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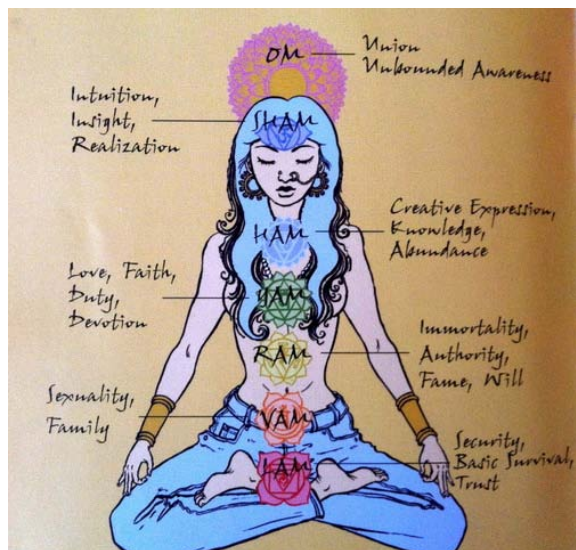
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## Chakras 101: Location, Qualities, Development & Use

By Jen Warakomski

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If you have been to a yoga class or yoga themed workshop, you may have heard the teacher using the word 'Chakra'.

Or, perhaps you have seen images of Chakras tattooed on a yogi's back while checking out your neighbor in side plank during class. Either way, if you are curious about these things we call Chakras, or even if you are familiar and would like to know more, let's first unveil the basics.

The Chakras are seven main energy points in the body that run vertically from bottom to top along the spine. They are considered 'wheels' of energy that regulate the flow of energy within our body.

Chakras are not visible to the human eye, because they *are* energy. However, especially here in the West, you may have seen illustrations of Chakras in the form of 'yantras', or geometric symbols, which represent each particular Chakra. In addition to its yantra illustration, each Chakra is represented by many other details ranging from a specific color, Mantra Sound, Hand Mudra, Earth Element, Crystal, Essential Oil and other correlations.

Our Chakras are even directly linked to a specific endocrine gland and organ within our bodies. Since they are *the* major energy locations of the body, the Chakras are directly associated with our physical, mental and emotional interactions and expressions. Therefore, one can say that all of our senses, all of our perceptions and insights, all of our possible states of awareness—everything that is possible for

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us to experience—can be divided into one of the seven Chakra categories.

Each of the seven Chakras can become blocked or imbalanced as we experience both normal and irregular life events, sometimes stemming all the way back to birth. Through meditation, Reiki, yoga, various healing art therapies and life & style adjustments, our Chakras can be cleansed, unblocked and rebalanced.

To begin your study, review the Chakra associations and characteristics below. Then, start to observe or meditate on each Chakra—first, by simply focusing on the location and color. You can also utilize each Chakra's descriptive associations as tools to navigate and, quite possibly, discover more depth within yourself.

Are you ready? Let's begin at the base of the spine and work our way up:



#### The First Chakra | Root Chakra

- >>Sanskrit: Muldhara
- >>Color: red
- >>Element: earth
- >>Development: from womb to 12 months of age.
- >>Location: base of the spine
- >>Balanced Qualities: groundedness, stability
- >>Imbalanced Qualities: unsettled feelings and tendencies
- >>Main Right: to have and to be present
- >> Body Location Where Physical Issues May Occur: legs and feet

A balanced or clear Root Chakra is steady and grounded. If unbalanced or blocked, one can have issues with survival—both financially and domestic. Trust and appropriate boundaries can also be challenged.

The main right of your First Chakra is for you to find more safety and grounding so that you can trust in the wisdom of your body with your surroundings.



#### The Second Chakra | Sacral Chakra

- >>Sanskrit Name: Svadhishthana
- >> Color: orange
- >>Element: water

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A poster for Shakti Fest, a celebration of the Divine Feminine. The background is a gradient of purple, pink, and orange. The text reads: "Shakti Fest", "A Celebration of the Divine Feminine", "MAY 16-18 | JOSHUA TREE, CA", "JAI UTTAL • SHIVA REA • SAUL DAVID RAYE", "DAVE STRINGER • TIM MILLER • SARA IVANHOE", "DONNA DE LORY • MARK WHITWELL", "AND MANY MORE", and "TICKETS ON SALE NOW 408-460-0504".

A collage of four images related to yoga and wellness. Top left: "HANUMAN FESTIVAL" logo with a sun and a silhouette of Hanuman, dated "JUNE 12-15, 2014". Top right: "Shakti Fest" logo with "MAY 16-18 JOSHUA TREE, CA" and "TICKETS ON SALE NOW". Middle left: Text "WHY JUST STRETCH WHEN YOU CAN SAVE THE WORLD?". Middle right: "om singles.com" logo with the tagline "own your truth®". Bottom left: A green tassel necklace. Bottom right: "yoga tune up" logo with "Teacher Trainings Change Lives".

A collection of "Yoga in a Bottle" products, including several bottles of yoga mats and other items, with the text "Yoga in a Bottle" at the top.

- >>Development: 6 months – 2 years
- >>Location: lower abdomen, below the navel
- >>Balanced Qualities: sensuality, sexuality
- >>Imbalanced Qualities: sexual dysfunction, lack of sensation
- >>Main Right: To Feel
- >>Body Location Where Physical Issues May Occur: reproductive organs

Our Sacral Chakra deals with our needs and desires, both [sexually](#) and emotionally. This Chakra is also linked to our innate Creativity. An imbalance in our second Chakra can leave us feeling [insecure](#) and unable to deeply feel or enjoy physical or emotional sensations.

The main right of your Second Chakra is to be able to feel, and to enjoy the sensations of experiencing feeling, and like water, go with the flow.



#### The Third Chakra | Solar Plexus Chakra

- >>Sanskrit Name: Manipura
- >> Color: yellow
- >>Element: fire
- >>Development: 18 months – 4 years
- >>Location: Solar Plexus
- >>Balanced Qualities: confidence
- >> Imbalanced Qualities: low self esteem, lack of vision
- >>Main Right: to be
- Body Location Where Physical Issues May Occur: intestines, stomach

The Solar Plexus Chakra defines our personality as how we perceive and are perceived in the world. If this Chakra is unbalanced, one can experience issues with self-esteem, confidence, willpower, personal power and autonomy.

The Third Chakra's main rights are to act and to be an individual. Once one honors their ability and "can do" capabilities, the Fire within their Third Chakra can burn through all blocks, hesitations and fears.



#### The Fourth Chakra | Heart Chakra

- >>Sanskrit Name: Anahata
- >>Color: green

- >>Element: air
- >>Development: 4 – 7 years
- >>Location: heart center
- >>Balanced Qualities: love for oneself
- >> Imbalanced Qualities: depression, seclusion
- >>Main Right: to love and be loved
- >>Body Location Where Physical Issues May Occur: circulatory system, heart

The Heart Chakra embodies our ability for [Self-Love](#). When we are open to loving ourselves and loving others, we are living in balance with the world. Challenges or blockages within the Heart Chakra will express themselves in the form of lack of compassion towards oneself and/or others, or the inability to offer unconditional love to someone, or something.

The Fourth Chakra's main right is to accept that you can love and that you are worthy of love, and like air, love is all around.

FIFTH CHAKRA: VISHUDDHA



#### Fifth Chakra | Throat Chakra

- >>Sanskrit Name: Vishudda
- >>Color: blue
- >>Element: sound
- >>Development: 7 – 12 years
- >>Location: throat
- >>Balanced Qualities: open communication
- >>Imbalanced Qualities: withdrawn
- >>Main Right: to express oneself
- >>Body Location Where Physical Issues May Occur: throat, lungs, sinuses

An open Throat Chakra allows us to express ourselves and communicate with others. Challenges or imbalances can leave us with issues with communication, resonance or even the ability to [speak the truth](#).

The Fifth Chakra's main right, in order to survive, is to recognize that you must express yourself and do so with sound and clear intentions.

SIXTH CHAKRA: AJNA



#### Sixth Chakra | Third Eye Chakra

- >>Sanskrit Name: Ajna

- >>Color: indigo
- >>Element: light
- >>Development: adolescence
- >> Location: Third Eye (space between eyebrows)
- >>Balanced Qualities: intention and intuition
- >>Imbalanced Qualities: lack of direction
- >>Main Right: to see
- >>Body Location Where Physical Issues May Occur: eyes and ears

Our Third Eye Chakra is the center of our intuition and defines our connection to our own inner guidance. Issues within the Ajna Chakra can arise in the form of lack of ability to make decisions. One may feel that their imagination, intuition or dreams are challenged or dim.

The Sixth Chakra's main right is to harness the ability to manifest your vision, your light. This will allow you to "see" things with greater clarity.



#### Seventh Chakra | Crown Chakra

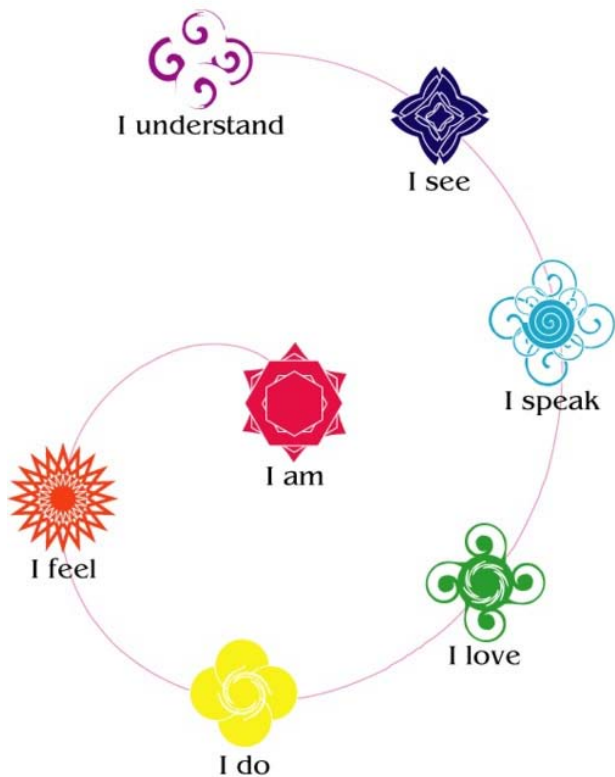
- >>Sanskrit Name: Sahasrara
- >>Color: white/violet
- >>Element: space
- >>Development: early adulthood onwards
- >>Location: crown of the head (cerebral cortex)
- >>Balanced Qualities: connection with divine
- >> Imbalanced Qualities: negativity, separation, duality
- >>Main Right: to know, to Learn
- >>Body Location Where Physical Issues May Occur: brain

The Crown Chakra deals with Spiritual Connectivity. Blockages or imbalances can manifest in the forms of duality, or lack of oneness. An open approach to new ideas, experiences and individuals allows the introduction and verification that the world is your teacher.

The Seventh Chakra's main right is to connect to and be guided by your own wisdom.

*As we explore the Chakras in depth in subsequent articles, we will continue to demystify these powerful energies within our bodies and discuss avenues to seek balance and harmony within your own innate energy and power that lies within your own Chakra System. From yoga poses to guided meditations, we are here to help you navigate and find your center[s]. If you have any questions, or would like to see something specific covered here in this series, please let us know below.*

# Chakra Meditation



## About Jen Warakomski

*I am a E200/500 RYT and Certified Reiki Master currently based in Lucca, Tuscany in Italy. One of my deepest joys is to teach and share the wonders, technique and mystique of Classical Yoga, along with the therapeutic power of meditation and relaxation that is achieved through both Yoga and Reiki Healing. I lead classes, trainings and workshops in the Tuscany and New York City Areas. Connect with me on the web, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Pinterest.*

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Tags: chakras, chakras 101, crown chakra, heart chakra, root chakra, sacral chakra, seven chakras, solar plexus chakra, the chakras, third eye chakra, throat chakra

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David Sparks · ★ Top Commenter

This is great intro to Chakra theory, but it does not include the info about essential oils on the graphic on Facebook that provides the link to this article. So, I cannot include that info with the article in my Pinterest archive.

[Reply](#) · November 20, 2013 at 9:17pm



Christina Hutto · Woodinville, Washington



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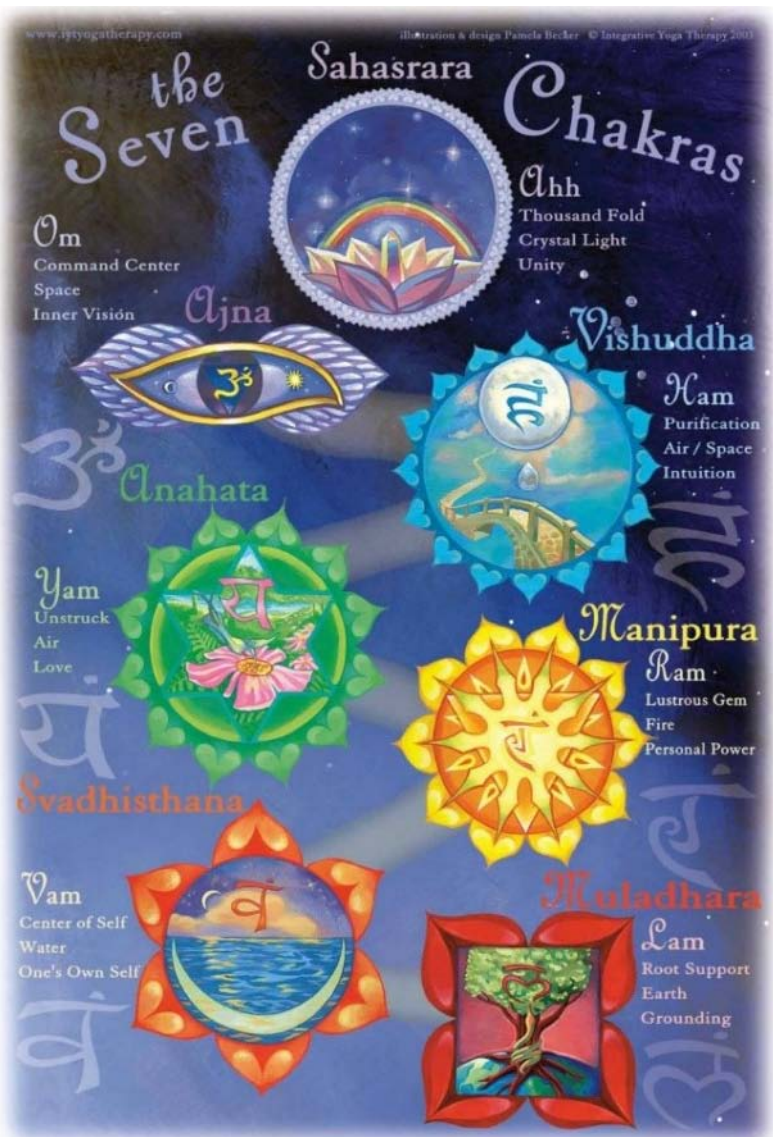
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# Chakras 102: How Our Asana Practice Relates to Our Chakra System

By Jen Warakomski

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Did you know that our physical yoga practice—our asana

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## practice—directly relates to our [Chakra system](#)?

If you practice this limb of yoga, you know that your asana practice allows for physical openness and, overall, invites more balance and harmony within your body, mind and spirit.

Interestingly, when we look more closely at our energetic Chakra system and physical yoga poses together, we can gain even more insight into our personal matters and issues that may require our attention and correction.

Let us initiate this journey of self-exploration and expression by first examining each of our Chakras and their qualities, as illustrated in these [Chakra 101 descriptions](#). By understanding each Chakra's characteristics and behaviors, we can utilize the techniques that lie within our physical yoga practice to unlock, unblock, revitalize and re-balance our Chakras, which, on occasion, can each become underactive, overactive, or blocked. And, much like the sequential path of the Chakra energy system, that stretches from the base of the spine to the crown of our heads, a yoga pose series or sequence is also interrelated because each pose affects one another and, ultimately, is designed to work together.

Beginning at the base of the spine, our first Chakra, Muladhara, translates from Sanskrit as "Root" or "Foundation". This critical arrangement is necessary as the translation suggests, because without a [firm foundation](#), or "Root", one can feel unstable and unsafe.

The Root Chakra's element is Earth and yoga poses that express groundedness will energize this Chakra. Poses such as [Tadasana](#) [Mountain Pose], [Uttanasana](#) [Standing Forward Bend], [Janu Sirsasana](#) [Seated Head to Knee Forward Bend], along with other poses that focus specifically on the feet and legs, will provide grounding and stability to benefit the Root Chakra.

Next, we move up to our Second Chakra, Svadhisthana, which translates to "One's Own Space, Place, and Base". This Sacral Chakra, linked to the element water, helps us to acknowledge and feel our sensory experiences.

Hip openers, in particular, are connected to this Chakra. Practicing [Eka Pada Rajakapotasana](#) [One Legged Pigeon Pose], [Virabhadrasana II](#) [Warrior II], Lunges, or [Baddha Konasana](#) [Seated Bound Angle Pose] will provide more freedom in your pelvic area and enliven your Sacral Chakra.

Rising above our Second Chakra lies our Manipura Chakra, which translates to "Lustrous Gem". This Third Chakra is tied to the fire element and our own sense of identity, confidence and ego.

Located at the Solar Plexus, any abdominal poses such as [Navasana](#) [Boat Pose], [Dhanurasana](#) [Bow Pose], [Urdva Dhanurasana](#) [Wheel Pose], and twists such as [Ardha Matsyendrasana](#) [Half Lord of the Fishes Pose] will stoke and stimulate this fiery Chakra, allowing for you to maintain and develop your own clear and confident life path.

Our Fourth Chakra, Anahata, is the bridge point between what is considered the lower three, physically associated Chakras, and the upper three spiritually associated Chakras. Translated from Sanskrit, it means "Unstruck" and its element is air.

The [Heart Chakra](#) is the core of our spirit. Poses that open our chest and draw in heart energy will benefit this location. [Ustrasana](#) [Camel Pose], [Bhujangasana](#) [Cobra Pose], [Urdhva Dhanurasana](#) [Wheel], [Gomukhasana](#) Arms, and any other heart opener [backbend] will energize the fourth Chakra with self-love as you will release what you can often create in your everyday life: unnecessary protection or habitual holding, both physical and emotional.

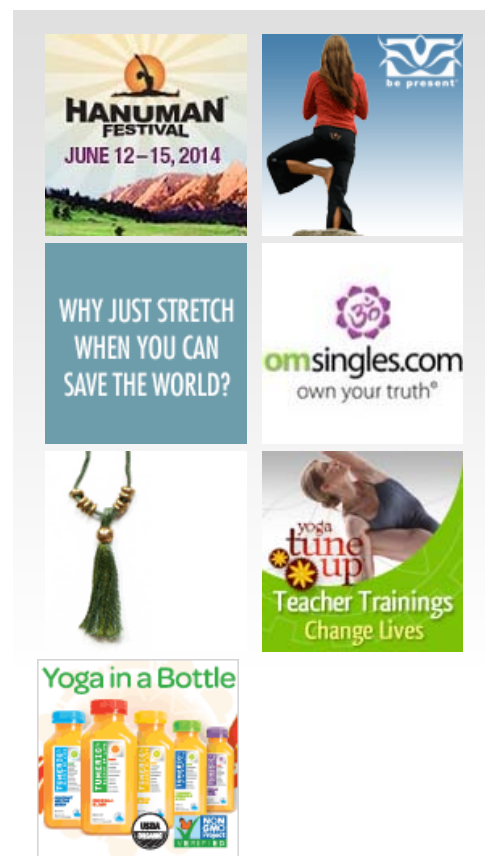
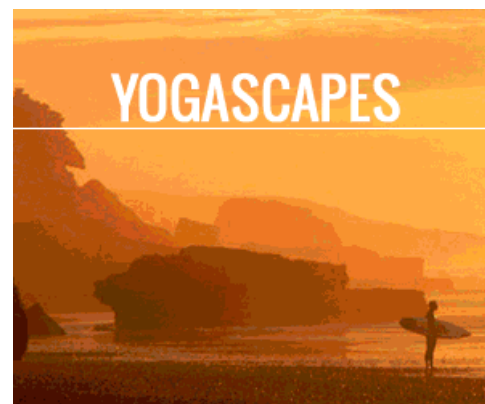
Above the Heart Chakra is our Throat Chakra, Visuddha, which means "Pure" or "Purification" in Sanskrit. This Fifth Chakra aids our voice, our ability to speak, and is related to the element of sound



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with its location assigned at our throat.

Along with chanting mantras, asanas such as *Halasana* [Plow], *Salamba Sarvangasana* [Shoulder Stand], and *Matsyasana* [Fish], all relate to this Chakra and can encourage an energetic balance, which allows one to feel that you can effectively communicate your own individual voice and opinions.

The Anja Chakra, our Sixth Chakra, translates to “The Command and Perception Center”, and is where our intuition and inner voice resides. Represented by the element of light and tied to our power of perception, poses can directly stimulate its physical location, which is centered just above and between the eyes.

*Balāsana* [Child’s Pose] and other seated forward folds, with a block placed under the forehead just above the eyebrows, as well as gaze focused balancing poses such as *Gauradasana* [Eagle Pose] allow you to hone your concentration and ultimately begin to manifest and trust in your own guidance and vision.

Our final destination is our Seventh Chakra, Sahasrara, which means “Thousandfold”. Represented as the element of space, it is our higher connection to the Divine and the location at the crown of the head that defines this Chakra.

Seated meditation in *Padmasana* [Lotus Pose] or *Savasana* [Corpse Pose] along with *Salamba Sirsasana* [Supported Headstand] will stimulate this Chakra location. Ultimately, through meditation, you will nurture your path towards trusting and believing in your own wisdom.

When working with the Chakra energy system and our own physical yoga practices, it is important that we create and maintain a firm foundation in our lower three Chakras in order for them to connect and bridge to our upper Chakras. This is because the lower three Chakras deal with home, family, surroundings—specific details of our lives, and the upper Chakras can be considered a larger embodiment of wisdom and our own understanding of the higher power and order of things.

A balanced asana practice, sequenced with proper opening poses, mid and closing poses along with a meditation practice, also reflects this same journey and can help us achieve a higher vision and form for ourselves, both on and off our mats.

And, while there are many more pose approaches associated with each Chakra, there is also overlap, as one pose can correlate to two or more Chakras. For example, *Urdhva Dhanurasana* [Wheel] can be connected to our Heart and Throat Chakras.

As we continue to delve further into a deeper understanding of the Chakras as whole in this series, we’d love to hear from you—tell us your favorite yoga pose or poses as they relate to the Chakras in the comments below!

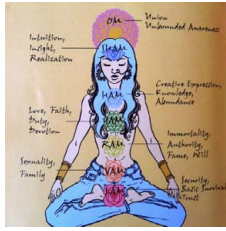


#### About Jen Warakomski

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[Kenneth Venson](#) · Bolton High School

The more I learn about the Chakras the more I understand my limitations may be due to blocked energy! I'm still a baby in the craft, but it didn't take me long to realize yoga, meditations, and the chakras go hand in hand...thanks for your insight and teachings on how which yoga poses help unblock and free energy from certain chakras... :)

Reply · 👍 2 · August 11, 2013 at 8:48pm



[Denise OBrien](#) · Northbridge, Massachusetts

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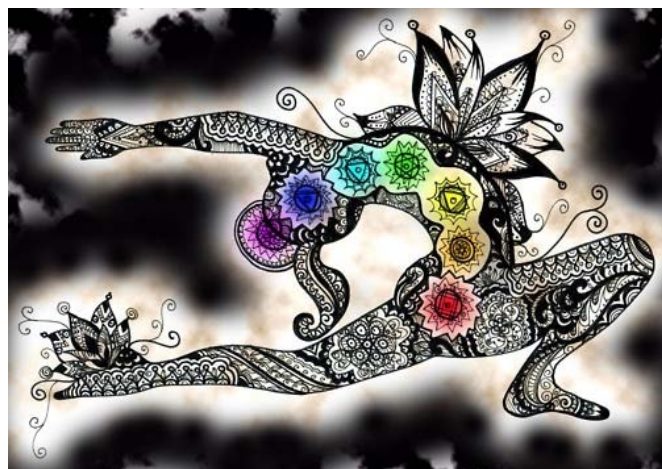
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## Chakras 103: Full Relation + Meditation Techniques

By [Jen Warakomski](#)

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The final chapter in our Chakra studies leads us to finding a comprehensive understanding of the Chakras, and thus allows us to further our estimation of ourselves.

We began with identifying the characteristics of the Chakras in the [Chakra 101](#) series, and then followed up with how the Chakras relate to yoga poses in [Chakras 102](#). Now, we will dive even deeper and discuss the Chakras as they fully relate to us and learn meditation techniques to focus on each with sounds.

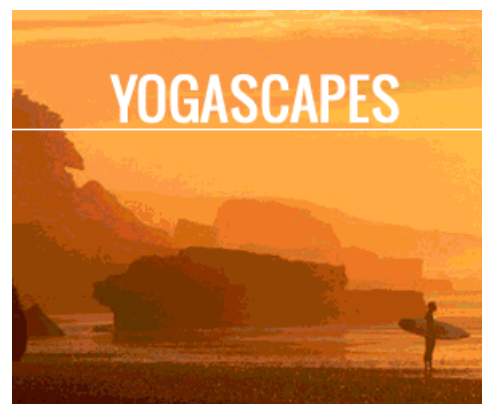
The Chakras energy centers of our bodies *record* our life's journey. As we grow and live our lives, our Chakras accumulate the energy that we put forth and receive. Essentially, these invisible recording devices are storing all the physical, emotional and spiritual expressions we all experience as human beings.

When we begin to investigate our Chakras, both individually and together as a holistic energy system, we are able to use this understanding as a tool to affect the changes that we each want to make in our lives. And, while we talk frequently about the Chakras in yoga classes and other wellness modalities, we must remember: we are talking about our energy systems.

Our energy systems were identified and well understood long before science came around and began to rule what most would call "Modern Medicine" today.

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Since people acknowledged long ago that living things had an energetic consciousness, it makes sense that the practices outside of today's modern medicine are what suits and benefits our Chakra's balancing, healing and unblocking.

Meditation, Yoga, Reiki, Crystal Therapy, and many other healing modalities can work separately or in conjunction to optimize and help us keep our energy systems free flowing and clear.

One immediate tool for working with balancing your Chakras is using meditation and Bija Mantras to connect to each Chakra location. The word 'Bija' is translated as 'seed', and a Bija Mantra is the "Seed Sound". Bija Mantras are formed from the semi-vowels of the Sanskrit alphabet: YA, RA, LA, VA. Each Chakra has its own Bija Mantra, and because of their Sanskrit pronunciation, they can be felt in the location of each Chakra's center when recited out loud.

Reciting the Bija Mantras also purifies the nadis, which are our subtle energy channels. In addition, when recited in sequential order—from Root Chakra to Crown Chakra—these Sanskrit sounds are felt from the back of the tongue to the front of the tongue moving through all the way to your lips. Pretty incredible, yes?

Let's revisit and dive into each individual Chakra, and identify its Bija Mantra. We will start at the bottom and rise up—following the flow of universal life energy that exists within each of us.

Muladhara, our First Chakra, records our experiences that deal with our physical health and financial well being.

Since these can be considered as two defining points for survival, it is critical that we have a clear relationship with our First Chakra, as it is the foundation for all other Chakras. Also, when looked at from the perspective of its defining characteristics; one can agree that when our own health and financial situations are unstable, everything else in our life becomes unstable as well.

The Bija Mantra for our First Chakra is LAM. [Pronounced as LAUM]

Svadhithana, our Second Chakra, is the location where all of our sexual experiences are recorded, and this Chakra in itself determines our own level of sexuality.

Most likely, if you are reading this, you are a normal human like the rest and are subject to the natural human desires that are embedded in our energy, and the survival aspect of our genealogy. While celibacy can be recommended, but may not often the first choice for one when considering to balance this Chakra, it can also be approached with considering and observing how you give and share yourself, both your physical body and your energy.

The Bija Mantra for our Second Chakra is VAM. [Pronounced as VAHM]

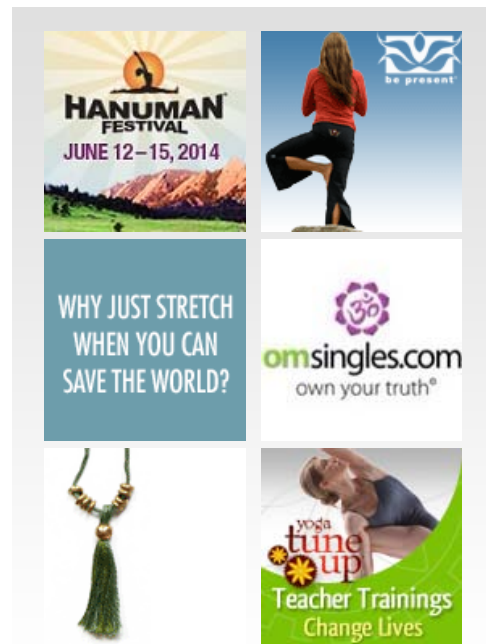
Manipura, our Third Chakra, aligns with our emotional intelligence.

Whether you consider yourself to be emotional or not, we all experience emotions and they are an essential part of our well being, and our survival. Being able to express or use your emotions is just as important as using your eyes to see or your hands to touch. It is emotional intelligence that allows us to properly use our emotions in any given scenario—happy or sad, fast or slow, empty or full. This emotional intelligence is fully expressed in the ability to choose and make choices—from choosing 'that apple' amongst the pile that stands before you in the supermarket, to picking the right partner in friendship, business or love.

When we are in alignment with the understanding our emotions and their motivations, we can quite possibly make clearer choices, or at the very least, be able to identify that we do indeed have choices in all aspects of our lives.

The Bija Mantra for our Third Chakra is RAM. [Pronounced RAHM]

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Anahata, our Fourth Chakra can simply be stated as our ability to love others and ourselves.

Essentially, it is the recording of our experiences of love. Great happiness and great pain, when in relation to love and others, is the main component of the fourth Chakra. If you are open in this Chakra, you know how to love—be it small or large, you understand the definition of love and can see things in the most beautiful of life's light.

If you are closed in this Chakra, you find difficulty finding and feeling love for others, love for life, and most especially you have a hard time feeling love for yourself. The biggest lesson that lies within the Fourth Chakra is that once you expect things in life, such as love, all that love you desire vanishes and loses the quality that defines it.

The Bija Mantra for our Fourth Chakra is YAM. [Pronounced YAHM]

Vishuddha, our Fifth Chakra completely aligns with your self-realization and your ability to fulfill that potential.

While you can have a life that is bursting with experiences, if you cannot articulate, share or verbally identify those experiences with yourself or others, you are missing the boat on fully expressing yourself in this world. This expression can manifest in the forms of creative expression in visual art, music, poetry or even insightful media content sharing.

When looking at this from a sensory point of view, both speaking and listening are paired functions of this Chakra. If you find yourself wanting to interject or interrupt someone who is speaking to you, or even if you find yourself not actively listening to a conversation being directed your way, you can work to balance this Chakra and also remember that the words 'silent' and 'listen' both contain the same exact letters, but are only arranged in a different order.

The Bija Mantra for our Fifth Chakra is HAM. [Pronounced HAHM]

Ajna, our Sixth Chakra, completely aligns with our own personal truth and purpose. It creates the visions that can generate action and transformation in our lives. These actions generated within the Sixth Chakra are what grow into physical manifestation in our lives. When seeing things in your mind's eye, it is important that you can see these actions or things as being real—without them actually existing on the physical plane, (yet!).

The thoughts that are most clear in our mind's eye are also the one's that are not enveloped with pre-conceived notions. Emotional investment is not connected with our Third Eye thinking. These thoughts can be considered to be clean thinking, or what I like to call clean visualizing.

The Bija Mantra for our Sixth Chakra is AUM. [Pronounced AH-UHM]

Sahasrara, our Seventh Chakra, is at the crown of the head and covers it like a hat. We wear hats in cold weather to prevent heat escaping our bodies and can use this image as a metaphor when talking about our Seventh Chakra. Our intuitive energy can escape us if this Chakra is out of balance. The location, also being the highest part of the physical body, is what governs our thoughts and symbolizes the teacher, or guru, within each of us.

As we begin to find more alignment and understanding of our thoughts, as a witness to ourselves, we realize the power of our thoughts—about ourselves, others, and the greater world that surrounds us. These thoughts create what we understand and define as our life, or our universe. Once we begin to gain more control over our thoughts, this harnessed energy links to all the lower chakras and optimizes each of their capabilities and powers.

If the lower chakras are mostly unstable, it is impossible to find clarity and stability in the Seventh

Chakra. If your crown chakra is the roof of your temple, or body—the lower foundation and walls that support it must be in balance in order to support your higher thinking and self-awareness.

In addition, when your cap or roof is properly constructed, it can act as an antenna to receive higher wisdom that is considered to vibrate at a greater frequency, and ultimately complete one's ability to access optimal vitality and universal connection.

The Bija Mantra for our Seventh Chakra is OM.

Now that we have identified further characteristics and sounds associated with each Chakra, practice this simple sound meditation and repeat each of the Bija Mantras several times:

Begin at your root and move through each Chakra until you reach your Crown. Then, in quick succession, repeat each of the Bija Mantras one time, in order and complete this cycle three times in a row.

LAM – VAM – RAM – YAM – HAM – AUM – OM.

Then, pause. Sit and witness your experience. Notice the subtle changes as you move your attention from one Chakra to the next. Any sensations—subtle or grand, can be looked at as indicators to Chakra locations that need further balance. Continue to meditate on those Chakras that you identify.

You can also explore all the other healing modalities I have mentioned above to align, balance and ground your entire energy system.

Trust that this is a process that can be ongoing. Our Chakras are active energy centers that are recording all our life events, and it is completely possible to find greater self-awareness and self-understanding by working with your Chakra energy centers more closely.

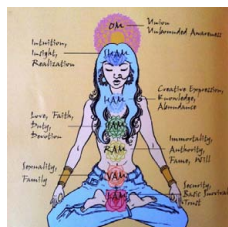


### About Jen Warakowski

*I am a E200/500 RYT and Certified Reiki Master currently based in Lucca, Tuscany in Italy. One of my deepest joys is to teach and share the wonders, technique and mystique of Classical Yoga, along with the therapeutic power of meditation and relaxation that is achieved through both Yoga and Reiki Healing. I lead classes, trainings and workshops in the Tuscany and New York City Areas. Connect with me on the web, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Pinterest.*

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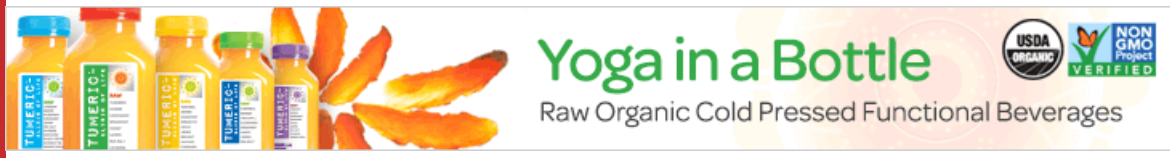
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