

Chakras

By Virginia Hanspiker RMT

The chakra system, honoured in Ayurvedic and Tibetan teachings for thousands of years, is increasingly being acknowledged in western society. This parallels the growing acceptance of acupuncture which is based on energy flowing through the body's meridian system.

Our experience of reality is said to be coloured by the vibration and health of our chakras. For me, knowledge of this system means an expansion of my awareness that leads to understanding more about self, growth and change. As our understanding of energy within the body grows, we gain insight into why we attract the circumstances into our life that we do. This can help us accept our responsibility to learn the lessons involved and better yet, to perceive alternative choices.

Chakras are usually described as the energy centers or transformers in the body that bring energy in to flow through our nervous systems, influencing all body tissues and functions. Although there are said to be many throughout the body, with some above and below it, seven of the twelve 'major chakras' of the body are located along the spine, where major nerve ganglia or plexuses are located. They are also said to correspond to our endocrine system.

Influencing how we operate on many levels, these energy centers affect various physical systems as well as emotional and mental responses and their resulting thought patterns. The lower body chakras vibrate at a slower or 'lower' frequency than the upper centers. Each chakra has a different rate of vibration on a particular tone frequency, usually using notes of the major diatonic scale from 'C' at the root or base chakra progressing to 'B' at the crown chakra in our head. Sound and light are both forms of energy, so each center is linked to a corresponding physical and etheric colour association because colour is simply a much higher rate of vibration than sound. The physical and etheric colours differ because the physical vibration is lower on the scale than the etheric vibration. One chakra will influence another, just as striking one note on a keyboard resonates harmonic overtones on the keyboard. And, just like an instrument, we operate and sound much better when our chakras vibrate in harmony rather than in discord (with 'discord' referring to distortions or

congested energy influencing a center's vibratory rate or tone).

Our ability to make choices evolves as we grow, as does the function of our chakra centers. Each one, from the bottom to the top of the body, displays a successively more complex mode of functioning for both body and mind. Varying philosophy exists on which center develops at whatever physical age, but the concept of their development linked to our physical ages and emotions further unravels the choices of our life patterns. A key teaching in the work of Dr. Randolph Stone, DC, DO, ND, founder of Polarity Therapy, shows the importance of resolving emotion if balance is to be sustained on a permanent basis. We most often find energetic distortions occurring in the three lower chakras, the earliest to develop and the basis of our growth as an individual. Energy patterns can be held for many years. We may acquire an attitude during our early, impressionable years or from a time when we were simply unable to cope. Until we adjust the thought pattern we adopted from the experience, that energy remains part of us, influencing how we operate and the energy we attract into our life. Once aware of this, we can either adjust our perspective of the cause and our interpretation of it, or develop new positive thought forms to replace it. As Sher Smith, RN, RPP, RCST has stated, "When our experience (trauma) is beyond our resources, it's crystallized into the tissues until a time when we've accessed enough resources to deal with it."

In most cases, lack of nurturing in our early developmental years was not intentional, but rather a reflection of the parents' or caregivers' personal upbringing and behavioural patterns from their life experiences. To own responsibility for changing your own personal concepts is most important to expand your comprehension level and degree of acceptance, rather than blaming upbringing or someone else for your responses.

Varying degrees of balance are expressed among the chakra centers at different times throughout our life. They all are active,

some more than others. It has been said that most people who gather together are moving through the same vibrational frequency or growth of a particular chakra. Having a 'chakra balance' should leave you feeling relaxed, but how long you hold a balance depends on the changes occurring within you, your responses to circumstances and the key people in your life.

The First Chakra

Development during this early growth period is on a family or 'tribal' basis, so the first chakra resonates to our basic survival needs and physical comforts. It sets the foundation for our outlook and attitudes as experienced in group situations. Distortions can reside here when early family life contained elements of trauma, death to one of its key members, severe financial struggle or strife and division that influenced the family unit. How easily these types of trauma were handled as a family or 'tribal group' largely determines how well you move these types of emotions through this chakra. Distortions may manifest as insecurity, emotional or financial fears, phobias, self-centered tendencies, violence and being overly-focus on physical survival. We may resonate to the 'mass' consciousness or be absent-minded whenever our foundation, our stability seems threatened and we feel ungrounded. The first chakra denotes our degree of acceptance or conversely, resentment and rigidity. Fear-based attitudes from this center represent the least evolved platform from which we make decisions and choices, but can show a degree of influence until we change the misconceptions earlier thought processes recorded and restructure our habit of holding that pattern. As an evolving society we are still emotion-based and society's opinions are always ready to act as our mirror. Distortions here may help us create aspects, true or untrue, that we need at some level in order to bring areas within self to the surface to examine and expand beyond.

CHAKRA / LOCATION	COLOUR / TONE	ELEMENT	BODY REFERENCE	ISSUES	1ST ACTIVATION
1st Chakra (Base or Root) at coccyx	Red / C	Earth	skeleton, feet, legs, adrenal glands, colon	structure, survival, foundation, patience	Approximate ages 1 - 3 years
2nd Chakra (Navel, Sacral, Sexual) below navel	Orange / D	Water	reproductive system, pelvis & low back, bladder	emotions, sexuality, polarities, desire	Approximate ages 4 - 7 years
3rd Chakra (Solar Plexus) below sternum	Yellow or Gold / E	Fire	solar plexus, thighs, eyes, pancreas, liver, stomach	self-esteem, power, vitality, metabolism & transformation	Approximate ages 8 - 12 yrs
4th Chakra Heart	Green or Rose / F	Air	heart, lungs, thymus	compassion, love, balance	Approximate ages 12 - 15
5th Chakra Throat	Blue / G	Ether	throat, neck, ears, esophagus, thyroid	expression, truth, creativity, reliability	Approximate ages 15 - 17
6th Chakra Third Eye Brow chakra	Indigo / A		pituitary (some also say pineal gland)	insight, moral, discernment, intuition	Approximate ages 17 - 22
7th Chakra Crown (top of head)	Violet / B		pineal gland	soul, surrender, spirituality, understanding	No defined age

The Second Chakra

This center pertains to our emotional identity and sexuality. Our consciousness first expands beyond survival of self to dualism at this chakra level, so it's said to represent the balancing of polarities: male/female, positive/negative, relationships and how we relate to others with our 'gut-level' emotions. Balanced energy flowing through this center would influence the degree that we can harmoniously work with others, giving and receiving, tolerance, healthy emotional boundaries, how we handle change and sexual or passionate love. Repressed emotions and trauma easily settle into this chakra and may manifest as confusion, envy, over-indulgence in food or sex, and addictions. Energy congestion could also show up as a movement to disorder, and thought forms like "It's not safe to commit to a relationship" or "I mustn't get close to...."

The Third Chakra

A person who feels powerless in controlling the direction of their life could take a look at thought forms that may have started around the ages of 7 to 12, when our self-concept is further expanded from family to the world outside. Balanced energy in this center might be seen as the balanced use of personal power, mastery of desire, self-control, warmth, humour and radiance. Whenever feelings of inadequacy, inferiority and

helplessness occur, they may influence this chakra's balance. Distorted energy flows may manifest as anger, perfectionism, a tendency to take on more than you can handle, or too much emphasis on power and recognition. Digestive problems may result. Thought forms indicative of congestion here might include "nothing comes easy in my life", or "my survival depends on you..." The solar plexus center has been called a great clearing house, and makes a trio of the lower three chakras that reflect up to the heart center.

The Fourth Chakra

This center unites the energies above with the energies below, meaning both the lower chakras of our body with the higher chakras, and also spirit with physical. It reflects our ability to express love, for ourself and for others. Not to be confused with sexuality, the heart center reacts under group impetus, group happiness or unhappiness and group relations. Here we expand beyond self. Forgiveness and compassion resonate within the heart center, as does acceptance and contentment. Growth here may be expressed in non-judgemental understanding, care towards others, or loving relationships with family and friends. Feeling and wisdom are awakened at the heart center. Distortions

are said to present in such thought forms as "I can't do all I should, I feel guilty", or "there's always something missing in my life".

The Fifth Chakra

This chakra governs our ability to recognize our own truth, our ability to communicate and all forms of self-expression. Energetic distortions may manifest as vocal cord difficulties, mouth, trachea, esophagus and thyroid conditions, or knowledge used unwisely. Thought forms indicating it's time to address the energy at this chakra may be something like, "If I express my true feelings and needs, I'll be ridiculed".

The Sixth Chakra

Said to govern the growth of our insight and moral discernment, this center deals with our ability to see the world around us and to perceive without prejudice. Also termed the "seat of our spirituality", when clear-flowing, we have direct, intuitive insight into our life, accompanied with peace of mind and wisdom. When this chakra activates, between the ages 17 – 22, we usually are ready to achieve independence and explore personal values. The higher chakra centers, (from the heart up) in addition to functioning on an individual basis, also represent our growth as a society expanding in group consciousness and

spirituality. If we think of the chakras as regions of mind power, or interrelated thought patterns, it paints a clearer picture of their dual role in the evolution of individual growth from the lower to the higher chakras as well as society as an evolving group. Energy distortions may show up as being enslaved by a compulsive drive for your own brand of perfectionism, which naturally leaves you falling short, becoming prey to guilt. Cynicism and lack of concentration or imagination abilities are also said to resonate from imbalance at this center.

The Seventh Chakra

Our spiritual search resonates from this center, and may begin quite early in life or never happen in a given lifetime. When separated from our spiritual connection at this chakra level, there is no meaning in life apart from purpose shifting among goals to acquire worldly gain, social status or physical pleasure.

Chakra System Balancing

What do the chakras have to do with massage or polarity therapy? Energy is addressed in many therapies, but especially with the application of polarity techniques. This is because Polarity Therapy's focus is to assist the balancing of energy levels for optimum function. It is achieved through intent, technique, and knowledgeable application of the various types of energy, how they manifest or influence our total person and their responses. The beauty of Polarity Therapy is that rather than focus on any one aspect it uses a whole-being

approach. With this perspective, it accesses all systems from the chakras to the nervous systems, to body tissues, and most importantly..... thought processes. Dr.

Stone largely based his energetic work on ancient Ayurvedic principles that had attained positive results for thousands of years. It incorporates an understanding of the energetic grid-work of the body as the source from which we develop, including emotional and mental makeup, as well as physical appearance. Dr. Stone's work recognized the importance of brain cross-over patterns. Today, Dr. Paul Dennison's Brain Gym[®], provides yet another method to access in-grained patterns you wish to dissolve, teaching the body/mind unit to revert to integration and balance. This assists you to develop and maintain a healthier and happier lifestyle. Brain Gym[®], is a whole other therapy with massive import through the use of simple and fun techniques, currently gaining worldwide acceptance due to its positive effect in dissolving undesirable behavioural tendencies.

While it often may be important to acknowledge the point where you acquired a misconception in order to change it, one worthwhile philosophy to also consider is that things are set in motion before you come into physical form. We are said to incarnate to serve a higher purpose, both for our own growth and for the good of others. Or, stated another way, we 'experience life patterns that will bring out the part of us that doesn't yet know God'. This theory

acknowledges that mistakes can happen when someone gets their messages reversed, that the power to choose is a large component of how things unfold. You could say that represents the 'free will' part, both on an individual basis or as a society that sometimes 'turns a blind eye'.

A quick energy balance on yourself can be done whenever you notice energy tightening in a particular chakra center. Hold your right, positive-energy hand over the front of the chakra and your left negative-energy hand over the stem of the chakra on your back. This helps adjust the flow of energy through it. You can also visualize a stream of the associated colour flowing between your hands through the chakra while closing your eyes to focus with three or four deep, diaphragmatic breaths. When you adjust your thought patterns, you are also adjusting the energy pattern flowing through the chakra that resonates to that thought or emotional vibration. Whether you start to change your lifestyle with polarity therapy, nutrition, massage therapy, yoga, fitness programs or art lessons, it all begins with your thoughts and your choices. Once you choose health for yourself, it spirals into more and more areas that assist you and those within your life, to feel better on many levels.

Virginia Hanspiker, RMT, is a Level 2 student of Polarity Therapy. She has 9 years experience which began in nutrition, reflexology and reiki, and lead to a successful practice in massage therapy. Currently, Virginia works in Mississauga, Ontario. For more information, please visit her website at www.atouchofhealth.ca.