

The Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh *Chakras*

Fully opening the channel to a life well lived

I. Introduction:

In our last talk, we discussed the first three *Chakras*: *Muladhara Chakra*, *Svadisthana Chakra*, and *Manipura Chakra*. By way of review:

- A. *Muladhara Chakra* is located at the root of the tailbone, in the pelvic area at the base of the spine. It constitutes our very foundation. It represents the building blocks of our life, which includes our bodies, health, physical and monetary state, our survival and our ability to satisfy our needs.¹
 - 1. Because *Muladhara Chakra* relates to our foundation, it is associated with issues such as grounding, nourishment, trust, health, home, family, and prosperity.²
 - 2. We must establish a solid foundation in order to create a life of well-being. Without the confidence that comes with a sturdy, dependable foundation in life, we are likely to miss the worthwhile opportunities life presents.
 - a. Instead of noticing opportunities to experience positive emotions, engagement, meaning, accomplishments, and nurturing relationships, we remain mired as we continually battle negative patterns of thought, including false beliefs about others and ourselves.
 - b. Rather than behaving in ways that foster increased connection to others and to our own inner strengths and dreams, we are constantly involved in putting out the fires caused by the precipitous and unhelpful behavior that flows from our negative thought patterns.
- B. *Svadisthana Chakra* is located below the navel, in the pelvic area at the root of the reproductive organs. It pertains to our ability to develop relationships with others, as well as our sexuality, pleasure, and desire for enjoyment and gratification.
 - 1. Since *Svadisthana Chakra* relates to our ability to develop relationships with others, it is considered the center of sensation and feeling, emotions, movement, change, and desire, including the desire to connect.³

¹ Judith, Anodea (2004 ed.) *Wheels of Life*. St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, at 60.

² Judith, Anodea (2004 ed.) *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, Berkeley, CA: Celestial Arts, at 57.

³ *Eastern Body Western Mind*, at 106.

2. We must keep this *Chakra* open in order to connect with others. When this *Chakra* is open, we are able to establish a flow in our relationships. We are accommodating and learn how to work with others.
- C. *Manipura Chakra* is located in the solar plexus area. It is associated with fire, vitality, willpower, self-esteem, and personality.
1. Because *Manipura Chakra* involves our desire for self-expression, this *Chakra* relates to ego development and creation of a sense of personal power. This allows us to then put our energy into meaningful action.
 2. Here we develop our capacity to take risks through self-expression.⁴ Manifesting our strengths in meaningful, engaging activities requires that this *Chakra* be open.

Today we look at the remaining four *Chakras* in the seven-*Chakra* system: *Anahata Chakra* (located in the area of the heart; pertaining to our social skills, including our compassion and capacity for love); *Vissudha Chakra* (located in the throat; pertaining to our communication skills and our creativity); *Ajna Chakra* (located between the eyebrows; associated with intuition, psychic perception, clarity, and wisdom); and the *Sahasrara Chakra* (located at the top of the head; associated with our spiritual consciousness).

II. **The fourth *Chakra*: *Anahata Chakra*.**

Anahata Chakra, is located at the heart. It is associated with our social skills, nurturing relationships, self-acceptance, compassion and capacity for love.

This *Chakra* represents a person free from the wounds of the past, emotionally fresh and able to avoid being overwhelmed by past issues. This freedom from negative past experiences and memories allows a person to thrive despite what life throws at him or her.⁵ This doesn't mean that such a person has never been wounded, only that the person has processed the wounds and is no longer bound by any negative emotions or habits associated with the pain of those wounds. While painful memories may well exist, they don't hijack our thoughts and behavior.

- A. *Anahata* means “un-struck” and refers to a “sound” that occurs without two things actually striking each other, symbolizing a lack of violence or conflict.
- B. *Anahata Chakra* relates to the Air element, representing the least dense form of matter. Air is associated with openness, expansion, and knowledge. In relationships this characteristic of air refers to spaciousness, the ability to avoid

⁴ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 172–173.

⁵ *Wheels of Life*, at 196.

clinging and let go. For significant personal relationships to survive and flourish, these traits must be developed.

- C. *Anahata Chakra* is associated with the color green. Green represents the way plants reach for the sky from their roots as they grow.⁶ Author and teacher Dr. Anodea Judith writes that we do the same thing as we expand into relationships; we reach or extend from our solid, healthy foundation to something beyond ourselves in a liberating current.⁷
1. This *Chakra* has a seed sound of Yam.
 2. *Anahata Chakra* has the following physical components:
 - a. This *Chakra* is associated with excessive characteristics of asthma, coronary disease, and lung disease.⁸
 - b. This *Chakra* relates to the Thymus gland, as well as the lungs, heart, circulatory system, arms, and hands.⁹
 3. *Anahata Chakra* has the following basic psychological components:
 - a. As mentioned, this *Chakra* is associated primarily with love.¹⁰
 - b. A healthy functioning of this *Chakra* results in a person being at peace and having a strong social identity and a sense of self-acceptance.¹¹ When this *Chakra* is activated, a person develops the capacity to love and increases his or her knowledge.¹² Compassion and positive relationships are enhanced.¹³

⁶ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 228.

⁷ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 228.

⁸ *Wheels of Life*, at 43.

⁹ *Wheels of Life*, at 43.

¹⁰ *Wheels of Life*, at 43.

¹¹ *Wheels of Life*, at 43.

¹² Iyengar, B.K.S. (2011 ed). *Light on Pranayama*. Uttar Pradesh, India: HarperCollins Publishers, India, at 39.

¹³ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 11.

- c. Deficiencies in this *Chakra* can manifest as shyness, loneliness, a feeling of isolation, bitterness, and being critical.¹⁴ A person with excessive characteristics may be co-dependent, have poor boundaries, and be jealous and possessive.¹⁵ The “demon” of this *Chakra* is grief.¹⁶
 - d. In part due to its association with the expansive liberating feelings associated with self-acceptance and love, this *Chakra* connects to *Rajas* and *Sattva Gunas*.¹⁷
- D. Dr. Judith describes how to reclaim this *Chakra*, suggesting that a person work to deal with family trauma and abuse, develop self-love, and resolve issues of rejection.¹⁸
- E. Fourth *Chakra* exercises include breathing exercises and yoga poses such as chest opener (clasping hands behind back, locking elbows, and bending over); Cobra Pose (*Bhujangasana*), Bridge Pose (*Setubhanda*), and Fish Pose (*Matsyasana*), by way of example, as well as certain themed meditations.¹⁹

III. The fifth *Chakra*: *Vissudha Chakra*.

Vissudha Chakra is located in the throat. It is associated with our ability to communicate, our self-expression, and creative identity. Remember, much of the world we create is through our words.

Vissudha means “purification” and refers to our movement from the material world into the spiritual realm.²⁰ This *Chakra* is where we begin to sense the vibratory nature of the world and its mysteries, including paranormal activities and telepathic episodes.²¹

- A. When we look for ways to do something meaningful, to serve in some way, it is important that we have a strong sense of what is going on around us and, from that sense, what the world needs from us based on our own unique package of strengths. This is an important reason for clearing flow through this *Chakra*.

¹⁴ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 11.

¹⁵ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 11.

¹⁶ *Wheels of Life*, at 43.

¹⁷ *Wheels of Life*, at 43.

¹⁸ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 246–283.

¹⁹ *Wheels of Life*, at 214–226.

²⁰ *Wheels of Life*, at 239.

²¹ *Wheels of Life*, at 242–244.

- B. *Vissudha Chakra* relates to the sky element, representing Supreme Consciousness, as well as space or ether. It is in this environment of “sky,” an invisible ethereal plane, where our thoughts and emotions reside.²² If we are unable to sense the vibratory ebb and flow, the give and take, of the world around us we are far less likely to make choices that serve those vibrations. This is true in our family, in our workplace, and in our community. To make choices that serve these important components of our life, we must be attuned to their vibratory energies.
- C. *Vissudha Chakra* is represented as the color blue, the color of the sky, representing inspiration and the unknown. It is the color of the sky and the ocean and is associated with the Divine.
- D. Dr. Judith explains that we communicate information through the symbolism of words, patterns, or electrical impulses.

We also think in symbols, so we must learn to figure out what symbols mean to us and then use them to make connections to others. This allows us to manifest ourselves in the world to the full extent of our potential.²³

1. This *Chakra* has a seed sound of Ham.
2. *Vissudha Chakra* has the following physical components:
 - a. This *Chakra* is associated with excessive characteristics of sore throats, neck and shoulder pain, and thyroid troubles.²⁴
 - b. This *Chakra* relates to the Thyroid and Parathyroid glands, as well as the throat, ears, mouth, shoulders, and neck.²⁵
3. *Vissudha Chakra* has the following basic psychological components:
 - a. As mentioned,²⁶ this *Chakra* is associated primarily with communication.
 - b. A healthy functioning of this *Chakra* results in people expressing themselves well, and creativity.²⁷ When this *Chakra* is activated, a

²² *Wheels of Life*, at 242–244.

²³ *Wheels of Life*, at 235–238.

²⁴ *Wheels of Life*, at 43.

²⁵ *Wheels of Life*, at 43.

²⁶ *Wheels of Life*, at 43.

- person becomes more intellectually alert, is better able to understand things, and becomes clearer in speech.²⁸
- c. Deficiencies in this *Chakra* can manifest as fear of speaking or even aphasia; interference with the ability to speak.²⁹ A person with excessive characteristics may talk too much, not be able to listen, or stutter.³⁰ The “demon” of this *Chakra* is lying.³¹
 - d. Words can expand consciousness in the world. Because the throat lies in the gateway between the mind and body, this *Chakra* has transformative powers when words and the energy generated by those words expand awareness and serve a greater good. In part for these reasons, this *Chakra* connects to both *Rajas* and *Sattva Gunas*.³²
- E. Dr. Judith describes how to reclaim this *Chakra*, suggesting that a person work to deal with guilt and shame, habits of trying to keep secrets (another way of gossiping, as opposed to honoring a legitimate confidence), lying, yelling and screaming, and an inability to listen.³³
- F. Fifth *Chakra* exercises include reciting *Mantras*, playing charades, engaging in periods of silence, and yoga poses such as shoulder stand (*Sarvangasana*), and Plow pose (*Halasana*).³⁴

IV. The sixth *Chakra*: *Ajna Chakra*.

Ajna Chakra is the command center *Chakra*.³⁵ It is located between the eyebrows. It is associated with intuition, psychic perception, clarity, and wisdom. It is referred to as “the third eye.”

²⁷ *Wheels of Life*, at 43.

²⁸ *Light on Pranayama*, at 39.

²⁹ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 11.

³⁰ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 11.

³¹ *Wheels of Life*, at 43.

³² *Wheels of Life*, at 43; 238.

³³ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 302–336.

³⁴ *Wheels of Life*, at 266–271.

³⁵ *Wheels of Life*, at 44; 196.

Ajna means “command” and refers to a person’s ability to see both inside themselves as well as connect to others.

- A. *Ajna* refers to the ability to perceive images and then form visions from which we create our reality; i.e., creative visualization.³⁶ As we seek to fully express our strengths in the world, this *Chakra*, when functioning fully, optimizes our ability to correlate our strengths and desires with service; i.e., meaningful engagement and accomplishment. We are capable of far more intimacy in our relationships with others as we deepen our sensitivity to them.
- B. *Anja Chakra* correlates with light because light helps us to see. This, in turn, helps illuminate and thus visualize the type of life we seek.³⁷ We can see the potential for meaningful action, where we can contribute our particular strengths and experiences.
- C. When we are able to see the world around us with clarity, we are better able to make choices that bring more positive emotion, meaningful engagement and accomplishment, and richer relationships.
- D. *Ajna Chakra* is represented as the color indigo. Indigo has been associated with that part of the rainbow bridging the material world with Supreme Consciousness. As such, it also represents our ability to build a rainbow bridge in the world. This is a bridge that fosters connection and harmony.

We see patterns of connection in the world that guide us in our choices. This feeds our visualization about how to create and live our life.³⁸

- 1. *Ajna Chakra* has a seed sound of Om.
- 2. *Ajna Chakra* has the following physical components:
 - a. This *Chakra* is associated with excessive characteristics of headaches and nightmares.³⁹
 - b. The sixth *Chakra* relates to the Pineal gland, as well as the eyes, base of the skull, and the brow.⁴⁰

³⁶ *Wheels of Life*, at 281–282.

³⁷ *Wheels of Life*, at 283–284.

³⁸ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 343.

³⁹ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 11.

⁴⁰ *Wheels of Life*, at 44.

3. *Ajna Chakra* has the following basic psychological components:

- a. As mentioned, this *Chakra* is considered our command center.⁴¹
 - b. A healthy function of this *Chakra* results in a person being intuitive, imaginative, and self-reflective.⁴² When this *Chakra* is activated, a person develops control over the body and a spiritual aura.⁴³ A person's psychic ability and skill in interpreting experiences are enhanced.⁴⁴
 - c. Deficiencies in this *Chakra* can manifest as hallucinations, delusions, and difficulty concentrating.⁴⁵ A person with excessive characteristics may have poor memory, poor vision, be unimaginative or live in denial.⁴⁶ The "demon" of this *Chakra* is illusion.⁴⁷
 - d. Because a person with a functioning sixth *Chakra* can see connection with the world, this *Chakra* connects to *Sattva Guna*.⁴⁸
- E. Dr. Judith describes how to reclaim this *Chakra*, suggesting that a person do dream work and visualization practices, among other work.⁴⁹
- F. Sixth *Chakra* exercises include various forms of meditation.⁵⁰

V. The seventh *Chakra*: *Sahasrara Chakra*.

The seventh *Chakra*, *Sahasrara Chakra*, is located at the top of the head and is associated with our spiritual consciousness and connection to that consciousness.

⁴¹ *Wheels of Life*, at 44.

⁴² *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 11.

⁴³ *Light on Pranayama*, at 39.

⁴⁴ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 11.

⁴⁵ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 11.

⁴⁶ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 11.

⁴⁷ *Wheels of Life*, at 44.

⁴⁸ *Wheels of Life*, at 44.

⁴⁹ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 375–388.

⁵⁰ *Wheels of Life*, at 305–310.

- A. *Sahasrara* means “thousand fold” and refers to a crown of a thousand-fold lotus atop our head.⁵¹ This lotus represents the infinite unfolding petals of a lotus. Each petal is full of intelligence and Divine possibility.⁵²
- B. When we’ve established flow all the way up from our foundational *Chakra*, *Muladhara*, to *Sahasrara Chakra*, we are fully present in the world, living the life of well-being we’ve sought to create. We find positive emotion routinely. We resonate those emotions, enhancing our connection with others. We are constantly engaged because we see each moment of life as full of potential, even those less than stellar moments. Even unfortunate events offer the possibility of creating meaning through our choice of response. We accomplish things. We find the Divine imprint everywhere.
- C. From a spiritual perspective, when we live out of *Sahasrara Chakra* we are now connected with the Divine; the ultimate goal of yoga.
- D. *Sahasrara Chakra* pertains to the notion of thought. Dr. Judith points out that this *Chakra* is about merging with Supreme Consciousness as we remember our own true nature.⁵³
- E. *Sahasrara Chakra* is represented as the color violet. Violet is the color of spiritual mastery.⁵⁴
 1. There is no seed sound for this *Chakra*.
 2. *Sahasrara Chakra* has the following physical components:
 - a. This *Chakra* is associated with excessive characteristics of confusion.⁵⁵
 - b. This *Chakra* relates to the Pituitary gland, as well as the central nervous system, and the cerebral cortex.⁵⁶
 3. *Sahasrara Chakra* has the following basic psychological components:
 - a. As mentioned, this *Chakra* is associated primarily with thought.⁵⁷

⁵¹ *Wheels of Life*, at 44; 319.

⁵² *Wheels of Life*, at 319–320.

⁵³ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 392.

⁵⁴ *Wheels of Life*, at 44.

⁵⁵ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 11.

⁵⁶ *Wheels of Life*, at 44.

⁵⁷ *Wheels of Life*, at 44.

- b. A healthy function of this *Chakra* results in a person being aware, wise, and understanding connection to something bigger. A person has self-knowledge as well.⁵⁸
 - c. Deficiencies in this *Chakra* can manifest as learning difficulties, spiritual skepticism, materialism, or apathy.⁵⁹ A person with excessive characteristics may be overly intellectual and vulnerable to spiritual addiction.⁶⁰ The “demon” of this *Chakra* is attachment.⁶¹
 - d. Because at this point a person has found spiritual connection as well as self-knowledge, this *Chakra* connects to *Sattva Guna*.⁶²
- F. Dr. Judith describes how to reclaim this *Chakra*, suggesting that a person engage in meditation and visualization practices, among other practices.⁶³
- G. Seventh *Chakra* exercises include meditation.⁶⁴
- H. In Chapter 72 of my book *Finding the Midline* I describe how my friend underwent a surgery. I wrote about the very tiny, sophisticated instruments the surgeons used during the course of that surgery that, frankly, blow my mind in terms of the genius involved with inventing such things. These instruments allowed the surgeons to find something that, if left undiscovered, would have caused severe problems for my friend down the road. The purpose of this story is to demonstrate how Supreme Consciousness is everywhere once we are able to see clearly through the purifying and activation of all seven *Chakras*.⁶⁵

⁵⁸ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 11.

⁵⁹ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 11.

⁶⁰ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 11.

⁶¹ *Wheels of Life*, at 44.

⁶² *Wheels of Life*, at 44.

⁶³ *Eastern Body, Western Mind*, at 421–436.

⁶⁴ *Wheels of Life*, at 340-343.

⁶⁵ Dorigan, William (2013). *Finding the Midline*. Winter Park, CO: LuHen Publications, LLC., at 222–223.

VI. Conclusion.

A life of well-being requires positive emotions, engagement, meaning, accomplishment, and nurturing relationships. We've seen where success in creating a life of well-being requires that we study ourselves to identify and then use our signature strengths.⁶⁶

Even when we've done that work, we still need to rid ourselves of patterns of thought and behavior that can interfere with the recognition and expression of our own potential. Working with the *Chakras* can help us work through those patterns, freeing us to recognize our gifts, share them, and experience those things that make life worthwhile.

Chakra work is of great help in preparing us for the work of yoga. That work is identified for us in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, the subject of our next series of talks.

⁶⁶ See, generally, Seligman, Dr. Martin (2011). *Flourish*. New York, NY: Free Press.