

The First, Second and Third *Chakras* From Foundation to Personal Expression

I. Introduction.

By way of review, *Chakras* are organizational pools of *Prana*—our life force. Understanding the *Chakras* can lead to greater connection with each other and ourselves as well as transform us. We need this connection because creating a life of well-being is difficult, if not impossible without it. How, for example, do we ascertain our own signature strengths without an on-going dialogue with ourselves? How do we ascertain meaningful ways to contribute to our family, our workplace, and our community, without connection to others? How do we develop close, valuable relationships if we aren't able to fully connect with others?

The *Chakras* assist us in a number of ways:

- A. As organizational centers, the *Chakras* store our patterns of thought and behavior. By self-study we can identify those patterns that assist us in achieving a life well lived and those that get in our way. By doing so we increase our ability to shape and create the world around us and within us.¹
- B. In terms of spiritual transformation, we learn to channel our life force, our *Prana*, in ways that help us with connection to Spirit and to a richer life. *Prana-sakti* is the power of spiritual transformation and it exists within us as *Kundalini*. According to Tantric philosophy, for real transformation we need this *Kundalini* to awaken and flow within us.² The *Chakras* are energetic hubs for the efficient flow of this energy which receive, assimilate and transmit the *Prana*.³
- C. Tonight we look at the first three *Chakras*: First *Muladhara Chakra* (located at the pelvis or base of the spine; constituting our very foundation); Second *Chakra*, *Svadisthana Chakra* (located below the navel, at the root of the reproductive organs; pertaining to our relationships with others); and Third *Chakra*, *Manipura Chakra* (located at the solar plexus; serving as the expression of our personality).

¹ *Eastern Body Western Mind*, at 4-8.

² Shantananda, Swami (2003). *The Splendor of Recognition*. South Fallsburg, NY: SYDA Foundation, at 215; 309-310.

³ Judith, Anodea (2004 ed). *Eastern Body Western Mind*. Berkeley, CA: Celestial Arts, at 4.

II. The First *Chakra*: *Muladhara Chakra*.

Muladhara Chakra, is located at the root of the tailbone, in the pelvic area at the base of the spine. It is associated with issues such as grounding, nourishment, trust, health, home, family, and prosperity.⁴ *Muladhara Chakra* represents the building blocks of our life, including our bodies, health, physical and monetary state, our survival and our ability to satisfy our needs.⁵

- A. *Muladhara* means “root support.” Here we develop the foundation or roots of our life, both physically and spiritually.⁶ Anodea Judith refers to our sciatic nerve, which travels from the sacral plexus, near the location of this *Chakra*, down through the legs. She points out that this nerve functions much like a root for the nervous system to the solid and stable ground.⁷ If we are to maximize our ability to create a life of well-being we must have a strong foundation, a level of confidence that allows us to move through the world without the constant hijackings that insecurities and fears can cause.
- B. *Muladhara Chakra* relates to the Earth element, representing the densest form of matter. Earth represents steadiness, dependability, and solid support. When we feel this way about ourselves, we are in a position to pay attention to each moment, capable of enjoying the positive emotions and opportunities for meaningful engagement that arise. We are the type of reliable person others seek as friends.
- C. *Muladhara Chakra* is represented as the color red, the color of beginnings and the longest wavelength and slowest vibration of colors.⁸ Red symbolizes a bright heat representing raw power, the power of creation.
- D. This *Chakra* has a seed sound of Lam.
- E. We first explore the physical components of this *Chakra*:
 - 1. This *Chakra* is associated with excessive characteristics of obesity or anorexia, as well as sciatica and constipation.⁹

⁴ *Eastern Body Western Mind* at 57.

⁵ *Wheels of Life* at 60.

⁶ Judith, Anodea (2004 ed). *Wheels of Life*. St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Press, at 60.

⁷ *Wheels of Life* at 60.

⁸ *Wheels of Life* at 60.

⁹ *Wheels of Life*, at 42.

2. The First *Chakra* relates to the Adrenal gland, as well as the legs, feet, bones, and large intestine.¹⁰
- F. We now look at the basic psychological components of this *Chakra*:
1. As mentioned, this *Chakra* is associated primarily with survival or self-preservation.¹¹
 2. A healthy function of this *Chakra* results in a person being well grounded and having a good sense of personal identity.¹² When this *Chakra* is activated, a person becomes firm in vitality and sexual energies begin to come under control.¹³
 3. Deficiencies in this *Chakra* can manifest as fear, lack of discipline, lack of focus, and greed. *Eastern Body Western Mind* at 10. The “demon” of this *Chakra* is fear.¹⁴
 4. In part due to its association with the dense, slow vibration of the earth element, the First *Chakra* connects to *Tamas Guna*.¹⁵
- G. Anodea Judith describes how to reclaim this *Chakra*, suggesting a person work with trust, abandonment, and abuse issues and engage in practices designed to work with these issues and restore a solid foundation, including grounding exercises.¹⁶
- H. First *Chakra* exercises include yoga poses such as Bridge Pose (*Setubhanda*), Locust Pose (*Salambhasana*), and Head to Knee Pose (*Janu Sirsasana*), among others.¹⁷
- I. In Chapter 66 of my book *Finding the Midline* I describe how a healthy foundation can often be built through our parents. I describe trying to call in

¹⁰ *Wheels of Life* at 42.

¹¹ *Wheels of Life* at 42.

¹² *Wheels of Life*, at 42.

¹³ Iyengar, B.K.S. (2011 ed). *Light on Pranayama*. Uttar Pradesh, India: HarperCollins Publishers, India, at 38.

¹⁴ *Wheels of Life*, at 42.

¹⁵ *Wheels of Life* at 42.

¹⁶ *Eastern Body Western Mind*. At 66-102.

¹⁷ *Wheels of Life*, at 86-98.

sick for a night shift at the steel mill one night during college so I could go out with one of my sister's attractive friends. My mother, ever vigilant, caught me and made me go to work. As much as I resented her for that night, I later realized that it was that constant vigilance and commitment to my having a fruitful life that helped make me a strong, dependable person who could forge a life of success.¹⁸

III. The Second *Chakra*: *Svadisthana Chakra*.

Svadisthana Chakra is located in the pelvis area. It is associated with the capacity for relationships, sexuality, pleasure, and desire for enjoyment and gratification. At this *Chakra* we recognize difference and we begin to perceive ourselves in relationship to others. This constitutes flow or movement, in contrast to the stillness of the First *Chakra*, rooted in foundation.¹⁹

- A. *Svadisthana* means “sweetness.”²⁰ This *Chakra* is the center of sensation and feeling, emotions, movement, change, and desire, including the desire to connect.²¹ In creating a life well lived, connection to our own feelings as well as to the feelings of others, is critical. We also must have sufficient desire to bring these things into our life so as to do the personal work necessary to make connections. With the desire to connect we associate this *Chakra* with the ability to feel passion, pleasure, as well as desire.²²
- B. Because this *Chakra* is associated with movement, it relates to the Water element, representing the flow and adaptability of water. When this *Chakra* is active, we seek the flow of dynamic energy that is necessary for transformation and connection. Like water, we must be adaptable to difference in order to make connection to others. If we have established a solid First *Chakra*, a steady foundation that brings feelings of confidence, we are able to flow into relationship, inviting, of course, the range of emotions that come with relationship.
- C. *Svadisthana Chakra* is represented as the color orange. Orange is a sophisticated glow of creativity as opposed to the bright red of the First *Chakra*, suggesting the addition of our personality to the raw potential existing at our foundation.

¹⁸ Dorigan, William (2013). *Finding the Midline*. Winter Park, CO: LuHen Publications, LLC., at 209-210.

¹⁹ *Wheels of Life* at 108.

²⁰ *Eastern Body Western Mind*, at 105.

²¹ *Eastern Body Western Mind*, at 106.

²² *Wheels of Life* at 106.

- D. This *Chakra* has a seed sound of Vam.
- E. We first explore the physical components of this *Chakra*:
1. This *Chakra* is associated with excessive characteristics leading to frigidity and impotence.²³ Malfunctions at this *Chakra* can manifest as sexual problems and urinary trouble.²⁴
 2. The Second *Chakra* relates to the Gonads, as well as the womb, genitals, kidney, bladder and low back.²⁵ It is associated with liquids.
- F. We now look at the basic psychological components of this *Chakra*:
1. As mentioned, this *Chakra* is associated primarily with desire and self-gratification.²⁶
 2. A healthy function of this *Chakra* results in a person having an appropriate sense of sexuality and a sound emotional identity. When this *Chakra* is activated, a person becomes friendly and compassionate.²⁷
 3. Deficiencies in this *Chakra* can manifest as being overly emotional, lacking in boundaries, and obsession with others, rigidness, fear of pleasure, and emotional numbness.²⁸ The “demon” of this *Chakra* is guilt.²⁹
 4. The energy of this *Chakra* is still dense as we continue to coalesce. Therefore, this *Chakra* is also connected to *Tamas Guna*.³⁰
- G. Anodea Judith describes how to reclaim this *Chakra*, suggesting we do physical work to restore a proper balance of energies and engage in activities that help eliminate any existing excesses and deficiencies. She suggests we encourage movement when we sense rigidity and recognize and seek to

²³ *Eastern Body Western Mind* at 10.

²⁴ *Wheels of Life*, at 42.

²⁵ *Wheels of Life*, at 42.

²⁶ *Wheels of Life* at 42.

²⁷ *Light on Pranayama*, at 38.

²⁸ *Eastern Body Western Mind* at 10.

²⁹ *Wheels of Life*, at 42.

³⁰ *Wheels of Life* at 42.

contain excessive energy. She also suggests we examine as appropriate other emotional issues.³¹

- H. Second *Chakra* exercises include poses such as Goddess Pose (on back, knees bent and feet together, Pelvic Rock (on back, knees bent and feet flat, and Standing Hip Circles, among others.³²
- I. In Chapter 67 of my book *Finding the Midline* I describe how a healthy desire to connect with my son caused me to avoid meddling in his dreams for his future and, instead, listen to what he wanted and offer support.³³

IV. The Third *Chakra*: *Manipura Chakra*.

Manipura Chakra is located in the solar plexus area. It is associated with fire, vitality, willpower, self-esteem, and personality. Here we develop a desire for self-expression. A key purpose of this *Chakra* is transformation and the energy of this *Chakra*, unlike the first two, is upward like a rising fire as we liberate from old patterns and seek ways to expand in the world.³⁴ Our desire to creatively express ourselves burns like a fire within us. Our increased awareness of our connection to others guides us like a bright light in our actions.

- A. This Third *Chakra* means “lustrous gem.”³⁵ This *Chakra* is where we desire to convert our energy into action, develop a sense of ego and personal power, and take risks as we engage in self-expression.³⁶
- B. This *Chakra* relates to the Fire element. In addition to the other similarities to fire, this *Chakra* relates to the Fire element because of how the light and heat of fire can be so transformative, casting light on appropriate outlets for expression and burning away fears that might inhibit such expression. With the desire to transform we eventually overcome the inertia that tends to keep us trapped in old behaviors.³⁷

³¹ *Eastern Body Western Mind*, at 150-163.

³² *Wheels of Life*, at 134-141.

³³ *Finding the Midline*, at 211-212.

³⁴ *Wheels of Life* at 152.

³⁵ *Eastern Body Western Mind*, at 166.

³⁶ *Eastern Body Western Mind*, at 172-173.

³⁷ *Wheels of Life* at 152.

- C. *Manipura Chakra*, is associated with the color yellow. Yellow represents awareness and a dawning of expression of our creative power and increased perception.
- D. The seed sound for this *Chakra* is Ram.
- E. We first explore the physical components of this *Chakra*:
 1. This *Chakra* is associated with excessive characteristics of being dominating, controlling, and over active.³⁸ Deficiencies can cause digestive issues, chronic fatigue, or hypertension.³⁹
 2. This *Chakra* relates to the pancreas and adrenals, as well as the digestive system, liver, and gall bladder.⁴⁰ It is associated with plasma.
- F. We now look at the basic psychological components of this *Chakra*:
 1. As mentioned, this *Chakra* is associated primarily with transformation.⁴¹
 2. A healthy function of this *Chakra* results in a person having a healthy sense of ego and identity, allowing that person to approach relationships and connection in an appropriate way.⁴² When this *Chakra* is activated, a person obtains calmness even in the face of adversity.⁴³
 3. Deficiencies in this *Chakra* can manifest as poor self-esteem, lack of discipline, and fearfulness.⁴⁴ The “demon” of this *Chakra* is shame.⁴⁵
 4. This *Chakra* is also connected to *Rajas Guna* in part because at this *Chakra* the energy is rising.⁴⁶

³⁸ *Eastern Body Western Mind* at 10.

³⁹ *Wheels of Life*, at 42.

⁴⁰ *Wheels of Life* at 43.

⁴¹ *Wheels of Life* at 152.

⁴² *Wheels of Life*, at 42.

⁴³ *Light on Pranayama*, at 38.

⁴⁴ *Eastern Body Western Mind* at 10.

⁴⁵ *Wheels of Life*, at 42.

⁴⁶ *Wheels of Life* at 42.

- G. Anodea Judith describes how to reclaim this *Chakra*. Examples include seeking supportive relationships to help us overcome the inertia that blocks our transformation and to overcome patterns of thought and behavior that holds us back. She suggests we engage in nourishing activities that help stoke the fire of desire to transform, work on any shame issues we might have and be encourage risk-taking and seek to eliminate anger and shame.⁴⁷
- H. Third *Chakra* exercises include jogging, and the Wood Chopper exercise, and yoga poses such as Bow Pose (*Dhanurasana*) and the Belly Push (*Purvottanasana*), among others.⁴⁸
- I. In Chapter 68 of my book *Finding the Midline* I discuss how a friend of mine was able to overcome her fear of teaching her first yoga class to become one of the most appreciated and valuable teachers in our community, not only transforming herself in the process but also transforming numerous others fortunate enough to attend her classes.⁴⁹

V. Conclusion.

These first three *Chakras* set the groundwork for a life well lived and for spiritual transformation. When we work through issues involving these *Chakras* we have a foundation of confidence that allows us to meet life's challenges. We develop the ability to get along with others, and we mold ourselves into a strong, powerful presence in the world.

The subject of our next talk, the remaining four *Chakras*, completes our journey over the Rainbow Bridge.

⁴⁷ *Eastern Body Western Mind*, at 214-218.

⁴⁸ *Wheels of Life*, at 176-184.

⁴⁹ *Finding the Midline*, at 213-215.