

Chakra Study Program

Understanding how and where energy is blocked



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Chakra Study - Introduction

Chakra study or chakra awakening?

The aim of this chakra study project is to help you bring awareness to where your life energies lie, and to uncover whether you are making the best use of those energies. Through enquiry and practices you will come to understand if particular chakras are 'blocked' or if your life energies are flowing. For example, you may expect that if you are nursing a sick loved one your chakra energies may be diminished, particularly at Muladhara and Anahata.

Chakra awakening, or Kundalini, is quite different in that it aims to awaken the dormant chakra energies, allowing them to rise from the base chakra to the crown chakra, thereby bringing enlightenment (Samadhi). Commonly, the usual advice for awakening Kundalini is that a teacher or guide needs to be present while the awakening process is undertaken.

Of course, chakra awakening is not the only pathway to the goal of Samadhi (which simply means awake or aware at all times). There are many pathways, Yogic and others, which bring awareness, even though the goal is identical – awareness at all times.

What are chakras?

The Sanskrit word, chakra, literally means 'wheel' or 'vortex'. In Yoga teachings, the chakras are seven major psychic centres in the subtle body responsible for specific physiological and psychic functions. Chakras are symbolic energy centres; each centre has a physical, emotional and spiritual connection to the Self – the unique You!

While Yoga describes the chakras in a spiritual and symbolic manner; Carl Jung referred to them as gateways of consciousness. Modern medicine may describe the areas that comprise the chakra centres as bunches of nerve fibres making up the plexuses. A clairvoyant may describe them as manifestations.

The chakras are symbolic, not an actual physical attribute. You cannot have an operation on one or have a chakra implant. While a chakra is not a muscle, bone or organ in the body, studies have proven measurable physical and emotional differences in persons meditating or concentrating on these centres.

ॐ *'When the chakras are awakened the mind automatically changes. Your values in life also change and the quality of your love and relationships improve immensely, enabling you to balance out the disappointments and frustrations in life. Therefore you are able to live a little higher than you do now, and your attitude towards your Self and towards life is much better.'* Swami Satyananda Saraswati – 'Kundalini Tantra'



Sahasrara



Ajna



Vishuddhi



Anahata



Manipura



Svadisthana



Muladhara

The goal of this series of lessons is to provide a means by which you may assess whether your energies are well utilised, overused or stuck. Understanding your own energies will allow you to see how other people are going in this game of life. Such knowledge, about your Self and others, can facilitate empathy and compassion.

Terminology

Khestram - the front of body location relative to each chakra

Kundalini - is the latent (sleeping) power within the chakras - symbolically represented as a coiled serpent, poised to rise upward. The kundalini energy rises in a spiral from the base chakra, heading to the crown chakra but usually with many stop points along the way.

Pranayama - prana means life force – ayama means pause. Pranayamas are breathing practices, bringing life force into the physical body

Location of the Chakras

Seven chakras are considered present in humans:

7.Sahasrara – crown

6 Ajna – eyebrow

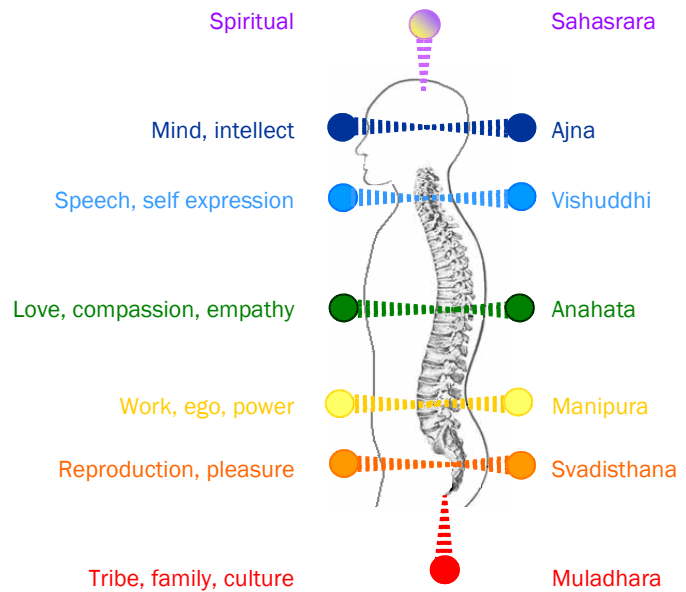
5.Vishuddhi – throat

4.Anahata – heart

3.Manipura – navel

2.Svadisthana – level with coccyx

1.Muladhara – base of spine



Six chakras are described below the position of Muladhara but Yoga teachings consider humans have transcended these - they are active only in the bodies of animals. The base chakra, Muladhara, is the highest in animal evolution, while the crown chakra, Sahasrara, is the highest in human evolution. According to Tantric wisdom, the first chakra was once the navel chakra, Manipura, but there was a fall in human evolutionary consciousness to Muladhara.

Traditionally, chakras awareness begins by working on Ajna – the chakra of the intellect.

Kundalini - the traditional experience of awakening



In traditional literature, Kundalini is depicted as a serpent - a concentrated form of prana (life force) lying latent at the base of the spine. Awakening gives release to this dormant energy which spirals upwards through the chakras to the crown chakra.

This is solely symbolic – no living snakes are involved in the awakening process!

Kundalini is a metaphor, a creative way of describing a flow of energy and consciousness. The awakening of energy is not an actual physical occurrence; it is solely a developing awareness or consciousness of how well you are living the life you are living.

Becoming aware of chakra energy has an intermediate phase where feelings, perceptions and experiences are being transformed.- this is often referred to in Yoga as being in a place between the 'known' and 'unknown'.

In our everyday life, consciousness and the transcendent consciousness cannot be maintained at the same time. For most of us, normal living means a mind focused on the practicalities and excitement of that living. Energy rises and falls between the three base chakras, those involved with tribe and home (Muladhara), sex and reproduction (Svadisthana); work and ego (Manipura). The nature of life and living means this is where the majority of our physical, emotional and mental energies are required.

The complete process of the rising of Kundalini comprises several stages as the energy rises through the chakras.

Once Kundalini energy rises to your heart chakra (Anahata), even though the energy may stay at heart level for a long time, it does not ever return solely to the lower energy centres.

Spiritual awakening has begun.

Signs

The teachings of Kundalini offer 'signposts' for this awareness journey, you may experience some of these in your chakra awareness journey. All chakra work begins with Ajna, the chakra of the intellect. An initial signpost will be a light or a mild sensation at the eyebrow centre, the khestram of Ajna.

The breathing pattern in the nostrils normally changes throughout the day, with the breath predominantly in one nostril, then the other. This pattern changes further every fourth day, in tune with the cycles of the moon. A commonly attributed sign of impending spiritual breakthrough is the flow of breath becoming simultaneous in both nostrils.

Though intellectual awakening begins with a focus on Ajna, another sign can be a burning sensation in Muladhara, as though heat or energy is stimulated.

Fears, risks and precautions

Much has been written and advocated regarding the dangers of stimulating the rise of Kundalini, or even a clearing, balancing and opening of the chakras through awareness of their functions.



'Take your chakra journey slowly, with care and instruction. Then no harm can come to you. If your intentions are pure, no harm can come to you in whatever you undertake in your Yoga journey.'

However, in this present time, many have come to feel that if they want something then it should be instantaneous. Not so with Yoga! Remember, Yoga is a path of moderation in all things. Slow, gentle, moderate. Impatience can impede your journey.' Swami Kamalamata Aranya

There is no need to be afraid of this study of becoming aware of the chakras, but there is a need to be prepared for whatever may be presented - whether it is old emotional baggage, buried life stories, forgotten hopes and dreams or strange, new phenomena.

For example, in the process of stimulating Ajna, you could experience an isolated 'awareness' where you can 'see' beyond the conscious world into your unconsciousness. You may 'see' symbols, figures, benevolent beings and even unpleasant beings. You may see the symbolic form of Ajna, a two petalled indigo lotus. You may also 'hear' that which is not there to hear.



Be aware that all these experiences are simply parts of your being which have been 'sleeping' - which are in a dormant state because they have been neglected as part of your whole being.

New awareness is born from the old - from your life experiences and memories, from living and loving, from experiencing joy and happiness or pain and sorrow.

Perhaps you have practiced and studied Yoga and understand how the Yamas and Niyamas work within your life and living, or you have a deepened awareness from exposing the nature of the mind through a Pratyahara study and practice. Or perhaps you have been a student of your inner life through other traditions or wisdoms.

The form of your learning is not actually relevant - learning is learning, knowledge is knowledge, truth is truth. The chakra learning and knowledge may hold untold truth or treasures for you, or be a road that does not lead anywhere in this lifetime.

On the journey through life your mind unconsciously accumulates much chitta (mind-stuff). So be very aware, on this journey through your chakra energies, to **consciously take away only the mind stuff that is useful to you.**

Leave the rest behind. Your mind has enough to do dealing with the day to day, moment by moment essentials that constitute living your life well.



Chakra Study - Lesson 1

Ajna Chakra

1. Notes on Ajna Chakra
2. Personal study and practice
3. Self enquiry assignment



Ajna is the 6th chakra; its element is light.

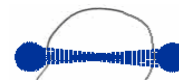
Ajna means to perceive, to know. This chakra is the third eye - the space between the eyebrows. Ajna is a psychic tool reminding us that everything we see, hear, smell, touch or taste started as an inner vision, insight or thought.

Ajna, as the chakra of intuition, is essentially the chakra of the mind, representative of a higher level of awareness.

Shape:	Two petalled lotus.
Colour:	Indigo
Zodiac:	Pisces, Sagittarius, Aquarius
Planets:	Mercury, Venus, Uranus
Gland:	Pineal
Associated body parts:	Cerebellum, pituitary, face, eyes, nose, sinus
Massage points:	Feet - sole of foot at the first joint of the big toe Hands - palm, level with little finger Direction - female, clockwise; male, anti-clockwise
Oils:	Jasmine, Basil, Rosemary, Patchouli (singly or blend)
Life lesson:	The Self shining through intellect and intelligence

Location:

In the brain directly between the eyebrow centre and the corresponding position at the back of the head- it is at the top of the spinal cord. Kshetram (front) is the eyebrow centre. The internal position is difficult to locate.



Tradition:

Awareness at Ajna brings purification to the mind - once the mind is purified study of the other chakras can proceed. Each chakra contains a store of karmas - good and bad, positive and negative. Awareness through self enquiry will bring these to the surface of the mind. The mind needs to be as pure as possible as a preparation to handle these karmas. Meditation and Anuloma Viloma Prana are used to aid purity.

What is Ajna?

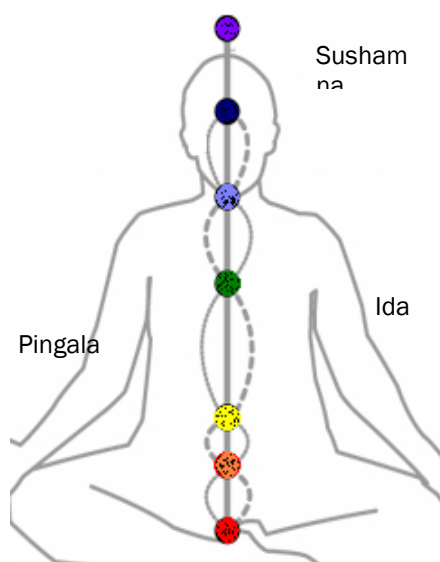
Literally the command or monitoring centre, Ajna is potentially the threshold of divinity. Ajna is considered the bridge which links guru (teacher) and chela (student). This is not necessarily another person – it can be the inner guru, a communication between the conscious Self and the unconscious self.

ॐ 'The guru can be without or within'. Hatha Yoga Pradipika

Ajna is your key to perception and discernment. Awareness from Ajna opens the intellect to true knowledge and allows wise, discriminative thoughts and actions. Focusing on Ajna, with any of the suggested practices, will bring you a different perspective on the 'problems' of life. You will begin to see more clearly what is real and true in your life.

While in the deepest state of meditation, Ajna, as the centre of command, hears the directions of the inner guru. Chitta, the chatter of the mind, is extinguished and the ego ceases to disturb your inner peace.

Ajna is the 'eye' of intuition, the third eye. With awareness of, and awareness at Ajna, intuitive responses to experiences become more honest and basic to the way you live your life.



Within Ajna three energies merge creating the beginning of the spiritual journey. In addition to the chakras, traditional teachings described a network of fourteen subtle channels, or nadis. The three considered the most important are Ida, Pingala and Sushumna.

Ida is the left channel. Ida is the feminine energy, white, cold and represents the moon. Originating in Muladhara, Ida ends up in the left nostril.

Pingala is the right channel. Pingala is the masculine energy; red, hot, and represents the sun. Originating in Muladhara, Pingala ends up in the right nostril.

Sushumna is the central channel, proceeding up the body from just below Muladhara chakra to Sahasrara chakra at the crown of the head.

These three nadis also represents the symbolic union of sun and moon – heat and cold.

ॐ Sutra 1.2 'Restraining chitta (mind stuff), is Yoga – mastery over agitated thoughts and emotions.'

The second of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras explains the task of a Yogi – to restrain chitta or mind-stuff. When you were born, your mind was free from ideas, beliefs and experiences. As you grow and experience life, so does your mind fill with chitta: ideas, beliefs, memories, expectations, some of which may be satya, truth and some which may be maya, illusion.

Your mind, using resident chitta, can create fantasies where the future is always brighter (and out of reach) or where the past is much better and more enticing than the present moment.

Conversely, chitta can influence an illusion that the future is frightening and the past a dark place that has created you, a person totally incapable of living life well.

Because Ajna is the centre of intellect, chitta is involved with the manner in which you make life decisions, the way you perceive your world and the people in it. Therefore it is important to work out which chitta is satya and which is maya, to understand how your mind can misinterpret and distort experience and memory.

Unfortunately, most of the mind's unceasing, internal dialogue is negative. The mind holds onto negativity when it cannot let go of the ending of a life story; where an outcome is unacceptable. The mind returns again and again to the story, seeking a different, better ending.

Once this manner of thinking is entrenched and habitual, it is almost impossible for you to hold a more positive attitude and outlook. The habitual mind place becomes a comfort zone. The mind falls easily into resentments, gossip, complaining, confusion, discontent and unhappiness.

This mind-stuff creates your self-talk, the things your mind repeats, mostly in silence: the things your mind is constantly saying to your Self. This mind-stuff navigates your journey through life and is the greatest source of human unhappiness and resentment. The way to overcome this is through restraint, and restraint comes through understanding resident chitta; both its sources and influence.



Yoga is about balance, not about living life on the edge of great excitements or great disappointments. It is about being really alive in every moment of your life.

If you are an aware being, you may find that you spend your life taking in energy and directing it from the mind down to the physical body, out and away.

These are habitual sensory behaviours – eating and elimination; thought and action; desiring, acquiring and disposing. When energy is continuously dispersed in this manner the result can be lethargy or stress. There is little energy left for your Self.

Ajna is the centre where you can practice 'flipping' perception from the lower chakras to the higher chakras – essentially training your self to live life at a higher level. So to begin creating awareness at Ajna you need to become aware of lifting those heavy physical, mental and emotional energies from the lower chakras up toward the intellectual or spiritual chakras.

If you feel Ajna is out of balance, if your mind is scattered and you constantly feel stressed, focus for a moment on why this is so. Problems with family, love life, work? Worry over such situations? Then direct the scattered mind energy up to Sahasrara, the spiritual centre, for renewal. This is a simple technique which will work for replenishing energy and balance in all chakras.

Ajna out of balance

If all your life energies are focused exclusively on Ajna your behaviours are likely be highly logical, even authoritarian, because intellect is ruling the senses. Insufficient awareness at Ajna brings lack of discipline and unsubstantiated fears and worries.

Ajna in balance

In balance with the other chakra energies, Ajna brings high levels of intuition, contentment, a sense of gratitude and, most importantly, non-attachment to those merely material matters in life.



Personal Study



Ajna – opening to the light of the intellect

Your personal study is in three parts:

- Meditation for Ajna chakra
- Pranayama (breathing practice) for Ajna chakra
- Questions for you to answer

Decide how often and for how long you will practice the meditation and pranayama – remembering that it is far better to be realistic about the time you have available. If you nominate to practice each day and cannot achieve this, then your mind will think you have failed.

Ajna relates in the most fundamental way to the quality of your life because it is the ‘thinking’ chakra. In the Yoga Sutras, Patanjali describes how the mind mistakes mind-stuff, chitta, for Self; how at times this chitta is displayed in behaviours, almost as though the chitta is more powerful than the mind. This uncovering of chitta is the whole purpose of Yoga. It gives control over experiences, fears and doubts. It allows the real you to shine through the mind-stuff.

1. Meditation for Ajna



You may use the mp3 download ‘Ajna meditation’ or the following text script for your meditation practice

- Set a timer (or mobile phone) for 10 to 15 minutes.
- Sit in a comfortable position with your spine straight. Use a cushion or chair to support your spine if you need it.
- Say in your mind: ‘Blessings to all the great masters and teachers who have been here before me. May all beings be happy, safe and well. My body is strong, my mind is strong, my Self is strong.’
- Now become aware of the stillness of your body.
- Allow your awareness to flow gently through your physical body - feet and legs, hands and arms, lower trunk, upper trunk, head and face. Twice more, ‘run’ your mind through your physical body.
- Now become aware of your breath – be aware of the slow and gentle rise and fall of your abdomen as you breathe. Two more breaths.
- Become aware now of the senses – the sense of touch, the sense of taste, the sense of smell, the sense of sight, the sense of hearing.
- Now ‘see’ the shape of your body in your mind. Be aware of the Self that sits within this shape.
- Envisage a glowing, golden aura of health, strength, peace, harmony and tranquillity pulsating around your physical body. Sit with this imagery for a few moments.
- Now, as you breathe in, draw the golden source of energy into Ajna chakra, spread it throughout your physical body, to every cell, organ, muscle, bone and joint. Feel the vibrancy within your body.
- Maintain awareness of this vibrancy – whenever your mind wanders from its task, gently bring it back again.



At the end of your nominated time, sit quietly for a few moments and reflect on your experience. Write it down if you wish.

2. Anuloma viloma pranayama – Pranayama/Dharana practice for Ajna

The aim of anuloma viloma is to stimulate Ajna on a subconscious, psychic level. It is both a pranayama practice (control of breath) and a Dharana practice (concentration).



Sutra 2.50 *Modifications of life breath (pranayama) involve regulation of out breath, in breath and holding breath; by space (in lungs), by time and number and with long or short duration.*



Sutra 2.51 *These four (techniques) draws one away from external and internal activities.*



Sutra 2.52 *Thereafter, the veil covering illumination is destroyed*



Sutra 2.53 *And the mind is capable of concentration.*

Anuloma is a greatly beneficial practice from three aspects:

- Pranayama - bringing in prana at a powerful level
- Dharana - a practice of deep concentration
- Chakras – awareness at Ajna chakra

Muladhara chakra, at the base of your spine, and Ajna chakra are closely related. Ajna's role as the chakra of the intellect means it is the first chakra for awakening. Ajna allows discernment through self enquiry. Self enquiry allows awareness - consciousness flowing unimpeded by chitta.

Normally, the breath is dominant in one nostril for a period of time, then the dominance changes to the opposite nostril. If you become aware of this, you will notice how the dominance changes from one nostril to the other during the day. Following continual practice of Anuloma both nostrils become clear, which leads to a feeling of having a clearer, 'cleaner' mind. Next comes a constant feeling of peace and calm, then a beautiful voice. You may find the breath does not flow equally in each of your nostrils – ignore this; allow your mind to 'see' the breath flowing correctly.

This particular practice requires considerable dedication and concentration. Thirty days of continuous practice is recommended. The breathing is practiced in rounds, beginning at 100 and counting backwards to zero.

Traditionally Anuloma is practiced for one month, early in the morning 'when the earth stands still'. Also traditionally, the fingers are used to close the alternate nostrils (nadhi sodhana), but for this practice only the mind (far more powerful than fingers!) is used.

You will find it is not strictly necessary to follow the traditional rules; far better and less stressful for you to decide how and when to practice at a time and space suitable to fit into your life and living.

Awareness of the flow of breath

Maintaining an awareness of the counting is the important aspect of Anuloma. If you lose concentration you will become aware only of the vast amount of impressions in your unconscious mind (chitta). Your mind will then run over and over your entire store of life stories. The practice can take over half an hour, depending on your breathing rate.

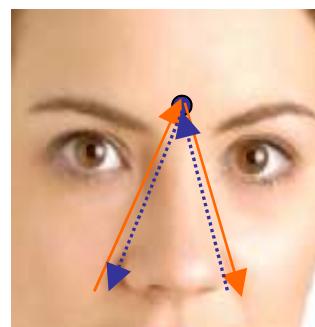
Before you begin

First draw a definite triangle with a forefinger to help you to follow the pathway of the breath with your mind:

- from the outside of the left nostril up to Ajna
- down the outside of the right nostril
- back up the outside of the right nostril to Ajna
- down the outside of the left nostril

Now using your mind alone:

- breathe in, up the left side of the triangle to Ajna
- breathe out down the right side of the triangle
- breathe in up the right side of the triangle
- breathe out down the left side of the triangle



The practice

Sit in a totally relaxed position. Use whatever props you need to enable you to sit comfortably and maintain the position – a chair, cushions etc. It is important not to move; moving breaks concentration of breath pathways and counting.

1. Fold your hands in your lap
2. Begin counting the breath
 - 100 breathe up, down, up, down the triangle
 - 99 breathe up, down, up, down the triangle
 - 98 breathe up, down, up, down the triangle
 - 97 breathe up, down, up, down the triangle
 - 96 breathe in both nostrils to Ajna, out both nostrils to Ajna
3. This completes one round. Continue counting down, continue breathing, **maintaining total awareness**, until you reach **zero**.
4. Take several deep breaths through both nostrils
5. Gently relax the effort it has taken to sit in this position
6. Lower your head, open your eyes
7. Do not move quickly, take your time to restore normal activity

Decide how many times you intend to practice Anuloma awareness in the next month.

Write your intention here

3. Self enquiry

Copy the following questions to an Open Office or Microsoft Word text document please (save as a text file .txt or .rtf) OR copy directly to your email draft folder. Answer the questions, email to me at manasam@harboursat.com.au for responses. Please limit answers to one paragraph per question. As I am on the long end of life, I wish to have time to read and respond. SwE

Physical

1. Do you have problems with your eyesight or any eye disease?
2. Do you commonly catch colds and/or influenza? If yes, are you debilitated by the infection, and how long does it take for your body to fight it? What do you do to avoid them?
3. If you feel obsessive about parts (or all) of your face, how do you think this influences the way you feel about your self and how does it affect the way you present your self to the world?

Chitta – mind stuff

4. List the ways you predominately think – e.g. logical, rational, irrational, worried, panicky, loving, revengeful, self-pitying, victimising..
5. What past experiences have influenced your thinking?
6. What influences your thinking now?
7. How do you predominately spend time – thinking, dreaming, organising, doing, experiencing, other..?
8. What external matters influence the way you spend time now?
9. How does your thinking influence the way you spend time?

The senses and the mind

10. Do you identify only with tangible experience – with what can be validated by the senses of touch, sight, hearing, taste, smell? Explain...
11. Have you sometimes felt confused, out of touch, almost as though you were walking around in a fog? Explain...
12. If you have you ever questioned the stability of your mind, what were the circumstances?
13. Can you make decisions or do you over analyse problems and delay making decisions. Explain...
14. How do you manage stressful situations?

The subconscious

15. How do you utilise your intuition?

16. List two of your most vivid dreams and your interpretation of the deepest meaning within them (this will require more than one paragraph SwE).

Question Assessment

Which of your answers gave you important information about your Self? Explain:

Outcomes from Meditation

Write here your own assessment of your meditation practice:

Outcomes from Anuloma Viloma (pranayama) practice

Write here your own assessment of your pranayama practice:

Responses will be made to your email address.

ॐ *May your sadhana be blessed with peace and truth.*



Chakra Study - Lesson 2

Muladhara Chakra

4. Notes on Muladhara Chakra
5. Personal study and practice
6. Self inquiry assignment



Muladhara is the 1st chakra; its element is earth.

The Sanskrit word moola means 'root or foundation'. This chakra is concerned with physical needs and basic human survival. The impulses of life rise through the body from Muladhara. It has the lowest vibrational rate of all the chakras.

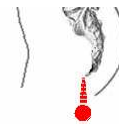
This is the chakra that keeps us grounded to the earth. Muladhara is associated with physical security, family and tribe, and it holds your family and tribal memory. Through self enquiry you can come to understand how many of your beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviours stem from how you fitted in (or didn't fit in) to your family group.

Shape:	Four petalled lotus
Colour:	Red
Zodiac:	Capricorn, Taurus, Scorpio
Planets:	Mars, Saturn
Gland:	Adrenals
Associated body parts:	Skeleton, teeth, finger & toe nails, legs & arms, intestine, anus, prostrate
Oils:	Marjoram, clove, cedar, cypress
Massage points:	Inward side of heel, thumb width from the base of the palm inside wrist

Life lesson: Survival of the Self as part of, yet separate to, the tribe (or whole).

Location:

Muladhara's location is at the base of the spine – at the perineum in males, at the cervix in females.



Tradition:

Muladhara is the seat of kundalini - the basis from which the possibility of higher realisation arises. This great potential is symbolically seen to be lying dormant in the form of a coiled serpent. When aroused, it makes its way upward through sushumna (in the spinal cord) until it reaches Sahasrara (crown chakra) where the ultimate experience of enlightenment occurs.

What is Muladhara?



As the base chakra, Muladhara provides the foundation for your spiritual search; balance at Muladhara is needed as a foundation for all life.

Muladhara connects you to physical life. If energy at Muladhara is weak you start things and leave them – work, practices, hobbies, study, relationships etc.; life is unbalanced, the mind distracted.

It is difficult to have a spiritual life if your physical life is not secure. It is even difficult to begin a spiritual journey if you do not have a strong, safe base from which to begin. Of course, this space can be actual – a happy home, congenial work place, strong relationships – or it can be from an inner strength, an awareness of your own value and worth to your Self and to others; a knowing of place.

In many traditions, spiritual seekers see a necessity to shed themselves of every physical facet of life, of all their things and experiences; and in some cases even discard the people who cherish them. Long ago, long before ‘things’ became such an essential in human existence, people wandered the earth with few belongings, yet from surviving evidence appear to have had very strong and meaningful spirit aspects to their lives and living. To this day, some still see the necessity to shed themselves of all things physical in order to seek spirituality.

However, if energy at Muladhara is strong, you can be focussed and established in life, and there is flow and evenness to your life however this life is being lived.

It is a fact of life that a great chunk of your time on earth is owned by the need to become educated, earn an income, make a home, nurture your family and allow them to nurture you. This can be seen as time away from Self learning, or more positively, as time spent to give a foundation to that learning.

There are many aspects to the reality of supporting your life on this earth which intrude upon the time you may wish to use for your enquiry into your true Self. Strongly held beliefs, often mistaken for knowledge and truth, can be a stumbling block for growth. For how can the enquiring mind climb over the blocks in knowledge built up by exposure to tribal and family ‘believing’?

Time can be at a premium if your tribe requires you to attend to ritual and dogma. Ritual can bond a tribe, a family, a community – or if enforced without reason, ritual can irretrievably fracture them and cause immense pain to individuals. There is a practiced sophistry in some tribes and families; members are expelled for not keeping to the letter of ritual, dogma, certain religious rites or traditional rules.

How important can these creations of someone else’s mind be? More important than causing pain to people you love, who love you? More important than your own spiritual journey?

Incredible physical, emotional and mental harm is done, even to children, by such dogma and ritual, without reference to any substantial truths and without benefits to the recipient. In today’s ‘modern’ world genital mutilation to little girls, circumcision to baby boys, virtual imprisonment of girls and women is still commonplace.

If rituals are important to you, try to see beyond the event of them into the soul of them. What is the origin of ritual? What are the beliefs and dogmas behind them? How much of ritual falls into the ‘should’s’ and ‘have to’s’ that relentlessly flow from generation to generation?

How much of ritual and dogma survive for generations unquestioned in value to the participants?

Strengthen the energy at Muladhara by seeking your own knowledge and understanding through enquiring of the Self, through striving for that clear, chitta free mind.



Becoming aware of your energy levels at Muladhara also gives you the opportunity to assess how you consciously use this energy. Is this valuable energy source dissipated through violent thought and action? Tribes and families often go to war against each other as well as against others. In Yoga, consciously deciding not to live this way is Ahimsa, non-violence in thought, word and deed.



Sutra 2.35 'Those in the presence of one who is firmly established in non-violence discard their hostility.'

Is this you? Firmly established in non-violence? Moment by moment awareness of non-violence can be immensely revealing. Can you, for one whole hour, not have a violent thought? Not have angry thoughts towards someone driving erratically in heavy traffic? Not think about outdoing or belittling a work colleague? No angry thoughts towards your partner, child, friend, relative?

Thought is the birth place of action and thought primarily develops from the life experiences you have with your tribe and family.

You may find you can trace many of the attitudes and behaviours that are such an intrinsic part of you to the experiences you had within your tribe. These parts can be what you like best, or are proud to have as part of your personality. Or they can represent the things you do not like about your life. Understanding this is not about apportioning blame to another for how your life is going. These matters are brought to awareness so you can begin to change the parts of your life and living you are not happy with.

Bringing awareness and energy to Muladhara can be a period of intense emotional and psychic upheaval which can be mistaken as a 'fall' in spiritual evolution. Many schools of Yoga state that this is a time where the guidance of a guru is essential. Remember though, the instruction from Hatha Yoga Pradipika:



'The guru can be without or within.'

There is usually nothing to fear except fear itself. If you find yourself in emotional or mental turmoil practice lifting the chakra energy from the Muladhara to Anahata, the heart chakra, then further to Ajna, the chakra of the intellect, then further still to Sahasrara.

Muladhara out of balance

Lack of balance can be identified if, in your daily life, you are overly materialistic to the point where money and things dominate your thinking. Other signs are engaging in foolish, even dangerous activities; self-centredness; bossiness and bullying, caring only for how your possessions look (super-neat production style houses, gardens, and clothing). Insufficient awareness can be seen in emotionally needy behaviours; low self-esteem; fearful thoughts; emotionally self-destructive thoughts and behaviours.

Muladhara in balance

In balance with the other chakra energies, Muladhara brings high physical energy, stamina and the ability to stay focused on tasks. You will feel healthy, grounded and in charge of your life and living.



Personal Study



Muladhara – the firm foundation from which to live life

Your personal study is in three parts:

- Meditation for Muladhara chakra
- Pranayama (breathing practice) for Muladhara – the same practice as Ajna chakra
- Questions for you to answer


Again, you decide how often and for how long you will practice the meditation and pranayama. As you practice, hold awareness and (perhaps) gratitude for the life lessons residing at Muladhara chakra.

1. Meditation for Muladhara



You may use the mp3 download 'Muladhara meditation' from the website or the following text script for your meditation practice.

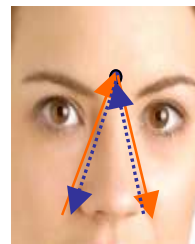
The meditation for Muladhara invites you to contemplate your fears and your needs. This requires complete honesty because many of our fears are deeply buried, and we learn from childhood (particularly females) not to acknowledge our needs. What do you worry about – losing people – losing material possessions? How do you protect them – i.e. hold on to them? How much of your energy does this worrying and holding on require? Identify one fear or need before each Mula meditation – focus on only one at a time.

- Decide which fear or need you wish to understand. If you do not have any fears or needs, focus on something within your Self that you wish to improve.
- Set a timer or your mobile phone for 10 to 15 minutes.
- Sit in a comfortable position with your spine straight. Use a cushion or chair to support your spine if you need it.
- Say in your mind: 'Blessings to all the great masters and teachers who have been here before me. May all beings be happy, safe and well. My body is strong, my mind is strong, my Self is strong.'
- Now become aware of the stillness of your body.
- Allow your awareness to flow gently through your physical body - feet and legs, hands and arms, lower trunk, upper trunk, head and face. Twice more, 'run' your mind through your physical body.
- Now become aware of your breath – be aware of the slow and gentle rise and fall of your abdomen as you breathe. Two more breaths.
- Become aware now of the senses – the sense of touch, the sense of taste, the sense of smell, the sense of sight, the sense of hearing.
- Now 'see' the shape of your body in your mind. Be aware of the self that sits within this shape.
- Bring to your awareness your focus for Muladhara. Do not analyse any feelings that come in relation to this issue, just allow them to come and watch them go.
-  At the end of your nominated time, sit quietly for a few moments and reflect on your experience. Write it down if you wish.

2. Anuloma viloma pranayama - Pranayama practice for Muladhara

Decide how many times you intend to practice Anuloma awareness in the next month.

Write your intention here



3. Self enquiry

Copy the following questions to an Open Office or Microsoft Word text document please (save as a text file .txt or .rtf) OR copy directly to your email draft folder. Answer the questions, email to manasam@harboursat.com.au for responses.

Physical

1. Do you have health problems related to:

- skeleton, teeth, finger or toe nails?
- legs and arms
- intestines, anus, prostate

If yes, how does this impact on your life?

2.. Is an addictive/compulsive tendency toward sensual comfort part of your everyday life (food, alcohol, drugs, sex). Describe:

3. If you feel run down or have low energy, can you identify the cause/s?

Tribe and family

4. The first tribe, family (parents, siblings, extended family, social circle) and home you have is the greatest impact on your life. Describe yours:

5. Can you identify particular influences from your 'tribe' on your values and beliefs?

6. Are there influences from your tribe that you have eliminated from your life? What are they? Why did you decide to exclude them?

7. Are there influences you would like to remove from your life? What are they? Why do you think your life would be improved without them?

8. If you hold attitudes that make your life difficult, what are they?

9. Your spontaneous behaviours say much about you. List any you would like to change.

10. Has loss of a loved one or loss of a relationship impacted on you? How?

Place

11. Where do you place the here and now - the physical, material world in importance to your life?
12. Are the majority of your actions/decisions motivated by fear of cutting off support (food, clothing, shelter)? Describe:
13. Is financial security overly important to you? Why?

Work

14. Is your job important to you? Why?
15. Anger/aggression is common in work places. If you have experienced this - either yourself towards a colleague or colleague towards you, describe how this has affected you:

Question Assessment

Which of your answers gave you important information about your Self? Explain:

Outcomes from Meditation

Write here your own assessment of your meditation practice:

Outcomes from Anuloma Viloma (pranayama) practice

Write here your own assessment of your pranayama practice:

Responses will be made to your email address.

ॐ *May your sadhana be blessed with peace and truth.*



Chakra Study - Lesson 3

Svadisthana Chakra

7. Notes on Svadisthana Chakra
8. Personal study and practice
9. Self inquiry assignment



Svadisthana is the 2nd chakra; its element is water.

Svada means sweetness. Its associations are what make life sweet - pleasure, sexuality, nurture of self and others, movement and change.

It corresponds to the bladder, circulatory system, sexual and reproductive organs and psychologically to emotions, sexual desire, passion, partnerships.

Shape:	Six petalled lotus
Colour:	Orange
Element:	Water
Zodiac:	Cancer, Libra, Scorpio
Planets:	Moon, Venus, Mars, Mercury
Gland:	Ovaries, testes
Associated body parts:	Bowel, bladder, reproductive organs
Oils:	Marjoram, clove, cedar, cypress
Massage points:	Inside of heel. Inside wrist - a thumb width from base of palm

Life lesson: Knowing your true Self through achieving emotional balance

Location:

The base of the spinal column, at the level of the coccyx or tailbone. It is anatomically very close to Muladhara, two finger widths higher. Its kshetram (front of body location) is in the front of the body at the level of the pubic bone.



Tradition:

Traditionalists claim that humans are born (or re-born) because they have desires to fulfil - a life purpose. The 'memory' of these desires resides in Svadistana.

Balance in this chakra is claimed to slow ageing, prevent disease and provide the 'fountain of youth'. This may explain the noticeable radiance of 'enlightened' ones; they have learned to balanced desires with their life's work.

What is Svadisthana?

The strength from Svadisthana urges you to find a mate and to make a home that will protect and nurture your unique genetic heritage – the genes passed from your forebears and carried to future generations through your children. This primitive motivation is hard-wired into your brain.

Yoga teachings state that there are three stages of life:

- A child, student
- A householder, parent
- A spiritual seeker
-
-



The first stage, being a child and student, establishes your physical and emotional wellbeing. It is here that values are garnered from your tribe, family and community; it is here that you may learn the behaviours that will support or defeat the actions you take throughout life. If you learn damaging habits and behaviours as a child, you can uncover these through self enquiry – and decide to change. Change usually takes place unconsciously, through imposed circumstances. Change undertaken consciously is powerful indeed.

During the householder years, the fertile human years, sexual energy is a force which can either overcome the energies of Muladhara and Manipura, or complement them in such a way that balance for the ‘householder’ stage of life is achieved.

Most humans have a tricky period of life while the body and hormones rule thoughts and actions. It is during this time mistakes can be made which affect decades of your life. Remember that mistakes are not necessarily catastrophic; much can be learned from them!



Pleasure is the elementary motivating factor of Svadisthana energy. This where the mind comes to expect the rewards of pleasure, through the thrill of sexuality and nurture. Of course, pleasure is the hook. It can also become the sinker! Once dependent upon repetitions of pleasurable or exciting experience derived solely from external stimuli, the senses become insatiable. The mind confuses satisfying the senses with happiness.



It is common to slip into a habit of sensual reward when the mind is confused – food, alcohol, conquest, success, dangerous pursuits etc. It isn't that these things are so detrimental or non-spiritual; it is more that they can become transient, somewhat empty compensations for the peace your mind and spirit seek.

Denied pleasure, the senses reach out for more and more; the lonely pursuit of pleasure becomes an addiction. For a moment, imagine how much of real living is lost in the constant reaching out for something (or someone) different or just out of reach. Addictions confuse the mind, chitta is created; energy at Muladhara is blocked.

Studies into social aspects of modern life have shown that for some of us this fertile, householder stage of life is difficult to ‘let go’. Much of your youthful education, both formal and social, will have prepared you for loving another individual, almost to the exclusion of all others. Through this conditioning comes an expectation of the joy of becoming a parent. There is much sweetness in this stage of life, which possibly helps to perpetuate the human race – the sweet pleasures cleverly disguise the amount of toil involved!

As a generalisation, women tend to hold onto the nurturing role long after it is obsolete. And men tend to imagine, and expect, that their fertile era of sexual fecundity is actually life-long. Quite often both males and females mistake nurture and fecundity for love.

In both scenarios emotional damage can result to both the person 'holding on' and those close to her/him – no doubt spiritual damage is also likely.

It is important not to devalue the 'nesting' stage of life. It is here, if all goes well, that with strong Muladhara energy, you provide the solid base from which a spiritual journey can be undertaken. Imagine, if you can, how you could undertake any spiritual journey if you live in an atmosphere of constant dissent, turmoil and disorganisation from any cause - self-imposed (e.g. through unloving, unsupportive, abusive relationship) or externally imposed (e.g. through war or disaster).

It is possible, of course, but perhaps only for the saintly!

Humans are not quite so well prepared for the change that comes with the end of the nesting stage of life. Empty, almost purposeless years appear to stretch ahead.

Depleting health, strength and joy for life are common; the energy at Muladhara is weakened or unbalanced. Yet this is change, and change is part of human existence. Every cell in your body is constantly in a stage of change, of renewal or ageing.



The way forward from imbalance of energy is twofold: ensure that you freely give as much, or more, than you receive and allow your Self to regularly step away from constant stimulation.

Svadhithana out of balance

Life lived with Svadhithana ruling all actions results in emotional imbalance. Your life will be lived in an unrealistic fantasy world, in sexual addiction and manipulative behaviour, or conversely with impotence with your partner (or a series of partners). Unawareness of life lived this way means over-sensitivity; always feeling guilty for no true reason; blaming others for your problems and behaviour.

Svadhithana in balance

Svadhithana in balance with the other chakras manifests in expressiveness and creativity. You will be attuned to your own feelings, trusting and generous in relationships.



Personal Study



Svadhishthana – the source of life's greatest pleasures

Your personal study is in three parts:

- Meditation for Svadhishthana chakra
- Pranayama (breathing practice) for Svadhishthana chakra – Manas
- Self enquiry

1. Meditation for Svadhishthana



You may use the mp3 download 'Svadhishthana meditation' from the website or the following text script for your meditation practice.

This meditation is an opportunity for you to contemplate what makes you feel really good within yourself. What is it that motivates the great moments in your life? Can you live in the 'now' or are you always looking to the future or to the past. Remember to be completely honest with your Self.

- Decide which contemplation is the most meaningful for you – if all of the suggestions, meditate on one at a time.
- Set a timer (or mobile phone) for 10 to 15 minutes.
- Sit in a comfortable position with your spine straight. Use a cushion or chair to support your spine if you need it.
- Say in your mind: 'Blessings to all the great masters and teachers who have been here before me. May all beings be happy, safe and well. My body is strong, my mind is strong, my Self is strong.
- Now become aware of the stillness of your body.
- Allow your awareness to flow gently through your physical body - feet and legs, hands and arms, lower trunk, upper trunk, head and face. Twice more, 'run' your mind through your physical body.
- Now become aware of your breath – be aware of the slow and gentle rise and fall of your abdomen as you breathe. Two more breaths.
- Become aware now of the senses – the sense of touch, the sense of taste, the sense of smell, the sense of sight, the sense of hearing.
- Now 'see' the shape of your body in your mind. Be aware of the Self that sits within this shape.
- Bring to your awareness your focus for the mediation. Do not analyse any feelings that come in relation to this issue, just allow them to come and watch them go.



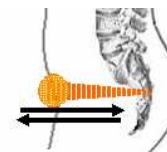
At the end of your nominated time, sit quietly for a few moments and reflect on your experience. Write it down if you wish.

2. Pranayama practice – Manas for Svadisthana

This breathing practice is used for Chakras 2 Svadisthana, the navel chakra (3 - Manipura) and the heart chakra (4 - Anahata).

Locate, in your mind only, the position of Svadisthana within the spinal column

Locate, in your mind only, the kshetram (front of body position) for Svadhistana (level with top of pubic bone).



See very clearly, in your mind only, the clear orange colour of Svadhistana

For five breaths, breathe the chakra colour between the spinal position and the kshetram. Feel the 'flow' of the breath moving from the spine to the kshetram, kshetram to spine

For five more breaths, breathe the colour and chant OM in your mind, 'feeling' the flow of breath and the power of the mantra moving from the spine to the kshetram, kshetram to spine

Decide how many times you intend to practice Manas for the next month.

Write your intention here

Decide how many times you intend to practice Manas in the next month

Write your intention here

3. Self enquiry

Copy the following questions to an Open Office or Microsoft Word text document please (save as a text file .txt or .rtf) OR copy directly to your email draft folder. Answer the questions, email to manasam@harboursat.com.au for responses.

Physical

1. If you have health problems related to bladder, bowel or the reproductive system how have these affected your life?

Giving and receiving nurture

2. How do you feel if you treat yourself (time-out, new clothing, outings etc)?

3. How do you fit quiet time into your life for meditation, yoga, reading, contemplating?

4. What are the feelings involved with giving nurture to others – joy, pleasure, resentment, irritation etc. Explain why.

5. What gives you the greatest pleasure - 'large' things (big salary, important job, cars, houses, holidays) or 'small' things (flowers, sunsets, hugs etc.)?

6. How do you react to criticism? How important do you think this is?

7. Family abuse (verbal, emotional, physical) has a radical effect on how well we can live in the world – if you have been either a recipient or have given abuse, describe how you feel about it now.

Major life events

8. Relationships are major life events – how have you been affected by relationship problems or failure (breakups of friendships or relationships; separation; divorce; conflict with child, parent, work colleague)?

9. Sexual relationships are major life events – how would you describe the importance of such a relationship to your life? Consider whether this is new and exciting or old and tired - and how much energy is required for maintaining it.

10. If you are not in a sexual relationship, and this not of your own choosing, describe how this impacts on your life.

11. Change is a major life event – how would you describe your ability to adapt to change in any facet of life (work, home, friends, relationships)?

12. How do you, and how well do you initiate change in your life (relationship, career, hobbies, religion, exercise)?

13. Commitment is a major life event – how would you describe your approach to commitment (emotional, sexual, financial)?

Question Assessment

Which of your answers gave you important information about your Self? Explain:

Outcomes from Meditation

Write here your own assessment of your meditation practice:

Outcomes from Manas for Svadisthana (pranayama) practice

Write here your own assessment of your pranayama practice:

Responses will be made to your email address.



May your sadhana be blessed with peace and truth.



Chakra Study - Lesson 4

Manipura Chakra

10. Notes on Manipura Chakra
11. Personal study and practice
12. Self inquiry assignment



Manipura is the 3rd chakra; its element is fire

Manipura is derived from two Sanskrit words: mani = jewel, pura = city. Therefore, in a literal sense Manipura is the city of jewels, the chakra from which the riches of life can be launched.

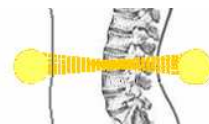
In Tibetan traditions, this chakra is known as mani padma, which means jewelled lotus - and is the focus chakra for the famous Tibetan Buddhist mantra 'Om Mani Padme Hum' (the jewel in the lotus).

Anatomically Manipura is related to the solar plexus, which controls the digestive fire and heat regulation in the body. Emotionally, Manipura is associated with power, ego, control and human interactions.

Shape:	Ten petalled lotus.
Colour:	Yellow
Zodiac:	Leo, Sagittarius, Virgo
Planets:	Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Sun
Gland:	Pancreas
Associated body parts:	Lower back, liver, abdomen, nervous and digestive system, stomach
Oils:	Lemon, Thyme, Chamomile, Ylang Ylang
Massage points:	Instep. Hands - thumb width from wrist on outer side of hand. Direction - female, clockwise; male, anti-clockwise
Life lesson:	Self awareness through judicious utilisation of personal power

Location:

Directly behind the navel. Manipura's Kshetram is right at the navel.



Tradition:

In most humans kundalini rises and falls between the three lower chakras. When awareness of the purpose of Manipura develops, your spiritual journey begins. Manipura is considered as the original the seat of kundalini, but following a fall in human evolution the seat, or base, came to rest at Muladhara.

What is Manipura?

Out of balance, Manipura - the seat of power - can be the place where the ego reigns supreme. This chakra provides the drive for achievement, success at work, the need for control over our lives, power and control over others and an innate, even overwhelming, desire not to fail.

The ego desires the exterior you to be seen as the inner you. So the trappings that go with success and power stroke the ego, makes it feel superior. Ego then demands more and more to satisfy its urgings to be best, to be seen being the best.

If your ego drives you relentlessly, then failure in any form can be a totally devastating life experience for you, from which it may take years to recover.

It takes only a small study of very 'successful' people to realise that, apart from the trappings, you would not want to change places with them. Quite often, those successful people who appear to have every single thing that this world is capable of providing are not happy people, or have great empty spaces in their lives that no 'thing' satisfies.

There is no doubt that the material 'pull' is enormous and is constantly reinforced by your tribe and family, by community standards, by advertising and by your own habitual wanting for more of life's good things. So much of your life energy is directed towards material success; it does not leave much lifetime to simply BE. Such drive can cause stress and negativity.



Striving to 'succeed' is considered the ultimate goal by much of our society, and manipulation of others is considered a legitimate part of the pathway to achieve such success

Those who walk, stomp or climb over others to succeed may be well rewarded, even lauded, by society. Yet, as a balanced equation, how important is success at any cost? Your job or career cannot love you back. Success cannot sit by your death bed, hold your hand, love and honour you.

This idea in no way negates you using your knowledge and skills to do the best job you can at work or at study. Rather, it suggests that a more balanced, happier person will be the one who balances work, family, friends and fun - and most importantly, allows time for Self reflection and understanding.

Achieving balance in Manipura is directly related to the level of self awareness you have regarding the impermanence of all the 'things' you strive so hard to achieve. All the achievements you build around you, whether they be of status in the workplace, bricks and mortar, material goods, qualifications, experiences, Yogic robes, descendants - all of these things eventually pass away physically, emotionally or mentally.

Think about an item, a belonging you may have cherished in your childhood.

Where is it now?

And does it matter if it is no longer physically, emotionally or mentally a part of your life? Is your life in some way diminished by the loss?



A healthy energy at Manipura manifests in healthy, interactive relationships where independence, dependence and inter-dependence are in balance.

Too much independence results in dysfunctional personal relationships – one partner will feel ineffective and unwanted at a physical, emotional or mental level. Too much dependence places an unnecessary burden on one partner – again at all levels. Dependence and submissiveness often go hand in hand. A submissive nature creates chitta because it suppresses the true Self, which damages personality; inhibits creativity and leaches vital energies. It is much more empowering and energising to be your true Self than to be dependent and/or submissive to another person.

Avoiding dependency does not suggest that for periods of time one member of a partnership may be more dependent, e.g. through illness, unemployment, need to study, a mother with a newborn, pressure at the workplace etc. Similarly, there are times when independence is necessary. Every parent will have experienced this while observing a child negotiating its changing, growing world.



Inter-dependence is the most natural form of human interaction. Inter-dependence takes the best from each individual to contribute to the tribe's welfare.

In balance, Manipura provides the source of energy for creativity, physical work and action, true sharing the fruits of our labours with those we love and others we may not love. In balance, Manipura is beautifully aligned to a healthy attitude towards achievement. Once the chakra energy rises to Manipura it reflects success at a spiritual level – the lifting of the energy from Muladhara and Svadisthana – which enables Manipura's immense power to be directed towards an enlightened (even lightened!) way of living.

Manipura remains in balance when the mind evolves to the realisation of the impermanence of status and security, when there is awareness that security resides in a higher dimension. Manipura, aware, heralds the spiritual journey ahead.

Out of balance

If energy and awareness are focused solely at Manipura, the result will be an angry, controlling person with a superior and judgemental manner. Workaholics' energy is centred at Manipura, the remaining centres receiving little, if any, attention. Lack of awareness results in insecurity, a need to have constant reassurance and an un-natural concern with the opinion of others.

In balance

Manipura in balance manifests in personal power, self respect and gratitude for life, an empathic nature and true success.



Personal Study



Manipura – the seat of power and ego

Your personal study is in three parts:

- Meditation for Manipura chakra
- Pranayama (breathing practice) for Manipura chakra – Manas
- Questions for you to answer

1. Meditation for Manipura



You may use the following text script for your meditation practice or the mp3 download 'Manipura meditation'.

This meditation facilitates self knowledge; you need to be as honest as you can with your Self. Are you a human do-ing or a human be-ing? Exactly what do you get frustrated and angry about – or who? How many people do you really like – unconditionally – without some little annoyance at their habits, faults, likes, dislikes? How many people do you allow to know the real, the true You?

- Decide which contemplation is the most meaningful for you – if all of the suggestions, meditate on one at a time.
- Set a timer or your mobile phone for 10 to 15 minutes.
- Sit in a comfortable position with your spine straight. Use a cushion or chair to support your spine if you need it.
- Say in your mind: 'Blessings to all the great masters and teachers who have been here before me. May all beings be happy, safe and well. My body is strong, my mind is strong, my Self is strong.
- Now become aware of the stillness of your body.
- Allow your awareness to flow gently through your physical body - feet and legs, hands and arms, lower trunk, upper trunk, head and face. Twice more, 'run' your mind through your physical body.
- Now become aware of your breath – be aware of the slow and gentle rise and fall of your abdomen as you breathe. Two more breaths.
- Become aware now of the senses – the sense of touch, the sense of taste, the sense of smell, the sense of sight, the sense of hearing.
- Now 'see' the shape of your body in your mind. Be aware of the self that sits within this shape.
- Bring to your awareness your focus for the mediation. Do not analyse any feelings that come in relation to this issue, just allow them to come and watch them go.



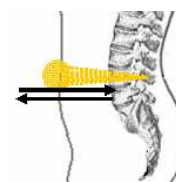
At the end of your nominated time, sit quietly for a few moments and reflect on your experience. Write it down if you wish.

2. Pranayama practice – Manas for Manipura

This breathing practice is used for Chakras 2, 3 and 4.

Locate, in your mind only, the position of Manipura within the spinal column

Locate, in your mind only, the kshetram (front of body position) for Manipura (level with top of pubic bone).



See very clearly, in your mind only, the clear yellow colour of Manipura

For five breaths, breathe the chakra colour between the spinal position and the kshetram. Feel the 'flow' of the breath moving from the spine to the kshetram, kshetram to spine

For five more breaths, breathe the colour and chant OM in your mind, 'feeling' the flow of breath and the power of the mantra moving from the spine to the kshetram, kshetram to spine

Decide how many times you intend to practice Manas awareness in the next month.

Write your intention here

3. Self enquiry

Copy the following questions to an Open Office or Microsoft Word text document please (save as a text file .txt or .rtf) OR copy directly to your email draft folder. Answer the questions, email to manasam@harboursat.com.au for responses.

How you utilise Manipura's power determines real 'success' – the emergence of spirit in your life journey.

Physical

1. Do you have digestive problems, lower back pain, stiffness in lower body joints and muscles?
2. What causes you to feel low in energy, drive?
3. Is it hard for you to stop, to relax? If yes, do you understand what drives you into constant motion?

Ego

4. Do you need validation of your worth through acquisition - of things, people or experiences? If yes, where does this need have its origins?
5. Do you need validation or approval for your work, or for the love and care you give to others? If yes, where does this need have its origins?
6. Do you spend more time at your workplace than you are paid for? If yes, why? If you are not in paid employment, do you spend more of your time than you would care to, doing things that you would rather not do? If yes, why?
7. Control over our individual lives is a fundamental human necessity. Does the need to have control over the people in your life (partner, children, friends, work colleagues) manifest in your life? If yes, what impact does that have on them? And what impact does it have deep within your Self?
8. How do you feel if you have had 'a victory' over someone or a situation – empowered, relieved, surprised, disappointed, other?

Monitoring Self

9. Do you conform to behaviours that are not your own but will make others think better of you? If yes, who, why?
10. If you are often irritated, annoyed, angry, out of control, do you understand why and from where these feelings arise?
11. How do you manage failure or the strong fear of failure?
12. How do you react when you realise what others think of you, either positively or negatively?
13. We share the planet with so many other humans - do you find you have a need to categorise people (lazy, unintelligent, useless, great personality, happy, energetic)? If yes, do you understand where this need has its origins?
14. When things don't go the way you planned, do you feel angry, nervous, disoriented, other...?
15. Anxiety is a good barometer of emotional health; if you feel nervous or anxious without an obvious reason do you, at a deeper level, know why?

Question Assessment

Which of your answers gave you important information about your Self? Explain:

Outcomes from Meditation

Write here your own assessment of your meditation practice:

Outcomes from Manas for Svadisthana (pranayama) practice

Write here your own assessment of your pranayama practice:

Responses will be made to your email address.



May your sadhana be blessed with peace and truth.



Chakra Study - Lesson 5

Anahata Chakra

13. Notes on Anahata Chakra
14. Personal study and practice
15. Self inquiry assignment



Anahata is the 4th chakra. Its element is air.

Awareness at Anahata begins the permanent shift towards spirituality. Anahata means 'unstruck or unbeaten', reflecting the relationship with the heart, which beats to a constant unbroken rhythm.

This is the central chakra - the chakras below it are related to physical life, the chakras above to spiritual life. Through Anahata we relate compassionately and unconditionally with others.

Physiologically this chakra is related to the cardiac plexus of nerves; Kundalini Yoga claims a direct connection to the part of the brain responsible for all the creative sciences and arts - music, painting, dance, poetry etc.

Shape:	Twelve petalled lotus
Colour:	Green
Zodiac:	Leo, Libra
Planets:	Sun, Saturn, Venus
Gland:	Thymus
Associated body parts:	Heart, chest, ribs, upper back, lower lungs, circulation, abdomen.
Oils:	Clary Sage, Geranium, Bergamont
Massage points:	Foot - area of joint of big toe. Hands - an arc on the palm above the lower thumb joint Direction - females, clockwise; males, anti-clockwise
Life lesson	Awareness of your true Self from experiencing love and relationship

Location:

Directly behind the centre of the chest. The kshetram is at the heart position on the front chest.

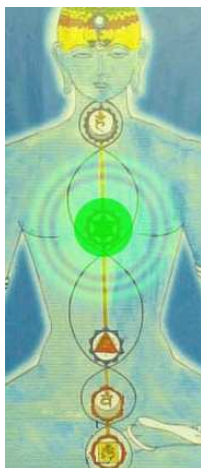


Tradition:

Anahata chakra is where your spiritual thoughts and desires are materialised and fulfilled. If the consciousness resides in the lower chakras you will remain completely dependent on the day-to-day minutiae of physical life.

What is Anahata?

Anahata is the central chakra, the line between physical life and spiritual living. This does not mean that physical life ceases to exist, but that life is lived differently because heartfelt spirit is influencing action. Anahata brings a radiant, all encompassing love, or heart feeling.



It is not the dependent love of Muladhara, the sensual love of Svadisthana or Manipura's love of power – it is truly Being, being one with all sentient and non-sentient beings.

True 'heart feeling' does away with the anchoring of Muladhara's tribal urgings; Svadhistana's fixation with the senses and Manipura's need for control. Once the vision of Self becomes extended to all sentient and non-sentient life, love flows and ego is diminished.

Kundalini Yoga considers Anahata as a centre of great importance because, although awareness rising to Manipura is permanent, the energy remains in Anahata for quite a long time before ascending to Vishuddhi. It is as though the chakra energies need time to be bathed in love before continuing on their journey.

Sutra 1.36 'Or attain freedom from suffering by setting the heart on the Light within.'

In his 'Yoga Sutras', Patanjali suggests the way to free your Self from suffering is to set your heart on a greater source of power, the light (knowledge, awareness) within.

'In love' is quite different to 'loving'. To be capable of loving another person it is necessary to love – and like – your own Self. Only when you know your true Self, when you know who you are, when you deeply value this understanding, can you give and receive love freely. When you are not a whole person, unhappy with your Self and incapable of living with honest inter-dependence, your love will be conditional. When there are conditions surrounding love, love cannot include freedom.

If, to you, love means fear of its loss, then you may be avoiding your own long held thoughts of hurt or betrayal. Such chitta comes from past experiences or from your own lack of Self worth.

A student told me how miserable her life was while she was consumed with jealousy:

'I was full of fear every time my husband was out of sight, actually even when he was in sight. He is a thoughtful and generous person and women, particularly, like him and confide in him. One day we had an enormous fight because I was convinced he was having an affair. He told me he was so tired of defending himself that he was not sure he liked the person I had become. I was distraught.

But over the following few days, as I asked myself how I could survive if he left me, I realised I would still be me. I'd breathe, laugh, work, cry, love our children; my life could go on without him. Suddenly my jealousy seemed just, well, childish and stupid. The pressure of all those fears fell away from my mind. I felt free.'

Twenty+ years later these two still love each other and laugh a lot.



In the spiritual literature such an experience is called an epiphany – a sudden realisation or insight. An epiphany is when all the illusions fall away and truth stands pure and clear in the light of awareness.

Loving too much, trying to possess another person as you would an inanimate object, becomes emotionally disabling. So much energy goes into controlling a life not your own; the mind becomes consumed with the need for power. Know your Self, value your Self, love your Self – then you have no need to control someone else to keep them in your life. Freely given love attracts unconditional love.

Awareness at Anahata does not need the props of religion, ritual and dogma. It does not need ceremony or rewards. The 'end' feelings of the shift in energy are acceptance, purity and serenity.

How does the shift manifest?

Turmoil can result from this higher shift. Watch for:

- feelings of separateness from other people
- distance from matters within the world
- dislocation from your known way of living
- great feelings of sadness and loss for the 'old life'



Be aware that this is merely transition from an almost total focus on the three lower chakra energies. It isn't that an awakened Anahata means the Yogi becomes heart-less, but the full feeling heart now feels totally without attachment.

If you feel unbalanced or confused, take time out for your Self. Take a break from stimulation – walk on a beach or in a park or forest. Meditate, listen to beautiful music. Balance will return.

External support is helpful while Anahata energy is manifesting, so this can be a good time to be with a master or mentor, or with a loving, understanding partner. Remember though, 'the guru can be without or within', and guru within is a mere thought away from manifestation.

Awareness at Anahata heralds the permanent shift towards spirituality. The vision of Self sees all sentient beings as equal, as one. In a sense, this is the birthplace of Ahimsa, non-violence, for once we see plant, animal, insect, bird and fish life as having an equally valid right to a share, with humans, of this planet, then violence in thought, word or deed is untenable. It would be as though one was violent to one's Self.

Anahata out of balance

Too great a focus on Anahata manifests in possessiveness, loving only with conditions, withholding emotions to punish loved ones and over-dramatisation of situations. Unawareness allows you to love too much yet feel unworthy of love; to fear rejection and be self-pitying.

Anahata in balance

Anahata in balance is beautiful – allowing you to love unconditionally, nurture your Self and others and radiate deep, heartfelt gratitude, compassion and empathy to all forms of life.



Personal Study



Anahata – the heart of Being

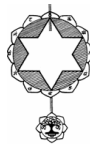
Your personal study is in three parts:

- Meditation for Anahata chakra
- Pranayama (breathing practice) for Anahata chakra – Manas
- Self enquiry

1. Meditation for Anahata



You may use the following text script or the mp3 download 'Anahata meditation' for your meditation practice



- Set a timer or your mobile phone for 10 to 15 minutes.
- Sit in a comfortable position with your spine straight. Use a cushion or chair to support your spine if you need it.
- Say in your mind: 'Blessings to all the great masters and teachers who have been here before me. May all beings be happy, safe and well. My body is strong, my mind is strong, my Self is strong.'
- Now become aware of the stillness of your body.
- Allow your awareness to flow gently through your physical body - feet and legs, hands and arms, lower trunk, upper trunk, head and face. Twice more, 'run' your mind through your physical body.
- Now become aware of your breath – be aware of the slow and gentle rise and fall of your abdomen as you breathe. Two more breaths.
- Become aware now of the senses – the sense of touch, the sense of taste, the sense of smell, the sense of sight, the sense of hearing.
- Now 'see' the shape of your body in your mind. Be aware of the Self that sits within this shape.
- Be aware of feeling quiet and peaceful.
- If you have your own mantra, silently repeat it now three times. If you do not have your own mantra, silently repeat either OM or OM Mani Padme Hum three times.
- Now catch the very first thought that arises in your mind. Be aware first of the feeling involved with the thought.
- Next be aware of the feeling behind that feeling
- Hold awareness of **acceptance** of the second feeling
- Next – hold awareness of the **purity** within that acceptance
- For a moment hold in your heart awareness of the **serenity** that purity brings to you
- Return to your mantra or to the sound of OM in your mind
- Continue to 'catch' and hold awareness of thoughts



At the end of your nominated time, sit quietly for a few moments and reflect on your thoughts that came to you and the feelings these thoughts bring with them. Write it down if you wish.

2. Pranayama practice – Manas for Anahata

This breathing practice is used for Chakras 2, 3 and 4.

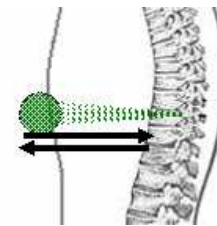
Locate, in your mind only, the position of Anahata within the spinal column

Locate, in your mind only, the kshetram (front of body position) for Anahata (level with the centre of the chest).

See very clearly, in your mind only, the living green colour of Anahata

For five breaths, breathe the chakra colour between the spinal position and the kshetram. Feel the 'flow' of the breath moving from the spine to the kshetram, kshetram to spine

For five more breaths, breathe the colour and chant OM in your mind, 'feeling' the flow of breath and the power of the mantra moving from the spine to the kshetram, kshetram to spine



Decide how many times you intend to practice Anuloma awareness in the next month.

Write your intention here.....

3. Self enquiry

Copy the following questions to an Open Office or Microsoft Word (save as a text file (.txt or .rtf), please) OR copy directly to your email draft folder. Answer the questions, email to manasam@harboursat.com.au for responses.

It is not an accident that 'heart' features in many colloquialisms – heartfelt, heartless, full-hearted, heartbroken, mean hearted, big hearted – all reflect an understanding of the place heart plays in **feeling**. When the energy of awareness comes to the heart centre, some of the ways you habitually live life will change, or will come to the surface of the mind as life issues. Once energy rises to Anahata, it does not ever totally descend to the three bases chakras. Your life is lived with more heart.

Physical

1. Do you feel you have a weight on your chest or around your heart?
2. Do you regularly have chest infections, colds, flu?
3. Do you have problems with your upper spine or rib cage?
16. 4. If you answered 'yes' to any of the above, how does this affect your life at this time?

Rising

5. How do you feel when you please others to the detriment of yourself, and where in your body is the feeling?
6. How do you recognise unhealthy relationships?
7. Are you able to end or change such relationships? If yes, how does this affect you? If no, what is this doing to the quality of your living?
8. If you regularly feel invalidated by a partner/child/relative/friend/work colleague, where in your body is the feeling?

9. What is it that causes you to accept such behaviour from others?
10. Do you often feel drained of energy, irritated or frustrated after spending time with certain people? Describe.
11. Do you understand how and why this happens?
12. Are you an easy target for other people's problems? If yes, then what happens?
13. Can you recognise any the above behaviours in yourself - 5 (you forcing others to please you), 6 (you as the unhealthy partner) 8 (you as the invalidator) 10 (you taking energy) 12 (you offloading problems)? Describe.

Residing

The following are feelings and experiences you may have when energy begins to reside at Anahata.

14. Do you feel the need to pretend happiness, friendliness when you don't actually feel it? Explain.
15. Do you feel emotionally distanced from those who you 'should' be close to? Explain.
16. Do you feel emotionally distanced from the catastrophes in the world? Explain.
17. Describe, if you have felt it, the desire to be different, to totally change your life.

Question Assessment

Which of your answers gave you important information about your Self? Explain:

Outcomes from Meditation

Write here your own assessment of your meditation practice:

Outcomes from Manas for Anahata (pranayama) practice

Write here your own assessment of your pranayama practice:

Responses will be made to your email address.



May your sadhana be blessed with peace and truth.



Chakra Study - Lesson 6

Vishuddhi Chakra

Notes on Vishuddhi Chakra
Personal study and practice
Self inquiry assignment



Vishuddhi is the 5th chakra. Its element is ether.

The Sanskrit word 'shuddhi' means to purify. This is the first of the higher centres, associated with communication, self expression and creativity through sound.

Vishuddhi represents a state of openness from which your life is experienced. This perspective leads to greater awareness. It allows you to consciously detach from the unpleasant aspects of life and to seek those which bring knowledge and awareness. Vishuddhi allows you to discern higher levels of knowledge from the 'babbling' of the unconscious mind.

Shape:	Sixteen petalled lotus.
Colour:	Light blue
Zodiac:	Gemini, Taurus, Aquarius
Planets:	Venus, Mars, Uranus
Gland:	Thyroid, parathyroid
Associated body parts:	Neck, nape of neck, throat, jaw, lungs, bronchioles, vocal cords and voice.
Oils:	Sandalwood, Lavender, Sage
Massage points:	Foot - base of big toe Hand - level with base of fingers Direction - females, anti-clockwise; males, clockwise

Life lesson

Expression of the true Self through speech

Location:

In the cervical plexus directly behind the throat pit. Kshetram is in front at the throat pit or thyroid gland. Physiological associations are with the pharyngeal and laryngeal nerves plexi.



Tradition:

Tantra considers there are two higher centres within the brain – Bindu and Sahasrara. Hindu Brahmin's shave their heads but keep a tuft of hair at the (symbolic) point of bindu – at the top back of the head. Bindu is said to be truly beautiful to envisage; precious nectar falls from it to Vishuddhi where it splits into 'poison' and 'pure form'. The poison is discarded; the pure nectar nourishes the body ensuring perfect health and longevity.

What is Vishuddhi?

Vishuddhi, the first of the three higher centres, is associated with communication, self expression and creativity through sound. From this chakra sounds and vibrations emanate from you into the ether. Energy resonating in Vishuddhi combines self expression with responsibility – the responsibility is to make all your speech meaningful.



Once awareness of energy is residing in Anahata, the higher practices can begin. Purification or regenerating of communication can be practiced by 'lifting' speech up to Ajna and Sahasrara, instead of it falling unchecked from the mouth.

Ajna, the centre of discrimination transforms thoughts to words and words back to thought. These thoughts 'lifted' to Sahasrara, soul centre, become pure.

Vishuddhi is connected to hearing, to active listening, to the stimulation of the subtle inner ear. Being aware of exactly what you are listening to can progress awareness at Vishuddhi. If you are constantly exposed to gossip and innuendo, if you tune into 'shock jock' radio, deliberately 'controversial' television programs or internet chat sessions where truth is, too often, manipulated or exaggerated for an effect – then your mind will be absorbing unnecessary chitta.

There is a strong link between Satya (truth), the second of Patanjali's Yamas (observances) and Vishuddhi:



Sutra 2.36 'The consequence of being firmly established in truthfulness is a state of being where actions and their fruits become subservient.'

When truth is established it is no longer important to be concerned about outcomes of actions; truth naturally follows truth. Speech is an action, and can be uplifting to humanity or drag it down to the depths of depravity. The history of human supremacy of this planet holds proof of both. Communicating only what is true, both to your listening sub-conscious and to other people's minds, is crucial to attracting energy to Vishuddhi.

If you are not being true to your Self, not thinking the truth or speaking the truth you cannot make spiritual progress. Satya, truth, is integral - not only to your spiritual growth, but to how well your life is lived, moment by moment.

Yet, what is truth? Your truth may be entirely different to another person's truth. Truthfulness comes when your thoughts, speech and actions are in harmony. If your actions do not fit with your true thoughts or speech, there is no truth. It can be difficult to agree what is the truth. The guiding factor for truth is:

- no intention to harm anyone or any thing.

You can arrive at your truth through enquiry of your own experiences, and through questioning the beliefs you have formed through interaction with your tribe and family.

Beliefs are not necessarily truth. Beliefs are not always knowledge. It can be a long journey uncovering your beliefs, becoming aware of their origins and seeing through the chitta to what is an actual truth.

Inner truth comes from identifying the difference between honesty and integrity. Honesty – speaking the truth as best you can, is an external practice.

Integrity is an internal form of honesty – your own awareness and understanding of your truth. Most important to observe here is your capacity to maintain that level of truth when there are no witnesses to observe you as you think, speak and behave.

If you do not value your own truth, this will manifest in an inability to speak up – to those you love, in your workplace, at meetings or within groups of friends. Silence can be mistaken for consent, concurrence. You may feel that it is not worth speaking your truth if conflict will follow. It is possible that no-one is ever convinced by argument. To make a distinction between fighting for your view and graciously accepting another person's view is, to say the least, difficult.



To bring awareness to Vishuddhi it is imperative that you practice hearing the things you say about your Self. If what you say about your Self is tentative, negative or boasting, then self enquiry on the reasons for this brings self awareness. Make a list of the things you hear yourself say and then enquire into their origins and the reasons such speech continues to be part of who you are.

At times you may find that you are not being truthful to your Self about your life situations – that you are holding on to your own mind-story rather than accepting the truth. This is most common in personal relationships, but is also a factor in workplace relationships, community organisations, politics and religions.



It is important to accept that you have the right to express hurt and anger. It is even more important to learn to do this without causing hurt and anger. At times it helps to express your own hurt by stating what you feel – e.g. 'I feel undermined and undervalued by....', or 'I feel very sad when...'. You own your own feelings and are not attacking another person's speech or actions by stating them.

Lack of balance in Vishuddhi can result in difficulty expressing yourself. Signs of this are your chin held down to the chest or a hand may be used to 'protect' your throat when you are speaking. This physical 'hiding' of the throat chakra is common; it represents a weak and vulnerable energy at Vishuddhi or deliberate dishonesty.

'Swallowing' truth causes nervous coughing and constant clearing of the throat. The tone of speech can be dull and slow, or high pitched, rapid and constant. In life situations where it is not possible to express truth openly and honestly, fear, anger and frustration is created – blocking the throat chakra.

Loud and intrusive speech hide insecurity or conversely, imbalanced energy at Manipura pushing for control over others. Those who speak in a continuous monologue, without thought for the listener's time or truths, who prattle endlessly and mindlessly without saying anything of value, are likely to have all six chakras seriously out of balance. Tools for healing such a state of being are professional counselling, one-to-one work with an aware person or self enquiry with the true intention of uncovering awareness.

Vishuddhi is also the 'filter' for receiving thought vibrations from other people's minds; the resulting impressions are relayed to the brain, then to individual awareness.

In balance and with an aware energy residing at Vishuddhi, you speak with clarity and purpose. The voice is soft and beautiful. Your voice and communication vibrate with truth and a wholly aware heart energy.

ॐ *'Speak only when it will improve the silence.'* Sai Baba

Out of balance

Life can be extremely dogmatic and self-righteous with Vishuddhi out of balance. This will manifest in arrogant speech, being over-talkative and dominating conversations. Lack of awareness of the power of Vishuddhi and speech can show in the inability to express yourself or in inconsistent statements and unreliability.

In balance



Energy radiating within Vishuddhi makes any words you speak a mantra. In balance with the other chakras, Vishuddhi allows you to be an exceptional communicator, to speak with contentment and artistic expressiveness. The ability to meditate easily is attained, because being comfortable with silence is a support to meditators.



Personal Study



Vishuddhi – where each word becomes a mantra

Your personal study is in three parts:

- Meditation for Vishuddhi chakra
- Awareness at Vishuddhi chakra
- Questions for you to answer

1. Meditation for Vishuddhi



You may use the following text script for your meditation practice or the mp3 download 'Vishuddhi meditation' from the website.

For this meditation the beautiful peace mantra 'Shanti, shanti, shanti – eee' is utilised. The ideal is to feel the vibration in your throat and the sound resonating in your hearing. Sit quietly with the vibration.

- Set a timer or your mobile phone for 10 to 15 minutes.
- Sit in a comfortable position with your spine straight. Use a cushion or chair to support your spine if you need it.
- Say in your mind: 'Blessings to all the great masters and teachers who have been here before me. May all beings be happy, safe and well. My body is strong, my mind is strong, my Self is strong.'
- Now become aware of the stillness of your body.
- Allow your awareness to flow gently through your physical body - feet and legs, hands and arms, lower trunk, upper trunk, head and face. Twice more, 'run' your mind through your physical body.
- Now become aware of your breath – be aware of the slow and gentle rise and fall of your abdomen as you breathe. Two more breaths.
- Become aware now of the senses – the sense of touch, the sense of taste, the sense of smell, the sense of sight, the sense of hearing.
- Now 'see' the shape of your body in your mind. Be aware of the self that sits within this shape.
- Become aware of the perfect stillness of your body and your breath
- Imagine all the voices in the world joined together chanting the peace mantra – 'Shanti, Shanti, Shanti – eee', over and over and over. Feel the vibration spread from your throat centre to your physical body, from your body to those you love, then spreading out and out to encompass the planet. Sit quietly with the vibration.
- Do not analyse any thoughts or feelings that come, just allow them to come and watch them go.



At the end of your nominated time chant the peace mantra three times aloud then sit quietly for a few moments and reflect on your experience. Write it down if you wish.

2. Awareness in Vishuddhi

In the following four weeks, dedicate one day each week to the following practice.

Morning:

Be aware of what you are saying

Be aware of the thoughts behind what you are saying

Be aware of the feelings behind the thoughts

Afternoon and evening:

Before you speak, 'lift' the energy from Vishuddhi to Ajna (mind) and from Ajna to Sahasrara (spirit).

Then speak as though your words are a mantra.

Try to be aware of subtle differences coming from this practice – not only in what you say and how you say it, but also in what you hear.

3. Self enquiry

Copy the following questions to an Open Office or Microsoft Word text document please (save as a text file .txt or .rtf) OR copy directly to your email draft folder. Answer the questions, email to manasam@hamboursat.com.au for responses.



Vishuddhi – when each word is a mantra

Getting the words out, expressing how we truly feel, is difficult for some of us. When the chakra energy resides at Anahata for a time, the way you express yourself and communicate may change dramatically. It can be as simple as having the confidence to speak up on the way you feel about everyday matters, or as difficult as speaking against a position or opinion you had previously held on moral and ethical issues.

Physical

1. Do you regularly clench your jaws or teeth?
2. Do you frequently have sore throats, laryngitis, ear infections or blocked sinuses?

Feelings

3. If it is difficult for you try to express your deepest feelings, does this manifest as a lump in your throat, anger, silence, confused speech, other..?
4. When you try to share something deeply meaningful, does your mind go blank?
5. Faced with inappropriate behaviour from others, do you think about telling them but never actually do it? If yes, why?
6. What do you think of the truism 'if you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all'? Describe possible outcomes.
7. Are you afraid of voicing a contrary opinion to partner/children/family/friends/work colleagues? If yes, why?

Communication

8. How do you hear yourself speaking about yourself?
9. Do you use words as weapons, to deliberately hurt others? If yes, how? And why?
10. Do you use words deliberately uplift others? If yes, how?
11. Are you often using words to deliberately distance yourself from others? If yes, how? And do you understand why?
12. When you talk to people, are they always asking you to speak up? If yes, in what circumstances?
13. Are people always asking you to speak more quietly? If yes, how do you deal with this?
14. Do you stutter when nervous? If yes, do you know why?

Question Assessment

Which of your answers gave you important information about your Self? Explain:

Outcomes from Meditation

Write here your own assessment of your meditation practice:

Outcomes from Vishuddhi awareness

Write here your own assessment of your practice of awareness:

Responses will be made to your email address.

ॐ *May your sadhana be blessed with peace and truth.*



Chakra Study - Lesson 7

Sahasrara and Analysis

Contents:

Notes on Sahasrara chakra

Analysis of chakra energies



Sahasrara means one thousand - and is visualised as a lotus of one thousand glowing petals. It encompasses all colours, elements and all aspects of being.

The implication is that the magnitude and significance of Sahasrara is unlimited. Sahasrara is 'beyond the beyond'. This chakra represents the fusion of consciousness with matter and energy; the individual with the whole.

Shape:

One thousand petalled lotus

Colour:

Multicoloured to the point of appearing purple or white

Associated body parts:

Whole of body

Life lesson

Union of body, mind and spirit

Location:

At the crown of the head



Tradition:

Most classical teachings claim Sahasrara as the highest point of awareness and the objective of the rise of Kundalini energy from its journey through the chakras. Kundalini energy is creative intelligence in action; it is said that by activating Kundalini any person can become anything they wish to in life - artist, musician, scientist, inventor, athlete, writer, exemplary person....

What is Sahasrara?

Just as none of the Yoga's is a religion, Sahasrara is not a chakra. The Yoga pathways are systems of awakening the true consciousness within you. All chakra practices lead to Sahasrara, the merging of the consciousness of the awakened chakras, the place of culmination, from where the energies awakened from the six bodily chakras radiates. This radiation is pure energy free from intention. Sahasrara does nothing yet does everything. It is ever present; transcending concepts yet is the source of concepts.

When the life energies have risen to Sahasrara, name, form, the 'I', 'you', 'we', cease to exist. The seer, seeing and seen are united. Yoga, union, takes place. Awareness is paramount.



Sutra 1.3 'With mastery, the Seer (the one who sees), exists as its own true nature.'

Although Patanjali's Sutras do not reference the chakra system, there are parallels. Patanjali's awareness is obtained in steps or stages, from sensual to mental awareness, then to awareness of the true Self. Every one of humanity's spiritual or religious systems struggles with a way of describing this ultimate awareness. The sutras describe it as Samadhi. Samadhi means aware at all times – the seer existing in her/his own true nature.

In the beginning awareness will ebb and flow. Your mind may desire truth and peace – your senses may desire pleasure, excitement and risk taking. So you may experience a little Samadhi, but there will be fluctuations.

The chakra parallel is that while awareness of chakra energy develops you may feel moments of a radiant Sahasrara, but with a pull towards the comfort of partaking only of pleasure and the material world. The three base chakras are concerned with ensuring human success and domination:



As the primal source of energy, Muladhara desires the material security of family, tribe and home with the beliefs and rituals that consolidate a traditional safe and secure base from which to go out into the world

Svadisthana seeks the sweet pleasures of life. These desires – food and drink, procreation, reproduction and the sweet pleasures of raising children – have, at certain times in your life, a force that is strong to the point of overwhelming all other material and spiritual needs.



Manipura's drive is for power and success. The intense desire for dominance and to satisfy personal needs and wants can bring success in a material form. The cost is often spiritual growth, or at least the loss of a balanced life.

The next three chakras are a precursor to a more open way for human life:

Anahata balance brings the capacity to love unconditionally, to see each sentient being on this planet as equal to your Self. This equality means that every life form is as important as your own which, in turn, brings ahimsa (non-violence) into the way you live your life. Once energy resides in Anahata it does not ever go away.



Vishuddhi is the chakra of communication. It is from Vishuddhi that you express your true Self through your speech, which conveys a duty to take care in what you say to your Self and to others. Vishuddhi also is the centre of creativity; once awareness resides in this chakra your creativity can flow unimpeded.

Ajna is the command centre, the chakra of perception, discernment and intuition. Chakra awareness begins at Ajna because knowledge and understanding are indispensable for this purpose. Awareness cannot come from ignorance; the primary requisite of knowledge is open-ness and honesty. Once awareness exists at Anahata, the progress of your spiritual quest can begin in earnest.



All the variations in awareness that you experience within the chakra awareness process are quite normal. This is all fine! This is the evolving nature of consciousness. Once you arrive at Sahasrara awareness or Samadhi, you will still need to love, work and play. Only the awareness is different.

Analysis



Sahasrara – Self and Spirit shining through ego and personality

Your personal study is an energy analysis of the chakra energies of four people and of yourself. Answer the questions relating to each person and the overall analysis at the end.

Before you begin:

It is very important to be sure of your integrity. This energy analysis can be intrusive of the private and personal space of others.

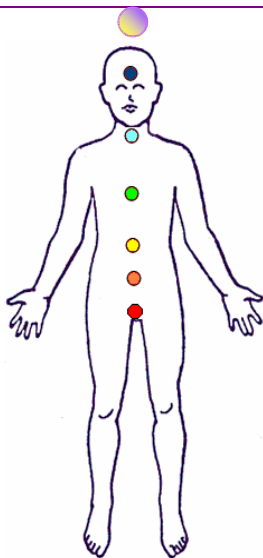
The purpose of this analysis is not to intrude or intend to harm another person. The purpose is to aid your own compassion and empathy with others and your Self - for if you can assess where the energies of other people lie, it can be an aid for you to understand them and how past influences or present situations affect them and/or control their behaviours.

I repeat, this analysis must not be done with the smallest intention to do harm to another person. Remember the law of Karma – what you give inevitably returns to you.

When you come to analyse where your own energies lie, you need to do so with complete honesty. Then the analysis can be very helpful to your life and living.

When you feel disturbed or upset by another person, take a moment to think where that person's energy lies and whether that may be influencing their speech and actions. Do this without intention to do harm.

When you feel disturbed or upset by local, national or global events, take a moment to think where the collective energies in these places lie, and whether collective human energies could be having an effect on wider society. Do this without intention to do harm by blaming or disassociation.



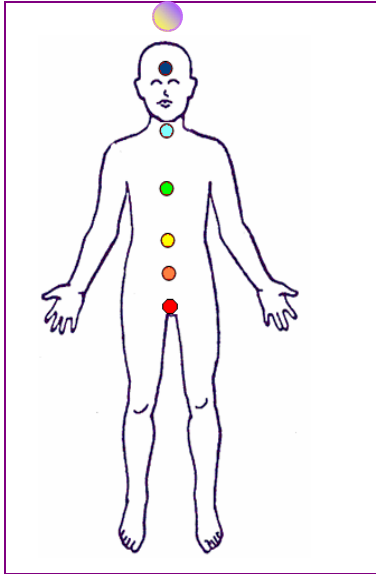
Person 1 – someone you do not know at all

What was this person doing when you observed her/him?

Where do you feel this person's chakra energy predominantly resides?

Why?

Describe your feelings towards this person.



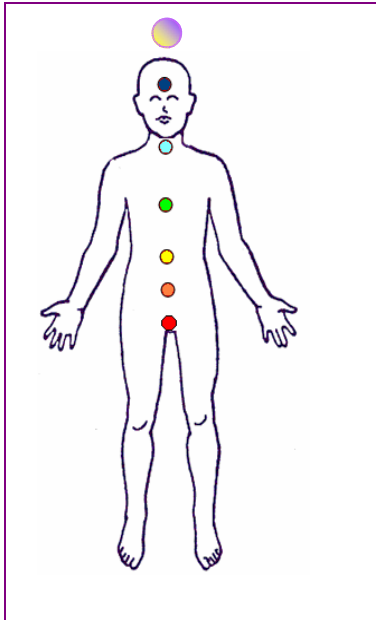
Person 2 – someone you know quite well, but not closely

Describe the person's personality, family, lifestyle, work etc.

Where do you feel this person's chakra energy predominantly resides?

Why?

Describe any changes in your feelings towards this person.



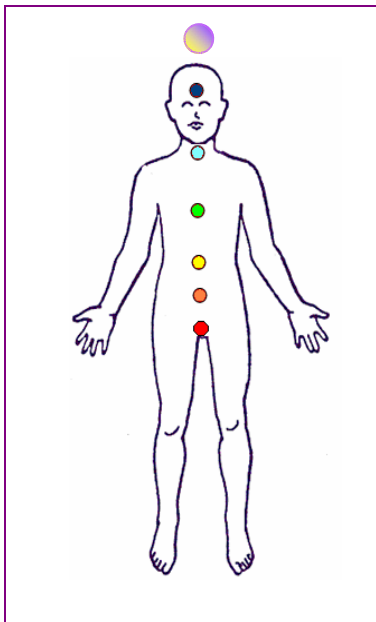
Person 3 – someone who disturbs you or whom you do not like

Describe the person's personality, family, lifestyle, work etc. and exactly what is not working in your relationship with this person.

Where do you feel this person's chakra energy predominantly resides?

Why?

Describe any changes in your feelings towards this person.



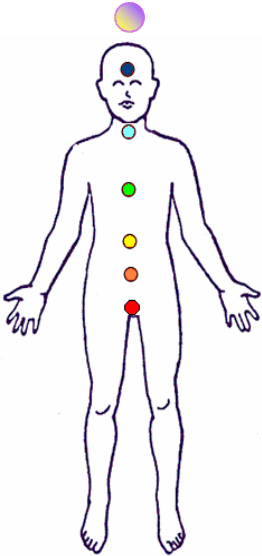
Person 4 – someone very close to you

Describe the person's personality, family, lifestyle, work etc. and the value you place on your relationship with this person.

Where do you feel this person's chakra energy predominantly resides?

Why?

Describe any changes in your feelings towards this person.

	<p>Yourself</p> <p>It can be more difficult to 'see' where your own chakra energy resides than it is to see others. Where do you feel your chakra energy predominantly resides?</p> <p>Why?</p> <p>If you feel your chakra energy resides in more than one chakra, describe where, why..</p> <p>How you feel about your energy being where it is?</p>
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Analysis of Energy Assessment

Write briefly on each analysis. What was revealing to you? How can you use this skill as an aid to improving your own relationships?

Person 1

Person 2

Person 3

Person 4

Your Self

How will you utilise the knowledge gained from this analysis?

Any questions for Swami? (3 only please)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Responses will be made to your email address.

ॐ *May your sadhana be blessed with peace and truth.*

