

THE SEVEN HINDU CHAKRAS

According to Hindu philosophy, the chakras are subtle energy bodies located within the spinal cord and housed within the innermost core of the *Sushumna nadi*. This core is called the *Brahma nadi*, the carrier of spiritual energy. The nadis carry subtle energy throughout the body and are, as stated above, critical allies in the rising of the kundalini energy.

The core of the Sushumna nadi is considered a spiritual energy body, not a material energy body; therefore, the chakras are most often referred to as subtle in nature. Some Hindu systems, however, connect the chakras with the gross nerve plexuses, which are outside the spine. In these systems, the chakras are considered physical as well as subtle and are considered the foundation of all existence, psychologically and physically.

Subtle energy medicine is largely based on chakra work, as chakras govern significant aspects of our lives. The following descriptions cover several significant details about your chakras. The meaning of the chakra's Sanskrit name provides a clue to the chakra's purpose. Its mission is the overall job relegated to the particular chakra; knowing the mission of each chakra can help you quickly diagnose which chakra you might want to work through.

The emotional focus refers to the types of emotions (feelings and beliefs) managed through this energy center; like the meridians, every chakra hosts a different set of emotions. By figuring out which emotions are troubling you or someone else, you can pinpoint the chakra to work on.

A chakra's "spiritual concern" covers two focuses; the spiritual perception afforded when looking at life through the lens of that chakra and in the innate psychic frontloaded into that chakra. Each chakra provides a unique psychic glimpse into reality.

Each chakra corresponds with and connects to a particular location within the physical body. Every chakra is also related to a specific endocrine organ. If you're wondering where to focus healing for a chakra, you can always work through the related endocrine gland. You'll also learn which of the physical organs are affected by each chakra. This knowledge will help you zoom your healing into the chakra that matches physical symptoms.

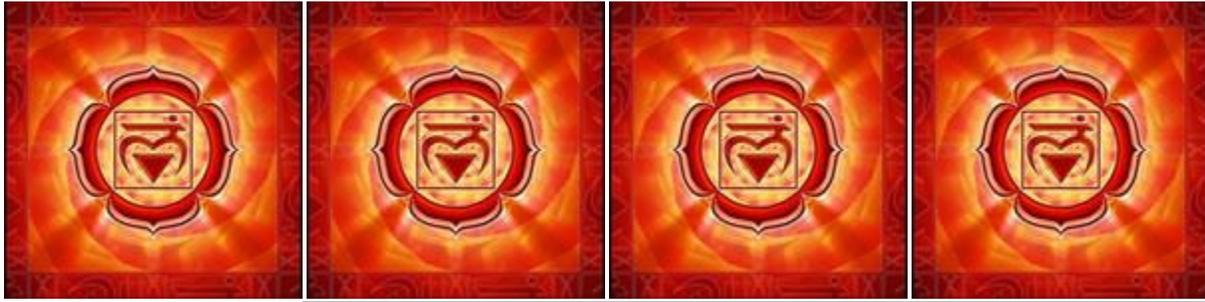
WORKING WITH THE CHAKRAS

Each chakra is a prism that regulates a specific set of physical, emotional, mental and spiritual concerns. This means that we can use them to diagnose problems and create a healing plan for a variety of issues. Understanding the chakras, we can:

- Use physical symptoms to clarify the emotional, mental and spiritual components of an illness.
- Trace our emotional issues back to the development of a certain part of our body or to the age at which the issues originated. Emotions are the language of the body. If we can re-experience the feeling component and the physical reactions attached to a debilitating situation, we can reprogram self-destructive beliefs and chart a whole new course.
- Isolate the mental or spiritual beliefs affecting us, thereby healing our emotional or physical issues.
- Awaken repressed memories, including in utero and past-life memories, for the purpose of understanding clearing, and healing. By getting to the root cause of an issue, we can unlock the energy blocks it might be causing.
- Become knowledgeable parents to our own children, supporting them through each development stage.
- Better parent our own inner child, that natural self within each of us waiting for his or her chance at life.
- Make appropriate and wise decisions by pinpointing our current development stage.
- Better understand where, how, and why we get "stuck" in harmful habits, cycles and even addictions.

In working with the chakras, we are searching for two points of awareness. First we want to identify and acknowledge our positive traits, which might be in need of recognition or revitalization. All too often, we bury some of our best qualities beneath a deluge of conflict and misperceptions. Our second goal is to uncover, understand, and change self-destructive beliefs, patterns and programs.

Anatomy of the Spirit – The Seven Stages of Power and Healing, by Caroline Myss.
Sacred Contracts – Awakening your Divine potential by Caroline Myss.



#1) Mooladhara (Area of consciousness for the physical body):

Name:	Sanskrit word <i>moola</i> means 'root' or 'foundation', base of chakra system
Beeja:	Lam
Relates to:	Our connection to the earth, material reality, survival, physical strength, vitality, the blood of life, sexuality, the spine, the pelvis, rectum, legs, bones, feet, immune system, nervous system, emotional/mental health.
Symbolic to:	Our need for logic, order and structure. This energy orients us in time and space and to our five senses. As children, we perceive and learn about the physical world through our five senses. The first chakra energy has trouble interpreting our lives symbolically, for our five senses give us literal perceptions and cause us to take things at face value. Not until we are older are we able to seek out the symbolic meaning of events and relationships.
Emotional focus:	Primal feelings
Spiritual focus:	Deserving to exist; physical sympathy, ability to sense physical energy
Gland:	Adrenals
Physical organs:	Genital organs and adrenals; bones and skeletal structure, coccygeal vertebrae, some kidney, bladder and excretory functions, skin.
Issues with:	Physical family, group safety and security. Ability to provide for life's necessities. Ability to stand up for self. Feeling at home. Social & familial law and order.
Sense:	Smell
Element:	Earth
Personality:	'I am'
Balanced Energy:	Centered, grounded, healthy, fully alive, unlimited physical energy, manifesting abundance, master of oneself
Excessive Energy:	Egotistic, domineering, greedy, addicted to wealth, indiscriminate use of sexual energy, nervous sexual energy
Deficient Energy:	Lack of confidence, no grounded in physical reality, weak, can't achieve goals, self destructive, feeling unloved or abandoned
Illnesses:	Chronic lower back pain, sciatica, varicose veins, rectal tumors/cancer, depression, immune-related disorders, constipation, diarrhea, urinary tract infections, cold hands/feet, kidney stones, irrational fears, financial problems.

The energy content of the first or Tribal chakra is *tribal power*. The word tribe is not only a synonym for family but an archetype, and as such it has connotations beyond its more conventional definition. Archetypally the word tribal connotes group identity, group force, group willpower, and group belief patterns. The first chakra grounds us, it is our connection to traditional familial beliefs that support the formation of identity and a sense of belonging to a group of people in a geographic location.

To connect to the energy of your first chakra, focus your attention for a few moments on something tribal that triggers an emotional response in you:

- listening to the national anthem
- observing a military spectacle
- watching an athlete receive a gold medal at the Olympics
- witnessing the marriage of someone you care about
- learning that a child has been named after you

The first chakra energetic connection is the emotional/mental body and is seen as the foundation of emotional and mental health. Emotional and psychological stability originate in the family unit and early social environment. Various mental illnesses are generated out of family dysfunctions, including multiple personalities, obsessive-compulsive disorder, depression, and destruction patterns like alcoholism.

The symbolic/perceptual connection manifests in our need for logic, order, and structure. This energy orients us in time and space and to our five senses. As children, we perceive and learn about the physical world through our five senses. First chakra energy has trouble interpreting our lives symbolically, for our five senses give us literal perceptions and cause us to take things at face value. Not until we are older are we able to seek out the symbolic meaning of events and relationships.

The primary fears are of physical survival, abandonment by the group, and loss of physical order. However, the primary strengths are tribal/family identity, bonding, and the tribal honour code; the support and loyalty that give one a sense of safety and connection to the physical world.

The sacred truth inherent in the first chakra is that All is One. We learn this truth and explore its creative power through experiences connected to tribal or group dynamics. It carries the message that we are connected to all of life and that every choice we make and every belief we hold exerts influence upon the whole of life.

We begin to discover that *'All Is One'* as we start life within our tribe or family. To be part of a tribe is a primal need, since we are completely dependent upon our tribe for basic survival needs: food, shelter and clothing. As tribal beings, we are energetically designed to live together, to create together, to be together, to need one another. Each of our tribal environments – from our biological tribe, to the tribe we form with co-workers, to our tribal bonds with friends – provides the essential physical settings within which we can explore the creative power of this truth. Regardless of the “truth” of familial beliefs, every one of them directs a measure of our energy into an act of creation. Each belief, each action has a direct consequence. When we share belief patterns with groups of people, we participate in energy

and physical events created by those groups. This is the creative, symbolic expression of the sacred truth *All Is One*.

No one begins life as a conscious “individual” with conscious will power. That identity comes much later and develops in stages from childhood through adulthood. Beginning life as a part of a tribe, we become connected to our tribal consciousness and collective willpower by absorbing its strengths and weaknesses, beliefs, superstitions and fears.

Through our interactions with family and other groups, we learn the power life of sharing a belief with other people. We also learn how painful it can be to be excluded from a group and its energy. We learn as well the power of sharing a moral and ethical code handed down from generation to generation. This code of behaviour guides children of the tribe during their development years, providing a sense of dignity and belonging.

Maintaining the health of our individual first chakra depends upon addressing our personal tribal issues. If we feel victimized by society, for example, we should deal with this negative perception so that it doesn't cause us to lose energy. We can, for instance, get therapeutic support, become skilled at an occupation, seek a more symbolic view of our situation, or become politically active to change society's attitudes. Nurturing bitterness toward the cultural tribe embroils our energy in a continual inner conflict that blocks access to the healing power of the sacred truth 'All is One'.

Our respective tribes introduce us to life “in the world.” They teach us that the world is either safe or dangerous, abundant or poverty-ridden, educated or ignorant, a place to take from or to give to. And they transmit their perceptions about the nature of reality itself – for instance, that this life is only one of many or that this life is all there is. We inherit from our tribes their attitudes toward other religious, ethnic, and racial groups. Our tribes activate our thinking processes.

The process of spiritual development challenges us to retain the tribal influences that are positive and to discard those that are not. Our spiritual power grows when we are able to see beyond the contradictions inherent in tribal teaching and pursue a deeper level of truth. Each time we make a shift toward symbolic awareness, we positively influence our energy and biological systems. We also contribute positive energy to the collective body of life – the global tribe. Think of this process of spiritual maturation as “spiritual homeopathy.”

Given the power of unified beliefs – right or wrong – it is difficult to be at variance with one's tribe. We are taught to make choices that meet with tribal approval, to adopt its social graces, manner of dress, and attitudes. Symbolically, this adaptation reflects the union of individual willpower with group power. It is a powerful feeling to be in a group of people or a family with whom you feel spiritually, emotionally and physically comfortable. Such a union empowers us and energetically enhances our personal power and our creative strength – and it continues as long as we make choices consonant with the group's. We unite and create.

At the same time we have within us a relentless congenital desire to explore our own creative abilities, to develop our individual power and authority. This desire is the impetus behind our striving to become conscious. The universal human journey is one of becoming conscious of our power and how to use that power. Becoming conscious of the responsibility inherent in the power of choice represents the core of this journey.

From an energy perspective, becoming conscious requires stamina. It is extremely challenging, and often very painful, to evaluate our own personal beliefs and separate ourselves from those that no longer support our growth. Change is the nature of life, and external and internal change is constant. When we change inwardly, we outgrow certain belief patterns and strengthen others. The first belief patterns that we challenge are tribal because our spiritual development follows the structure of our energy system; we clear out ideas from the bottom up, starting with the earliest and most basic.

Evaluating our beliefs is a spiritual and biological necessity. Our physical bodies, minds, and spirits all require new ideas in order to thrive. Seen symbolically, our life crises tell us that we need to break free of beliefs that no longer serve our personal development. These points at which we must choose to change or to stagnate are our greatest challenges. Every new crossroads means we enter into a new cycle of change – whether it be adopting a new health regimen or a new spiritual practice. And change inevitably means letting go of familiar people and places and moving on to another stage of life.

Many people are stuck in between two worlds: the old world they need to release and the world that they are afraid to enter. We are attracted to becoming more ‘conscious,’ but at the same time we find it frightening because it means we must take personal responsibility for ourselves – and for our health, career, attitudes and thoughts. Once we accept our personal responsibility for even one area of our lives, we can never again use ‘tribal reasoning’ to excuse our behaviour.

In tribal consciousness personal responsibility does not exist in well-defined terms, so it is much easier to avoid the consequences of personal choices in the tribal milieu. Tribal responsibility extends mainly to the physical areas of our lives, meaning individuals are accountable for their finances, social concerns, relationships and occupations. The tribe does not require members to take personal responsibility for the attitudes they inherit. According to tribal reasoning, it is acceptable to excuse one’s prejudices by saying, “Everyone in my family thinks this way.” It is extremely difficult to give up the comfort zone that accompanies such excuses; just think of how many times you have said, “Everyone does it, so why shouldn’t I?” This dodge is the crudest form of the sacred truth All is One, and it is commonly used to evade responsibility for all manner of immoral acts, from tax evasion to adultery to keeping the extra change from a sales clerk. Spiritually conscious adults, however can no longer utilize tribal reasoning. Tax evasion becomes a deliberate act of theft; adultery becomes the conscious breaking of a marriage vow; and keeping extra change becomes equal to stealing from the store.

Summary of Chakra #1:

The first chakra corresponds to the area where the body makes contact with the earth when seated in the classic posture of meditation. It grounds us in physical life: in the physical arena, every experience, every encounter we have automatically engages our first chakra, which assesses our immediate environment for the basic details of size, shape, people, and all other factors that relate to physical characteristics. The first chakra also grounds us to the groups that support our life. Our relationship with power begins with learning how it works within our family and other social groups or tribal connections, including friends, gangs, religious affiliations, and social class. Other forms of group power connections include genetic

inheritance, ethnic heritage, and national identity, as well as group beliefs, values, attitudes, and superstitions.

An enormous supply of your energy is invested in potent beliefs common to thousands or millions of other people. Many people have been told that a certain illness runs in their family, for example, and that they have a natural propensity toward that disease. As a result of having this notion reinforced in their psyche, they invest their energy in that thought, giving it power and authority over them. I have worked with many people who, in the process of healing a serious illness, try every form of alternative medicine, including visualization and positive thinking. Yet when I ask whether they believe that they can heal the illness, a high percentage admit to hoping they can while at the same time expressing their doubts, because modern medical research maintains that no cure has been found. So although their mind is focusing on maintaining a positive attitude, their energy, or power – which is the only investment that matters – is connected to the findings and beliefs of the medical community. Their attachment to the power of that group thought-form inevitably dominates, because hope without power is no match for fear with power.

Your chakras, like your archetypes and contracts, are essentially, neutral, providing you with either strength or vulnerability depending on how you make use of their energy. Your first chakra, for instance, connects you to family loyalties, traditions, rituals, social laws, and the many positive elements of society that give you a sense of identity. I believe that we agree to be born to parents whose genetic traits and family lineage provide precisely the assets and liabilities that will help us most in learning and contributing what we need to in this life. Our parents' financial situation, level of intellect, psychological and emotional predispositions, and geographic location are all part of the equation that yields the sum of our own life. There are no "accidents of birth," as the phrase goes; everything is provided for your particular journey, including the social, ethnic, and religious value systems of your family, which form the foundation of your consciousness and the lens through which you will first encounter life.

Making sense of Chakra #1 (case):

Loyalty is a beautiful tribal quality, most especially when it is conscious loyalty, a commitment that serves the individual as well as the group. Extremes of loyalty that harm one's ability to protect oneself, however, qualify as a belief pattern from which one needs to free oneself. The following case history involves a primary tribal violation.

Tony, thirty-two, is the son of Eastern European immigrants. He was five years old when his family moved to the USA, one of seven children. During those early years of establishing a home in this country, his parents found it extremely difficult to provide the family with the basics, including food. As the age of eight, Tony got a job at a local candy store, helping with small maintenance tasks.

Tony's family was deeply grateful for the extra ten dollars a week. After two months the boy was bringing home almost twenty dollars a week and feeling proud of himself – he could see how much his parents appreciated his contribution to the family funds. But once that dynamic of appreciation was in place, the store owner began to make sexual advances toward Tony. They began as subtle physical contact, but eventually they led to a situation in which this pedophile totally controlled the young boy. Tony was soon so completely dominated that he had to call the store owner every evening to assure him that everything was still 'their secret.'

As his double life continued, Tony's psychological state became understandably fragile. He knew that his frequent encounters with the 'candy man' were immoral, yet his family was now counting on his monthly household contribution of almost a hundred dollars. Tony finally found the courage to describe to his mother – in limited detail – what he had to do in order to earn his monthly wage. His mother responded by forbidding him to ever to speak of such things again. The family members were counting on his keeping that job, she said.

Tony remained at the candy store until he was thirteen years old. The effects of his abuse extended into his student life. He barely made it through his sophomore year in high school, and at fifteen he was a dropout. To earn his way Tony took a job as an apprentice to a construction worker and, simultaneously, began to drink.

Alcohol helped repress Tony's nightmarish experiences of being sexually molested and calmed his nerves. He began to drink every evening after work. By sixteen he was an adept street fighter and a neighborhood troublemaker. The local police brought him home several times for starting fights and for minor vandalism. His family tried to force him to stop drinking but could not. During one incident when Tony's friends brought him home after an evening of drinking, he screamed in rage at his parents and his brothers for not rescuing him from the candy man. He knew that his mother had told his father about the molestation because even though they did not tell Tony to quit his job, his parents had forbidden his younger brothers to go to the store. And he later realized that his brothers understood what had happened, too, but treated it as a joke, implying at times that he enjoyed it.

At twenty-five, Tony started his own small construction company; he and his crew of four men performed minor repair work on homes. He managed to maintain this business fairly successfully until he reached twenty-eight. At that time his drinking became so severe that it triggered attacks of paranoia in which he believed that demons were surrounding him, telling him to kill himself. By twenty-nine Tony had lost his company and his home. As a coping mechanism, he turned completely to alcohol.

I met Tony only a month after he began working again. He had been hired to repair a home near mine, and we met quite accidentally. Even while he was managing his small crew, he was drinking on the job. I made a comment about it. He responded, "You'd drink too if you had my memories." I looked at him, and by the way he held his body, I knew instantly that he had been molested as a child. I asked him if he wanted to talk about his childhood. For some reason opened up, and that dark chapter of his life poured out of him.

We met a few times after that to talk about his past. I realized in listening to him was that the pain of knowing that his family had not tried to help him was greater than the pain of the sexual abuse. In fact, his family now considered him a drunkard and fully expected him to fail again and again in his life. The pain of family betrayal was destroying him. Curiously, he had already forgiven the candy man. His unfinished business was with the family.

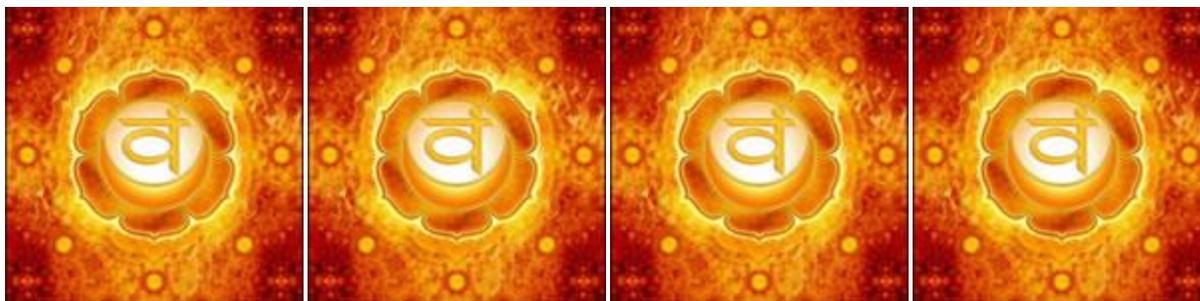
Two months after we met, Tony decided on his own to enter an alcohol treatment program. After he completed it, he contacted me and shared with me the healing impact of the therapy sessions in the program. In therapeutic circles reconciliation more often than not means confronting the people with whom you have unfinished business and cleaning out your wounds in front of them. In the best of cases, the people who wounded you will apologize, and some form of renewal or closure will occur. Tony, however, realized that his family would never be able to acknowledge their betrayal of him. His parents in particular would be too

ashamed even to listen to his history. They were emotionally incapable of admitting that they knew what he had to do to earn that money so many years ago. Tony, instead turned to prayer and continual psychotherapy.

When his sobriety and his commitment to prayer had continued for more than a year, he told me that his anger toward his family was gone. Given his parents fear of survival in a new country with very little money, he said, perhaps they had made the only choice they were capable of making. He worked on renewing his bonds with his family, and as his new business grew, his family spoke proudly of his success. To him, that represented their apology for the events of long ago.

Questions for Self-Examination:

1. List all the blessings that you feel came from your family?
2. What belief patterns did you inherit from your family?
3. What positive traits did your Father mirror to you?
4. What positive traits did your Mother present to you?
5. What negative traits did your Father & Mother mirror to you for your learning?
6. What negative traits have your mate/spouse/ partner mirrored?
7. What positive traits has this person mirrored?
8. Is there a theme or drama in your life playing out over and over again – something that appears through different situations, old fears or negative thoughts?
9. Do you have any unfinished business with your family members? If so, list the reasons that prevent you from healing your family relationships.
10. If you are now raising a family of your own, list the qualities that you would like your children to learn from you.
11. Describe the tribal characteristics within yourself that you would like to strengthen and develop.
12. Have there been people in your life who tried to control you and/or take away your power?
13. Are there any beliefs or thoughts that are keeping you from becoming your best and living up to your greatest potential?
14. What tribal traditions and rituals do you continue for yourself and your family?
15. Do you have a personal code of honour? What is it?
16. What superstitions do you have? Which have more authority over you than your own reasoning ability?
17. Which of those belief patterns that still have authority in your thinking can you acknowledge are no longer valid?
18. Have you ever compromised your sense of honour? If so, have you taken steps to heal it?
19. What makes you angry?
20. Have there been power struggles in your relationships?



#2) Swadhisthana (Area of consciousness for the emotional body):

Name:	Sanskrit word <i>swa</i> means 'one's own' and <i>adisthana</i> means 'dwelling place or residence'
Beeja:	Vam
Relates to:	the water element in the physical body, the sexual organs, large intestine, lower vertebrae, pelvis, hip, bladder, the lymphatic system, the mammary glands, and eliminative organs, the emotions, passion, feelings, imagination
Emotional focus:	All feelings
Spiritual concern:	Ability to express feelings; psychic capability of feeling sympathy, through which you can sense others' feelings
Gland:	Ovaries in women and testes in men
Physical organ:	Part of kidney system, intestines; some aspects of reproductive system, including the womb; bladder; prostate; sacral vertebrae and nerve plexus; the neurotransmitters determining emotional responses to stimuli
Issues with:	Blame, guilt, money, sex, power, control, creativity, ethics, honour in relationships
Sense:	Taste
Element:	Water
Personality:	'I feel' or 'I desire'
Balanced Energy:	Friendly, optimistic, concerned for others, sense of belonging, creative, imaginative, intuitive, attuned to your own feelings, sense of humour
Excessive Energy:	Emotionally explosive, aggressive, overly ambitious, manipulative, caught up in illusion, overindulgent, self serving, obsessive thoughts of sex, see people as sex objects.
Deficient Energy:	Extremely shy, timid, immobilized by fear, overly sensitive, self-negating, resentful, buried emotions, burdened by guilt, distrustful, clinging, guilty about sex, difficult conceiving, abused, frigid or impotent
Illnesses:	Chronic lower back pain, sciatica, gynecological problems, pelvic/low back pain, sexual potency, urinary problems

The second chakra is the partnership chakra. Its energy begins to pulsate and become distinct around the age of seven. At the age of children start interacting with other children and adults, more independently of their parents and outside the home environment. Through these initial interactions they begin to individuate, form relationships, and explore their power of choice.

With the second chakra energy shifts from obeying tribal authority to discovering other relationships that satisfy personal, physical needs.

This chakra resonates to our need for relationships with other people and our need to control to some extent the dynamics of our physical environment. All the attachments by which we maintain control over our external lives, such as authority, other people, or money, are linked through this chakra to our energy field and physical body. The illnesses that originate in this energy center are activated by the fear of losing control.

The symbolic connection: The energy in this chakra enables us to generate a sense of personal identity and protective psychological boundaries. As we continually assess our personal strength in regard to the external world and its physical seductive forces – such as sex, money, addictive substances, or other people – the second chakra energy of a healthy physical ego keeps us able to interact with the world without having to negotiate or sell ourselves; it is the energy of self-sufficiency, a survival instinct for being in the world.

This chakra has procreative energy that is both biological and spiritual: we desire to create children and also to bring our creative ideas into physical form, which is crucial to our physical health as to our spiritual.

The primary fears in this chakra are the loss of control, or being controlled by another, through the dominating power of events or conditions such as addiction, rape, betrayal, impotence, financial loss, abandonment by our primary partner or professional colleagues.

The primary strengths are the ability to survive financially and physically on one's own to defend and protect oneself; the 'fight or flight' instinct; the ability to take risks; the resilience to recover from loss whether of family members, partners, property, occupation, or finances; the power to rebel and re-establish a life; and personal and professional decision-making ability and talent.

The sacred truth inherent in the second chakra is 'Honour One Another'. This truth applies to our interactions with each other and with all forms of life. From a spiritual perspective every relationship we develop, from the most casual to the most intimate, serves the purpose of helping us to become more conscious. Some relationships are necessarily painful because learning about ourselves and facing our own limitations are not things we tend to do with enthusiasm. We often need to be spiritually 'set up' for such encounters.

Spiritual messengers bring into our lives-and we into theirs-revelations about our own strengths and weaknesses. From relationships within the home to those at work to community or political activity, no union is without spiritual value; each helps us grow as individuals. We can more easily see the symbolic value of our relationships when we release our compulsion to judge what and who has value and instead focus on honouring the person and the task with which we are involved.

The second chakra's energy has an inherent duality. The unified energy of the first chakra, represented by the tribal mind, becomes divided into polarities in the second chakra. The division of forces has been given many names: yin/yang, anima/animus, male/female, sun/moon. Understanding the significance of these opposites is the key to working with second chakra issues. The energies of the sefirah of Yesod and the sacrament of Communion combine with these dual energies of the second chakra to ensure that we "attract" to ourselves relationships that help us come to know ourselves. Well known expressions such as "Like attracts like" and "When the student is ready, the teacher will appear" acknowledge that an

energy working “behind the scenes” seems to organize when and where we meet people – and always at the right time. The spiritual challenge of this second chakra is to learn to interact consciously with others: to form unions with people who support our development and to release relationships that handicap our growth.

Physical science recognizes second chakra energy as the law of cause and effect (for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction) and the law of magnetism, these laws mean that we generate patterns of energy that attract people who are opposite us in some way, who have something to teach. Nothing is random; prior to every relationship we have ever formed, we opened the door with energy that we were generating.

The energy of the second chakra helps us evolve beyond the collective energy of the tribe. Choice is born out of opposites, and the duality of the second chakra is forever challenging us to make choice in a world of opposing sides, of positive and negative energy patterns. Every choice we make contributes a subtle current of our energy to our universe, which is responsive to the influence of human consciousness.

Managing the power of choice, with all its creative and spiritual implications, is *the essence of the human experience*. All spiritual teachings are directed toward inspiring us to recognize that the power to make choices is the dynamic that converts our spirits into matter, our words into flesh. Choice is the process our spirits of creation itself.

The fact that our choices weave our spirits into events is the reason the major spiritual traditions are formed around one essential lesson: Make your choices wisely, because each choice you make is a creative act of spiritual power for which you are held responsible. Further, any choice made from faith has the full power of heaven behind it – which is why ‘faith the size of a mustard seed can move a mountain.’ And any choice made from fear is a violation of the energy of faith.

Choice has a mysterious aspect, however, for we will never completely know the full outcome of any choice we make. A primal lesson of the second chakra is the paradoxical nature of choice: what seems right can turn out wrong; what appears good can end up bad. Just when everything is going smoothly, chaos breaks things up.

Paradoxically, while the energy of the second chakra inclines us to try to control our lives, the lesson of the second chakra is that we cannot be in control. We are physical beings and energy beings, but since the physical world cannot be controlled, the task before us is to master our inner responses to the external world, our thoughts and emotions.

Nevertheless, we all struggle in a seemingly never-ending cycle of disappointment in which we attempt to control our lives. We search endlessly for the one grand choice that will put everything in our lives into permanent order, halting the motion of change long enough to establish final control over everyone and everything. Is that choice the right career? The right marriage partner? The right geographic location? In seeking this one right choice constantly, we give form to our fear of the changing rhythm that is life itself. In looking for this single external person or thing that will forever bring us peace, stability, love, and health, we dismiss the more authentic power that lies “beyond our eyes and not in front of them.” The truth contained within the paradoxical nature of dualism is this: It is not *what* we choose that matters; our power to influence an outcome lies in our *reasons* for making a certain choice.

The challenger of the second chakra is to learn what motivates us to make the choices we do. In learning about our motivations, we learn about the content of our spirits. Are you

filled with fear, or are you filled with faith? Every choice we make contains the energy of either faith or fear, and the outcome of every decision reflects to some extent that faith or fear. This dynamic of choice guarantees that we cannot run away from ourselves or our decisions.

Choice and Relationships

Second chakra energy is extremely volatile because it seeks to create. It is also linked to the issues of physical survival: sex, power, and money, the currencies of relationships. As we set out to carve a place for ourselves in the physical world, our internal conflict between faith and fear is often buried underneath the survival issues that dominate our thoughts: Can I earn a living? Can I find a partner? Can I take care of myself?

The shadow side of second chakra issues consists of our most prevalent fears: rape, financial loss and poverty, abandonment, isolation, impotence and the inability to care for ourselves. Each of these fears has the power to control us and to direct our actions for an entire lifetime. In the language of the Scriptures, these fears qualify as “false gods.”

In order to learn about our motivations – to discover our personal “false gods” – we need relationships. To form a relationship, we use some of our energy or personal power. Once the relationship is formed, we may ask, often unconsciously: Is this relationship drawing power from me, or am I drawing power from it? Where do I end, and where does the other person begin? What is my power, and what is the other’s power? Am I compromising myself, in exchange for safety, or money, or status? While these questions are essentially healthy, in most relationships we begin thinking in terms of psychologically diverse and conflict-inducing opposites: me or you, mine or yours, good or bad, winner or loser, right or wrong, rich or poor.

Symbolically, these conflicts represent most people’s relationship to God: my power or Yours – are You really with me on this earth, or must I try to control everything myself? And even if a Divine power is manoeuvring behind the scenes, how do I know what choices to make? This primary conflict of faith is present in every one of our relationships.

Paradoxically, our challenge in managing these conflicting energies is to maintain them in the consciousness of the inherent oneness of the universe. We begin this journey by exploring conflict within relationships: Relationships generate conflict, conflict generates choice, choice generates movement, and movement generates more conflict. We break free of this cycle by making choices that transcend dualism and the perceived divisions between ourselves and others, and between ourselves and God. So long as we focus on trying to control another person and forget that that person is a mirror reflecting back to us our own qualities, we keep conflict alive within ourselves. Seeing ourselves and others in symbolic unions, however, helps us accommodate differences.

Personal Power

While creativity, sexuality, morality and money are all forms of second chakra energy or power, the desire for personal power also needs to be discussed. Power is a manifestation of the life-force. We require power in order to live, to thrive, to function. Illness, for example, is the natural companion of powerless people. Everything about our lives is, in fact, involved on our relationship to this energy called power.

At the level of the first chakra, we feel a sensation of power when we are with a group of people to whom we are bonded in some way, like an electrical current. The enthusiasm fo

sports fans or of participants in political rallies – uniting people behind the same team or cause – exemplifies this type of power. The quality of power in the second chakra, however, expresses this energy in physical forms, like materialism, authority, control, ownership. Sexual magnetism, sensuality, eroticism, and addiction. Every physically seductive form that power can take is energetically connected to the second chakra. And unlike the group nature or first chakra power, the second chakra has a one-on-one nature. Each of us as an individual needs to explore our relationship to physical power. We need to learn how and when we are controlled by external power and, if so, the type of power to which we are most vulnerable.

Power is the life-force, and we are born knowing this fact. From the time we are young, we test ourselves and our capacity to learn what and who has power, to attract power, and to use power. Through these childhood exercise we discover whether we have what it takes to draw power to ourselves. If we do, we begin to dream of what we would like to accomplish as adults. If we decide that we are unable to attract the life-force, however, we begin living in a type of ‘power debt.’ We imagine ourselves surviving only through the energies of other people, but not on our own.

For people who are confident of their ability to attract power, ordinary dreams can turn into power fantasies. In the worst of cases they may fill their minds with delusions of grandeur. Then the reasoning mind becomes eclipsed by a desire for power that stretches the parameters of acceptable behavior to include any and all means that fulfill this end. The appetite for power can become an addiction that challenges the will of God. The craving for power for power’s sake alone is the subject of numerous scriptures and myths of humans who are ultimately humbled by Divine design.

For all of us the challenge is not to become ‘power celibate’ but to achieve sufficient internal strength to interact comfortably with physical power without negotiating away our spirits. This is what it means to be ‘in the world but not of it.’ We are fascinated by people who are immune to the seductions of the physical world; they become our social and spiritual heroes.

Ethical Energy

The second chakra is the ethical center of the body. While laws are connected to the first chakra, personal ethics and morals reside in the second chakra. This spiritual energy influences us to have a strong personal code of ethics, drawing us into one-on-one relationships and alerting us intuitively to the dangers of betraying our honor code.

The second chakra organs ‘record’ all our interactions in which we ‘give our word’ to other people, make promises and commitments to them, or accept their promises. A strong code of ethics radiates a perceptible quality of energy. This part of our biology also records the promises we make to ourselves, such as New Year’s resolutions and other decisions to ‘repattern’ certain behaviors in our lives.

The physical order of which the first chakra is in charge makes us feel safe, and its laws make us feel that control exists within our environment. The ethics and morals of the second chakra provide us with a language through which we can communicate what we accept and don’t accept in human relationships. Ethics hold enormous bonding power: we seek out the company of those who hold the same sense of right and wrong as we do; when people deviate from their ethical or moral character, we often disqualify them as intimate companions. We

also want our God to be an orderly god, and we are forever trying to crack through the Divine code of right and wrong and reward and punishment, attempting to reason why ‘bad things happen to good people.’ We take comfort in believing that if human justice fails us, Divine justice will see that all receive their ‘just desserts.’

Summary of Chakra #2

Second chakra energy gives us our basic survival instincts and intuitions, as well as our desire to create music, art, poetry, and architecture, and the curiosity to investigate nature in science and medicine. Our creative energy draws us into an internal dialogue with the polarities of the self, our self, our conflicting inclinations, and it compels us to form external relationships to resolve these polarities. Choice is born out of opposites, and the duality of the second chakra is forever challenging us to make choices in a world of opposing sides, of positive and negative energy patterns. Every choice we make contributes to a subtle current of our energy to our universe, which is responsive to the influence of human consciousness.

This chakra is centered in the sexual organs and lower back region. While the power inherent in the first chakra is part of a tribal family, or group energy, the energy in the second focuses on your individual ability to manage the power of sexuality, money, influence or control over other people, competition, and self-defense. Chakras located near each other overlap somewhat in their focus, and these powerful second-chakra energies are all clearly related to survival, also a first-chakra and third-chakra concern. Our ability to make and handle money, our sexual orientation and attitudes around sex, and our relative level of personal power and ability to use it are all governed by agreements we have made regarding the second chakra.

On the level of physical perception, your second chakra automatically evaluates any situation according to how it affects your survival: Are you physically safe? Are there any financial implications? Is your power in this situation threatened by someone bigger, stronger, richer, sexier? A part of you instinctively assesses each moment of your life for its potential threat to your survival. Even if you enter a room full of loving friends and family, for example, your brain and body still scan the room and the energy around you for any impending physical dangers or negative attitudes. You also automatically scan for any threat to people you love. How often have you felt, on running into a friend or family member or thinking of someone, that you “knew” something was wrong, even though you could not identify it?

Through this energy center you are attached to your addictions, regardless of whether they are drugs, work, or other habits. Having to be first in line or needing to have the last word in a discussion or debate with someone is a form of addiction as surely as alcoholism or overeating. Addiction is the act of giving away your power to a substance that in turn controls you, a type of second-chakra tug-of-war. This is the “fight” or “flight” chakra that is another manifestation of your survival instinct. It is also the center of your body that thrives on creativity and your need to give birth, either literally or figuratively, to creative projects. But if birth is associated with this chakra, so is literal and figurative abortion. When creative projects or activities in which you are involved cannot be completed, their premature death represents and energy abortion. Given this perspective, men as well as women recognize that they have abortions.

The act of rape and the energy of vengeance are also products of the second chakra. In this sense, rape is a violation not only of one’s physical body but also of one’s emotional,

psychological, and creative life. Many people carry the scars of rape in the psyches, but because they have no association with rape as an energy crime, they are completely unaware of the source of their trauma, much less how to heal it.

You may have many Contracts with people that will come to light consciously when you evaluate your energy bond with them through issues related to this chakra. Because all second-chakra issues are somehow concerned with physical survival, this chakra reflects some of our deepest vulnerabilities.

Even when we get an insight that sheds a spiritual light on a painful situation, we may trouble coming to grips with old feelings of hurt, anger, and rejection. To free yourself of enmeshment in anger or old wounds, you have to climb the ladder back up through the chakras until you can view a painful experience symbolically and objectively. Healing can sometimes take practice, and this inner work of viewing your history symbolically is rarely completed overnight.

Making sense of Chakra #2 (case study):

Paul, forty-two, is an attorney who contacted me for a reading because, he said, the stress related to his job was getting to him. While doing his reading, I received impressions that toxic energy was trying to penetrate into his second chakra, as if someone or something was trying to control him. Then I realized that Paul suffered from chronic pain, from migraines to backaches to neck and shoulder pain.

When I shared my impressions with him, Paul verified them, saying that he had been in varying degrees of pain for the past ten years. He had tried therapy, but it hadn't helped. He popped pain pills like candy, which explained my impression that something was trying to control him: he was terrified of becoming addicted to his pain medication. The source of his pain, I pointed out to him, was his compulsion to want everything to go according to his plans. As a part of this control obsession, he had to win, no matter what he was doing, be it a matter of law, sports, card games, or even getting somewhere first. He was driven by the needs to control, and now that he was taking a pain medication, he was tormented by the possibility of becoming controlled by something. For Paul, such a development would mean losing his sense of honor. Paul believed that if he was dominated by something or someone, he was but inches away from compromising his integrity; this was his personal code of honor.

I suggested that since Paul was an attorney, he should draw up a contract with himself through which he would, step by step, reorder his life. He could make his controlling but honorable nature work with him by gradually changing his need to control outcomes. With each success, I told him, the energy generated by his success would be more likely to ease his pain. He loved the idea, no doubt because he could control the content of the contract. He said he would draw up the agreement immediately and fax me a copy, which he did – the next day.

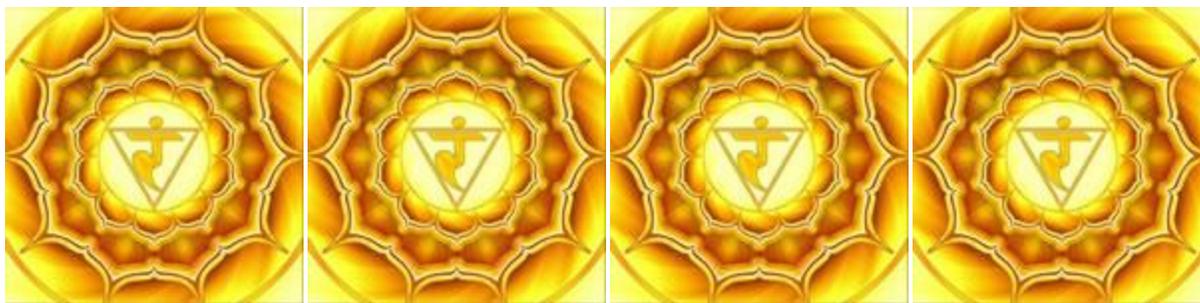
Three months later Paul sent me a note commenting that he had made progress with his healing ever since he put himself 'under contract' to heal. As a way of beating his need to win, he forbade himself to place bets on anything. He allowed his winning compulsion to continue only in legal matters, where it was appropriate. He had never realized, he said, that everyone who knew him interpreted his need to win as an 'obnoxiously competitive nature.' His

pain was healing, his migraines were becoming more infrequent, and his back pain was improving to the point that he could once again exercise.

Paul's story conveys the symbolic meaning of taking communion with oneself; that is agreeing with yourself to make yourself whole and balanced. So long as a dysfunction part of your nature negatively influences the rest of your system, your energy will be depleted, divided against itself. Paul was able to make a successful contract with himself and heal.

Questions for Self-Examination:

1. How do you define creativity? Do you consider yourself a creative person? Do you follow through on your creative ideas?
2. How often do you direct your creative energies into negative paths of expression? Do you exaggerate or embellish "facts" to support your point of view?
3. What goals do you have for yourself that you have yet to pursue? What stands in the way of your acting upon those goals?
4. Do you frequently judge and criticize yourself?
5. Do you judge others?
6. Are you a controlling person? Do you engage in power plays in your relationships? Are you able to see yourself clearly in circumstances related to power and money?
7. Does money have authority over you? Do you make compromises that violate your inner self for the sake of financial security?
8. What are your addictions?
9. Have you acknowledged and begun the process of embracing your addictions so these can be healed and transmuted into a more positive form?
10. Are you able to give and receive freely?
11. Are you comfortable with your sexuality? If not, are you able to work toward healing your sexual imbalances? Do you use people for sexual pleasure, or have you felt used? Are you strong enough to honor your sexual boundaries?
12. Do you negotiate your ethics depending upon your circumstances?
13. Do you have an impression of God as a force that exerts justice in your life?
14. How often do survival fears dictate your choices?
15. Are you strong enough to master your fears concerning finances and physical survival, or do they control you and your attitudes?
16. How strong are the soul fragments you have created that feed on guilt regarding others?
17. On guilt regarding your past actions?
18. On guilt regarding your performance (or having to be perfect?)
19. How do you feel about your body?
20. How do you feel about the opposite sex?
21. How do you feel about sex?
22. Do you have sexual issues that need to be resolved or healed?
23. Have you cultivated any over indulgent traits? Have you acknowledged and embraced your over indulgent traits so these can be healed and transmuted into a more positive form?



#3) Manipura (Area of consciousness for the mental body):

Name:	<i>Manipura</i> is derived from two Sanskrit words: <i>mani</i> meaning 'jewel' and <i>pura</i> meaning 'city'. Manipura literally means 'city of jewels'.
Beeja:	Ram
Relates to:	Personal power, individual expression in the earth, the ability to 'digest life', the fire element, the conscious (waking) mind, self-image, digestive organs, diaphragm, the breath, solar plexus
Emotional focus:	Fears, doubt, and other feelings affecting self-esteem
Spiritual concern:	Empowerment; psychic ability to perform clairvoyance or "clear sensing" or mental information
Endocrine Gland:	Pancreas
Physical organs:	Pancreatic system, all digestive organs in the stomach area, including the liver, spleen, gallbladder, stomach, pancreas and parts of kidney system; lumbar vertebrae and solar plexus
Issues with:	Trust, fear, intimidation, self esteem, self confidence, self respect, care if oneself and others, responsibility for making decisions, sensitivity to criticism, personal honor.
Sense:	Sight
Element:	Fire
Personality:	'I will'
Balanced Energy:	Outgoing, cheerful, self respect, respect for others, strong sense of personal power, have found your gift, able to digest life, able to digest food, skillful, intelligent, relaxed, spontaneous, expressive, take on new challenges, enjoy physical activity, enjoy good food
Excessive Energy:	Judgemental, workaholic, perfectionist, overly intellectual, demanding, resentful of authority, a need for drugs to relax, superiority complex
Deficient Energy:	Depressed, lack of confidence, worry about what others think, confused, feeling that others control your life, poor digestion, afraid of being alone, need constant reassurance, jealous, distrustful
Illnesses:	Arthritis, gastric ulcers, colon/intestinal problems, pancreatitis, diabetes, indigestion, chronic or acute, anorexia or bulimia, liver dysfunction, hepatitis, adrenal dysfunction.

Third chakra energy, the energy of personal power chakra, becomes the dominant vibration in our development during puberty. It assists us further in the process of individuation, of forming

a `self`, ego and personality separate from our inherited identity. This energy center also contains most issues related to the development of personal power and self-esteem.

The third chakra completes the physical trilogy of the human energy system. Like chakras one and two, it primarily relates to a physical form of power. Where the first chakra resonates to group or tribal power, and where the second chakra resonates to the flow of power between the self and others, the third chakra relates to our personal power in relation to the external world.

Energy Connection to the mental emotional body, often called the solar plexus, is our personal power center, the magnetic core of the personality and ego. The illnesses that originate here are activated by issues related to self-responsibility, self-esteem, fear of rejection, and an oversensitivity to criticism.

The third chakra mediates between the primary external (which is characteristic of the first and second chakras) and the internalization of consciousness. The first chakra has an external center of gravity and is always located within a group mind. The second chakra, too, has an external gravitational center but focuses on relationships and their effects on us. In the third chakra, however, the gravitational center is partly internalized, as our focus shifts from how we related to people around us to how we relate to and understand ourselves.

Primary fears: Fears of rejection, criticism, looking foolish, and failing to meet one`s responsibilities; all fears related to physical appearance, such as fear of obesity, baldness, or aging; fears that others will discover our secrets. The illnesses that originate here are activated by issues related to self-responsibility, self-esteem, fear of rejection, and an over sensitivity to criticism.

Primary strengths: Self-esteem, self-respect, and self-discipline; ambition, the ability to generate action, and the ability to handle a crisis; the courage to take risks; generosity, ethics, and strength of character.

The energies that come together in this chakra have but one spiritual goal: to help us mature in our self-understanding – the relationship we have with ourselves, and how we stand on our own and take care of ourselves. We all have faced or will face an experience that reveals to us our own internal strengths and weaknesses as separate from the influence of our elders. The spiritual quality inherent in the third chakra compels us to create an identity apart from our tribal self. As we develop a sense of self, our intuitive voice becomes our natural and constant source of guidance.

Developing Self-Esteem

How we feel about ourselves, whether we respect ourselves, determines the quality of our life, our capacity to succeed in business, relationships, healing, and intuitive skills. Self-understanding and acceptance, the bond we form with ourselves, is in many ways the most crucial spiritual challenge we face. In truth, if we do not like ourselves, we will be incapable of making healthy decisions. Instead, we will direct all of our personal power for decision-making into the hands of someone else: someone whom we want to impress, or someone before whom we think we must weaken ourselves to gain physical security. People who have a low sense of self-esteem attract relationships and occupational situations that reflect and reinforce this weakness. No one is born with healthy self-esteem. We must earn this quality in the process of living, as we face our challenges one at a time.

The third chakra in particular resonates to the boundaries of the physical body. Are we physically strong or weak? Able or handicapped? Beautiful or scarred? Too tall or too short? From a spiritual perspective, any and all physical assets and limitations are illusory, mere 'life props'. Yet a person's acceptance of or resistance to them is critical to entering spiritual adulthood. From a spiritual perspective, in fact, the entire physical world is nothing more than our classroom, but the challenge to each of us in this classroom is: Given your particular body, environment, and beliefs, will you make choices that enhance your spirit or those that drain your power into the physical illusion around you? Again and again, the challenges of the third chakra will cause you to evaluate your sense of power and self in relation to the external world.

Enhancing Inner Power

We reorder our lives when we choose spirit over the illusions of the physical circumstances. With each choice we make, we either become more involved in the illusory physical world, or we invest energy into the power of spirit. Each of the seven chakras represents a different version, or manifestation, of this one essential lesson. Each time we choose to enhance our internal power, we limit the authority of the physical world over our lives, bodies, health, minds and spirits. From an energy point of view, every choice that enhances our spirits strengthens our energy field; and the stronger our energy field, the fewer our connections to negative people and experiences.

The stronger our spirits become, the less authority *linear time* can exercise in our lives. To some extent linear time is an illusion of the physical world, tied in to the physical energy of the first three chakras. For physical tasks, we need this physical energy; for example, when we need to take an inspiration from thought to form, we run it through linear steps. But in terms of our belief in our ability to heal, our concept of time should be re-examined.

The illusion that healing takes a "long time" holds considerable authority in our culture. Believing it makes it true. In the Book of Genesis, Yahweh "breathed into his nostrils a breath of life, and thus man was born." By choosing to believe something, we breathe our breath into that belief, giving that belief authority.

Our culture believes that healing painful childhood memories requires years of psychotherapy, but that need not be the case. If one believes it, healing painful memories and releasing the authority they have within one's life can happen rapidly.

The length of healing processes becomes calibrated to the time that the tribal mind attributes to them. For instance, the group mind currently believes that certain cancers take six months to kill us, that people with AIDS can live for six to eight years, that grieving a mate's death requires at least one year, and that grieving a child's death may never end. If we believe these assessments, we give the tribal mind power over our lives instead of exercising our personal power. If your spirit is strong enough to withdraw from the authority of a group belief, it is potentially strong enough to change your life.

Self-Esteem and Intuition

Intuition is neither the ability to engage prophesy nor a means of avoiding financial loss or painful relationships. It is actually the ability to use energy data to make decisions *in the immediate moment*. Energy data are the emotional, psychological, and spiritual components of a given situation. They are the "here and now" ingredients of life, not nonphysical information

from some “future” place. For the most part information that is accessible to intuition makes its presence known by making us feel uncomfortable, depressed, and anxious – or at the other extreme, drifty and detached, as if we were suddenly cut off from all of our own feelings. In dreams of an intuitive nature, we receive symbols of change or chaos. Such dreams often occur more intensely during emotional crises. Energy or intuitive sensations signal that we have reached a crossroads in our lives and that we have an opportunity to influence the next stage of our lives, at least to some degree, through the choice we make now. The intuition and the independence of the third chakra together give us the capacity to take risks, to follow through on gut hunches.

If a person suffers from low self-esteem, he/she cannot act on her intuitive impulses because her fear of failure is too intense. Intuition, like all meditative disciplines, can be enormously effective *if, and only if*, one has the courage and personal power to follow through on the guidance it provides. Guidance requires action, but it does not guarantee safety. While we measure our own success in terms of our personal comfort and security, the universe measures our success by how much we have learned. So long as we use comfort and security as our criteria for success, we will fear our own intuitive guidance because by its very nature it directs us into new cycles of learning that are sometimes uncomfortable.

An empowered sense of self can also develop in stages, over the course of our of our lives, in a series of mini-initiations. Every time we advance in self-esteem, even in a small measure, we have to change something about our external dynamics. For the most part we abhor change, but an initiation represents the necessity to change. We may end a relationship because we have become sufficiently empowered that we need a stronger partner. Or we may quit a job because we need to break out of our safe and familiar patterns and test-fly our own creativity. Too much change that happens too rapidly can be overwhelming, so we try to manage our own empowerment by taking on only one challenge at a time. As we do, one by one, the changes we undergo form a pattern in our journey toward personal power. As we gain strength and stamina from living with self-esteem, our intuitive abilities emerge naturally.

The Four Stages of Personal Power

We have to work to discover ourselves, to understand why we keep secrets, or have addictions, or blame others for our own errors. We must work to understand why we find it difficult to receive or give a compliment, or whether we carry shame within us. We need to become comfortable with taking pride in our character and accomplishments. We need to learn the parameters of our character, how much of ourselves we will compromise, and where we draw the line – or even if we draw the line. Creating an identity for ourselves is based upon self-discovery and not upon biological and ethnic inheritance.

Stage One: Revolution

Developing self-esteem requires an act of revolution, or several mini-revolutions, in which we begin to separate from group thought and establish our own sense of authority. We may suddenly realize we hold an opinion different from our family or our peers, but in either case we will have difficulty freeing ourselves from the group’s energy, whose strength depends upon numbers and opposition to most expressions of individuality.

The act of finding our own voice, even in mini-revolutions, is spiritually significant. Spiritual maturity is measured not by the sophistication of a person's opinions, but by their genuineness and the courage necessary to express and main them. By courage, I do not mean the intractable stubbornness of two people locking horns; that dynamic is a second chakra power play. Spiritual maturity, in contrast, is the capacity to stand one's ground as a reflection of a genuine inner belief.

Stage Two: Involution

Every new encounter or pursuit we have to ask our inner self, 'What else do I believe? What else do I think? I want to know myself better. This is a request for information.' In every new situation, information pours into our gut. We get feelings about new people and new circumstances. In this phase, involution, we assess our external world and how well it is serving our needs. Often, this self examination leads us to want to focus on our relationship with God and our life's purpose, but we first need to develop a level of internal stamina that gives us the strength to handle the consequences of self examining thought. During my workshops people have admitted to me that when I ask them certain self-reflective questions, they prefer to 'zone out' because they don't want to know themselves that well. Or they may say, 'I don't know. I've never thought about that,' to which I respond, 'Well, think about it now.' Why is this response so common? Because self-knowledge promotes choice and action, and many people feel unready for either.

Stage Three: Narcissism

Although it has a bad rap, narcissism is sometimes an extremely necessary energy for us as we work to develop a strong sense of self. Giving ourselves a new image – a new hairstyle, new clothes, perhaps even a new body shape from personal training – indicates that changes are also occurring within us. While we are in this vulnerable stage, we may get major reactions from our tribal or group associates, but narcissistic energy gives us the backbone to re-create ourselves and our boundaries in the face of opposition. The changes in this stage prepare us for the more significant internal changes to follow.

Stage Four: Evolution

The last stage in developing self-esteem is an internal one. People who can maintain their principles, their dignity and their faith without compromising any energy from their spirit are internally evolved: people such as Gandhi, Mother Teresa, and Nelson Mandela. The world is filled with people of much lesser reputations who have accomplished this level of self-esteem, of course, but these three people's spirits took charge of their physical environments – and the environments changed to accommodate the power of their spirits.

All three of these people were, incidentally, thought to be narcissistic during some stage of their development. Mother Teresa, for example, was almost forced to leave two religious communities in her early days because her vision of service to the poor was much more intense than her sisters could abide. During that time she was thought to be self-absorbed and narcissistic. She had to go through a period of deep spiritual reflection, and when the time was right, she acted on her intuitive guidance. Like Gandhi and Mandela, she entered into a stage of evolution in which personality became persona – and archetypal force

from which millions of people could draw inspiration. As your own spirit takes command, the world will also yield to its force.

Challenges of the Journey

There is nothing simple about developing self-understanding, independence, and self-respect, even though the journey consists of only four stages. The third chakra is filled with the energy of our personal ambitions, our sense of responsibility, and our respect for our strengths and weaknesses, as well as our fears and secrets that we are not yet ready to face. Because we are often riven with personal conflicts, we meet the spiritual challenge to ‘becoming empty in order to be made full,’ to die to old habits and self-images in order to be reborn, with great trepidation. Yet the path to developing independence and maturity is far more than a psychological act of health. Becoming adept at the internal process of self-inquiry and symbolic insight is a vital spiritual task that leads to the growth of faith in oneself.

Summary of Chakra #3:

We are all on a pilgrimage of sorts, through it is certainly not necessary to travel physically to sacred places and conduct ceremonies to release our past. It is necessary, however, to travel spiritually and to shed the fears that block us from recognizing the beauty in our lives, and to come to a place of healing and self-acceptance. We can take this type of journey daily in the privacy of our own prayers and meditation.

All of your interactions with people begin via your third chakra. I once overheard someone say that the greatest curse of the human experience is low self-esteem, and I could not agree more. The insecurities that arise from a lack of self-esteem generate an almost disabling degree of vulnerability. You are unable to “hold your center” or withstand criticism; you have trouble expressing your opinions and needs and drawing your boundaries of self-protection; you don’t trust your intuition. Without self-esteem we lack the courage to carve our place in the world and may end up being controlled by other people.

Your third chakra is, in effect, your loudest voice, and it is also your intuitive guide – hence the term ‘gut’ instinct. According to your third chakra’s initial impression, your other chakras either shut down, send warning signals, or open up to welcome the person into your energy field. For although your five senses provide your mind with the lay of the external land, the sensory system of the third chakra conveys the “feeling” of the land, from sensing what could be hiding behind the bushes to feeling an atmosphere pregnant with potential and opportunities.

The third chakra is also the place where you define your sense of integrity and your personal code of honour. The fifth chakra regulates the choices you make in expressing and living up to your honour code, but the third is the center where that code is first formed. The more fully your third-chakra values are developed throughout your life, the more positively they will be expressed by your fifth-chakra choices. This energy center resonates with your integrity, personal pride, and dignity, which are the positive aspects of the ego. Shame, loss of face, and a lack of personal identity are the power crises of this chakra. An honor code is essential for you to maintain a healthy spirit and body. Compromising your values of lacking a spiritual backbone puts you at physical and spiritual risk.

On the material plane your third chakra lets you know “where you stand” in a given situation. Its energy directs you to the location in any physical setting that is most advantageous to your sense of self esteem, how you will project yourself to other people. In a social gathering, for instance, this chakra’s energy might direct you to stand against a wall, sit in a chair in the corner, or position yourself in the middle of the room and move from one group of people to another. At a business meeting the third chakra is continuously sending you messages about where best to sit and where to address your attention.

Making sense of Chakra #3 (case study):

Chuck came from a very traditional Eastern European family. The influence of his family was strong in every way – social attitudes and religious values. The children were expected to grow up to be like their parents. Chuck was the outsider in his family: he disliked sports and beer parties and was attracted to liberal ideas and friends. By the time he was in high school, he was already leading a double life, keeping his interests and friends separate from his home life. By the end of high school, he knew that he was gay, which intensified his need for his double life since he knew his family would not be able to cope with his homosexuality. Chuck left home to travel abroad and teach in other cultures; he mastered numerous languages.

By the time he finally resettled in his hometown, he had received a number of academic honors, yet he was continually depressed. When I met him, he clearly needed to stop his external travels and venture into himself. We spoke of his life in symbolic terms, recognizing that his real motivation for living abroad was that he had been uncomfortable as the outsider in his family. He desperately wanted to be accepted by them, yet he knew that he had yet to accept himself. He still could not live openly as a gay man, which concerned him because, as he said, “I don’t consider that I have accepted being gay if the only people who know are my gay friends. My biggest fear is that if I explore my feelings, I’ll find the bottom line is that I genuinely can’t accept myself. They what do I do?”

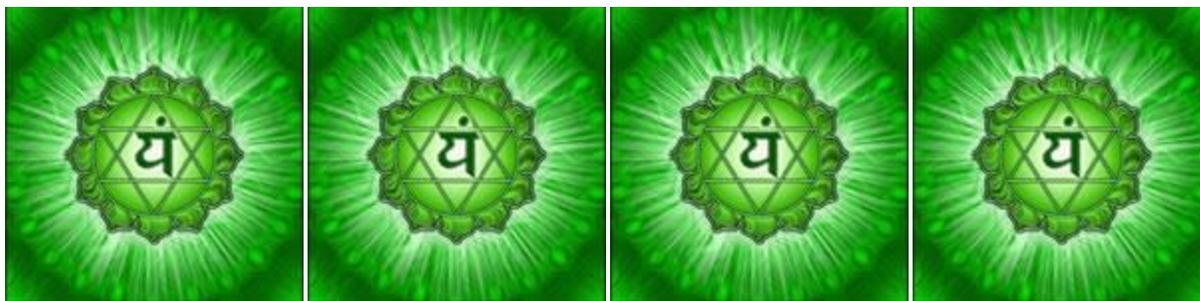
Chuck was devoted to studies in mysticism and maintained a spiritual practice that included prayer, meditation, and worship in church. I suggested that he make a pilgrimage to the spiritual places about which he loved to read, and direct his spiritual intention toward accepting himself. He quoted a friend who had told him, “Pilgrimage is extroverted mysticism, just as mysticism in introverted pilgrimage.”

The next summer Chuck left for Europe to visit Fatima, Lourdes, and several other places that represented the sacred to him. At each place he performed a spiritual ceremony, releasing a painful part of his past and asking for the ability to accept himself fully. By the time he returned home, Chuck was changed. He was free and ‘alive’ in the way we are all meant to be. He had shed his shadow and seemed to radiate light. One of the first things he did on his return was to have his family over and tell them he was gay. He was prepared for any reaction from them, but much to his delight they accepted his news. Chuck’s spiritual journey had gained him independence from his past and his fears of tomorrow, and a deep faith in himself.

Questions for Self-Examination:

1. Do you like yourself? If not, what don’t you like about yourself, and why? Are you actively working to change the things about yourself that you don’t like?
2. Are you honest? Do you sometimes misrepresent the truth? If so, why?

3. Are you critical of others? Do you need to blame others as a way of protecting yourself?
4. Are you able to admit it when you are wrong? Are you open to feedback from other people about yourself?
5. Do you need the approval of others? If so, why?
6. Can you calmly state your truth when challenged by someone?
7. Have you ever allowed yourself to be in a relationship with a person you didn't love, but it seemed better than being alone?
8. Do you respect yourself? Can you decide to make changes in your lifestyle and then stick to your commitment?
9. Am I ready to end relationships with people that I have 'outgrown' or try to move them to a higher level?
10. Can I love and bless others while allowing them to follow their own path, as I choose to follow mine.
11. Are you afraid of responsibility? Or do you feel responsible for everything and everyone?
12. Are you continually wishing your life were different? If so, are you doing anything to change it, or have you resigned yourself to your situation?
13. Are you becoming more aware when you are being bombarded by emotional energy being dumped into your auric field by another?
14. Are you learning to set firm boundaries and conditions in a respectful and compassionate way?
15. Can you handle power situations by not reacting in an ego-centric way?
16. Do you examine your closest relationships to determine who is siphoning off your emotional energy? Name several.
17. Are you dependent on the energy of another?
18. Do you set guidelines for your children appropriate for their ages?
19. Do you teach by example rather than by setting rules to be blindly followed?
20. Do you treat your children the same way your parents treated you by saying the same things and using the same methods? Name several instances. How did each of these make you feel?
21. Have you reacted to the emotional needs of others rather than by fulfilling your own needs in an assertive, yet loving way?
22. Can you calmly state your truth when challenged by someone?



#4) Anahata (Area of consciousness for the astral body):

Name:	Sanskrit <i>anahata</i> actually means 'unstruck' or 'unbeaten'
Beeja:	Yam
Relates to:	Transition, the bridge between the physical and the spiritual, change, healing, the heart – the centre of all physical and spiritual life, the lungs, circulatory system, ribs, breasts, shoulders, arms, hands, diaphragm, the immune system, selfless love
Emotional focus:	Emotions in relationship; all feelings related to love, such as gratitude
Spiritual concern:	Connection to the Divine
Gland:	Thymus and lymph
Physical organs:	Heart, lungs, circulatory and oxygenated systems, breasts, lumbar, thoracic vertebrae, cardiac nerve plexus
Issues with:	Love, hatred, resentment, bitterness, grief, anger, self-centeredness, loneliness, commitment, forgiveness, compassion, hope and trust.
Sense:	Touch
Element:	Air
Personality:	'I give and receive love'
Balanced Energy:	Physically and emotionally balanced, quality of nurturing, compassion, empathy, friendliness, active in the community, discriminating mind, humanitarian, able to see good on others, able to surrender in a love relationship, healthy use of will power
Excessive Energy:	Demanding, overly critical, possessive, moody, martyr complex, loves conditionally, withholds love or generosity, melodramatic, manic-depressive, hyper-tension (especially tension between shoulder blades
Deficient Energy:	Paranoid, indecisive, fear of letting go, fear of being hurt, fear of being free, fear of being abandoned, feelings of unworthiness in love, needing constant reassurance
Illnesses:	Congestive heart failure, myocardial infarction (heart attack), mitral valve prolapse, cardiomegaly, asthma/allergy, lung cancer, bronchial pneumonia, upper back, shoulder pain and breast cancer.

The fourth chakra is the central powerhouse of the human energy system. The middle chakra, it mediates between the body and spirit and determines their health and strength. Fourth chakra energy is emotional in nature and helps propel our emotional development. This chakra embodies the spiritual lesson that teaches us how to act out of love and compassion and recognize that most powerful energy we have is love.

Energy Connection: This chakra resonates to our emotional perceptions, which determine the quality of our lives far more than our mental perceptions. As children, we react to our circumstances with a range of emotions: love, compassion, confidence, hope, despair, hate, envy and fear. As adults, we are challenged to generate within ourselves an emotional climate and steadiness from which to act consciously and with compassion.

Symbolic Connection: More than any other chakra, the fourth represents our capacity to “let go and let God.” With its energy we accept our personal emotional challenges as extensions of a Divine plan, which has as its intent our conscious evolution. By releasing our emotional pain, by letting go of our need to know why things have happened as they have, we reach a state of tranquillity. In order to achieve that inner peace, however, we have to embrace the healing energy of forgiveness and release our lesser need for human, self-determined justice.

The challenge inherent in this chakra is similar to that of the third but is more spiritually sophisticated. While the third chakra’s focus is on our feelings about ourselves in relation to our physical world, the fourth chakra focuses on our feelings about our internal world – our emotional response to our thoughts, ideas, attitudes, and inspirations, as well as the attention we give to our emotional needs. This level of commitment is the essential factor in forming healthy relationships with others.

Primary fears: Fears of loneliness, commitment, and “following one’s heart”; fear of inability to protect oneself emotionally; fear of emotional weakness and betrayal. Loss of fourth chakra energy can give rise to jealousy; bitterness, anger, hatred, and an inability to forgive others as well as oneself.

Primary strengths: Love, forgiveness, compassion, dedication, inspiration, hope, trust, and the ability to heal oneself and others.

Learning the Power of Love

Because love has such power, we come to know this energy in stages. Each stage presents a lesson in love’s intensity and forms: forgiveness, compassion, generosity, kindness, caring for oneself and others. The stages follow the design of our chakras: we begin learning love within our tribe, absorbing the many expressions of its energy from our family members. Tribal love can be unconditional, but it generally communicates the expectation of loyalty and tribal support; in the tribal setting, love is an energy that is shared among one’s own kind.

As the second chakra awakens and we learn the bonds of friendship, love grows to include “outsiders.” We express love through sharing with and caring for others to whom we are not connected through blood. And as our third chakra awakens, we discover love of external things, of our personal, physical, and material needs, which may include athletics, academics, fashion, dating and mating, occupation and home, and body.

All three of these lower chakras involve love in the external world. At some time in our civilization, these three practices of love were all that life required. Very few people needed more than tribal and partnership love. With the advent of psychotherapy and the spiritual movement, however, love became recognized as a force that influences and perhaps determines biological activity. Love helps us heal others and ourselves.

Life crises that have issues of love at their core – divorce, death of a loved one, emotional abuse, abandonment, adultery – are often the cause of an illness and not just an event that coincidentally precedes it. Physical healing often requires, and may demand, the healing of emotional issues.

Loving Oneself as the Path to the Divine

The expression “If you can’t love yourself, you can’t love anyone else” is commonplace. Yet for many people loving oneself remains a vague notion, which we often act out in material ways – through shopping sprees and outrageous vacations. But rewarding oneself with trips and toys is third chakra love – using physical pleasure to express self-appreciation. While this type of reward is enjoyable, it can obstruct our contact with the deeper emotional stirrings of the heart that emerge when we need to evaluate a relationship, or a job, or some other troubled circumstance that affects our health. Loving oneself as a fourth chakra challenge means having the courage to listen to the heart’s emotional messages and spiritual directives. The archetype to which the heart most frequently guides us for healing is that of the “wounded child.”

The “wounded child” within each of us contains the damaged or stunted emotional patterns of our youth, patterns of painful memories, of negative attitudes, and of dysfunctional self-images. Unknowingly, we may continue to operate within these patterns as adults, albeit in a new form. Fear of abandonment, for example, becomes jealousy. Sexual abuse becomes dysfunctional sexuality, often causing a repetition of the same violations with our own children. A child’s negative self-image can later become the source of dysfunctions such as anorexia, obesity, alcoholism, and other addictions as well as obsessive fear of failure. These patterns can damage our emotional relationships, our personal and professional lives, and our health. Loving oneself begins with confronting this archetypal force within the psyche and unseating the wounded child’s authority over us. If unhealed, wounds keep us living in the past.

Healing is possible through acts of forgiveness. In the life and teachings of Jesus, forgiveness is a spiritual act of perfection, but it is also a physically healing act. Forgiveness is no longer merely an option but a necessity for healing. Jesus always first healed his patients’ emotional sufferings; the physical healing then followed naturally. While Jesus’ healings have been interpreted by many theologians and Sunday school teachers as a Divine reward for those who confess of misbehaviour, forgiveness is an essential spiritual act that must occur in order to open oneself fully to the healing power of love. Self-love means caring for ourselves enough to forgive people in our past so that the wounds can no longer damage us – for our wounds do not hurt the people who hurt us, they hurt only us. Releasing our attachment to these wounds enables us to move from the childlike relationship with the Divine of the first three chakras into one in which we participate with the Divine in acting out of the love and compassion of the fourth chakra.

The fourth chakra energies propel us further into spiritual maturity, beyond a parent-child dialogue with the Divine, beyond praying for explanations for events, beyond fearing the unexpected. The wounded child sees the Divine as operating a reward and punishment system, with humanly logical explanations for all painful experiences. The wounded child does not understand that within all experiences, no matter how painful, lie spiritual insights. So long as we think like a wounded child, we will love conditionally and with great fear of loss.

Our culture as a whole is evolving toward healing from its emphasis on wounds and victimization. Having entered into the power of our wounds, however, it is difficult to see how we let go of this negative power and move ahead to become “unwounded” and self-empowered. Ours is a “fourth chakra culture” that has not yet moved out of our wounds and into spiritual adulthood.

The Path to the Empowered Heart

Step 1: Commit yourself to healing all the way to the source of the pain. This means turning inward and coming to know your wounds.

Step 2: Once inside, identify your wounds. Have they become a form of ‘wound-power’ within your present life? If you have converted your wounds into power, confront why you might fear healing. As you identify your wounds, have someone ‘witness’ them and their influence upon your development. You need at least one person, a therapist or a friend perhaps, who is capable of working with you in this way.

Step 3: Once you have verbalized your wounds, observe how you use them to influence or even control the people around you as well as yourself. Do you ever say you are not feeling well because of them in order to cancel an appointment, for instance, when in fact you are feeling fine? Do you ever control another person by saying that his or her actions remind you of your parents? Do you ever give yourself permission to quit something, or not try at all, by dwelling on your past and therefore encouraging depression? Are you afraid that in healing yourself you will lose your intimate connections to certain people in your life? Are you afraid choosing to heal yourself will require you to leave behind some or much of your family life? These are questions you need to address honestly, because they are the most significant cluster of reasons that people fear becoming healthy.

As you observe yourself throughout the day, note carefully your choice of vocabulary, your use of therapeutic language, your fluency in woundology. Then formulate new patterns of interaction with others that do not rely upon wound power. Change your vocabulary, including how you talk to yourself. Should changing these patterns prove difficult, recognize that it is often far more difficult to release the power you derive from your wound than it is to release the memory of the painful experience. A person who cannot let go of wound power is a wound addict, and like all addictions, wound addiction is not easy to break. Don’t be afraid to seek therapeutic help in getting through this step, or any of the others.

Step 4: Identify the good that can and has come from your wounds. Start living within the consciousness of appreciation and gratitude, and if you have to – “fake it until you make it.” Initiate a spiritual practice, and stick to it. Do not be casual about your spiritual discipline.

Step 5: Once you have established a consciousness of appreciation, you can take on the challenge of forgiveness. As appealing as forgiveness is in theory, it is an extremely unattractive personal action for most people, mainly because the true nature of forgiveness remains misunderstood. Forgiveness is not the same as telling the person who harmed you, “Its okay,” which is more or less the way most people view it. Rather, forgiveness is a complex act of consciousness, one that liberates the psyche and soul from the need for personal vengeance and the perception of oneself as a victim. More than releasing from blame the people who caused our wounds, forgiveness means releasing the control that the perception of victimhood has over our psyches. The liberation that forgiveness generates comes in the transition to a

higher state of consciousness – not just in theory, but energetically and biologically. In fact, the consequence of a genuine act of forgiveness borders on the miraculous. It may, in my view, contain the energy that generates miracles themselves.

Evaluate what you need to do in order to forgive others – and yourself, if necessary. Should you need to contact anyone for a closure discussion, make sure that you are not carrying the message of blame as a private agenda. If you are, you are not genuinely ready to let go and move on. Should you need to share your closure thoughts in a letter to the person, do so, but again, make sure intention is to retrieve your spirit from yesterday, not to send yet another message of anger.

Finally, create an official ceremony for yourself in which you call your spirit back from your past and release the negative influence of all your wounds. Whether you prefer a ritual or a private prayer service, enact your message of forgiveness in an “official” way in order to establish a new beginning.

Step 6: Think love. Live in appreciation and gratitude. Invite change into your life, if only through your attitude. And remind yourself continually of the message of all spiritual masters worth their salt: keep your spirit in the present time. In the language of Jesus, “Leave the dead and get on with your life.” And as Buddha taught, “There is only now.”

The curious thing about healing is that depending upon who you talk to, you can come to believe either that nothing is easier or that nothing is more complicated.

The fourth chakra is the center of the human energy system. Everything in and about our lives runs off the fuel of our hearts. We will all have experiences meant to “break our hearts” – not in half but wide open. Regardless of how your heart is broken, your choice is always the same: What will you do with your pain? Will you use it as an excuse to give fear more authority of the physical world over you through an act of forgiveness? The question contained within the fourth chakra will be presented to you again and again in your life, until the answer you give becomes your own liberation.

The subtle energies of this chakra continually direct us to discover and love ourselves. This love is the essential key to finding the happiness that we are convinced lies outside of ourselves but the spiritual texts remind us is only found within. Too many people are frightened of knowing themselves, convinced that self-knowledge would mean living alone, without their current friends and partners. While the short-term effect of self-knowledge may well cause changes, its long-term developments – fueled by consciousness, not fear – will be more fulfilling. It makes no sense to seek to become intuitively conscious, then work to keep that consciousness from upsetting our lives. The only path toward spiritual consciousness is through the heart. That truth is not negotiable, no matter what spiritual tradition one chooses as a means to know the Divine.

Summary of Chakra #4

The fourth chakra is the heart center of the body. As the keeper of wisdom and the power of forgiveness and release, this chakra rules the process of transformation. The heart center regulates all issues related to emotions, from love, compassion, generosity, and empathy to hatred, jealousy and malice. The heart chakra also governs the spiritual challenges of forgiveness of others and of oneself. The power of this energy center animates the life that

surrounds you, lending all activities and exchanges personal texture and significance. And although each of your chakras serves the whole of your energy field, the fourth is the most vital of all, because love, passion, envy, generosity, compassion, and all the emotions connected to your fears and other strengths reside here. Where your heart is, there is your power. Without this energy nothing in your life can manifest or flourish, from your romantic relationships to your artistic creativity.

Your fourth chakra perceptions also automatically assess your emotional response to a physical setting or relationship. Do you feel love or anger toward someone in your vicinity? Does someone appeal to you emotionally? You may not even be consciously aware of the chakra's assessments, but it passes them on energetically to your fifth chakra to determine how you will communicate your responses to those around you.

Making sense of Chakra #4 (case study):

I met Perry, a physician, in one of my workshops. Perry had an enormous practice, which generated the typical level of professional and personal stress. When the medical community became flooded with information on alternative theories and practices, Perry read bites and pieces but continued prescribing conventional treatments for his patients because he did not know enough about alternative treatments to recommend them.

About five years ago Perry decided to attend a seminar on alternative therapies. He was remarkably impressed not only by the scientific validity of the material presented, but by the case studies his colleagues discussed. Immediately upon returning to work, he viewed all his patients differently, and began to ask them about their personal problems during the course of regular exams. Perry read books on holistic health and attended more lectures and seminars on the topic he found most interesting, the emotional component of disease. Little by little, Perry lost faith in conventional treatments. He wanted to discuss his feelings with his colleagues, but they did not share his interest. He reached a point where he no longer felt confident enough to recommend simply that a patient seek other treatments. Eventually, he dreaded going to his office so much that he actually considered leaving the practice of medicine.

The one day, while preparing to meet with a new patient, Perry, at fifty-two, suffered a heart attack at his desk. During his recovery he asked to meet with both a psychotherapist and a spiritual advisor. He received counseling for several months and then took a leave of absence from his practice, during which time he studied alternative care. Eventually, he created a treatment center where the emotional, psychological, and spiritual needs of patients could be attended to along with physical needs.

"I suffered a very severe heart attack," said Perry. "I will always believe that I regained my health because I entered therapy and therefore entered into myself. I never realized that I was heartsick because of my medical practice until my heart literally became sick. What could be more obvious? For my own sake, I need to treat my patients with the care and awareness I now realize they need. I also need to care for myself differently, so I no longer keep the hours I once did in my practice. Now I make care of myself a priority. My entire life is healthier because I became ill and decided to believe that my heart attack was far more significant than merely developing an electrical problem in my coronary system.

Questions for Self-Examination:

1. What emotional memories do you still need to heal?
2. What relationships in your life require healing?
3. Do you ever use your emotional wounds to control people or situations? If so, describe them.
4. Have you ever allowed yourself to be controlled by the wounds of another person? What are your feelings about letting that happen again? What steps are you prepared to take to prevent yourself from being controlled that way again?
5. What fears do you have about becoming emotionally healthy?
6. Do you associate emotional health with no longer needing an intimate relationship?
7. What is your understanding of forgiveness?
8. Who are the people you have yet to forgive, and what prevents you from letting go of the pain you associate with them?
9. What have you done that needs forgiving? Which people are working to forgive you?
10. What is your understanding of a healthy, intimate relationship? Are you willing to release the use of your wounds in order to open yourself to such a relationship?
11. Are you growing more aware of the heart centered emotions you feel?
12. Can you truthfully say that you are beginning to listen to your 'angel heart' which radiates love and acceptance to you and those around you?
13. which radiates love and acceptance to you and those around you?
14. Do you prevent others from learning their lessons when encountering their difficulties by giving too much kindness – by doing it for them?
15. Can you allow others to return kindness to you by accepting both giving and receiving in a gracious and balanced way?
16. Have you experienced feelings of unworthiness or of not being loved?
17. Have you tried following the patterns of these feelings back to a source point?
18. What did you discover?
19. Are there people in your life you need to forgive? Name them.
20. Are there things or events that occasionally bother you and that you feel you should be forgiven for? List these.

**#5) Vishuddhi (Area of consciousness for the etheric body):**

- Name:** Sanskrit *shuddhi* means 'to purify', known as the 'purification centre'
- Beeja:** Ham
- Relates to:** Communication, speaking, perception, listening, ears, throat, thyroid, trachea, esophagus, parathyroid, hypothalamus, neck vertebrae, mouth,

	jaw, teeth, nerves, muscles, musical or artistic expression, desire for spiritual development
Emotional focus:	Expression of all emotions, especially in relation to self-responsibility
Spiritual concern:	Sharing divine guidance; psychic ability of clairaudience or “clear hearing”
Gland:	Thyroid
Physical organ:	Thyroid and parathyroid glands, larynx and laryngeal nerve plexus, mouth and auditory systems, mouth, throat, ears, lymph and lymphatic system, thoracic vertebrae
Issues with:	Choice, strength of will, personal expression, following one’s dream, using personal power to create, addiction, judgement and criticism, faith and knowledge, capacity to make decisions.
Sense:	Hearing
Element:	Ether
Personality:	‘I have power to communicate’
Balanced Energy:	Contentment, centered in the present, good sense of timing (can be a good speaker), awareness of time, pleasant voice, good communicator, musically or artistically inspired, expressive and prolific, understanding of spiritual concepts, ability to meditate or experience Divine Energy, sexual energy is used efficiently or may be channelled artistically
Excessive Energy:	Self righteous, overly talkative, dogmatic or overly religious, addictive tendencies, dominating – sexually and otherwise
Deficient Energy:	Timid, overly quiet, inconsistent, unreliable, loses track of time, devious, inability to express well, conflicts between sex and religion, nervous.
Illnesses:	Raspy throat, chronic sore throat, mouth ulcers, gum problems, temporomandibular joint problems, scoliosis, laryngitis, swollen glands, thyroid problems.

The fifth chakra embodies the challenges of surrendering our own will power and spirits to the will of God. From a spiritual perspective, our highest goal is the full release of our personal will into the “hands of the Divine.” Jesus and Buddha, as well as other great teachers, represent the mastery of this state of consciousness, complete union with Divine will.

Energy connection to the emotional body: The fifth chakra resonates to the numerous emotional and mental struggles involved in learning the nature of the power of choice. All illness has a connection to the fifth chakra, because choice is involved in every detail of our lives and therefore in every illness.

Symbolic connection: The symbolic challenge of the Willpower chakra is to progress through the maturation of will: from the tribal perception that everyone and everything around you has authority over you; through the perception that you alone have authority over you; to the final perception, that true authority comes from aligning yourself to God’s will.

Primary fears: Fears related to our willpower exist within each chakra, appropriate to that chakra. We fear having no authority or power of choice within our lives, first within our tribes, then within our personal and professional relationships. And then we fear having no authority with ourselves, being out of control when it comes to our response to substances, to money, to power, to another person’s emotional control over our well-being. And finally, we

fear the will of God. The notion of releasing our power of choice to a Divine force remains the greatest struggle for the individual seeking to become conscious.

Primary strengths: Faith, self-knowledge, and personal authority; the capacity to make decisions knowing that no matter what decisions we make, we can keep our word to ourselves or to another person.

Sacred truth: The fifth chakra is the center of choice and consequence, of spiritual karma. Every choice we make, every thought and feeling we have, is an act of power that has biological, environmental, social, personal, and global consequences. We are everywhere our thoughts are and thus our personal responsibility includes our energy contributions.

What choices would we make if we could actually see their energy consequences? We can approach this kind of foresight only by abiding by the sacred truth *Surrender Personal Will to Divine Will*. The spiritual lessons of the fifth chakra show us that actions motivated by a personal will that has trusted in Divine authority create the best effects.

Understanding the energy consequences of our thoughts and beliefs, as well as our actions, may force us to become honest to a new degree. Lying, either to others or to ourselves, should be out of the question. Genuine, complete healing requires honesty with oneself. An inability to be honest obstructs healing as seriously as the inability to forgive. Honesty and forgiveness retrieve our energy – our spirits – from the energy dimension of ‘the past’. Our fifth chakra and its spiritual lessons show us that personal power lies in our thoughts and attitudes.

The most costly energy consequences come from acting out of fear. Even when choices made from fear lead us to what we desire, they generally also produce unwanted side effects. These surprises teach us that choosing from fear transgresses our trust in Divine guidance. We all do live, at least periodically, within the illusion that we are in charge of our lives. We seek money and social status in order to have greater power of choice and so that we do not have to follow the choices others make for us. The idea that consciousness requires surrendering personal will to Divine will stands in direct conflict with all that we have come to consider the measure of an empowered person.

Thus, we may repeat the cycle of fear-surprise-fear-surprise, until we reach a point of prayer in which we say: You choose, and I’ll follow. Once we release this prayer, guidance may enter our lives, along with endless acts of synchronicity and coincidence – Divine “interference” at its best.

Faith

The essence of the fifth chakra is faith. Having faith in someone commits a part of our energy to that person; having faith in an idea commits a part of our energy to that idea; having faith in a fear commits a part of our energy to that fear. As a result of our energy commitments, we – our minds, hearts, and lives – become woven into their consequences. Our faith and our power of choice are, in fact, the power of creation itself. We are the vessels through which energy becomes matter in this life.

Therefore, the spiritual test inherent in all our lives is the challenge to discover what motivates us to make the choices we do, and whether we have faith in our fears or the Divine. We all need to address these questions as a matter of spiritual thought or as a result of physical illness? We all reach a moment when we ask, Who is in charge of my life? Why aren’t things

working out the way I want? No matter how successful we are, at some point we will become conscious that we feel incomplete. Some unplanned event or relationship or illness will show us that our personal power is insufficient to get us through a crisis. We are meant to become aware that our personal power is limited. We are meant to wonder if some other “force” is acting in our lives, and to ask, Why is this happening? What do you want of me? What am I meant to do? What is my purpose?

Gaining an awareness of our own limitations opens us to considering choices we would not otherwise have made. During the moments when our lives seem most out of control, we may become receptive to a guidance that we would not have welcomed before. Then our lives may move in directions we had never anticipated. Most of us end up saying, “I never thought I would be doing this or living here, but I am, and all is well.”

It may help you to arrive at the point of surrendering if you can use symbolic sight to view your life as only a spiritual journey. We have all known people who have recovered from dire circumstances – and credited the fact that they let the Divine take over. And every one of these people shared the experience of saying to the Divine, “Not my will but Yours.” If that one prayer is all that is required, why are we so afraid of it?

Remember that your physical life and your spiritual path are one and the same. Taking pleasure in your physical life is as much a spiritual goal as achieving a healthy physical body. Both are the consequences of following Divine guidance in making choices of how to live and of acting out of faith and trust. Surrender to Divine authority means liberation from physical illusions, not from the delights and comfort of physical life.

The spiritual energies of the fifth chakra guide us toward that point of surrender and the greatness through love, which directs us to be as loving as possible in all circumstances. Sometimes the greatest act of love is to withhold judgement of another or of oneself. Again and again we are reminded that being judgemental is a spiritual error. Developing the discipline of will allows us to refrain from releasing negative thoughts toward others or ourselves. By being nonjudgmental, we attain wisdom and defeat our lives. This teaches us to release the need to know why things happen as they do, and to trust that whatever the reason is, it is a part of a grander spiritual design.

Between the Head and the Heart

Since the center of the will is located between the energies of the heart and the mind, we need to learn how to balance our responses to their urgings. Usually as children, we are directed toward one of these two ruling energies: boys are usually pushed to use their mental energy, and girls their hearts.

Mental energy powers the external world, while heart energy powers our personal domains. For centuries our culture has thought that emotional energy weakens our ability to make quick and necessary decisions, and that mental energy is virtually useless in the emotional domain, as noted in the old saying that reason can win no war against a heartfelt choice. For centuries, until the 1960s, this separation was acceptable. Then the decade when the head met the heart redefined a balanced individual to mean one who operates with heart and mind in unison.

If mind and heart are not communicating clearly with each other, one will dominate the other. When our minds are in the lead, we suffer emotionally because we turn emotional data

into an enemy. We seek to control all situations and relationships and maintain authority over emotions. When our hearts are in the lead, we tend to maintain the illusion that all is well. Whether the mind is in the lead or the heart, will is motivated by fear and the futile goal of control, not by a sense of internal security.

This imbalance of head and heart turns people into addicts. In energy terms, any behaviour motivated by the fear of internal growth qualifies as an addiction. Even behaviour that is usually healthy – exercise or meditation, for instance - can be addiction if it is used to avoid pain or personal insight. Any discipline can become a willful block between our conscious and unconscious minds, saying, “I want guidance, but don’t give me any bad news.” We even try to direct the very guidance we are seeking. We end up living in a seemingly endless cycle of mentally wanting change but emotionally fearing change at every turn.

The only way to break through this pattern is to make choices that engage the united power of the mind and the heart. It is easy to keep oneself in a holding pattern, claiming that one does not know what to do next. But that is rarely true. When we are in a holding pattern, it is because we know exactly what we should do next, but we are terrified to act on it. Breaking through the repetition of cycles in our lives only require one strong choice that is aimed at tomorrow and not yesterday. Decisions that say, “No more – I will not take this type of treatment any longer,” or, “I cannot stay here one more day – I must leave,” contain the quality of power that unites the energy of both the mind and the heart, and our lives begin to change almost instantly as a result of the authority present within that intense degree of choice. Admittedly it is frightening to leave the familiar contents of one’s life, even though one’s life is often desperately sad. But change is frightening, and waiting for that feeling of safety to come along before one makes a move only results in more internal torment because the only way to acquire that feeling of security is to enter the whirlwind of change and come out the other end, feeling alive again.

Summary of Chakra #5:

Corresponding to the throat and thyroid gland, the fifth chakra is your center of will, your ability to express your needs and desires, and your power of choice. The force behind acts of creation, choice creates consequence. The fifth chakra also is the center of the energy of honor. It resonates when you “give your word” to someone. When you make a commitment, you agree to use the power of your will to hold within you a part of another person’s spirit, to be psychologically supportive. “Giving your word,” or making a social vow of marriage or a religious vow is a ritual of personal revelation. When a person breaks his word, that action reverberates for years within the psyche of the betrayed. It cuts to the soul.

Fifth-chakra vows are promises of the body, mind, heart, and spirit merged into one. Acts of soul retrieval, or confession, are also fifth-chakra rituals in which the individual consciously calls back fragments of her spirit that have been out on “negative missions,” such as telling a lie. The need to participate in such rituals for the health of one’s spirit is recognized in some form by most spiritual traditions. The ritual of last rites as performed in the Roman Catholic Church acknowledges that the whole of one’s spirit must be called back into the self prior to death so that the whole of one’s being can move on to the afterlife.

The inherent soul knowledge of the fifth chakra communicates to us that we must develop the strength to make choice that reflect who we are. We suffer deeply when our fifth

chakra is controlled by someone else through social customs, restrictions, or tyranny, or by thought-forms, superstitions, and emotional weight such as guilt. When that happens, we find ourselves living a life that serves the needs of others to the detriment of our own, and we must learn how liberate our voice and spirit. Archetypes of the Slave or Servant hold the potential for liberation for those who must birth their own will, the spiritual equivalent of buying your freedom from servitude.

You develop a powerful personal will by making choices that draw on both the desires of the heart and the wisdom of the mind. In a physical setting, for example, your fifth chakra spontaneously organizes the manner in which you will communicate with others within that setting, helping you choose whether to be defensive and circumspect or direct and open. Developing the strength to manage the power of will is perhaps the most difficult stage in the process of spiritual maturation. In all of life's interactions we must make choices, and choices direct our spirit into action. All Contracts draw us into at least one act of will. When Malcolm X went to Mecca in 1964 to make the *hajj*, the pilgrimage required of every Muslim at least once, he was the chief disciple of Nation of Islam leader Elijah Muhammad, who preached hatred toward the white race based on what he claimed were Muslim teachings. During the *hajj* Malcolm met and mingled with Muslims from India, China, Indonesia, and North America, including many whites. His heart was deeply moved by the love and unified spiritual purpose he experienced from his fellow Muslims. "I could see from this," he wrote home, "that perhaps of white Americans could accept the Oneness of God, then perhaps, too, they could accept *in reality* the Oneness of man – and cease to measure, and hinder, and harm others in terms of their 'differences' in color."

Filled with this insight that had both moved his heart and stirred his mind, Malcolm returned to America and broke with Elijah Muhammad, bringing many other African-Americans with him into an orthodox Islam that preaches tolerance to people of all races and religions. Malcolm X could only have made this powerful choice, which had enormous consequences for the future of race relations in America, by joining together the desires of his heart with the wisdom of his mind.

Making sense of Chakra #5 (case study):

Marnie, forty-four, is a healer, a genuinely anointed healer, she began her work following a seven-year-long "dark knight of the soul" in which she had to heal herself. When she was thirty, she was a social worker in Scotland, lived an active life, had a number of friends, and enjoyed her work immensely. Then she was diagnosed with an "undiagnosable" condition.

With each passing month, Marnie developed increasing pain, sometimes in her back, sometimes as intense migraines, sometimes in her legs. Eventually the pain forced her to take a leave of absence from her job. She spent almost two years going from one specialist to another, none of whom could help her understand her chronic pain and occasional loss of balance, or prescribe any effective treatment.

Marnie spiraled into depression. Her friends suggested that she seek the help of alternative health therapists, in whom she had never believed. One day, a friend showed up at Marnie's home with a collection of alternative health care books, among which were the

writings of Sai Baba, a spiritual master living in India. Marnie read the material but dismissed it as the type of nonsense that “only cult minded creatures would believe.”

Six more months of pain forced Marnie to retreat those words as she journeyed to India to try to get a private audience with Sai Baba. She spent three weeks at his ashram but never saw him privately. She returned to Scotland even more despondent than before. Yet shortly after returning home, Marnie had a series of dreams in which she was continually asking only one question: Can you accept what I have given you?

At first, Marnie thought the dreams were merely the consequence of her trip to India and her numerous conversations about the nature of God’s will for people. Then a friend suggested that she treat the dream as though she were genuinely being asked a spiritual question. As Marnie put it, “I had nothing to lose, so why not?”

The next time she had the dream, she answered the question: “Yes, she felt herself being bathed in light, and for the first time in years she was pain-free. Upon waking up, she hoped her illness would be gone, but it wasn’t – in fact, it gradually got worse over the next four years. She dwelled upon that dream again and again, holding to the belief that it wasn’t really a dream, yet she continued to experience anger and despair, feeling at times that God was asking her to suffer for no good reason.

One night, while she was weeping, Marnie said she reached “surrender.” She thought she had been in that state of consciousness since her dream, but that night she realized, “I was in resignation, not surrender. I was living in this type of attitude that said, ‘All right, I’ll do this. Now reward me for it by making me feel better.’ And then, that night, I realized that I might never feel better, and if that’s the case, what would I then say to God? I surrendered completely. I said, ‘Whatever you choose for me, so be it. Just give me strength.’”

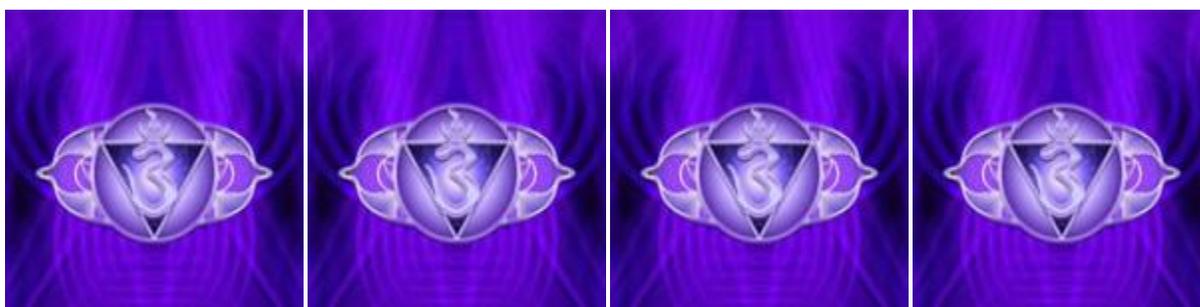
Marnie’s pain instantly eased, and her hands filled with heat – not ordinary body heat, but “spiritual heat.” She knew immediately that the heat running through her hands had the power to help heal others, although ironically, she herself might not be able to “drink from that well.” She actually laughed at her condition, because it was “exactly like the stories of the mystics of old I had read about – only who would of thought that I would qualify for their tasks?”

Marnie is now a greatly loved and highly respected healer, and while her physical body has healed and substantially from the undiagnosed pain, she still has her difficult moments. But in Marnie’s words, “I would go through it all again, given who I am today and what I know, for the privilege of helping others the way I can now.” Her story stands out to me because of her deep understanding of the difference between surrender and resignation, and because she lived through the myth that once we say yes to God, everything will be perfect immediately. Saying yes to our condition is the first part – an act that may or may not change our condition - and saying yes to God’s timing is the second.

Questions for Self-Examination:

1. What is your definition of being `strong-willed`?
2. Who are the people in your life that have control over your willpower, and why?
3. Do you seek to control others? If so, who are they, and why do you need to control them?

4. Are you able to express yourself honestly and openly when you need to? If not, why not?
5. Are you able to sense when you are receiving guidance to act upon?
6. Do you trust guidance that has no proof of the outcome attached to it?
7. What fears do you have associated with Divine guidance?
8. Do you pray for assistance with your personal plans, or are you able to say, 'I will do what heaven directs me to do'?
9. What makes you lose control of your own willpower?
10. Do you bargain with yourself in situations in which you know you need to change but you continually postpone taking action? If so, identify those situations and your reasons for not wanting to act.
11. Do you speak softly, in a quiet tone?
12. Have there been occasions in the past when you were told to 'shut up' or 'keep still'? Write one down. How did this make you feel?
13. Do you use negative language to express yourself or 'fill in the blanks.' Listen
14. to how often you or others say, 'you know,' or 'umm.' This is a habit. Become
15. aware of it and make a concerted effort to break this habit.
16. Do believe you can communicate with angels, your higher self or with people?
17. Have you ever had these experiences?
18. Have you ever had inspired, unusual thoughts come into your mind?
19. Do you pray? Do you meditate?
20. Have you been judgemental or critical of others? In what situation?
21. How could you have handled these situations for a better outcome?
22. Do you use profanity or other low vibrational words or exclamations? If so, what do intend to do about this?
23. Are you learning that there are times when it is better to be silent and not to express an opinion?



#6) Ajna (Area of consciousness for the celestial body):

Name: The *ajna* comes from the Sanskrit root which means to know, to obey or to follow. Literally, ajna means 'command' or 'monitoring centre'.

Beeja: Om

Relates to: Clear sightedness, the bringing together of opposites (ida and pingala unite at the point), inspiration, insight, telepathy, access to the Higher Self (Guru), the pineal, pituitary, brain, ears, eyes, nose, realization of full potential

Emotional focus:	Feelings related to self-acceptance, such as self-love and self-awareness
Spiritual concern:	Visioning
Gland:	Pineal, Pituitary
Physical organs:	Pituitary gland, medulla plexus and parts of the hypothalamus, olfactory and visual systems, the left eye in particular, memory storage, some aspects of the ears and sinuses
Issues with:	Self-evaluation, truth, intellectual abilities, feelings of adequacy, openness to the ideas of others, ability to learn from experience and emotional intelligence
Sense:	Thought
Element:	Electric or Telepathic energy
Personality:	'I am who I am'
Balanced Energy:	Charismatic, open to guidance, not afraid of death, not attached to material things, can experience telepathy, past lives or astral travel, self-fulfilled, can be celibate, may have experienced Cosmic Consciousness
Excessive Energy:	Proud, religiously dogmatic, tyrannical, demonic
Deficient Energy:	Non-assertive, undisciplined, weak-willed, extreme sensitivity to the feelings (energy) of others, afraid of success, schizophrenic
Illnesses:	Brain tumor/hemorrhage/stroke, neurological disturbances, blindness/deafness, full spinal difficulties, seizures.

The sixth chakra involves our mental and reasoning abilities, and our psychological skill at evaluating our beliefs and attitudes. The Mind chakra resonates to the energies of our psyches, our conscious and unconscious psychological forces. Within Eastern spiritual literature, the sixth chakra is the 'third eye,' the spiritual center in which the interaction of mind and psyche can lead to intuitive sight and wisdom. This is the chakra of wisdom.

The challenges of the sixth chakra are opening the mind, developing an impersonal mind, retrieving one's power from artificial and "false truths"; learning to act on internal direction; and discriminating between thoughts motivated by strength and those by fear and illusion.

Energy connection to the emotional/mental body: The sixth chakra links us to our mental body, our intelligence and psychological characteristics. Our psychological characteristics are a combination of what we know and what we believe to be true, a unique combination of the facts, fears, personal experiences, and memories that are active continually within our mental energy body.

Symbolic/perceptual connection: The sixth chakra activates the lessons that lead us to wisdom. We achieve wisdom both through life experiences and by acquiring the discriminating perceptual ability of detachment. Symbolic sight is partly learned "detachment" – a state of mind beyond the influences of the "personal mind" or "beginner's mind" that can lead to the power and insight of the "impersonal" or open mind.

Primary fears: An unwillingness to look within and excavate one's fears; fear of truth when one's reason is clouded; fear of sound, realistic judgement; fear of relying on external counsel, of discipline; fear of one's shadow side and its attributes.

Primary strengths: Intellectual abilities and skills; evaluation of conscious and unconscious insights, receiving inspiration; generating great acts of creativity and intuitive reasoning – emotional intelligence.

Sacred Truth: The sacred truth of the sixth chakra is *Seek Only the Truth*. It compels us to search continually for the difference between truth and illusion, the two forces present at every moment. Separating truth from illusion is more a task of the mind than of the brain. The brain commands the behaviour of our physical body, but the mind commands the behaviour of our energy body, which is our relationship to thought and perception. The brain is the physical instrument through which thought is transferred into action, but perception – and all that is associated with perception, such as becoming conscious – is a characteristic of the mind. In becoming conscious one is able to *detach* from subjective perceptions and see the truth or symbolic meaning in a situation. Detachment does not mean ceasing to care. It means stilling one's fear-driven voices. One who has attained an inner posture of detachment has a sense of self so complete that external influences have no authority within his or her consciousness. Such clarity of mind and self is the essence of wisdom, one of the Divine powers of the sixth chakra.

Becoming detached and conscious means getting certain perceptions from our minds into our bodies. It means merging with perceptions that are truth and living them so that their power becomes one and the same as our own energy.

Take, for instance, the truth “Change is constant.” Mentally we can absorb that teaching with little difficulty. Yet when change occurs in our lives – when we notice we are aging, when people we love die, or when relationships shift from being intimate and loving to distant – this truth terrorizes us. We often need years to recover from some changes because we had hoped that it – whatever “it” was – would remain the same. We knew all along that it would change, but we can't help hoping that the energy of change will pass by this one part of our lives.

Even when “Change is constant” feels like an enemy that has swept away a happy part of our lives, our lonely times will come to an end and a new part of life will begin. The promise of “Change is constant” is that new beginnings always follow closures.

Consciousness is the ability to release the old and embrace the new with the awareness that all things end at the appropriate time and that all things begin at the appropriate time. This truth is difficult to learn to live with because human beings seek stability – the absence of change. Therefore becoming conscious means living fully in the present moment, knowing that no situation or person will be exactly the same tomorrow. As change does occur, we work to interpret it as a natural part of life and strive to “flow with it,” as the *Tao Te Ching* counsels, and not against it. Trying to make things remain the same is useless as well as impossible. Our task is to contribute the best of our energy to every situation with the understanding that we influence, but do not control, what we will experience tomorrow.

The meaning of detachment: the realization that no one person or group of people can determine your life's path. Thus, when change comes into your life, it is because a larger dynamic is moving you along. It may look like a group of people conspired to have you removed from a job or something similar – but that is the illusion. If you choose to believe that illusion, it will hold you captive, maybe even for a lifetime. But if it hadn't been the right moment for you to move on, the “conspiracy” would not have been successful. That is the

higher truth of this life change, and the symbolic sight that accompanies detachment allows you to see it.

Obviously, none of us wake up one morning and announces, “I think I’ll become conscious today.” We are drawn into a desire to stretch the parameters of our minds through the mysteries we encounter. All of us experience, and will continue to experience, relationships and events that cause us to re-examine our understanding of reality. The very design of our minds compels us to wonder why things are as they are, if only within our own personal confusion.

The following instructions provide a starting point for developing the impersonal mind and achieving symbolic sight, the ability to see through illusion and grasp the energy power behind the scenes. Following these steps may help you attain symbolic sight and increase your ability to reach the dimension of Divine reasoning.

- Develop a practice of introspection, and work to become conscious of what you believe and why.
- Keep an open mind, and learn to become aware when your mind is “shutting down.”
- Recognize defensiveness as an attempt to keep new insights from entering your mental field.
- Interpret all situations and relationships as having a symbolic importance, even if you cannot immediately understand what it is.
- Become open to receiving guidance and insight through your dreams.
- Work toward releasing any thoughts that promote self-pity or anger, or that blame another person for anything that has happened to you.
- Practice detachment. Make decisions based upon the wisest assessment you can in the immediate moment, rather than working to create a specific outcome.
- Refrain from all judgements – not just those rendered against people and situations, but those that concern the size or importance of tasks. Rather, remind yourself continually of the higher truth that you cannot possibly see all the facts or details of any situation, nor visualize the long-term consequences of your actions.
- Learn to recognize when you are being influenced by a fear pattern. Immediately detach from that fear by observing its influence on your mind and emotions; then make choices that weaken the influence of those fears.
- Detach from all values that support the belief that success in life means achieving certain goals. Instead view a successful life as a process of achieving self control and the capacity to work through the challenges life brings you. Visualize success as an energy force rather than a physical one.
- Act on your inner guidance, and give up your need for “proof” that your inner guidance is authentic. The more you ask for proof, the less likely you are to receive any.
- Keep all attention in the present moment – refrain from living in the past or worrying about the future. Learn to trust what you cannot see far more than what you can see.

Becoming Conscious

There is nothing easy about becoming conscious. We are forever looking for the easy meditation, the easy exercise, that will lift us out of the fog, but consciousness doesn't work that way. Ironically, there is a simple way out, only it's not easy: Just let go. Let go of how you thought your life should be, and embrace the life that is trying to work its way into your consciousness.

So many people struggling to find their way are in that necessary but confusing state of waiting. A part of each of them is eager to allow the Divine will to direct their lives, yet they remain tormented by the fear that they will lose all comfort on the physical plane should they actually surrender to it. So they are held in a waiting position until they are strong enough to release that fear and embrace the deeper truth that "all will be well – not "well" by our definition, perhaps, but certainly by God's.

Becoming conscious means changing the rules by which we live and the beliefs we maintain. Our memories and attitudes are literally rules that determine the quality of life as well as the strength of our bonds with others. Always, a shift in awareness includes a period of isolation and loneliness as one gets accustomed to the new level of truth. And then always, new companies are found. No one is left alone for long.

Summary of Chakra #6:

This chakra resonates with the pineal gland, which is located behind and between your eyes and so is often called the third eye. The center of wisdom in the body, its power affects the intellect and your ability to articulate vision and inspiration. While we may be able to envision endless dreams and possibilities, we still need an instrument that is skilled at focusing attention and applying imagination. A focused mind and disciplined imagination are two of the strengths associated with the sixth chakra. Once you have the seed of an idea, your sixth chakra helps give it shape. You run the idea through your intelligence to see if you can work with it. You evaluate the idea intellectually and decide whether you want to 'manage' the birth of this idea into its physical form. On the physical level your sixth chakra mobilizes your intellect and attitudes to deal with any situation and communicate your ideas to those involved.

This is also the energy center that empowers our attitudes, beliefs, memories, and the overall character of our rational mind. Whether we are fair- and open-minded or judgemental and limited in our capacity to consider new ideas is a manifestation of how we direct the power of this chakra. When we speak of creating our own reality, we are referring to the sixth-chakra laboratory in which process occurs.

The use of visualization and positive thinking to maintain or restore physical health is an example of directing the power of the sixth chakra. The sixth chakra imagines a body that is free of illness and then pushes this energetic vision in the fifth, fourth, and remaining chakras to utilize their power as a united system to rebuild the physical form. The blueprint for the overall healing, however, begins in the mind. The energy of the sixth chakra connects with all the other power centers in the body.

Making sense of Chakra #6 (case study):

Pete contacted me to do a reading on himself during a serious personal crisis. His wife of seventeen years had announced that she no longer loved him and wanted a divorce. Pete was, understandably, devastated, as were their four children. I suggested that just for a moment he

try to see this situation from a detached point of view. I suspected his wife was redefining herself beyond the role of caretaker - a role in which she had been living for most of her life. As a child she had taken care of her younger siblings; she had married at seventeen and been a mother at eighteen. Now, at forty, she was waking up to herself and her own needs and was probably having an affair. I told Pete that his wife was likely terrified by what she was feeling and that if she had a more therapeutic vocabulary, she might have been able to describe the new emotional energies she was experiencing rather than panicking at them. Her affair was her attempt to run away from what was happening inside her. She probably could not care less about the man she was involved with, even though she might not realize it at the time. She chose to have the affair because she could imagine no other way of leaving her husband and children. The option of seeking therapeutic help was not part of her culture or her thinking process.

I told Pete that, as difficult as it might be to accept, the fact was that his wife would have responded the same way at this point in her life no matter who her husband was, because she was going through a process of self-discovery that had nothing to do with him. She did not know herself that she had entered a "dark night" experience. Pete should work at not taking personally her acts of rejection and anger because, while he was certainly a target for her emotional anger, she was far more angry at her confusion than she was at him.

Pete was able to absorb this information and work with it. Though he and his wife decided to divorce, he returned to a more impersonal way of viewing this crisis every time he found himself sinking into the grief and hurt of the breakup of his family. Not long after our conversation, he discovered that his wife had been having an affair with a friend of his and that it had indeed broken. He realized that his wife was not in love with the other man but was attempting to find an outlet for her own confusion. I told him that she would, more than likely, continue to try to solve her crisis by trying to find another mate, but it would never work. Each relationship is destined to fail because finding another relationship – thereby becoming the caretaker again – was not the solution to her pain. Eventually she would be forced to go inside herself and work to heal the real source of her pain.

Questions for Self-Examination:

1. What beliefs do you have that cause you to interpret the actions of others in a negative way?
2. What negative behavioural patterns continually surface in your relationship with others?
3. What attitudes do you have that dis-empower you?
4. What beliefs do you continue to accept that you know are not true?
5. Are you judgemental? If so, what situations or relationships tend to bring out that tendency in you?
6. Do you give yourself excuses for behaving in negative ways?
7. Can you recall instances in which you were confronted with a more profound level of truth than you were used to hearing and found the experience intimidating?
8. What beliefs and attitudes would you like to change in yourself? Are you willing to make a commitment to making those changes?
9. Are you comfortable thinking about your life in impersonal terms?

10. Are you frightened of the changes that might occur in your life, should you openly embrace a conscious lifestyle?
11. Have you experienced any bad dreams or good dreams that you remember?
12. Did you attempt to learn the meaning of them or what your subconscious/superconscious mind was trying to convey to you? Write down some insights.
13. Were there times when you felt more connected to your higher self or the 'small, clear' inner voice?
14. What were the circumstances?
15. Were there times when you felt cut-off from your inner guidance?
16. What were the circumstances and what did you do about the situation?
17. Are you receiving more inspired thoughts? Is your insight via intuition growing stronger?
18. Are you able to maintain a 'light meditative' state, functioning fully in the physical world, while being a neutral observer of the process?
19. Are you beginning to feel the loving presence of your guides, teachers and angelic helpers, knowing that they are always near to guide and protect you?
20. Are you ready to accept the truth that your thoughts, words and actions create your picture of reality and that all you have to do to change your world is to shift your perception and thought patterns to a higher frequency?
21. Have you felt more connected to your 'soul family' and those with compatible vibrations? Give an example.
22. Are you better able to see the good in those around you, while allowing them to follow their own path, but not allowing them to deter you from following yours? Give an example.

Pineal Gland and Its Esoteric Origins:

Since time immortal, the pineal gland has been viewed as the physiological center between the astral and physical body, which determines how and what psychic information comes in. Your own built in psychic access hardware.

The size of a pea, shaped like a 'pine cone' and is represented in most of our religions and spiritual traditions of the past. Examples:

Babylon:

- Primitive mountain, shaped like a pine cone, viewed as the place where the Gods talk to man.
- The Babylonian God Tammuz is always pictured holding a pine cone in his hand.

Egypt:

- The Benben Stone is a pine cone shaped stone, with 2 serpents wrapped around it called Orais, which symbolically represent the Kundalini serpentine energy lying inside us. On either side of the stone are 2 birds, representing the powerful phoenix, expressing the death and rebirth symbolism.
- The staff of Osiris has a pine cone on the top with 2 serpents intertwined and wrapped around it.

- King Tut has a serpent coming out of his third eye in the middle of his forehead.

Masons:

- The ancient group known around the world as the 'Masons', reaches its secret highest degree at the 33 degree, representing our own 33 vertebrae and the subsequent release of the Kundalini up the spine, known as enlightenment.

Meso-America:

- The Mayan God Viracocha is the 'Lord of the Underworld', his face is visible coming out of the mouth of a giant serpent. The serpent represents the galaxy which travels up and over and then down and under the ecliptic. The coils of the serpent appear to look like a pine cone with jewellery of little pine cones.

Greek:

- The Omphalos stone also like a pine cone and is believed to be where the Gods come to speak with humanity. Used by the Oracles to get into contact with the Gods, viewed as a contact device to reach the spirit world.
- The Greek God Dionysus, the God of Death and Rebirth also has a pine cone on his staff.
- Dionysus then became the Roman God called Bacchus, the God of Revelry, who also sports a pine cone on his staff.

Buddhism:

- The Buddha is usually shown with his hair wrapped up on his head in the shape of a pine cone, with a bindi in the middle of his forehead, connecting to his third eye.

Vatican:

- The Court of the Pine Cone is a giant 20+ foot bronze sculpture of a pine cone, with 2 beno Egyptian phoenix birds, also with 2 lion sphinx style sculptures wrapped in hieroglyphics.
- The Pope's staff as a pine cone on the top with a Jesus crucifixion cross above, meaning you need your third eye to reach cosmic Christ consciousness.

Bible:

- Book of Mathew (6:22) Jesus, 'The light of the body is the eye: If therefore your eye be single, your whole body shall be full of light'.

Hinduism:

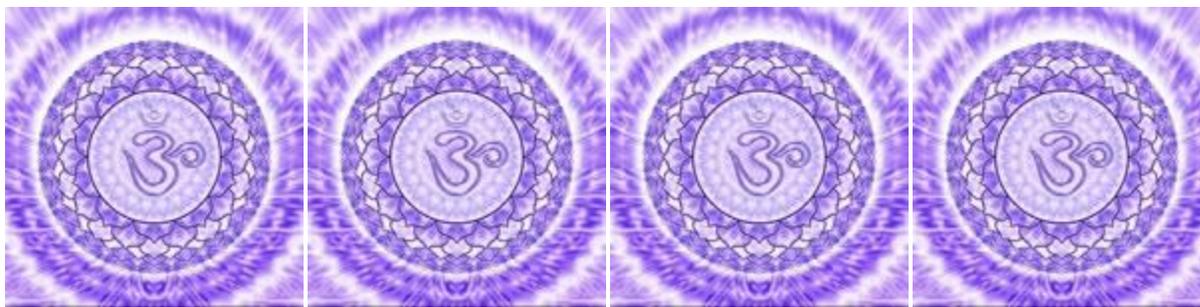
- Lord Shiva has a cosmic third eye shimmering out of his forehead, expressing his own direct link to the cosmos, the other dimensions, the great mysterious unknown which eludes us all. Shiva's dreadlocks wrapped around his head form a pine cone shape.
- Shiva is always seen depicted wearing venomous serpents as if they were jewellery. Snakes, especially cobras can be seen around Shiva's neck, slithering down his body, reflecting his absolute renunciation, his refusal to react or respond to any threat or

temptation. He is Nageshvar, lord of serpents. The serpent also represents the coiled energy of Kundalini, the power that enables seeds to germinate and animals to conceive. Shiva as lord of herbs and master of beasts, the primordial 'shaman' in touch with nature's mysteries, has a close relationship with serpents. The serpent is also said to be ananta sesha, the great serpent of eternity, within whose coils rests the universe.

- Shiva usually carries a human skull in his hand to confront the world with its mortality. Sometimes he uses the skull-cap as a drinking bowl. Shiva always carries a trident, trishul, whose three prongs are said to represent the trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshvar (shiva). A crescent moon crowns Shiva's head earning him the title of Chandrachuda. Like the waxing and waning of the moon, Shiva is in tune with the activity and passivity of the cosmos. On this moon grows the herb soma whose sap is the favorite drink of the gods. As Trimbaka, the three-eyes god, he uses his cosmic inner eye to distinguish truth from illusion and to destroy lust that seduces man into samsara. His third eye endorses his position as lord of yoga.
- Shiva the transcendent: Shiva means the auspicious one. Yet, everything about him seems inauspicious: he dwells in isolated hills, dark caves and dense jungles. He dances amidst funeral pyres, rattling bells and drums, wearing animal hide, if anything at all; he stinks like a goat, smears himself with ash, carries skulls, drinks poison, smokes narcotics, enjoys intoxicants, hangs out with ghosts, ghouls and goblins, demands worship during the dark half of the lunar month. Shiva thus transcends the duality of good-bad, right-wrong, holy-unholy, auspicious-inauspicious. Shiva stands above it all, accepting, loving all.
- Shiva the teacher: Shiva is the fountainhead of all wisdom. The Knowledge he imparts helps man to live a richer and fuller life. He is the lord of the performing arts, fine arts, martial arts, literature, science, mysticism and philosophy. He taught man the secrets of herbs along with the cycles of nature and the cosmos.
- Shiva the outsider: Shiva, is the rebel who challenges orthodoxy. He is a nonconformist, the refuge of all outsiders, individuals who feel alienated in a traditional society. He is the lord of the demons, of yakshas, asuras, danavas, rakshasas, all creatures deemed evil by society simply because their nature is not in accordance with the needs of civilization.
- Shiva the man: Shiva symbolizes cosmic virility. He is the cosmic man in eternal union with the cosmic women. He is thus the father-god, who complements the mother-goddess. If he is the seed, she is the field; he is the sky, she is the earth; if he is stillness, she is movement; if he is the axle she is the wheel; if he is the linga, she is the yoni. Together they are fused, two halves of the whole.
- Shiva the destroyer: Brahma creates the world, Vishnu sustains it, Shiva destroys it. Together this holy trinity ensures the rotation of the cycle of life. Shiva accepts all that is foul, unclean, dirty, rejected; he destroys the corruptions within them all and prepares them for rebirth. He is thus the renewer, the regenerator, the transformer.
- Shiva the soul: Shiva is the cosmic spirit untouched by material transformations. He stands beyond gender, space and time, yet permeates the entire cosmos. He is the vitality of life, the source of all things and their final destination. He is the sad-chitta-

ananda: absolute truth, pure consciousness, eternal bliss. Union with him is the ultimate aim of all creatures.

- Shiva the godhead: Shiva is the supreme being. He has five aspects representing creation, preservation, destruction, oblivion and grace. He has eight forms representing the soul, the sun, the moon, and the elements: earth, fire, water, wind and ether. He is the totality of all manifestation, the meaning of all existence. He is a mystery waiting to be unfathomed, just like life. To understand him is to understand the ultimate reality that governs the cosmos: the eternal absolute truth, sanatana dharma.



#7) Sahasrara (Area of consciousness for Ketheric body):

Name:	Sanskrit word <i>sahasrara</i> means 'one thousand', implies that its magnitude and significance is vast, in fact, unlimited.
Relates to:	Intuitive knowing, connection to one's spirituality, integration of the whole Our Highest self, wisdom, wholeness, oneness, surrender to All That Is, cosmic energy, transmutation, of energy into matter, or matter into energy, pituitary, pineal, nervous system, brain
Emotional focus:	Related to spiritual nature
Spiritual concern:	Oneness with Divine, psychic gift of prophecy or ability to sense divine plans
Gland:	Pituitary
Physical organs:	Pineal gland, upper skull and cerebral cortex, parts of the hypothalamus, higher learning and cognitive brain systems, parts of immune system, the right eye
Issues with:	Ability to trust life, values, ethics and courage, humanitarianism, selflessness, ability to see the larger picture/pattern, faith and inspiration, spirituality and devotion.
Sense:	Divine Compassion
Element:	Cosmic Energy (Maha Prana)
Personality:	'I surrender to Divine Will'
Balanced Energy:	Open to the Divine, able to work miracles, can transcend the laws of nature, access to the unconscious and subconscious, realization of immortality, awareness of death
Excessive Energy:	Constant sense of frustration, unrealized power, psychotic, manic-depressive, frequent migraine headaches, destructive, sexual expression ranges from passionate too distant
Deficient Energy:	Loss or lack of joy, catatonic, complete inability to make decisions, uncommunicative
Physical Dysfunction:	mystical depression, diseases of the muscular system, skeletal system and the skin, chronic exhaustion not associated with physical ailments, sensitivity to light, sound, environment
Illnesses:	Energetic disorders, mystical depression, chronic exhaustion that is not linked to a physical disorder, extreme sensitivities to light, sound, and other environmental factors.

The Crown Chakra is the seventh chakra and it is at the top of the "chakra ladder" which starts from the Root Chakra that grounds us on the Earth and progresses upward to the Sahasrara which connects us with the universe and the Divine source of creation. Sahasrara is located at the crown of the head. The gift of this chakra is experiencing unity and the selfless realization that everything is connected at a fundamental level.

The energy of this chakra allows us to experience mystical oneness with everyone and everything in nature. There is no intellectual knowing at the level of seventh chakra, but there is serenity, joy, and deep peace about life. You have a sense of knowing that there is a deeper meaning of life and that there is an order that underlies all of existence.

The "way of the Crown Chakra" is the way of going beyond the limits of your own ego. It is the way of transcending the ego and knowing that all of creation is interconnected at a fundamental level. A level that some call the "Akasha" or "Zero Point Field", or just "the Field". This is the fundamental level of connection.

According to Tantric philosophy, the seventh chakra is both a receiver and giver of energy and consciousness. It receives energy to sustain life and it gives back the personal energy to unite with the collective pool of consciousness. It is the meeting point between finite (your body and your ego) and infinite (the universe and your soul). It is the place where time and timelessness intersect and where death and eternal life meet.

The thousand petaled chakra embraces an attitude of gratitude for one's life. When we realize that everything is interconnected and that we are a part of the larger scheme of life, we begin to live with gratitude, faith and trust, rather than filled with fear and anxiety. We are guided by the Higher Power and we feel Divinity from within and from without. The challenge of this chakra is to liberate the Spirit - open to the Divine - and at the same time stay firmly rooted deep in the ground.

The seventh chakra is our connection to our spiritual nature and our capacity to allow our spirituality to become an integral part of our physical lives and guide us. While our energy system as a whole is animated by our spirit, the seventh chakra is directly aligned to seek an intimate relationship with the Divine. It is the power of prayer (intent). It is also our "grace bank account," the warehouse for the energy we amass through kind thoughts and actions, and through acts of faith and prayer. It enables us to gain an intensity of internal awareness through meditation and prayer. This chakra represents our connection to the transcendent dimension of life.

Energy connection to the physical body: The seventh chakra is the entry point for the human life-force, which pours endlessly into the human energy system, from the greater universe, from God or the prime creator. This force nourishes the body, the mind, and the spirit. It distributes itself throughout the physical body and the lower six chakras, connection the entire physical body to the seventh chakra. The energy of the seventh chakra influences that of the major body systems: the central nervous system, the muscular system, and the skin.

Energy connection to the emotional/mental body: The seventh chakra contains the energy that generates devotion, inspirational and prophetic thoughts, transcendent ideas, and mystical connections.

Symbolic/perceptual connection: The seventh chakra contains the purest form of the energy of grace or prana. This chakra warehouses the energy generated by prayer and

meditation and safeguards our capacity for symbolic sight. It is the energy center for the spiritual insight, vision, and intuition far beyond ordinary human consciousness. It is the mystical realm, a dimension of a conscious rapport with the Divine.

Primary fears: Faith in the presence of the Divine, and in all that faith represents within one's life – such as inner guidance, insight into healing, and a quality of trust that eclipses ordinary human fears; devotion.

Sacred truth: Seventh chakra energy motivates us to seek an intimate connection to the Divine in everything we do. This spiritual desire for connection is significantly different from the wish for connection to a religion. Religion, first of all, is a group experience whose main purpose is to *protect the group*, primarily from physical threats: disease, poverty, death, social crises, and even war. Religion is rooted in first chakra energies. Spirituality, on the other hand, is an *individual* experience directed toward releasing fears of the physical world and pursuing a relationship to the Divine. The sacred truth of this chakra is *Live in the Present Moment*.

Seeking a personal spiritual connection shakes us to our core. Our conscious or unconscious prayer to come to know the Divine directly goes something like this: "I no longer want to be protected within the group, nor do I desire to have a mediator filter my guidance for me. I now want You to move into my life directly and remove from my life any obstacle – be it person, place, or occupation – that interferes with my ability to form an intimate union with You." As Meister Eckhart wrote in *The Soul Is One with God*, the ultimate aim of the mystic is identity: "God is love, and he who is in love is in God and God in him."

In seeking union with the Divine, we are asking to have all physical, psychological, and emotional "illusions" removed from our lives. Once this process of removal begins, we awaken an internal voice of authority that immediately begins to compete with every external authority in our lives, which can throw us into internal turmoil, or even "spiritual schizophrenia."

This shift from religion to spirituality is not a simply a cultural trend. It is an archetypal reorganization of our planetary community, which now has access to the universal truths available through symbolic sight. Symbolic sight includes a sixth sense of intuition, which senses the connections among all living energy systems. This intuitive sense of connection is moving us as a planet toward a *holistic* understanding of health and disease, of the environment and its biodiversity, and of social priorities for service and charity. This movement toward working as "one world" is an extension of the release of the Divine Light into the world. It seems as though humanity is "under orders" to mature spiritually to a level of holistic sight and service, and any number of paths of service to fulfill those orders have opened up to us.

Spiritual Crisis and the Need for Devotion

The "symptomology" of a spiritual crisis is almost identical to that of a psychological crisis. In fact, since a spiritual crisis naturally involves the psyche, a "beginning mystic" may be unaware that the crisis is spiritual in nature and may describe his or her dilemma as psychological. The symptoms of a spiritual crisis are distinct, however, and threefold.

The crisis usually begins with an awareness of an *absence of meaning and purpose* that cannot be remedied merely by shuffling the external components of one's life. One feels a much deeper longing, one that cannot be satisfied by the prospect of a raise or promotion, marriage or new relationship. Ordinary solutions hold no attraction. Of course, some people have never found meaning and purpose in life, but these people are probably wrongly

expecting life to deliver “meaning” to their doorstep. Chronic complainers and people who lack ambition are not suffering from a spiritual crisis. Those who are in a spiritual crisis, however, have a feeling that something is trying to wake up inside them. They just don’t know how to see it.

Strange new fears are the second symptom of a spiritual crisis. These fears are not ordinary, such as fears of abandonment and aging; rather, they make a person feel as if he or she is losing touch with a sense of *self or identity*. “I am no longer sure of who I am and of what I want out of life” is a standard report from a person saturated with the energy of the seventh chakra.

The third symptom is the need to experience *devotion* to something greater than oneself. The many psychological texts available today that describe human needs rarely mention our fundamental need for devotion, yet we all biologically and energetically need to be in contact with a source of power that transcends human limitations and turmoil. We need to be in touch with a source of miracles and hope. Devotion commits a part of our conscious minds to our unconscious eternal self, which in turn connects us directly to a Divine presence. Even brief and fleeting encounters with this presence and its infinite power help our conscious mind release its fears of life, and human power ceases to command our attention.

Our need to be devoted to a higher power has found numerous inappropriate surrogates: devotion to a corporation, a political party, an athletic team, a personal exercise program, even a street gang. All these earthbound surrogates will eventually fail the devotee. No matter how much you exercise, you will age. You may remain healthy in the process, but you will still get older. And much of the anguish people suffer when they let go from companies they have served loyally for years undoubtedly occurs because their loyalty contained an unconscious devotion. We expect our devotions to earthly things and people to return to us a quality of power that can take care of all our woes, but no human being or organization commands such power. No guru, minister, or priest can manage the energy of devotees for long without some form of scandal. We are not meant to be devoted to a human being; devotion is meant to be directed upward and to take us with it.

Summary of Chakra #7:

This is the area of the psychophysical body where divine energy – prana – chi – or the life-force universe – enters your physical energy system. This is the initial point at which each archetypal pattern becomes personalized into your life. The seventh chakra energy resonates with the imagination, with the greatest potential of the human spirit and physical body. When athletes first aimed to run a four-minute mile, or aerospace engineers imagined that they could put a man on the moon, their idea of what was possible was a seventh-chakra image. Every greater vision manifests as a personal goal when it descends into the sixth chakra, where visionary energy allies with that of the rational mind.

In the Indian system the seventh chakra is known as the “thousand petaled lotus,” an indication of the tremendous potential energy it holds. The locale of our spiritual aspiration and development, this energy center’s power becomes available to us through meditation. The ancients described mystical experience as a sudden expansion of the energy of the seventh chakra flooding into the psyche and soul., elevating one’s entire being to a level of consciousness that is fully transcendent of the physical world. Over a century ago the Canadian

psychologist R.M. Bucke labeled this experience “cosmic consciousness.” He believed that humanity was on the path to evolutionary change from self-consciousness to cosmic or spiritual consciousness and he felt that this change would parallel the prehistoric shift from animal awareness to self-consciousness that marked the emergence of Homo sapiens. Bucke based his theory on his experience of a moment of illumination in 1872, as well as on the records of mystical experiences of extraordinary individuals including the Buddha, Jesus, Saint Paul, Plotinus, Muhammad, Dante, Saint John of the Cross, William Blake, and Sri Ramakrishna. His evidence suggested to him that human spiritual evolution was accelerating.

While the third chakra is your seat of self-esteem and gut intuition, your seventh energy center can inspire you to see beyond the limited range of the separate and into transpersonal or cosmic vision. In an epiphany or awakening, the priorities of your inner perceptions are reordered to perceive the presence of the Divine within your life.

Questions for Self-Examination:

1. Who has come into my life today (or recently) and what lesson/s did they present to me for my higher learning?
2. Write down any coincidences or miracles that happened to you today or very recently?
3. Write down any significant dreams, insights or meditative experiences?
4. Have you experienced a greater connection to your higher self and to God?
5. What questions have you sought guidance with during meditation or moments of prayer?
6. How would your life change if God suddenly decided to answer your questions? And how would it change if the answer you received was “I have no intention of giving you insight into your questions at this point in your life”? What would you be prepared to do then?
7. Have you started and stopped a meditation practice? If so, what are the reasons that you failed to maintain it?.
8. In which areas of your body do you resonate with your truth?
9. In which areas of your body do you feel something that may not be your truth?
10. Do you practice living in the now moment, while not getting caught up in past regrets or in future fears?
11. What answers to these questions would you most fear?
12. Do you bargain with God? Do you complain to God more than you express gratitude? Do you tend to pray for specific things rather than pray in appreciation?
13. Are you devoted to a particular spiritual path? If not, do you feel a need for one? Have you found surrogates to be devoted to? If so, list and evaluate your relationship to them.
14. Do you believe that your God is more authentic than the Divine in other spiritual traditions?
15. Are you waiting for God so send you an explanation for your painful experiences? If so, list those experiences.
16. What spiritual truths are you aware of that you do not live by? List them.

17. Are you afraid of a closer spiritual connection to the Divine because of the changes that it might trigger in your life?
18. Have you practiced any meditation techniques? What were they and how did they make you feel?
19. Have you practiced any sacred breathing techniques? What were they and how did they make you feel?
20. Have any new insights come to you that you were not sure about? Are you willing to place them aside until Spirit validates them for you (if they are not your truth?)