.

Although this can be done anytime, in general practice it is best done in the evening after the day' work, when you are ready to calm the mind for meditation.

## BENEFITS:

- This technique is a powerful nerve purifier, discharging negative energy (stress) from the nervous system.
- Clams the mind as it eliminates negative or disturbing thoughts.
- Clears the energy field (pranamaya kosha).

***Nadi shuddhi*** is similar to the alternate nostril above in that the breath is taken in the right nostril and let out the left repeatedly. The difference is that the ratio and pattern are those of Savitri, 8-4 breath. The technique acts as a nerve purifier, but does so at a relaxed pace that gently calms the mind and helps to clarify the thought process. It can be done for lengthy periods of time, 10 minutes being a minimum, while a half-hour would be a better duration.

Good method of relaxing in the evenings, or before *quiet yoga* practices.

BENEFITS:

- Using this technique in the four directions can easily advance your progress through the tangles of the subconscious mind. Swadhiyaya can be practiced in conjunction with this.
- Relaxes the mind for concentration or meditation.
- Moves the energies through blockages and resistances in the nervous system.
- Can be used *very well* with Hang Sah.

Paryayanasarandhra pranayama is the classic alternate-nostril breath. Using the hand postion of Vishnu mudra, the breth is drawn in throough the right nostril, then let out the left. The next inhalation is drawn in the left and out the right. Continue alternating back and forth like this --- exhaling then inhaling through one nostril, switching nostrils and doing the same on the other side. The technique can be done with various ratios for different effts. Savitri breath is recommended for the first year. Used for charging or increasing the energy potential of each of the chakras, this should be done after the nervous system has been purified. Otherwise it could over-stimulate the vortexes and lead to anxiety in any or all of them. Done with a balanced routine of Hatha Yoga it becomes a very empowering technique.

As part of a good moring routine this can be very empowering; though, it can well be done as an independent technique in the evening, or even in place of a coffee break.

BENEFITS:

- Balances the energies throughout the nervous system.
- Charges the energy body and each of the chakras evenly.
- Has a mellow but empowering effect on the mind.

## BINDU KRIYA

This is a technique in mental concentration for the development of the 6$^{th}$ chakra, also referred to as the third eye. As a simple practice this is done with synchronized breath by using mental visualization to direct a beam of energy (light) in and out of the third eye.

Begin the technique by doping three cleansing breaths and then with complete breathing establish a gently Savitri rhythm (8x4x8x4). Sitting in vakrasana (thunderbolt) or padmasana (lotus) find yourself with a straight spine, sternum lifted and shoulders relaxed. Once you establish your Savitri breathing begin to

concentrate on the third eye bindu (cosmic point) approximately two inches inside the forehead, up between the eyebrows. From here being an 8 count inhalation as you simultaneously visualize a beam of golden light moving out form the third eye bindu point to about six inches outside the forehead. Hold the breath and concentrate on this beam for a count of 4. Then on an 8 count exhalation of the breath visualize this beam of light moving back inside the third eye, two inches inside the forehead (cosmic point) and concentrate on this point while holding out the breath for a count of 4. Continue this pattern for ten minutes with focused concentration. If the mind is wandering, practice for a shorter amount of time until you can clearly focus for 10-15 minutes. Try to feel the energy as well as visualize it. When you have finished, stop the Savitri breathing, relax the breath and come to rest your consciousness on this inner point, seeing if you can remain there for a period of calm meditation.

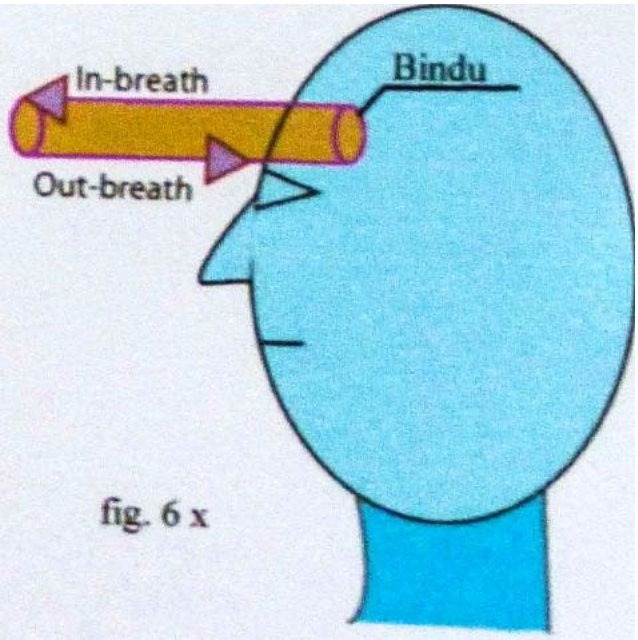


fig. 6 x

BENEFITS:

- This is a method of strengthening the magnetic power of the sixth chakra.
- It enhances perceptual clarity.
- Centers and calms the mind.
- Develops abilities of manifestation.
- Prepared the mind for meditation.

## Active Practice

# Ajna Chakra Routine

1. Begin as usual with the cleansing breath and the Pranava A-U-M.

2. Come to a standing position with feet wide apart. ***Prasarita paduttanasana*** is done from there by bending at the hips and coming down with a straight flat back until the fists come to touch the floor. Head is held up, exhale going down. # 111

3. ***Trikonasana***, the triangle, is similar to the above, but the arm is crossed over the body and the fist or hand placed down by the foot. The knee and elbow should be in line, the free arm pointed skyward and head turned to see that hand. Come up to a deep in-breath and down the other side to an exhalation. Feel the spine twisting into the position. # 102

4. ***Konasana***, angular posture, is done form the same wide-apart foot stance with arms outstretched at shoulder level. Bend over to one side, bending the knee and bringing the first down in front of the foot or behind it. The other leg is kept straight and the free arm raised straight above, with fingers pointing up and the head turned to face the hand. Exhale going down again. # 99

5. ***ArdhaChandrasana***, the moon, is done from the above posture by raising the straight leg parallel to the floor and balancing the body on the other leg which is now straightened also. The free arm may be skyward or right over and parallel to the ground. # 100

6. ***Vrikshasana***, the tree. Take a balanced pose on one foot and bring the other up against the other thigh near the groin, or you can do it from the half-lotus. Hands are in *namaskaram* and are raised up above the head with the in-breath and brought back down with the expelled breath. On the expelled breath the supporting leg may be bent, lowering you into a squat or even until the other knee touches the floor. Balance, strength, stamina and stability are gained through this practice. # 82

7. ***Paarshwaritasana***, the side bend, is done from a wide-apart foot stance by bending over to one side, sliding the arm down the leg, keeping the legs and hips straight. Top arm is relaxed, exhale and feel the stretch on one side of the rib cage and the compression on the other.
8. # 108

9. ***Makarasana***, the dolphin. From a sitting-on-the-heels position, lean forward until you can place elbows and forearms onto the floor. Elbows are about a foot apart, head is now placed in the clasped hands, and that part of your head just behind the hairline is placed on the floor. From here you straighten

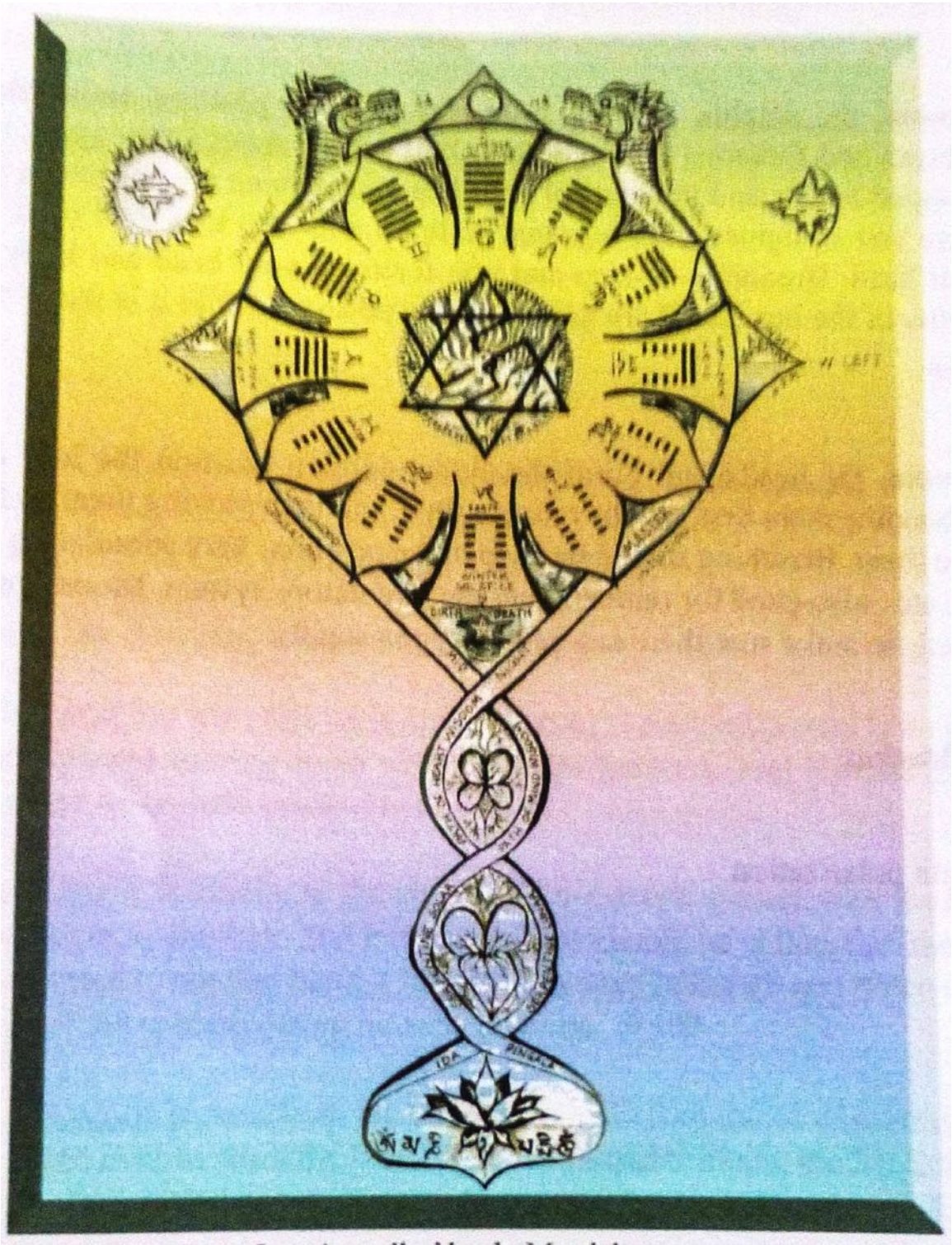
your legs and walk up with your toes until your torso is straight up over your head. Breathing is deep and you focus on your head and body position. Many of the benefits of the headstand are gained in this position, while it is much simpler to do in the beginning.

10. # 117

11. ***Shirshasana***, the headstand. From the above dolphin position the legs are raised from the ground, bending them first, maybe one at a time, and then moving them up form the buttocks to straighten them. Breathing should be deep in the position. Very stimulating for the head, pineal, pituitary, etc.; also good for rejuvenating the circulatory system. Blood pressure in the brain is heightened, so make sure there is a good oxygen supply.
12. # 118

13. The *Oli Mudras*

14. Relax, with polarization.



From Jose Arguelles' book: Mandala

# SYNOPSIS of AJNA CHAKRA

**ELEMENT**: Mind **YOGA**: Yantra Yoga

**GENDER**: Androgenous **NAME**: Ajna

**FORCE**: Magnetic

**MEDITATIVE DIRECTION**: Up

**YANTRA SYMBOL**: Circle with two side petals

**ENERGY COLOR**: Violet

**SOUND**: Ang

**SENSE PERCEPTION**: Mind perceptions

**ACTION**: Thinking

**NERVE PLEXUS**: Cavernous plexus

**PHYSIOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS:**
**GLANDS**: Pituitary **ORGANS**: Cerebrum **OTHER**: Head

**PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERSTICS:**

**POSITIVE:**
Visionary (practical)
Reliable
Capable
Level-minded
Inventive
Commanding
Forgiving

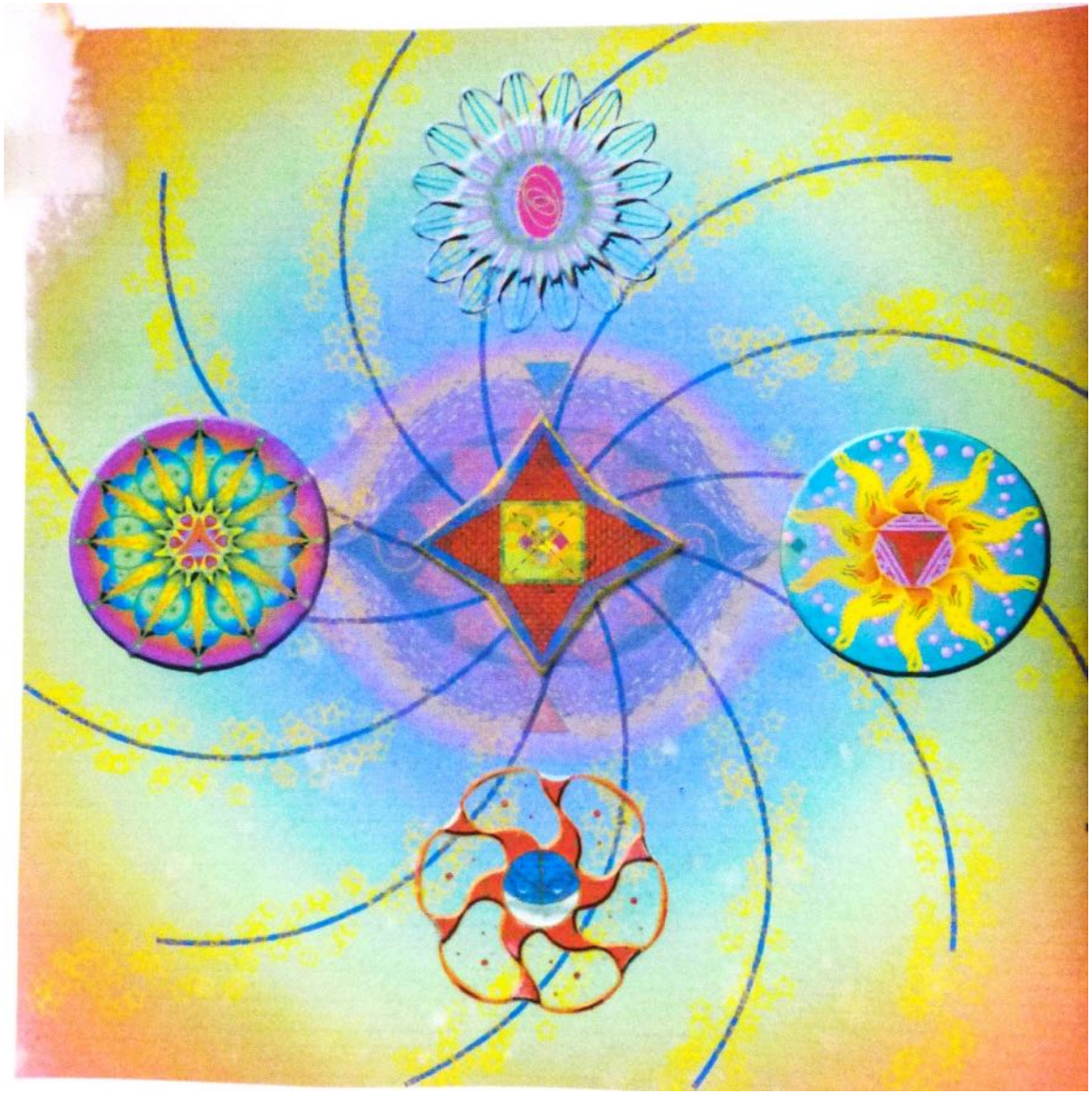
**NEGATIVE:**
Interfering
Ungovernable (questions author)
Conflicting
Snobbish

Headstrong (stubborn)
Indecisive
Devious

# Sahasrara Chakra

Consciousness

Consciousness



# CHAPTER 7

## Sahasrara Chakra

*Thousand Petalled Lotus*

## ELEMENT

**Consciousness** itself is the seventh element. It is a form of primeval awareness that constitutes the essence of all the other forces. This element is not often physical world but rather the spiritual essence which permeates it to the deepest level. This consciousness in its pure form is **awareness**. As the seventh element it makes up part of the eternal realm of the universe; that part of each individual that goes on from body to body. This element is the essence of your being; it is there in your dreams, and even in the dreamless sleep. Wherever you go there must be an awareness of being there; whether it is heaven, hell or earth, you are conscious of your existence there. Because of our habitual patterns of perceiving through the mind we cannot remember many of these experiences, memory is a function of perceiving through the mind we cannot remember many of these experiences; memory is a function of mind, not of consciousness. Awareness is the constant, ever-present essence of our bring. It is difficult for the mind to experience this particular element because it is that which does the experiencing, the witness to all of life.

As explained in the old texts, there is a tendency for consciousness to become colored by and attached to experience, just as water takes on the color of the dye you put in it. When you are working with the body, in Hatha yoga for instance, you are ware of feeling the body, often to the point where you think you are the body. These body sensations may be experienced as aches and pains as you being the practice, then may develop into flowing bliss as you recondition your physical being. Either way, the awareness that is observing these feelings is the presence of the

seventh chakra. Consider when you get distracted from these feelings and you are busy thinking about something else, or daydreaming --- what is it that gets distracted? It is your awareness, lost in a whirlwind of thoughts, memories and possibilities.

Through the filters of the mind we have learned to analyze and recognize all hat we experience, after which we see the mental reflection rather than the clear impressions of consciousness. In dreams, (dreamtime), inner experiences, and higher meditational states, we can perceive the realities of the universe more directly. It is unfortunate that memory cannot contain these experiences of the deeper states; this mental retention would take it simpler for us to tap into enlightenment.

One of the techniques used in yoga to expand our experiences beyond the realm of normal consciousness is to remain awake while going into, and beyond, the dream state. This process requires deep relaxation as a base, and it is essential that the practitioner be well grounded and established in the practices of various forms of yoga so as to not fall into delusional states instead.

Sahasrara chakra is actually centered above the head, though its awareness goes through all aspects of the body. It is the center of our conscious experience. We have a strong tendency in normal life to have it wrapped up in the vortex of mind energies, and these keep it entertained for ages on end. Yet, Sahasrara, or consciousness, ahs the power to direct all functions of the energies at the six levels below it when it is free. Freedom, or liberation, comes from detaching awareness primarily from the sensory perceptions and the subsequent analysis and judgments of the mind. We have a powerful and creative mind, capable of imagining a variety of attractive senses and presenting them to awareness as possibilities to daydream about. These fantasies can be very hypnotic, but they can easily become a trap when unfounded in reality. Imagining life as we would like it to be, fantasizing about ideal relationships, ect., can keep us entertained, sometimes for a lifetime. The negative side of this entertainment transpires when the mind draws on many of our negative memories of events or information, and spins them into a nightmare of possibilities we would much rather avoid. These past memories may come with doubts and fears supported by guilt, and w become unsure of what is really in store for us. All of this negative mind conditioning needs to be dealt with in ways explained through the previous chapters.

Going past this illusive realm can take us to the experiences that are actually happening here-and-now, in and all around us. When the direction of awareness moves down into the body we can perceive the sensations of the moment. With the expanding consciousness that stems from Hatha yoga practice, these sensations can spread to quite a range of experiences. As we noted in Anahata chakra, which deals with feelings, this realm of perceiving can reach into the depths of our subconscious feelings to observe a quantity of sensory information that is streaming into the mind at all times. Experiencing this in-flowing energy from a non-judgmental perspective

can lead to rushes of blissful feelings that may at times become quite orgasmic. On the other hand, yoga techniques can be used to withdraw our awareness form the realm of the body and direct it up and out into the energies of the universe above, to experience the reality of the electromagnetic ocean. Here we might find our bliss again as we become aware of this universal dancing energy, forever changing like a cosmic symphony; we can perceive this energy as mandalas unfolding like flowers as our awareness flows through them and we feel their vibration. This "beyond the body" experiences arises in the cosmic mind where our awareness is literally swimming through the electromagnetic ocean. Here, our perception of the body is absent, or has changed, transformed to a direct perception of electromagnetic energy. The aware element of this 7th chakra can go from deep within the body to realms of consciousness totally out there in the universal reality.

Mantra is one of the primary methods used to expand our awareness of this chakra, and Mantra Yoga is consequently the yogic path associated with Sahasrara. The technique known as Mantra Laya, for example, utilizes the vibrational sounds of all the chakra energies and by combining these sounds in a certain way, moves the energy up through the mind to elevate consciousness beyond our thinking state. The mantras used in this Laya technique are the fifty sounds at the specific frequencies of the energy body: the petal sounds of the six lower chakras are combined to create and upwards whirlpooling effect on our energies. Yogis intuitively heard these fifty sounds thousands of years ago as they sat in their caves (and temples) listening to the universe. This is how the Sanskrit language was intuitively developed. In their experiments and research, the early yogis discovered not only the sounds, but also how to utilize them in ways to elevate consciousness from the body to the upper realms. By chanting these sounds twenty times they achieved the silencing of the mind that allowed the transcendence they were looking for. Fifty sounds repeated twenty times made one thousand, so this level of awareness in blissful music became known as the thousand petalled lotus, the crown chakra: Sahasrara. Just as the lotus flower floats above the water, (and far above its roots down in the mud at the bottom of the lake), so this seventh chakra rises above material existence to bloom in the celestial realms. Here we exist more in a blissful state of experience witnessing undifferentiated music.

Compared to the music of the cosmos, the verbal and logical thinking of the mind is like someone talking loudly in a distracting argument while the orchestra is playing. As a result, we are unable to hear the softer parts of the music.

At the level of the 5th chakra we hear the stream of electromagnetic energy as sounds, words, thoughts, etc. In the realm of chakra 7, however, these individual sounds are all heard together, forming a symphony rather than merely a series of independent sounds. Just as an orchestra merges the instruments into a piece of music, the sounds heard at the level of the seventh chakra become harmonious rhythms and melodies as we become aware of the greater soundscape. In the Indian view, the sacred sound of AUM is just such a symphony, being composed of the fifty sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet all resounding together. It has been the experience

of many a yogi to go up to these levels of the universe where all sounds are heard together, adding up and blending into a melodious chord – an undulating wave of harmonious tones which create a blissful feeling in the listener.

Music and harmony are characteristics of this chakra. The way the universe is designed allows for all the various frequencies of energy to co-exist in harmony most of the time. Down through the ages many of these sounds have been described by various cultures like the Tibetan and Hindu, and when we open our inner ear, we too can hear these energies as a symphony. In fact, many eastern cultures invented musical instruments to try and recreate these cosmic sounds. The tamboura and sitar for instance, produce sounds much like the wavering energy fields of the cosmos. The didgeridoo from the aboriginal people of Australia also gives a very good impression of some of the lower frequencies that are forever vibrant on the inside. Then there are drums – like the heartbeat – the beat of the universe. These days we have the synthesizer, an instrument that can fabricate an incredible range of vibrations to emulate the flowing universe. In the category of new age music we might find compositions that re similar to the unfolding energies which can be heard on the inside. How many musicians of the past (Mozart and Beethoven for instance), and present, can actually tune into these sounds and reproduce them for others to hear? Rest assured that they can be heard. When you sit in a very quite place to meditate it is possible to discover these sounds.

## ENDOCRINE GLAND

The **pineal** gland is influenced by the energy of this center. This gland is a small cone-shaped projection form the top of the midbrain of most vertebrates, arising embryological as an outgrowth of the brain. It is absent in some mammals and consists of only a few cells in larger creatures such as whales and elephants. In the average human the structure develops until the seventh year, when it is slightly larger than a pea. According to Swami Gitananda, in some Indian yogis this gland has been shown through x-rays to be the size of a robin's egg.

The pineal gland has both neural and endocrine properties, and its function are only beginning to be understood in Western physiologiy. In simple vertebrates such as the lamprey, the organ is mounted on a stalk close to an opening in the skull and functions as a photoreceptive organ. Photoreceptive structures linked with the pineal body are still observed in higher vertebrates like reptiles and even some species of birds. In mammals the pineal body is not directly light-sensitive, but a neural connection remains between the eyes and the gland. The functions of the pineal body in an animal are thus still linked with surrounding light levels.

In studies done with light and color, for instance, it was seen that the energy impulses coming from the eyes through the optic nerves stimulated the pineal gland to emit certain hormones. During this research (done in 1971 by RCA) researchers

established that each color stimulated the production of a separate hormone. These colors in turn govern the hormones subsequently produced by the body's master gland, the pituitary gland, which regulates the production of hormones throughout the rest of the body. Consequently, we see a chain of events going from each color and form that we look at, down into our body chemistry through the endocrine system. As a practical experiment to demonstrate this point, try looking at a beautiful mandala, then switch your focus to a person you find sexually attractive, and observe your mental, emotional and physiological reactions to what your eyes are seeing. Observe and draw your conclusions; then you may decide to choose carefully what you focus your attention on. These effects and others have been known for thousands of years in schools of yoga where visual concentration is an important practice. More recent research has shown the pineal gland to be quite sensitive to other aspects of the electromagnetic spectrum, particularly to magnetic fields.

Another piece of the bio-energetic puzzle is the hypothalamus. It consists of a tiny cluster of nerve cells located at the center of the base of the brain, very close to the pineal and pituitary glands. Definitely in the "center" of our heads, the hypothalamus is responsible for many body functions and serves as a link between the autonomic nervous system and the endocrine system. The primary function of the hypothalamus is to integrate and ensure appropriate response to stimuli; it thus regulates hunger, thirst, sleep, and wakefulness (senses that are said to be governed by the 6$^{th}$ chakra). It also plays an important role in the regulation of most of the involuntary mechanisms of the body, including body temperature, sexual drive, and the female menstrual cycle. The hypothalamus also regulates the work of the pituitary gland.

The isolation of the hormone melatonin (in 1958) led to further research on the pineal body. Animal studies show that the gland synthesizes and secretes melatonin almost entirely at night, and that it ceases this function during the day. Melatonin, in turn, affects the functions of other endocrine organs such as the thyroid, adrenals and gonads. It displays a very mellowing effect upon these glands, our behavior, and our consciousness. This "mellowing" affects breeding cycles in animals and sexual activity in humans. In fact, the onset of puberty may be triggered by lower levels of melatonin. (Yogis call this hormonal substance ***soma***, the drink of the gods, and there is much technique and ritual around its production). In more recent research the pineal gland has been shown to be influenced by other forms of magnetic and electromagnetic waves. Experiments have demonstrated that it responds to magnetic fields by producing this hormone, which affects both the hypothalamus and the pituitary gland. In turn, melatonin stimulates the manufacture and release of the fertility hormones estrogen and progesterone.

In 1987 Dr. Ross Aidey, White Hourse Chielf of Staff for the Reagan administration, published a scientific paper (Cell membranes, Electromagnetic Fieldsd and Intercellular Communication) announcing that "about 20% of pineal cells in pigeons, guinea pigs and rats respond to changes in both direction and intensity of the

earth's magnetic field….causing variation in the peptide hormone melatonin, which powerfully influences circadian rhythms…" As we progress into the 21st century this type of research and observation is finding its way into the public eye. Both magnetic fields and electromagnetic energy have powerful and very direct influences on our brain and body chemistry. This invisible energy has long been known and utilized by yogis.

We can look at the light and energy phenomenon as an instant example of mind over matter. With our awareness we choose what we want to look at and create a corresponding state of mind and body. Of course this effect is not only mental and physical; it goes from one to the other through the emotional and energetic aspects of our being. Consider the differences in our feelings when looking at a beautiful sunset as opposed to when watching a horror film.

What about the music played in the film? This brings us back to sound and its influence on our state of being. Notice how in films music is often used to create the mood, from romantic to sad to frightening. These are all emotional states which can obviously be created easily by the right combination of sounds. Note that the harmonic sounds will tend to stimulate the pleasant emotions, while more chaotic or disharmonious sounds can create anxiety or fear. Once again we can choose with awareness which sounds we want to listen to, and create the effect we desire. In the '90s there was a fair amount of research done on the healing aspects of sound, enough to show clearly that our emotional reactions to music have a strong influence on both our brain and body chemistry.

Just as sounds all come together in the formation of a cosmic symphony at this level, so do the colors come together to formulate white light. The seventh chakra is like a crystal prism through which white light passes and becomes refracted into the colors of the rainbow, the vibrant energies of the chakras. At the same point where the lights gets separated it also becomes unified when going the other way. The white light that we see coming form the sun is in reality a combination of different colored lights, which make up white when seen together – the full spectrum. These different colors of light are in essence electromagnetic energies with different frequencies, and/or rates of vibration. The slowest speed of vibration that we see with our eyes gives us the color red, while the fastest we can see goes up into the violet range. Below red it falls into infrared, which we can no longer see, but we fell as heat. Above violet the energy moves into ultraviolet and X-rays, which we also cannot see, yet these are known to have a strong impact on us. With our inner eye we can see these higher and lower frequencies, while with our inner ear we can hear a very broad range of vibrations – which once again blend into symphonic harmonies.

## CHARACTERISTICS

A person born into this energy center will generally display an expanded awareness, with curiosity moving in many directions. They will usually have refined tastes in music, arts and intellectual pursuits, as well as spiritual aptitudes.

When the energy is strong, flowing and balanced:

The individual will have a refined awe of spirituality, and an open mind.
Strong interest in music, possibly good rhythm and an ear for tone.
May like movement and dance of a gently nature.
Studious, with an inquiring mind and intellectual capabilities.
Reflective and calm, enjoys meditation and other peaceful activities.
Cheerful and optimistic.

When the energy is too strong and out of balance:

Might easily be over-sensitive.
May have a turbulent mind with a tendency to dwell in negative thought patterns.
Introverted and overly studious to the exclusion of social life.
Not in touch with the body, ungrounded; too much time spent in the head.
Spiritual beliefs and practices may be taken to extreme.
Tendency to keep busy, losing touch with the peaceful side of life.

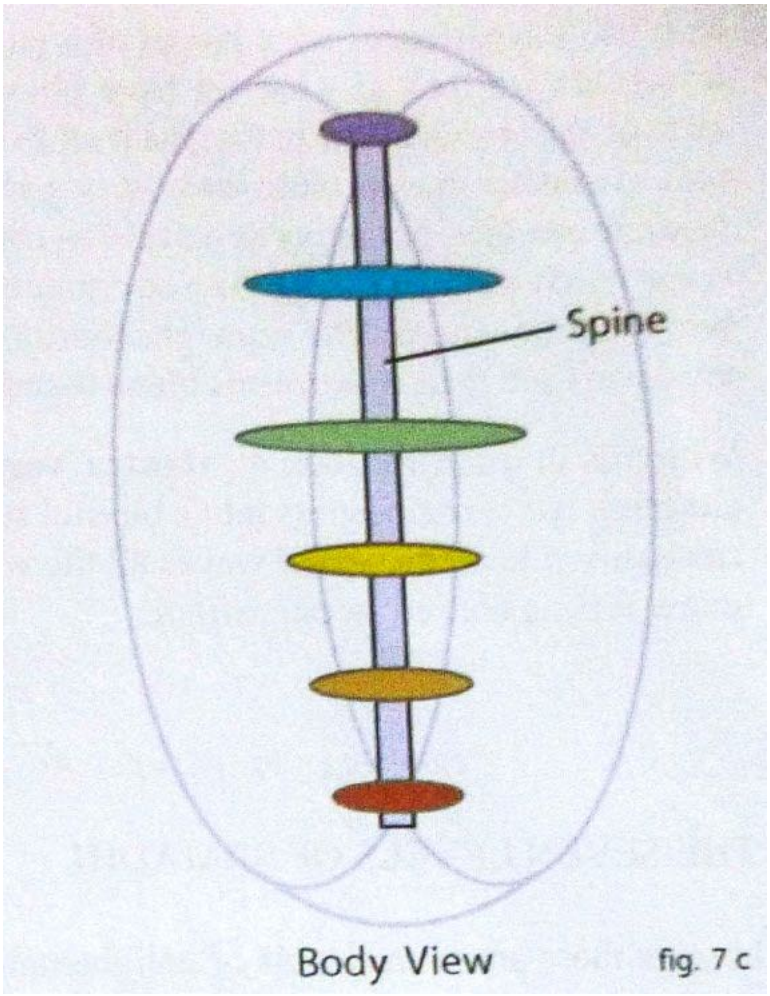
When the energy is weak and depleted:

May be lacking a sense of awareness and common sense.
Might become too attached to the material world, spiritual life has no appeal.
May be out of tune musically, with no sense of rhythm.
Easily develops tunnel vision, lacking consideration and sensitivity for others.
Tendency to become depressed and unable to see a purpose in life; not fun-loving.
Intellectually not very curious; might have a limited belief system.

## MENTAL DIRECTION

**Center** is the direction or the resting-place of this seventh chakra awareness while you are in the body. When we view the chakras as vortices along the spine, "center" means the area of the heart chakra. From the spherical mandala of the mind it is in the middle, the point from which you might go north, south, east, west, down or up, into the realms of each of the six other worldly chakras. These are all away from the center of your Self, but on the other hand awareness can expand in all these directions simultaneously. The goal of taking journeys in each of the directions, in

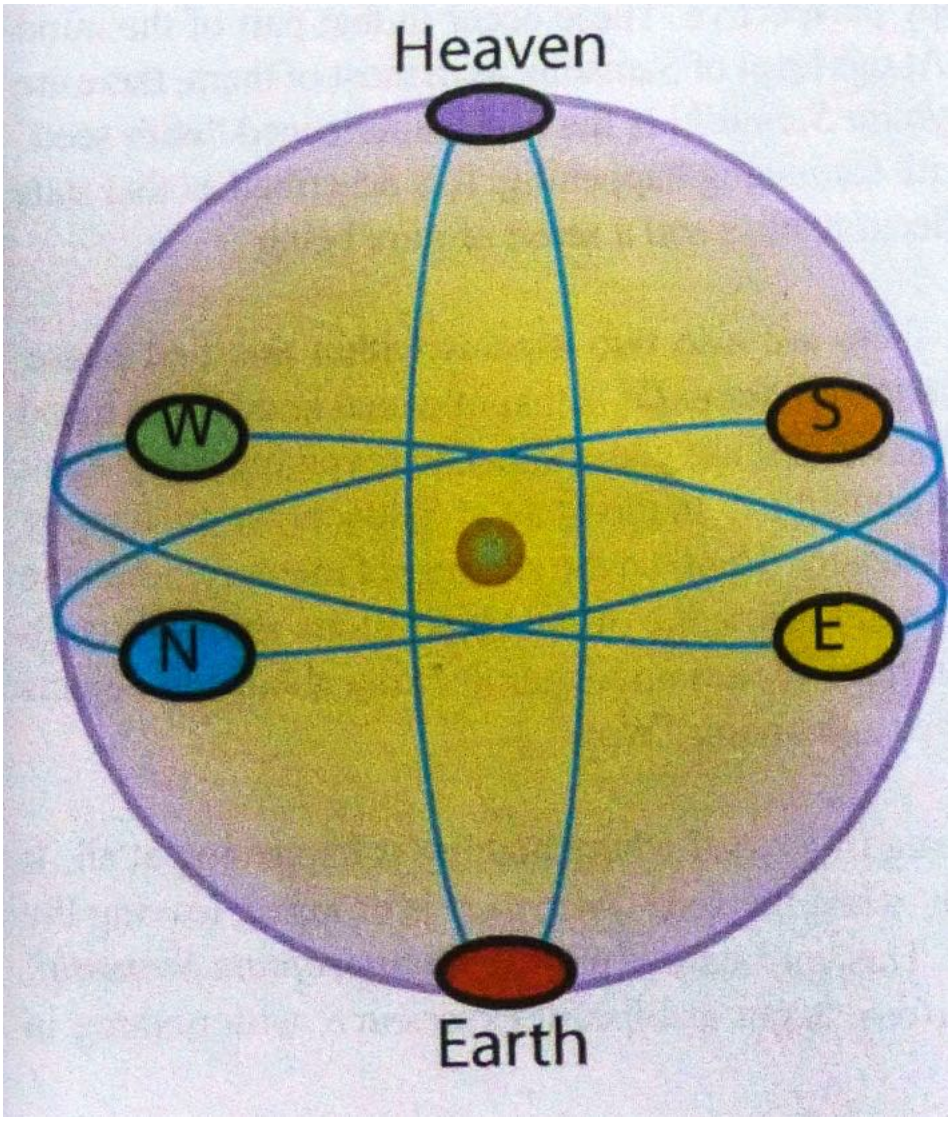
the Mayan system, was to educate oneself and become knowledgeable in each realm. Returning to center after each journey is a must in order to remain balanced. This centering is what ultimately creates an expansion of awareness is all directions.




In Eastern tradition, Sahasarara chakra is depicted on top of the head, not in it. The implication here is that this energy is independent of the body. Considered to be the first of the higher chakras, it forms a triangle with the eighth and ninth chakras. As energy fields go, the seventh is like the prism through which universal energy flows. The energy flow of the universe comes from the ninth chakra and goes to the eighth --- from the stars to the planets.

As spiritual beings living on earth we find ourselves under the seventh chakra --- rainbows that have been refracted through the prism. We are animated energy forms of the chakras with physical bodies. Our awareness then turns outward to our perception of physical reality, a perception which has all too often lost its brilliance and sometimes its color. Yoga is possibly the most comprehensive system designed to restore to us that colorful and magical view of life that we had as little children. Tuning up our senses and mind also requires tuning up our bodies, so, as a

beneficial side-effect, physical health is restored as well. Yoga also tunes us back into the energy world from which we came.




Because of the centering of consciousness in this seventh chakra, and an awareness that spreads out in all directions, there is a tendency to look at things as fitting together, as parts of a whole, as if life's experiences were pieces of a puzzle which come together to make the picture. With this awareness we look at what we have physically and what we have (learned) mentally, and try to arrange the pieces in a way that fits it all in. Usually we like to make certain it fits in with our higher ideals, whether they be philosophical or spiritual. We look at chakras for instance and see them not as separate energies, but rather as parts of an entire spectrum. Like a rainbow that provides a breathtaking scene much more inspiring than any single color, the 7th chakra expands our awareness to see the beauty of the whole. The same phenomenon applied to music makes us strive to find harmony; the musicians and their instruments blend together to make a harmonious symphony.

With this in mind we look at **Mantra Yoga** to create the harmony of sounds that blend together, elevating our consciousness into a blissful state. Seven seeks that harmony of sights and sounds, and can easily ride on the sound waves all the way to enlightenment, like a surfer riding a wave into the shore, feeling entirely at one with it.

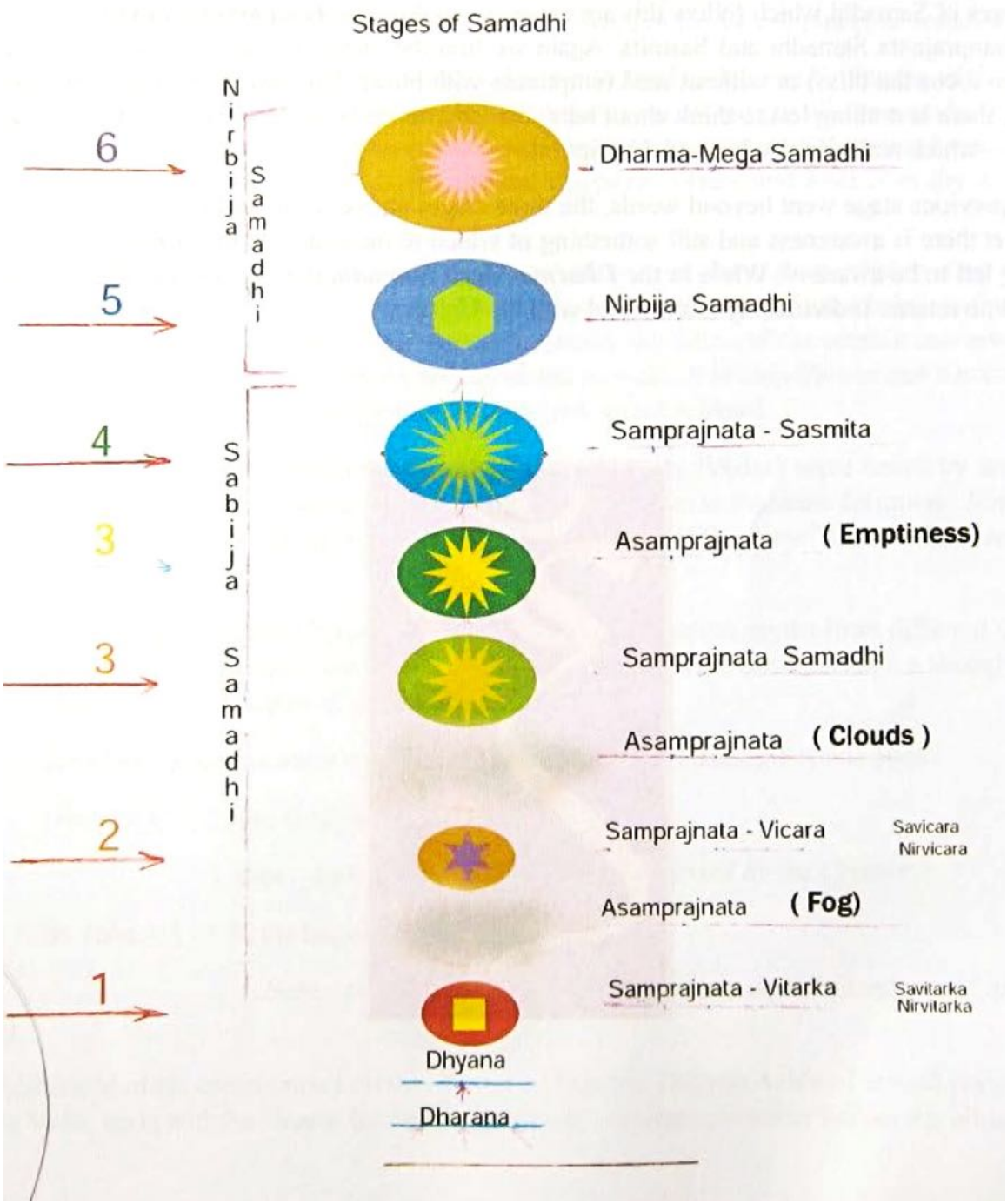
## THE SEVEN LEVELS OF SAMADHI

In yoga there are seven levels of enlightenment or *Samadhi*. These are levels of perception that our awareness goes through on the way to a totally blissful universal awareness. The final states are too far beyond the worldly experience to adequately describe. Although the higher levels of Samadhi are not easily attained, the beginning stages are quite attainable.

The first two stage are in fact very world states of mind, kind of childlike, where you perceive the world you are living in from a colorful and happy perspective. These occur in that part of the mind that deals with functioning in the normal world. At this level of Samadhi, as in most of them, there are two phases or two kinds of perception: ***Samprajnata Samadhi*** is the first, experienced "with seed" (an object of concentration), or with action, or with something happening. It is described as that state of enlightenment accompanied by reasoning, reflection, bliss and a sense of pure being.

It is stated at a further point in the Sutras that there are also two aspects within the first phase, ***Savitarka Samadhi*** and ***Nirvitarka Samadhi***. ***Savitarka Samadhi*** is that in which knowledge based on words (description), and ordinary knowledge based on sense perception and reasoning, are present in a mixed state allowing the mind to alternate between them. In this state of Samadhi we are happily "thinking" about our experience and describing its beauty. Then, on the clearing of memory, when the mind loses its essential subjective nature and the real knowledge of the object alone shines through the mind, ***Nirvitarka Samadhi*** is attained. At this stage we are no longer thinking about any objects nor are we comparing or analyzing them, but rather just saying "Wow".

Then comes a phase sometimes referred to as being in a cloud where nothing is happening at all. It is described as following the previous experience, when the seed (*pratyaya*) is dropped, leaving the mind blank as the remnant impressions fade away. This void state of mind is ***Asamprajnata Samadhi***; it is a cloudy state that can reappear between various stages as blissful experience, with nothing in particular to be blissful about.




Rising out of the previous cloud, we come up to the next stage of *Samprajnata Samadhi* which takes place in the higher mind. Once again there are two phases within the stage. The first of those, ***Savicara***, would be the verbal thinking aspect, contemplating the knowledge of reality in its manifest and ethereal (energy) forms. This knowledge might come from ancients texts, like the Sutras, or from more modern-day authors; either way they would be "inspired" wirings. Some of the information may be accurate, some might be opinion and require interpretation or

evaluation, nevertheless it would be regarding blissfully inspiring higher ideals. The second phase, that of ***Nirvicara***, takes us more into the intuitive and inspired areas of higher mental activity, where verbal thinking can no longer keep up with the vision. It is like seeing the greater picture, where words can only begin to describe one small piece of the puzzle. The next stage, ***Nirvicara***, is similar to ***Nirvitarka*** is that real knowledge of the whole pictures shines through, and needs no explanation.

Next comes the cloud nine phase of ***Asamprajnata*** where the enlightened knowledge (about the chakras, for instance) is dropped and fades away leaving an empty state of awareness. This can sometimes leave us with the mind of a child where we are simply standing in awe with no need to understand.

The stages of Samadhi which follow this are experienced through ***Anandamaya kosha***, the body of bliss: Samprajnata Samadhi and Sasmita. Again we find the phases of having seed (something on which to focus the bliss) or without seed (emptiness with bliss). The mind is no longer present nor needed, there is nothing left to think about here; the experience is clear, without clutter and beyond words --- which makes it also beyond description.

As the previous stage went beyond words, the three stages above it cannot be grasped by the mind at all, yet there is awareness and still something for which to be aware. In the ***Nirbija*** stage there is **no*thing*** left to be aware of. While in the ***Dharma-Mega Samadhi*** there is no individual awareness left, and no return: individuality has merged with the Universe.

# *MANTRA YOGA*

## ***Sacred Power of Sound***

The ancient civilizations including the Egyptians, Hindus, Tibetans, Greeks, Africans, Native Americans and other indigenous cultures were very aware of the sacred power of sound.

In its pure essence, universal cosmic sound is known to the Hindus and Brahmans of the East as the primordial sound, AUM. The Hindus believed that if you could put all the sounds of the universe together they would sound like this undulating vibrational wave of the sacred sound AUM. This same sound is called AMUN in the ancient Egyptian culture and AMEN in the religion of Christianity.

When an advanced yogi or yogini sits in deep meditation upon the Anahata chakra they can hear the cosmic sound of the universe. Anahata which is the name of the fourth chakra in the science of yoga means 'unstruck sound'. This sound is already the fabric of the cosmic universe. Other advanced meditators have commented on this sound as well. It is inaudible to one's normal level of hearing but when one silences the mind this sacred sound is heard.

Cosmic frequencies called shrutis in the Indian sacred texts (Vedas) were heard by meditating yogis. These sounds were chanted and eventually written down in mantram formulas. It is said that ***shrutis*** make up the body of the Vedic scriptures. In ancient times these Vedic texts were chanted and memorized.

In his book '*Healing Sounds*' Jonathan Goldman refers to creation myths from different traditions where the creator would manifest the world through sound. This came through a thought, vocalization, desire or visualization of the creator.

> Jonathon mentions some quotes from the bible in his Healing Sounds book.
>
> Genesis 1:3 "And God said, "Let there be Light".
>
> *(Here, light came as a thought manifested by the Creator.)*
>
> St. John 1:1 "In the beginning was the word"
>
> *(Here, the word is considered a thought or vocalized sound of the Creator.)*

As mentioned in his commentary on the 'Power of Mantra' Thomas Ashley-Farrand points out that in the Vedic texts and the 'Supta Brahmas Scriptures' written centuries before the bible it is said;

"In the beginning was Brahman with whom was the word" (Vedas)

"In the beginning was God, through the power of speech" (Supta Brahma Scriptures)

In his writings Jonathon Goldman speaks of the Hopi legend. The Hopi indigenous culture talk of Spider Woman manifesting creations upon the earth through song. As well, the stories of the ancient Egyptian culture speak of their God, Thoth, who could bring the material world into manifestation through vocalization of sacred sound. The Mayans apparently have said that the first enlightened beings were given life by the sacred power of the voice and sounds.

"In the mystery schools of Egypt, Rome, Greece, Tibet, India and other centers of learning, the knowledge of sound was highly refined science based upon an understanding of vibration as the primary causative form of the universe."

-Jonathan Goldman (Healing Sounds)

Various ancient civilizations believed that the human body was not only a physical body for the soul but also a vibrational energy field of cosmic sound vibration. (cosmic consciousness)

Edgar Cayce, the psychic teacher known as the 'Sleeping Prophet' spoke of the ancient Egyptian priests using seven vowel sounds to activate the energy centers in the body. He said these vowel sounds were also used to invoke divine, celestial beings. In one of his channeling sessions Cayce spoke of sound as being the medicine of the ancient cultures and to become, once again, the medicine and knowledge of our future modern times.

Many of the ancient cultures used sound in many forms of healing and ritual ceremonies. Some of these cultures believed that every organ and system in the physical body has its own resonant frequency. When something was out of harmony a dissonant pattern would create illness and disease. Sound was used as a method to bring the body back into balance. Goldman talks about this in his book. He said that in ancient Greece, the God, Apollo, was honored as the God of music and medicine. There were healing temples in ancient Greece which used music and sound for harmonizing the body and spirit. Edgar Cayce also spoke of other ancient temples such as those in ancient Egypt.

In the Eastern traditions, the power of mantra chanting has been used for thousands of years for healing, manifestation and spiritual evolution.

" In the Vedas, India's oldest scriptures, AUM is described as being the basic natural force inherent throughout all fo the phenomena of nature and from which all other forces are derived. Through the vibratory power of AUM God created and sustains the entire universe. Descending in frequency from the realms of pure spirit into the arenas of time and space, the AUM vibration shapes and organizes primordial energy to matter in such a way as to cause atoms to coalesce, thus manifesting physical matter. All that exists is therefore conceived as being fundamentally vibrational in nature."

- David Tame (The Secret Power of Sound )

Today in our modern times the scientists of quantum physics are acknowledging the facts that at its very core matter is made up of vibrational particles of energy.

Pythagoras, one of the great Greek philosophers known as the 'Father of Geometry' spoke of the 'Music of the Spheres'. He was one of those awakened beings who could hear the cosmic frequencies of the sacred universe. He taught that the movement of the planets in the universe created sound. Pythagoras said the sounds of the universe could be heard by those who consciously listened (Secret Power of Sound). He taight his advanced students this discipline of meditation. Through the invention of the one-stringed instrument called the monochord, Pythagoras correlated and taught the ratio of musical intervals and their harmonic notes. David Tame speaks about the discoveries of Pythagoras in his book , The Secret Power of Sound.

Sound is defiantly considered the phenomena of all of nature.

## Mantra Yoga

The word **mantra** (mantram) comes from the Sanskrit root 'manas' which translates into the word mind and 'trai' which means to liberate; to protect.

Some teachers such as Jonathon Goldman translate mantra as the 'thought that liberates and protects'. Some mystical texts refer to mantra as sacred sound, scientific sound formulas, the science of sound or vocal prayer.

Mantra chanting, which is called **japa** in Sanskrit, is the repetition (silently, spoken or sung) of an affirmative sound formula or mantram. Sanskrit syllables are strung together based on the understanding of the science of sound to create or invoke a particular energetic experience.

"A mantra is a vocal prayer. It is a syllable or word, or a series of syllables or words, vested with the spiritual power to evoke Divine Shakti energy to manifest within the jiva (being)." - Satyava

**Mantra Yoga** is considered to be one of the oldest and highest forms of yoga. The four known sacred texts of Indian culture called the 'Vedic Scriptures' are written and sung in mantric verse or mantra language formulas. These sacred teachings educate the seeker about the science of yoga as well as the science of mantra. According to the teachings this science dates back to over 5000 or more years ago.

In his audio commentary on *The Power of Mantra*, Thomas Ashley – Farrand states that the ancient Sanskrit language dates back to almost seven or eight thousand years ago and that is was an oral language before the art of writing. Ashley-Farrand said some of the oldest sacred teachings in the beginning were oral chants and dissertations of awakened beings called seers and sages. These enlightened beings received the knowledge of the sacred teachings of the universe while in Samadhi meditation. They verbalized the words of wisdom and mantra coming through them and these songs and poetry were later written down in the sacred texts of the Eastern teachings. (*Vedas, Upanishads & others*)

"The Sanskrit language is essentially an ancient science of sound composed of sounds and words based on the subtle vibrations that underlie the elements of the world, says Swami Akandananda. There is an inherent connection between the sound of Sanskrit and the actual reality that it represents. Especially potent syllables, called bija or seed syllables, are strung together like genes on a strand of DNA to form chants called mantram."

- Robert Gass (Chanting)

In the spiritual discipline of the 'Science of Yoga' the yogi masters called rishis, seer and sages are acknowledged as the original founders of the Sanskrit language. Seer is translated in Sanskrit as 'the one who sees'. Also, according to the ancient teachings, seers heard particular maha (great) mantras while in a blissful state of Samadhi and these mantras such as the Gayatri mantra were passed down to enlightened teachers of the ages. Today there are a number of maha mantras to choose from.

The Sanskrit language is also referred to as the 'Holy Language' for it is based on the science of sound; the geometric and rhythmic vibrational patterns of the cosmic universe. By sitting in deep states of meditation for long periods of time these seers would listen to the sounds of the cosmic universe as well as to the subtle frequencies of their human energy body. Through dedicated years of practice they began to scientifically name the frequencies of the energy body which corresponded to the sound of the universe. These sound frequencies as well corresponded to he chakra energy centers located along the human spinal column.

In India it is taught that these seers could actually see the petals of the chakras. Upon seeing and listening to the frequencies of the chakras these seers named each particular frequency and thus inscribed the Sanskrit language. The Sanskrit

alphabet contains 50 letters which include 16 vowel sounds. Interestingly enough, it is also taught in the *Science of Yoga – Chakra System* that there are 50 chakra petals which make up the six chakra centers in the body. When the yogi or yogini chants the sounds of these petals 20 times one can attain an opening of the thousand petalled lotus known as Sahasrara (7th Chakra). This yogic discipline is called the *Mantra Laya*.

The bija mantras known as the seed sound of the chakras as well as the petal sounds can be chanted in their pure form to transform one's consciousness. Mantra is sometimes referred to as the language of the chakras.

Various languages such as the Latin language is based on the ancient Sanskrit language. It is also interesting to note as well that the old Catholic masses were also sung text link that of the Vedic scriptures. In the Vedic texts mantra chants were scientifically formulated to create a certain vibration in the human subtle energy body while opening the door to the higher consciousness.

In Hindu mythology the revered Goddess, Saraswati is honored with and governs the principle of speech and mantra. She is known as the Goddess of poetry, music, and spiritual wisdom. She is referred to as the essence of the Vedic scriptures and the bestower of the maha mantras of India. She is the feminine aspect of the masculine creator of the universe, Brahma.

According to the teachings, spiritual teachers are said to transmit the power of mantra through the Saraswati principle. In his audio commentaries on mantra, Thomas Ashley-Farrand said enlightened teachers such as Paramahamsa Yogananda, Muktananda and Rama Krishna spoke of their personal transmission of the Shakti power through the Goddess Saraswati. Musicians and poets of India and Tibet bring praise and worship to Saraswati to inspire them in there learning and creative writings of musical compositions.

In his dissertation on the *Power of Mantra*, Ashley-Farrand talks about some of the characteristics of mantra. He says mantras are energy based rather than meaning based. For example the bija mantras are one-syllable sounds that have no literal translation.

According to the teahcings, mantras do not have an exact translation but only an approximate translation. The meaning of the mantra comes through the japa (repetition). It is after the person has chanted the sound formula several times that they will experience the meaning and the manifestation of that mantra.

Ashley-Farrand as well as other teachers speak of the intention behind the mantra. They say that focusing on our intention behind the mantra will also make it even more powerful. The combination of sounds and visualization will equal manifestation of different levels. Although you still will get results without visualization but it may take a little longer.

Mantra also stimulates the pranic life force in the body. The repetition of the mantra energizes the prana thus stimulating activity of the chakras and rejuvenation of the physical glands and organs. It is also taught that mantra can balance the positive (solar) and negative (lunar) channels of the energy body thereby activating the Kundalini energy at the base of the spine.

In his book, *Healing Mantras*, Thomas Ashley-Farrand says the practice of mantra helps one to safely prepare the chakras to receive large amounts of pranic, Kundalini energy. The chanting of the mantra beings to slowly purify negative vibrations in the energy body which allow the chakra centers to receive more and more pranic energy. Kundalini can easily ascend upward through the nadi channel and spinal column piercing he chakras along the way. It is said that because there is pranic energy, which is sometimes related to as an energy of fire, stimulated in the body of the chanter one may be come a little irritable or short tempered at times. This is because there is a purification taking place in the chakras and energy channels. It is advised that the chanter take a few days off japa or lesson the amount of japa per day until this clearing subsides.

Mantras calm the mind. The repetition of a mantra begins to absorb the wandering thoughts of the busy mind, silencing the chatter of the subconscious mind, which in turn begins to create onepointedness, focus and concentration. Japa is a great way to enter a quiet state of meditation. It is a great discipline to empty one's cup and open up to the spiritual wisdom, guidance and inspiration of the cosmic universe.

Chanting specific mantras are incredible tools for healing as well. By chanting a particular mantra one may be synchronistically led to a cure for their ailment. As well, by chanting a mantra and focusing on a particular organ or area of the body one can concentrate pranic life force into the area and help induce rejuvenation or healing. This is using the power of the mind and sound to create a desired result.

## How does one practice mantra?

Once can practice mantra internally in one's mind or vocally out loud. Traditionally in India and Tibet seed mantras and maha mantras have been recited without any particular music or melody and spoken in more of a monotone vibration. It is said the chanter will not be distracted by the melody and can deepen the vibration through the spoken formula.

Mantra has also been chanted in a form of kirtan, bhajan chanting where there is a lead singer and a group responding to the lead singer. This is named call and response chanting. This is usually led with musicians and singer therefore the mantras do have some melodies. These are usually mantras to a particular deity in the ancient tradition or affirmative prayers. This style of chanting does have great

benefits of healing., calming the state of mind of the chanter as well as awakening one's higher consciousness.

In modern day mantras are also chanted to more contemporary music in a call and response form or unison signing. This form of chanting seems more accessible to the general public and has many of the same benefits as well.

It is also recommended that eventually one take a particular maha mantra as one' only personal mantra and chant it daily. The longer one stays with the same mantra the greater the spiritual evolution of the chanter. Mantras can be one word such as Rama which was the mantra of the great Mahatma Gandhi or it can be one line such as the ancient formula Om Mani Padme Hum and lastly it can be a phrase such as in the great Gayatri Mantra.

In some spiritual traditions such as the Hindu and Tibetan traditions, mala breads are used to chant the mantra and count the number of rounds done. Mala beads are similar ot the rosary in the Christian tradition except there are 108 beads on a mala and 54 beads on a rosary. The mala beads are usually made of seeds or various types of wood such as sandalwood.

In his research on mantra Thomas Ashley-Farrand found that the Vedic scriptures speak of 108 principle astral channels leading from the heart in the subtle body out to the rest of the energy body. In the chakra yogic systems the teachings speak of 108 nerve impulses in the central nervous system that respond to 108 repetitive sounds or breaths. Hindu mythologies speak of 108 names God.

The daily repetition of a mantra takes root in the consciousness of the reciter and will even arise without the chanter thinking about it. It is said this can happen especially in times of danger or conflict. By sending a mantra deep into the subconscious mind, through japa, one experiences clearing of negative thought patterns and habits at the cellular level of one's being.

To practice your mantra you may follow a spiritual discipline by creating a quiet meditative space in your home or in nature. You may choose to chant your mantra with the mala beads or without. As well you can sub-vocally recite your mantra while walking, running, biking, waiting in line or doing mechanical talks. This is a great way to calm the busy mind and create more clarity in one's life. It is not recommended that one practice their mantra while driving for japa has a tendency to take one up into the higher chakras and more out of body. One needs to be more physically present when driving.

Practicing mantra at sunrise and sunset is a great traditional form of chanting as well. This is especially recommended with the Gayatri Mantra. Also practicing mantra such as the primordial sound, AUM, early morning (4 AM) or before bedtime is a good spiritual discipline and will create a lot of synchronicity and harmony in one's life.

You may try practicing mantra both ways. In a quiet meditative place in the morning as well as internally in your mind throughout the day. This is very effective and brings about desired results.

There are mantras to help one cope in the material world, healing mantras as well as mantra specifically taught to raise the consciousness of the chanter and awaken one along their spiritual path.

There are certain traditional mantras called the maha mantras that have more power and potency for they are mantras that have been heard by the seers of ancient times and passed down to many teachers through the ages. These mantras have been chanted for thousands of years and are part of the fabric of the cosmic universe. When one chants thee mantras one attunes to the frequencies of the mantra, which is already vibrating in the geometric configuration of the mystical universe.

Some of these maha mantras are:

Gayatri Mantra
Om Mani Padme Hum
Hare Krishna  Hare Rama
Shri Ram Jai Ram
Heart Sutra Mantra  ( Gate Gate ….)
Om Namah Shiva
Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaiya
Om Tara Tuttare Ture So Ha  (Hum)
Tryam Bakam

"Just as an external sound produces movements of air (vayu) in waves, so in the inner space of the jiva's (being) body, waves are produced by the movements of the vital air, prana-vayu, by the chanting of a mantra. The waves of heat generated by the chanting activate Kundalini thereby Shakti & divine consciousness are manifested within the jiva"
-Satyavan

Ashley-Farrnad speaks of the Eastern traditions choosing a discipline of 40 days to recite a mantra for a particular desired result. This is when one is trying to manifest something in the material world such as abundance, good fortune, inspiration, a soul-mate and so on. For healing mantras some people will choose up to 120 days. Other shorter disciplines are 21 or 27 days.

One can choose to do a particular mantra of manifestation along with their chosen daily mantras as well.

Practicing your mantra in the same space each day will charge the energy of that space making it more of a sacred, meditative place to sit.

In his teacher's manual, *The Healing Power of Sound*, Simon Heather recommends writing your mantra out over and over again to help calm the emotional mind. Also chanting with large groups of people can be very uplifting and energizing. In offering our Sanskrit chanting circles in Victoria the last four years I can attest to the many benefits of group chanting. It is wonderful to join in song with community. Simon reminds one that chanting over a certain period of time will generate a certain amount of spiritual energy in one's being that will draw one closer to the Divine. Chanting a maha mantra begins to remove the veils of illusion and ignorance connecting one with the source of creation.

In his book on mantram, Indian scholar, Eknath Eswaran, speaks of the power of a daily mantra. According to the ancient teachings, he points out that if the last words of a dying person is their mantra then this is where the person's energy will be drawn to or this will decide the plane of existence the person will be attached to. He spoke of Gandhi. He said that at the moment of his death Gandhi's maha mantra, Rama Rama, rose in his mind and were the last words on his lips. Therefore it is said that he would be united with the divine consciousness of the universe. Rama, in the ancient teachings, is recognized as an avatar or God.

It is said that devoted chanting of the divine names of the spiritual universe will eventually unite the reciter with this divine consciousness. According to research, the ancient Egyptian priests were also known to use sacred vowel sounds in invoke spiritual energies.

## Mantra is not a religion

Mantra chanting is not a religion but it is a spiritual discipline. Spiritually is the nature of the sacred universe and the earth. Most religious people tend to be spiritual and follow a particular set of religious beliefs. Mantra transcends all religions and is common to all beings.

One does not have to change their religion in order to practice mantra for Sanskrit is not a religion. The holy language of Sanskrit is based on the vibrational frequencies of the cosmic universe therefore it is not polarized to any particular religion although it does tend to fall under the philosophies of the Hindu and Tibetan traditions from which the Sanskrit language was founded.

Eknath Eswaran also states that if one is uncomfortable chanting mantram formulas in the Sanskrit language then one can chant something closer to their religious belief

system. For example for those who do not want to chant Rama or Krishna Eswaran says one may chant Jesus, Christi, Allah, Ave Maria or Hail Mary for a similar result. He says there is a lot of power behind the intention of the chanter and the repetition of a particular sound or divine name. If it is easier for a person to reach a sublime state chanting the name of Christi, Jesus, Allah, Eswaran says this is what one should use when reciting the names of God. He adds that it will get you to the same place.

Repetitious singing of affirmative songs or vowels will also enhance the consciousness of the reciter.

## Mantra & Karma

As mantra stimulates, energizes and clears negative vibrations form the chakras and subtle body karma is also being cleared or burned off. The vibration produced by the chanting of a particular mantra can eventually break down negative karmic patterns stored in the body.

This karma can be previous negative thoughts, judgments, old conditioning and habits stored in one's subconscious mind as well as the karma one has accumulated from previous past lives.

In audio commentary on the *Power of Mantra*, Thomas Ashley-Farrand speaks of the four divisions of karma described in the Vedas. Sanchita karma is the karma talked about above. It is these negative conditionings sorted into our cellular body. Another form of karma called *Prarabdha karma* are lessons we gave to ourselves for this lifetime to resolve. *Agmi karma* is the karma from our actions in this lifetime that will affect future lives. A last form of karma is *Kriya Mani* karma or popularly known as instant karma.

Mantras penetrate the vibrational patterns of these stored karmas, harmonize, and raise the vibration of the reciter. This higher, spiritual vibration on the chanter can then attract more positive experiences and circumstances. The power of these sacred formulas can transform our reality and purify our energy being. Great maha mantras have been known to bring the chanter to high states of enlightenment and liberation from the cycles of death and rebirth.

In the Vedic Astrology of the East there are also mantras for each of the planets. It is said by chanting these mantras one can lesson the effects of planets such as saturn's return and so on.

## **The benefits of mantra chanting:**

There is great research in our modern day on the many benefits of all forms of sacred singing, vowel toning, harmonic overtone chanting as well as mantra chanting. Each of these disciplines has a positive effect upon the physical, emotional and spiritual body – the body, mind & spirit! The cells, organs, muscles, bones and the entire physical body responds well to the healing vibration of sounds and mantra.

Mantra repetition begins a vibration that permeates the entire body. Sustained repetition of a mantra will eventually vibrate every cell, every atom and every molecule of one's being.

<u>Physical benefits of mantra chanting are as follows:</u>

- Oxygenates the cells while decreasing the consumption of oxygen in the body
- Calms respiration rate, heart rate and slows the rate of metabolism
- Relaxes the muscles, distresses the body while calming the mind
- Lowers blood pressure
- Improves blood and lymph circulation
- Deepens breathing
- Helps to relieve chronic pain
- Stimulates the auto-immune system
- Stimulates energy flow through the meridian pathways in the body
- Charges the entire brain while increasing brain activity and memory
- Equalizes brain waves while inducing the alpha brain wave activity for relaxation & visualization
- Energizes prana in the body for rejuvenation of the cells, glands and organs
- Increases levels of melatonin in the brain and massages the entire inner body

<u>Psychological benefits of mantra chanting are as follows:</u>

- Repetitive chanting frees the busy mind bringing one to a place of calmness, one-pointedness and concentration
- Sharpens clarity and alertness of the mind
- Calms the emotions, impedes anxiety and helps to decrease insomnia
- Silences the subconscious chatter and begins to delete negative thought patterns
- Enhances creativity and opens the door to inspirations as well as problem solving
- Heart-opening thereby increasing one's patience, trust and inner peace
- Improves self-confidence
- Weakens or burns one's negative karmic patterns
- Helps to lift depression especially when chanting with large groups of people
- Balances the solar and lunar energy currents in the body (pingala & ida)
- Helps one along their dharmic path; guides one's purpose in life

Spiritual benefits of mantra chanting are as follows:

- By activating the pranic life force at the base of the spine and in the chakra centers mantra chanting is awakening on many levels; Kundalini awakening
- Cleanses & purifies the energy body while raising the consciousness of the reciter
- Helps to remove the veils of illusion and ignorance which in turn helps one along their dharmic path and life's purpose
- Releases one from the bondage of predetermined karmic circumstances
- Balances the pingala (positive, solar) and ida (negative, lunar) energy channels in the body thus once again activating Kundalini energy at the base of the spine
- Creates a magnetic, positive current of energy around the chanter which enables one to attract more positive and synchronistic energies or experiences
- Enhances the spiritual charge of energy in each of the chakra centers as well as helps open the chakras
- Invokes divine energy
- Eases the suffering of the dying and prepares one for death / liberation
- Creates more desire and awareness of being in service for the good of humanity
- Creates more peace, love and joy in one's life

From his research on the power of mantra Ashley-Farrand said that in the Vedas Sanskrit mantra is called Deva Lingua which translates as the Language of the Gods and Goddesses.

Mantra Yoga is a wonderful discipline to explore, practice and share with your community of friends and family. By gathering in circles of chant one is helping to evolve one's own consciousness as well as the consciousness of our global planet.

**AUM SHANTI SHANTI SHANTI AUM!**

*Marina*

## Sahasrara Chakra Routine

Center yourself in feeling every move you make and every breath you take.

1. Cleansing breath first and then the A-U-M with hand positions. Feel the vibration.
2. Squat down to an inhalation and push yourself up as you push our the breath---27 times.
3. ***Padottanasana***: leg stretch pose. With you feet wide apart, take in a breath and exhale as you bend forward, with your back straight. Hands come to touch the floor. Breathe deeply as you hold the pose and twist your pelvis from side to side. Observe where the stretching moves to. Legs remain straight. When you come up, do it to a very deep inhalation. # 93
4. ***Trikonasana***: the triangle. With you feet further apart bring your arms straight up to be parallel to the floor; breathe in deeply and as you exhale, bring your right hand down to the floor beside your left foot. Other hand points up to the ceiling/sky and your head turns to look at that hand. Inhale up. Try it three times on each side. # 102
5. ***Paarshwarita trikonasana***: triangle variation. From the same foot stance, bend over to each side on the exhalation; pelvis is held straight, so are the legs. # 105
6. With legs closer together, move into forward and backward bending, exhaling with the bends and inhaling to the straight position. At the end take in a deep inhalation and hold it momentarily. # 94
7. Rapid twisting is done by turning and swinging the arms around behind you on each side to an exhalation. Breathe in going through the forward position. Emphasize the exhalation. # 98

8. Come to a sitting position, on the heels, facing west, and breathe 4-16-8-4, nine rounds.
9. Now move into ***paschimottanasana***, forward stretch. From a position sitting on your buttocks, legs stretched out front, move forward to grab your toes and pull your head down to your knees. Exhaling down, work you way into it with movement and with casual breathing. # 72
10. Lie on your back and go into ***halasana***, the plough. Lift up both legs, bring them up over your head and down to the floor. Rock your body back and forth a bit to get comfortable in the position. Breathing is shallow. Then bring your hands up to support the back and lift your legs up into the shoulder stand. Do any variations you feel are appropriate. To go down, go back into the plough and gently roll your back down to the floor one vertebra at a time. # 127
11. From the lying down position, bring your feet up to your buttocks with knees up in the air; hands go up over the head and down to the floor. Now push up into ***vilomasana***, the bridge. Drop your head down to touch the floor, put some weight on it. Breathe deeply. If you are ready for it, go up into ***chakrasana***, the wheel by lifting your head off and going as high up as you can. Watch your lower back; maybe tilt the pelvis back so as to not overbend it. Vigorous deep breathing in this pose is quite stimulating for all chakras and their physical components. # 44, 45
12. ***Ardha matseyendrasana***, the classical spinal twist, is done with one foot beside you and one crossed over the knee. Arm up over that knee and hand down to the foot. Exhale to the twist, and inhale as you relax out of it. # 85
13. Sitting in ***vajrasana***, facing **south**, do the second ***pancha sahita***, 4-4-6-8.
14. Stretch legs out front for ***shirsh janu asana***, head-to-the-knee-pose, beginning with hands in front of the chest and stretching them up to the sky with the in-breath, down to the toes on the out-breath, with head coming to the knees. Rock yourself down into the position. Both sides three times. # 74
15. ***Parighasana*** the locked gate pose. Now come up to the knees, straighten one leg out to the side, and with an exhalation bend over to that side. Breathe in and out feeling yourself stretch further with each out-breath. # 110
16. In standing position with feet apart, begin flexibility movements that are innovative and without structure, moving in every possible way – dancing fluidly as if you were a skin bag full of water.
17. Down to ***vajrasana***, then go back down to your elbows and back further to touch the top of your head to the floor (***supta vajrasana***). Breathing is deep and feel the stretch in the throat area. # 15
18. Now in the thunderbolt, facing **east**, breathe 8-4-4-16.
19. ***Janu Shirsh Asana***: knee to the head pose. In sitting position with one foot in to the thigh, the other foot is held with the hands and brought up straight in front, then pulled in to the head; each side. Inhale straightening the leg out, exhale pulling it up to the head. # 75
20. From the same position, bring the toe in to touch the forehead. Wiggle around in it to loosen up areas tat are tight.

21. Cross-legged position for a spinal twist, left hand to right knee, other hand on floor behind. Exhale as you twist and inhale coming forward.
22. Sitting between the heels, do ***purna usthrasana***, the extended camel, coming up to the knees and bending back until the hands hold the heels. Breathe deeply and vigorously in through the nose and out through the mouth. # 25
23. Facing north, sitting on heels, breathe 16-8-4-4.
24. Seven parts of the ***oli mudras*** as descried below.
25. Final breathing to the **west**, with 4-16-8.

## *THE OLI MUDRAS*

These are a group of practices done by the intermediate student of yoga for the purpose of changing or transmuting the energy usually dissipated through the physical body, into the fire power of *tejas*, and the higher mind energy, *ojas*. Sexual energy is changed from its raw form and converted into a higher form of creative energy. (Obviously sexual energy is creative since we were all created from it.) This energy is then used in a process of rejuvenations as the cells of glands and organs are re-created in healthy patterns which result in greater vitality. Some of the life force is pulled out of the sperm and ovaries, keeping the reproductive system in check, and drawn up the spine to be re-distributed along the endocrine glands and change the hormonal balances within the body. Emotions touched off by sex impulses are tones down, leaving the mind in a more peaceful state and more capable of turning into the realms of the higher mind, *Vhgyana maya kosha*. When accompanied with the proper frame of mind and spiritual motivation, these mudras produce perfect health and a very long life. In the overall practice of yoga they are to be done in conjunction with the *Loaya yoga kriyas* for the arousal and control of *Kundalini Shakti*. (advanced)

***Vajroli 1***: Starting from shavasana, do a straight back sit up, using the hands; then place them a little further back with fingers pointing forward, blast out the breath while leaning forward, lock it out, apply the *bandha trayam*. Now lean back, lift the legs high off the ground and up over the head, hold this position with the held out breath for 32 seconds while you are essentially balanced on your tailbone and hands. You might feel energy impulses jumping from the tailbone and shaking the whole body. Good. Afterwards come down very slowly, taking in a breath and letting it out as you lie back down and relax, with deep breathing.

***Vajroli 2***: Again you sit up from the corpse posture, but this time come up into the boat, *navasana*, with the hands on the thighs. A deep breath is taken coming up, now it is blasted out in one big whoosh, the *bandha trayam* is applied, and the hands slide

up the legs to take hold of the ankles. Meanwhile the torso and legs are folded up together, keeping each straight. The attained position is one of very delicate balance on the tailbone, with the body in a similar position to *paschimottanasana* but with the back much straighter. This is held for a 32 second count, feeling energy move and jump from the tailbone again, you might even feel a kick there. Then you return to the boat while taking in a breath, then let it out and return to a lying down position; relax totally and breathe deeply.

***Sahajroli 1*** ; This is done from shirshasana, the headstand, by bringing the feet together heel to heel near the groin with the knees bent and out to the sides. Now the breath is blasted out, *mula bandha* and *uddiyana bandha* are applied while pushing the feet together with as much pressure as possible. After 32 seconds the legs are raised with the in-breath up to the headstand again. Feel the energy moving up the spine from the *kandha*, tailbone, while you have the breath out.

***Sakajroli 2***: From the headstand in the last pose, one leg is bent and twisted around the other leg in a loose position. With a deep inhalation legs are pushed up skyward; *mula bandha* is applied and the breath is held in for a 16 count, while feeling an energy flow from the tailbone up towards one of the adrenal glands. Then release the breath and the leg position, change your feet around and repeat the procedure on the other side. Afterwards the simple headstand is returned to and then come back down to the ground.

***Amoroli 1***: Sitting in the posture of *shakta chelana*, a *mahatyoga pranayama* is taken, followed by the application of the bandha trayam and the breath is held in for 64 seconds. Then the breath is blasted out quickly, locks re-applied, and held out for a period of 32 seconds. Hands are in *gnani mudra* and placed palms down on the knees. Stay focused on feeling how the energy moves during this procedure with the locks and the breathing impulse.

***Amoroli 2***: is done immediately following the above *shunyaka*, by taking in one slow deep breath and blasting it out again in the usual fashion. Then with *mula* and *jalandhara bandhas* applied, the *uddiyana* is applied and released 55 times in a process called *nauli kriya*. The abdomen rolls in and out in a wave like motion; see if this puts you in touch with some of the internal energy flows.

The entire routine should be done within a ten minute time period, and followed by a short relaxation. Each part of this series needs to be perfected slowly over a period of however many weeks it takes so that there is no undue strain. Before doing these

mudras, the body should be warmed up with a good yoga practice; they should also be done early morning before eating anything.

## SYNOPSIS of SAHASRARA CHAKRA

**ELEMENT**: Awareness **YOGA**: Mantra

**GENDER**: Masculine **NAME**: Sahasrara

**MEDITATIVE DIRECTION**: Center

**YANTRA SYMBOL**: Thousand-petaled lotus

**ENERGY COLOR**: White (Gold)

**SENSE PERCEPTION**: All

**ACTION**: Musical expression

**NERVE PLEXUS**: Whole nervous system

**PHYSIOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS:**
**GLANDS**: Pineal **ORGANS**: Body

**PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERSTICS:**

**POSITIVE:**
Reflective
Refined
Meditative
Magnanimous
Calm
Studious

**NEGATIVE:**
Turbulent mind
Overly sensitive
Introverted
Envious

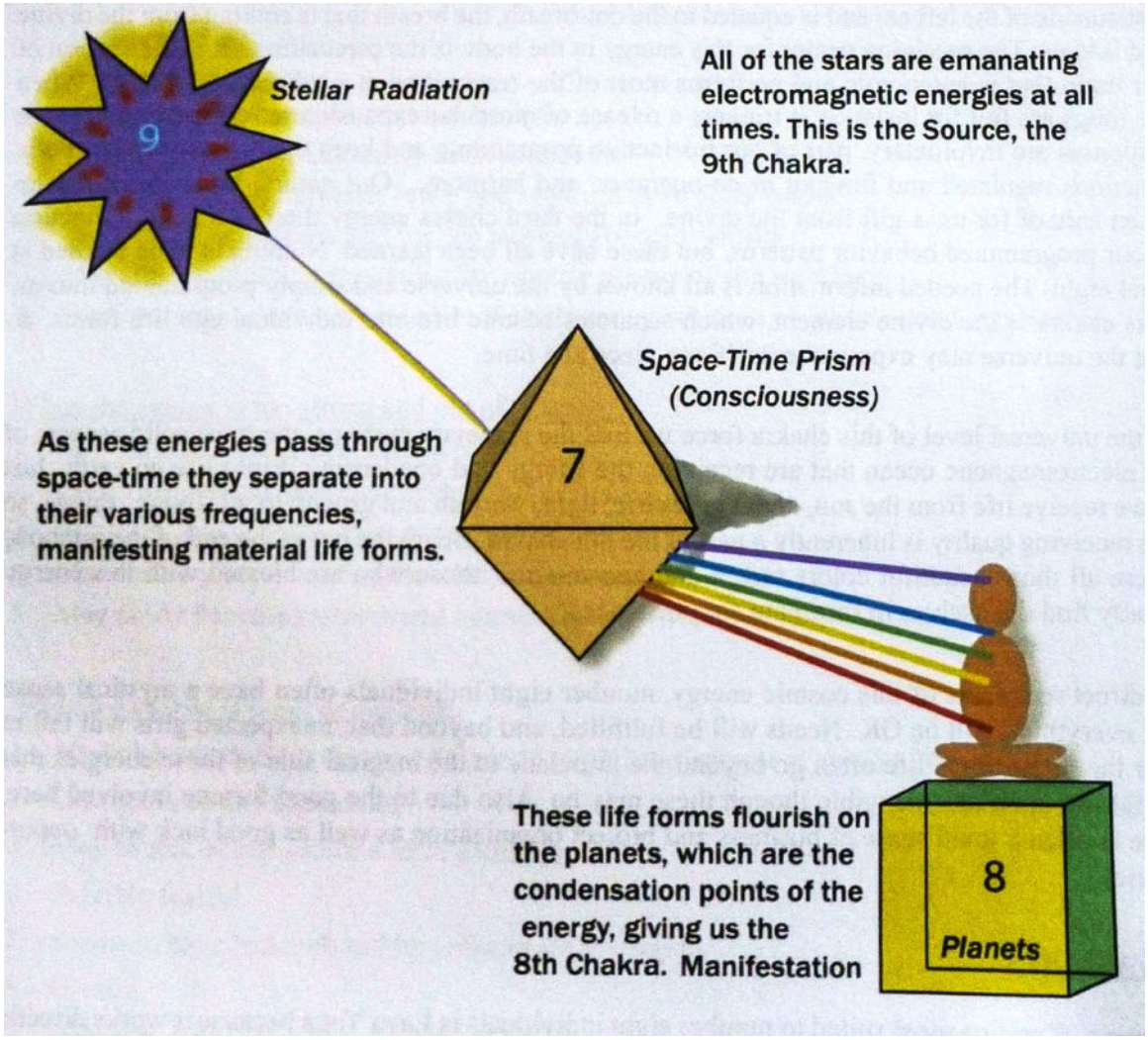
Eccentric
Offensive behaviour

Chapter 8

# NARAYANANA CHAKRA

*The breath of Vishnu*

The seventh, eighth and ninth chakras operate as a trinity, of which one is the source of universal energy (9), another is the destiny or destination (8), and the third is the flow between these two (7), and, as we see it, the manifestation of that energy.



The manifestation brought about by the trinity forms what we perceive as the material world. Our physical reality is really only a small fraction of all the energy flowing throughout the universe, just as visible light is only a small fraction of the electromagnetic spectrum. Although our little planet is only a fraction of reality, this material world is the one in which we have bodies, the one we accumulate possessions in, and the one we try to hold onto so dearly. It is kind of like possessively holding onto the doorknob, when in reality the whole mansion is yours. The universe at the electromagnetic level is an ocean of vibrant energy and we are the fish swimming in the sea. Living in the lower chakras, our sight is very limited to a short field of vision; it is like a small fish that can only see its immediate environment and has no concept of how vast the ocean may be. At level 7 we are more like eagles who fly high up above the ocean and see a horizon that seems to have no end. Beams of energy coming in at all angles from every part of the universe intersect at a variety of angles, weaving the fabric of an illusionary reality – a cosmic dreamworld that we all share and take to be substantial and solid.

The eighth chakra is called **NARAYANANA**, and is spoken of in the Hindu tradition as the center of the Breath of Lord *Vishnu*. Vishnu is a deity representing the preserving energy of the universe, that which maintains life in tis manifested forms. The breath of that energy has to do with the empowerment of the forces which maintain life as we know it here on earth. Narayanana is located just outside of the left ear and is equated to the out-breath, the breath that is coming from the divine and into us. The receiving center for this energy in the body is the cerebellum. It is the section of our brain that is automic and performs most of the responding at a subconscious level. When the lungs are full for instance, it triggers a release of muscular expansion to let the air out. These responses are involuntary, part of our instinctive programing, and keep the majority of our body functions regulated and flowing in co-operation and harmony. Our natural body functions are taken care of for us, a gift from the divine. In the third chakra energy there is a similar function in our programmed behaviors patterns, but these have all be learned. Nothing is to be learned at level eight. The needed information is all known by the universe and simply programmed into us. This chakra is the divine element, which separates cosmic life into individual ego life-forms, so that the universe may experience itself one piece at a time.

At the universal level of this chakra force we find the planetary systems, the most solid aspects of the electromagnetic ocean that are receiving the energy and condensing it into life on earth. Just as we receive life from the sun, and it gives life, light, warmth and growth to all 'living' things, so this receiving quality is inherently a part of the 8$^{th}$ chakra. Being the pot at the end of the rainbow, where all those beautiful colors merge and become one, those who are blessed with this energy usually find themselves in fortunate circumstances.

As direct recipients of this cosmic energy, number eight individuals often have a mystical sense that everything will be OK. Needs will be fulfilled, and beyond that, unexpected gifts will fall in their lap. Interests in life often go beyond the mundane

to the magical side of those energies that are falling upon us, intangible though these may be. Also due to the good fortune involved here, there is often a good sense of business and project organization, as well as good luck with opportunities.

## LAYA YOGA

The type of practice most suited to number eight individuals in Laya Yoga because it works directly with the force of the eighth chakra. As a practice that requires purification of the nervous system and good concentration, it is considered to be an advanced form of yoga. Consciousness and mind are used to direct the energy flows through Pranayama kosha, creating an upwards, awakening effect on our latent or dormant forces, sometimes referred to as ***Kundalini***. Because of this it is sometimes referred to as ***Kundalini Yoga***. Alos, because it words with the union of the positive (male) and negative (female) energy currents, uniting them to form the more potent force of Kunaalini, these practices are called ***Tantra Yoga***. The energy in our nervous system is affected by these practices, and this can have strange and unpredictable effects on our physical, emotional and mental states of being. Consequently, the Laya Kriyas are taught carefully to those who have gone through the necessary detoxification of body, purification of emotions and clearing of mind.

The stimulating bija for this center is Mung, while the mantra is nam na ray a nay a.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

When the energy is strong and flowing:

1. Qualities of justice and integrity.
2. Kind and generous.
3. Courageous and can often be a risk taker.
4. Generally fortunate and easily finds abundance.
5. In the flow of the universe, lucky and seems to have good karma.
6. Easy-going personality and not too worried about tomorrow.
7. Interested in mystic arts, spirituality, cosmic geometry and astrology.
8. Good networker, with organizational skills and good sense of business and commerce.

When the energy is too strong and out of balance:

1. May be dishonest or deceitful in business.
2. Couse be manipulative and perhaps quite cunning.
3. Secretive, can become cruel or wicked.
4. Materialistic, yet not very grounded in the material world.
5. May easily become extreme and oppressive in spiritual pursuits.

When the energy is weak or depleted:

1. Might be too much in the material world, with little interest in spirituality.
2. Disorganized and spaced out.
3. May be anti-social and/or a little eccentric.
4. Possibly fearful.
5. Seems to have bad luck and be unfortunate in general.
6. Greedy.
7. Difficulty being studious or intellectual.

## SYNOPSIS of NARAYANANA CHAKRA

**ELEMENT**: Time, Past

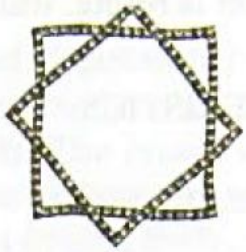
**YOGA**: Laya, Tantra or Kundalini

**GENDER**: Feminine

**MEDITATIVE DIRECTION**: Upper Left

**ENERGY COLOR**: Dark Blue

**YANTRA SYMBOL:**



**SOUND**: Mung

**SENSE PERCEPTION**: Mystical

**ACTION**: Out-breath

**NERVE PLEXUS**: Cerebellum, Brain Stem

**PHYSIOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS:**
**GLANDS**: Gonads **ORGANS**: Sex Organs

**PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERSTICS:**

**POSITIVE:**
Just
Integrity
Merciful
Charitable
Courageous
Lenient

**NEGATIVE:**
Unjust
Insidious (underhanded)
Ruthless
Virulent
Canny
Miserly

**BRAHMANANDA** is the name of the ninth chakra. This chakra is the source of all energy. In the manifest universe it is the source of the stars and galaxies that

emanate that energy. This vortex is located out and up from the right side of your head and tends to draw your consciousness out of your body. This energetic pull is like the radiant aspect of the stars beaming out energy in all directions. The ninth chakra is a powerful emanating force, one that instigates action. It is related to the in-breath, the life giving power, and is received in the cerebrum. From there, it flows to the breathing center (medulla oblongata), a part of the brain that gives the original impulse to begin things, from the breath to many of the creative endeavors that we initiate.

In universal energies the ninth chakra is the origin of the electromagnetic ocean, made up of all those billions of stars that are constantly radiating their energies outward in all directions. This energy has inspiring characteristics, often making people dominant with this energy those who shine the light for others to clearly see the more universal side of things. Expanding one's horizon, it can be as vast as the universe itself.

In those far reaching places of outer space where we see the stars, and where dwells that continuum of electromagnetic energy, are vast galaxies made up of billions of stars. One of the interesting observations made by astronomers is that the furthest galaxies, which look like stars to our eyes, when viewed with our most powerful telescopes, are seen to be receding away from us at half the speed of light. They are already billions of light years away, and moving further away at a speed of 93,000 miles each second. Where are they going? And just how vast is this "space" ? It spreads so far out in every direction that we cannot fathom it with our finite human minds. Yet, self-perpetuating energy fills this entire infinite space, making it an infinite amount of power.

These vast concepts intuitively infiltrate consciousness of # 9 people, creating a feeling that makes them stand in awe at the wonder of it all. The beautiful and benevolent gift of this mind-blowing reality is a Great Mystery. The ***one***-ness of it all creates a blissful feeling that they are connected, and all part of the greater reality. They can feel its divine essence, and because of this quality they tend to find an apply spiritual practices that keep them in touch with the divine quality of existence.

## BHAKTI YOGA

Though it may have many forms expressed as various religions, the essence of Bhakti Yoga in the Science of Yoga is maintaining a connection to the One, the Divine, or God. For the yogi this form of yoga can well become a study of astronomy and astrology. In such studies one learns to understand these cosmic energies which are flowing in from all angles of the universe at all times. The concept of one infinite and eternal electromagnetic ocean becomes deeper than a concept as we begin to feel it flowing in and through us, creating a feeling of ecstasy and bliss. Through the

experience we perceive the divine nature of the universe, realizing that the mind of the universe is much greater than the individual human mind, that the awareness of the universe is much vaster than our own.

The stimulating bija for this center is Dung, while the mantra is nam bha ga va day vas a day va ya.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

When the energy is strong and balanced:

Spiritual, idealistic and humanitarian, having an intuitive knowledge that it is all one universe.
Has generous giving nature, in the flow of universal love; outgoing personality.
Inspirational, open to the flow of incoming ideas.
Creative, dramatic and resourceful.
Contemplative, reflective and independent.
Organized, with good creative management skills, solution oriented.

When the energy is too strong and out of balance:

Probably as extreme nature, i.e. bouncing from spiritual to material.
Tendency to indulge in alcohol, or narcotics.
May be too idealistic, eccentric.
Ungrounded, not connected to the body, cloud-nine consciousness.
May be scattered and unfocused, too many inspirations.
Might be overly giving, to the point of losing out.
No boundaries.

When the energy is weak or depleted:

May be lacking in spiritual values.
More attached to personal desires then humanitarian.
Possibly introverted, anti-social and self-pitying; maybe even fearful.
May not have a strong sense of personal identity.
May be very impersonal and lacking in consideration for others.
Lacking of Inspiration or creativity, perhaps displaying tunnel vision.
Can easily become temperamental and pretentious.

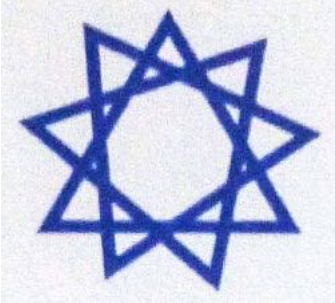
## SYNOPSIS of BRAHMANANDA CHAKRA

**ELEMENT**: Space, Future **YOGA**: Bhakti

**GENDER**: Masculine

**Name**: Brahmananda

**YANTRA SYMBOL:**



**MEDITATIVE DIRECTION**: Upper Right

**ENERGY COLOR**: Purple

**SOUND**: Dung

**SENSE PERCEPTION**: Divine Bliss

**ACTION**: In-breath

**NERVE PLEXI**: Cerebrum/ Central nervous system

**PHYSIOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS:**
**GLAND**: Thyroid **ORGANS**: Nervous System **OTHER**: Bones

**PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERSTICS:**

**POSITIVE:**
Universal Love
Idealistic
Spiritual
Intuitive
Sincere
Understanding

**NEGATIVE:**
Personal Desires
Pretentious
Self-pitying
Temperamental
Lacking Shrewdness
No Concentration

## *Chakra Yoga Teacher's Manual*

Written by David Goulet Co-authored by R. Marina Halleran

Topics written by David:

Knowledge of the Chakras, Science of Yoga
Psychology of the Chakras
Physiology of the Chakras
Synopsis of the Chakras
Samkhya Philosophy
Forms of Yoga
Koshas
Anamaya Kosha & Diet
Pranayama Basic Breath Training
Pranayama Kriya Techniques
Meditation Techniques
Yantra Yoga
Hatha Yoga / Oli Mudras
Benefits of Yoga Asanas
Sun Salute: Shakti Surya Namaskar, Sun Kriyas
Chakra Routines
Eye Drills
Pictures and Graphics
Editing and Manual Layout

Topics written by Marina Halleran:

Psychology of the chakras
Hatha Yoga
Sun Salutes: Anahata Sun Salate, Parvati Sun Salute
Benefits of the Asanas
Diet and Nutrition
The Voice
Vocal Warm Ups
Chants
Mantra Yoga; the Sacred Power of Sound

Kundalini: Ida Pingala and Shushumna
Synopsis of the Chakras
Ten-week Yoga Program Outline
Editing and Manual Layout
Meditation
Ashtanga Yoga
Bandhas

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