



CHAKRAS;

YOUR BODY, YOUR MIND

By Richard Brook

- Inside Your Chakras, Inside Your Mind -

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Introduction

This work on the health and dis-ease processes within the human body and the nature of how we experience our 'mind' and 'body-mind' is the culmination of my many years experiences with a wide variety of natural healing practices and therapeutic modalities.

Acupuncture, yoga, energy work, dance and movement, meditation, Native American style dance and ceremony, various bodywork practices, time in nature and everyday life all inform my understanding and awareness, and what I write can be generally applied across a wide range of approaches to wellbeing.

I explain and then in the main use the chakra system in relation to discussing what is needed to maintain our highest potential of health. Although the health of our chakras within our body is inextricably linked to that which goes on outside of us in our environment, I also make a broad distinction between practices that a person can do to maintain their health on an internal level and also what activities and environments they need to engage with outside of themselves to maintain balance, as both of these factors are essential in an individual's wellbeing.

I explain and discuss all matter as vibration and then how the vibrations we engage with affect us energetically either nourishing us or being abrasive to us and the process of how this effects our various layers - from the more subtle levels of thoughts, feelings and emotions through to affecting our physical structure - from the soft tissue through to the muscular-skeletal system, and particularly the spine.

I've also incorporated a great deal of my own understanding and awareness of the Body-mind connection including a section on the nature of mind and what we experience in our 'mind' gathered through engaging with all the aforementioned practices. I must have spent thousands of hours in a meditative self aware state dancing in particular, and I feel this experiential observation of the flow and movement of energy through my body has contributed to the potency and intelligence of what I offer. I also provide some context from a yoga perspective and explain the many benefits of yoga and balanced Heart energy (which Dru yoga particularly promotes) so hopefully see you at one of my classes soon!

Postscript, April 2011

Although I initially produced this work as part of a Yoga course (the original assignment brief being for a 2000 word project on Chakras!) it's quickly become evident that the body of work encompasses a broad understanding of body-mind interaction, the nature of 'mind', and health and wellbeing from a number of different perspectives and could therefore be of benefit to anyone with an interest in these areas. Admittedly it could still benefit from some fine tuning and further editing, and some sections with a more specific yoga focus do remain, but again the intelligence contained within those sections is also broadly applicable and of use within a broader context and understanding of body-mind dynamics.

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1 - Chakras Overview

'Chakras are specialized energy centres throughout our bodies where a unique form of subtle environmental (life) energy is absorbed and distributed to our cells, organs and body tissues'.

Richard Gerber, Vibrational Medicine for the 21st Century

There are seven main chakras on the human body (the number in animals varies depending on their physiology) although in addition there are many hundreds and possibly thousands of smaller energy centres. For the purposes of this work we will be looking in detail at the main seven.

Chakra by definition comes from the Sanskrit word 'wheel' which gives an indication as to how their energetic characteristics manifests at the surface level and slightly away from the body. Specifically they resemble that of a spinning wheel or vortex.

It is important to note however that a chakra encompasses much more than the surface level energy vortex. This is because each chakra has component parts on the interior of the body. Indeed each chakra comprises of, and is representative of the functioning of; a nerve plexus, internal organs, gland and area of spine.

On the exterior surface level they can be detected in several, subtle, sensory ways; to people with sharpened visual acuity they can be seen as vortices of colour and light. The energetic resonance or vibration of a chakra can also be felt, sensed or consciously interpreted by those with similarity sharpened sensual awareness. As we will later discuss, their state can also be related to the condition of some of the aforementioned physiological components, i.e. the spine, glands, organs, nerve and tissue.

Our chakras are also strongly affected by more subtle factors such as our personality structure, emotions and state of spiritual development. However it's key to note that the condition of our chakras is not solely the end result of internal component factors such as those listed. Rather there's a two way interaction occurring as the functioning of your chakras is also affected by external factors and this also plays a role in influencing the condition of their internal components.

Therefore it can be said that a chakra is *influenced* by the quality of activity within the body, as well as being able to *influence* the quality of activity on the interior of the body depending, as we will examine, on what your chakras interact with externally.

Figure's 1 and 2 (overleaf) show each chakra's location, and importantly as we have touched upon, the spread of colour away from each chakra and throughout an associated area of the body also demonstrates they have an area of influence within the body rather than just being confined to the size and shape to the chakra vortex on the surface. Figure 3 gives a more detailed image of the nerve ganglia associated to each chakra. Also please note that there will be internal organs and glands also associated to, and in the pathway of, each chakra, and these can be identified in Table 1 (page 6).

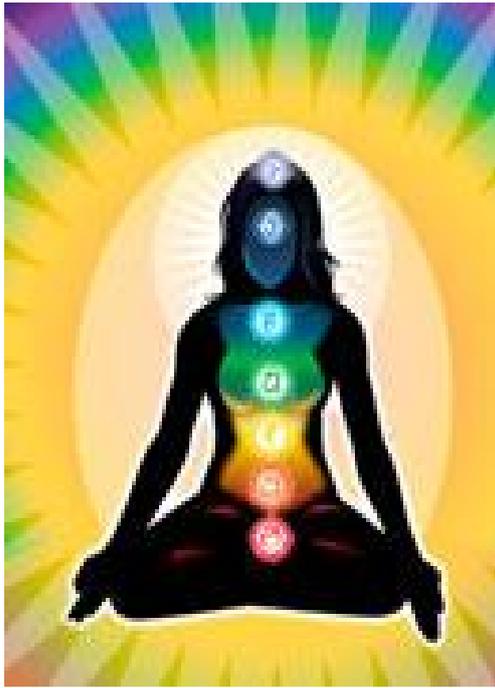


Fig 1; Chakra area of influence (ref; www.wisdominlight.com)

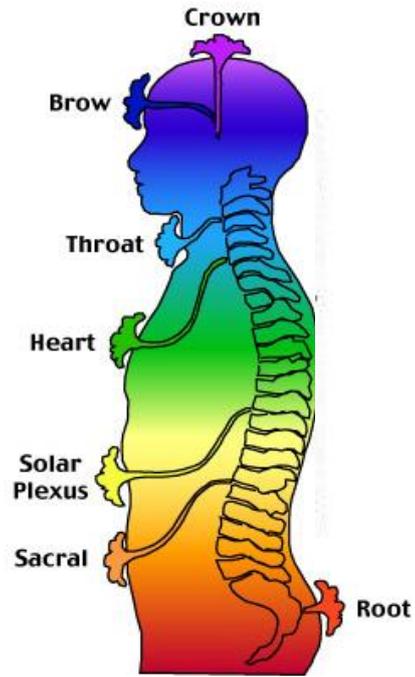


Fig 2; Chakra pathway runs from the body surface to the spine (ref; www.bethcoleman.net)

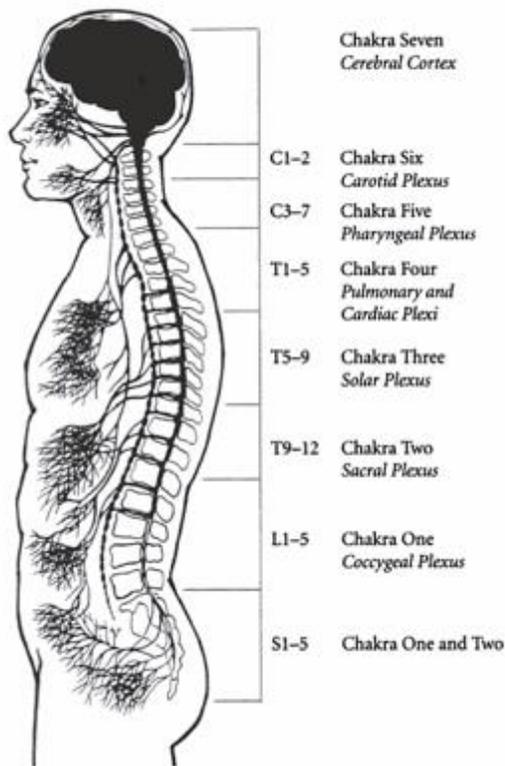


Fig 3; Nerve plexus associated with each Chakra (ref; Judith, A. Wheels of Life)

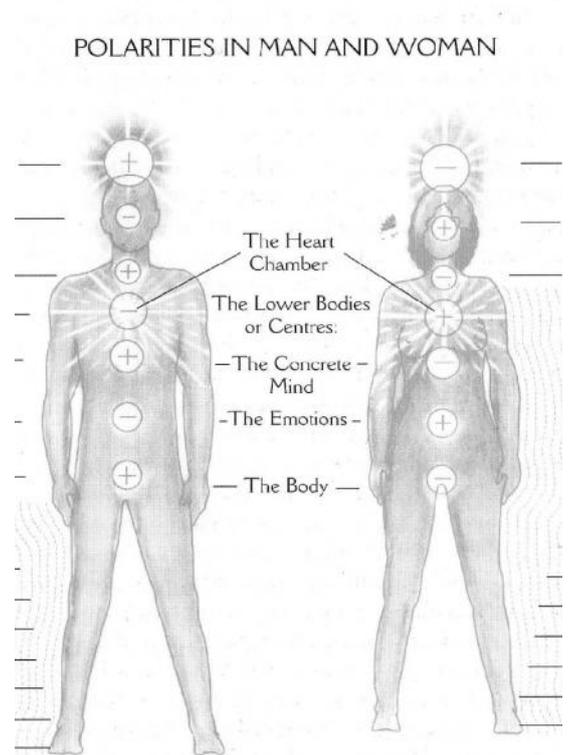


Fig 4 Chakra Polarities in Men and Women. (ref; Rey, Z. Karma and Sexuality)

Since the internal physiological components within a chakra (of soft tissue, gland, organs, nerves and spine) are interconnected, when any one of these physiological components is affected, altered, or manipulated it will have an associated effect on the others.

It's also absolutely key to note that the nerve ganglia within each chakra feeds back energetic information that we feel via a chakra to the brain via the spine and nervous system, where it can be interpreted in the mind as mental projections, thoughts, images and also accompanied by feelings we perceive due to hormonal secretions associated to the functioning of each chakra.

Therefore it's important to remember from a yoga perspective when we talk of a posture affecting a particular chakra, its effect will be along the whole chakra area of influence, and all the components within it, from spine through to soft tissue and also affects feelings and 'state of mind' These dynamics are also obviously of particularly great importance to Yoga practitioners, in the context of working towards 'union' of body, mind and emotions and will be further explored in later chapters.

Similar to the interconnectedness of component parts within an individual chakra, but in an even greater sense, nothing in the body as a whole works in isolation, so the condition of one chakra will also have an effect on the other chakras around it as they attempt to compensate for imbalances in one another. (Indeed it's worth a reminder that everything in the natural world is interconnected, which we can often forget)

In my opinion, to a certain extent, you could draw an analogy with a chakra to the functionality of our mouth. Through our mouth we absorb nourishment in the form of air and food, and also similarly expel through it. Our mouths also have the capacity to shut off from absorbing nutrition that is not to our taste, or potentially harmful.

On a more subtle level, we draw in energetic or vibrational nourishment from our environment into each chakra, to resonate with and 'feed' each energy centre, depending on its particular qualities. This energetic nutrition feeds the organs, glands nerves and spine.

Similarly, we also expel through our chakras as we do waste products through our mouth via our out breath. In this case each chakra emits the vibration of the particular organs which sit behind them, whether they are harmonious vibrations or not. The vibrations also, when interpreted, can also give an indication to the condition of the organs, glands, nerve plexus and associated area of spine.

It's a bit like looking through a window into a house – what's inside can be seen through the window, and what's inside shows itself to the outside.

Working with and understanding the full implications of chakras in relation to our health and wellbeing is a real fusion of Eastern philosophy and wisdom combined with Western medical science. This is exemplified by Table 1 overleaf which gives a fuller list of correspondences for each chakra, where Mantra's and Deities are equally represented alongside more medically recognisable physiological associations.

This fusion of East and West is particularly important to remember within the context of teaching a class as we are very much bringing an Eastern practise to the Western

Mind, and need to be able to converse understanding both systems in order to be as effective and accessible to the minds of yoga students as possible. People growing up in Western culture may also be very sceptical regarding the more esoteric aspects of Yoga, so to be able to back up chakra philosophy with information from a Western perspective is also very useful.

Throughout this work we shall be switching back and forth between Western scientific understanding and Eastern understanding and bringing it together from a Yogic perspective.

Table 1 Chakra Associations

Name	Common Name	Location	Physical Governing	Emotional Governing	Deity	Sense	Mantra	Element	Colour	Frequency	Sanskrit Symbol meaning	Seat
Mooladhara	Root Chakra	Base of spine, sacral plexus	Organs of excretion, adrenals	Survival, primal instinct	Brahma, Ganesha, Kubera, Lakshmi, Dumuzi, Tammuz, Gala, Anat, Ereshkigal	Smell	<i>Lam</i>	Earth	Red	396hz	Ambition	Primal life force
Swadhisthana	Sacrum/Sacral Chakra	Genitals, fluids	Gonads, reproductive organs	Self-acceptance, emotion, sexual energy	Vishnu, Dionysius, Pan, Tiamat, Diana, Indra, Varuna, Rakini	Taste	<i>Vam</i>	Water	Orange	417hz	Desire	Creativity
Manipura	Solar Plexus Chakra	Navel	Pancreas, abdominal organs	Self-will, mental acuity, sense of identity	Ra, Helios, Brigit, Apis, Agni, Rudra, Athene, Likini, Amaterasu	Sight	<i>Ram</i>	Fire	Yellow	528hz	Virtue	Subconscious emotion, ego, will
Anahata	Heart Chakra	Heart area	Thymus, lungs	Compassion, love, healing	Lakshmi Vishnu, Krishna, Isis, Pan, Dian Cecht, Aditi, Maat, Isvaru	Touch	<i>Yam</i>	Air	Green	639hz	Compassion	Love
Vishuddhi	Throat Chakra	Laryngeal plexus	Thyroid	Self-expression, speech	Saravati	Hearing	<i>Ham</i>	Ether	Blue	741hz	Reflection	Creative expression, communication
Ajna	Third Eye Chakra	Between the eyebrows	Pituitary gland	Intuition, extra sensory perception	Krishna, Shakti, Hakini, Hecate, Isis	Sixth sense, higher mind	<i>Aum</i>	Time	Indigo	852hz	Perception	Primordial power
Sahasrara	Crown Chakra	Top/crown of head, brain	Pineal gland	Divinity, peace, enlightenment	Shiva	Beyond sensory	-	Space	Violet	963hz	Realization	Liberation, All Power, eternal bliss

The Symbols

Each chakra has an associated symbol, which we can see in greater detail overleaf in Figures 5 - 12, along with notes showing the personality and behavioural qualities which are associated with each chakra, when in and out of balance. It is important to closely examine the chakra symbol, as it is absolutely indicative and symbolic of very essential esoteric understanding, and also the correlations back to science from the Western perspective.

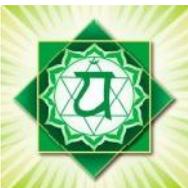
For example, within each chakra symbol are further symbols indicating Sanskrit vowel sounds (shown in the Mantra column in the chart above). This sound is said to correlate to the vibrational resonance of the nerve plexus coming from the spine.

The petals (known as Vritti) associate to a mental propensity or emotion associated to each chakra. This is because they correlate to hormonal and endocrine gland secretions – which govern the emotions on the bodily level (e.g. adrenaline equals fear and so on). The triangular or square shapes within the chakras symbolise the Elements relating to the chakra, for example Mooladhara equals Earth equals Square.

The colour of each symbol also resonates at the same frequency as the particular chakra. Similar to how sounds correlate to particular frequencies, so do colours, so a person's affinity with a particular colour can go some way towards building a picture as to their chakra state of balance.

As a slight aside, using essential oils is another way of working to balance the chakras as similarly to colours and sounds you can also find oils which resonate at particular frequencies which relate to those of the chakras.

Figures 5 – 12; Chakra Symbols and Qualities (from Dru Yoga: Stillness In Motion)

	<u>In Balance</u>	<u>Out of Balance</u>	<u>Health Issues</u>
<p>Sahasrara:</p> 	<p>Mature, confident, unique Sense of connection to a greater plan</p>	<p>Feels lonely and isolated, spaced out, ignores incidentals.</p>	<p>Stress, headaches S.A.D (seasonal affective disorder)</p>
<p>Ajna:</p> 	<p>Solves problems easily, clear purpose, dedicated, Self-motivated, single-minded.</p>	<p>No clear purpose to life, confused, narrow-minded, dwells on details.</p>	<p>Poor eyesight, headaches, migraines Insomnia, Ear problems</p>
<p>Vishuddhi:</p> 	<p>Extrovert, creative, ability to create with impact, makes effective choices excellent networking skills</p>	<p>Inability to communicate, over optimistic, loses interest once initial enthusiasm has passed.</p>	<p>Thyroid probs metabolism too fast or slow Neck pain and stiffness.</p>
<p>Anahata:</p> 	<p>Kind, compassionate, Empowered, co-operative Perceptive, good mediator, Helps others make the best of themselves.</p>	<p>Tendency to be selfish and feel inadequate negative thoughts about self. Indecisive</p>	<p>Heart and Circulatory problems, breathing disorders, upper back pain.</p>
<p>Manipura:</p> 	<p>Good Health Self Confident Dynamic Good Planner / Organiser Questioning Attitude Thrives on pressure</p>	<p>Exhaustion/ poor health Anger / Inflexible Slow to respond to new possibilities insensitive to people's feelings</p>	<p>Digestive disorders, fatigue, challenges with Liver and Gall Bladder.</p>
<p>Swadhisthana:</p> 	<p>Emotionally well balanced Sensitive to others needs Conscientious Good Leader / Carer</p>	<p>Attachment to Possessions and relationships, Inclined to worry Emotional Roller Coaster</p>	<p>Cystitis bladder probs, PMS, sluggish lymphatics, lower back pain</p>
<p>Mooladhara</p> 	<p>Observant Able to judge Accurately Secure about Self</p>	<p>Fear Insecurity Shyness Lacks Drive May find difficult to inspire others</p>	<p>Arthritis, Constipation, challenges with feet, knees, and hips.</p>

2 - Chakras, Sound and Vibration

The correspondence of each chakra to a sound, indicated by the Mantra symbol and shown in table 1 is of particular interest to me and returns us back to our earlier point about chakras receiving energetic and vibrational nourishment.

This is because all matter vibrates on a particular frequency, and therefore it could be said that all creation is 'sound' or has a particular sound or frequency vibration to it. As we've also identified earlier, each chakra has an area of influence interior in the body, containing organs, a gland, and a nerve plexus which connects to the spine. Since all matter has a vibration and frequency this relates to the Spine too.

Therefore an entire chakra pathway (soft tissue, organs, nerves, glands, and spine) vibrates at a particular frequency and thus gets tuned and nourished by the particular sounds and vibrations which resonate with them.

On a simple, more exaggerated level to witness the impact of vibration on our spine one only has to watch someone dance across a wide range of music and observe how they move different areas of their spine depending on the rhythm and frequency of the music.

Interestingly, the correlation and understanding of sound and vibration as an integral part of our being and health is also supported within other traditions. From a Chinese Medicine perspective this correlation of different areas of the spine to particular vibrational frequencies is discussed by Fabien Maman, an acupuncture practitioner in his book *The Body as a Harp: Sound and Acupuncture*. He basically posits that we get 'out of tune' and need re-tuning on an ongoing basis. He also identifies that different seasons have different vibrations to them and therefore relate to different areas of the spine, which fits with the more classical 5 Elements Acupuncture perspective that different seasons relate to different organs, which makes sense since they share a vibrational relationship with the spine. (Colour Light Therapy works on similar principles that the vibration and frequency of the coloured light resonates with particular organs)

Similarly, Beautiful Painted Arrow Joseph Rael, a Native American Elder discusses in his book *Being and Vibration* how within his Native American Community everything is recognised as sound and vibration, and indeed how the Tiwa language is representative of such, with words formed to represent the vibratory quality of what they describe.

This relationship to vibration is particularly important with regard to use of Mantra's in Yoga practice as they can be used to tune and nourish chakras but of course this relationship to vibration also has much wider general implications for the health and wellbeing of your chakra.

For example, Muladhara chakra is said to vibrate at an actual frequency of 396hz, Swadhisthana at 417hz, and so on (see Table 1) so during your day we are constantly coming into contact with other vibrations which either resonate and tune our chakras or create a bit of an abrasion against them - if the vibration you are experiencing is disharmonious to that of your own centres. Exposure to disharmonious vibrations can

create the situation where your chakras want to contract and shut down. The other alternate is that you come across vibrations that are fairly inert – they don't particularly resonate with your centres, or are abrasive against them, in which case prolonged exposure to that type of dynamic can mean your chakras go under-nourished and unfed.

The reality is that since we have seven chakras in simultaneous operation, and that everything we do and engage with engages our chakras, at any one time you likely have a combination of the above dynamics happening – some chakras getting fed, some being abraded against and some not being particularly met. We certainly have our work cut out in the modern world to ensure all seven get the correct nourishment on an ongoing basis! (See chapter 6 'Chakras and Optimum Health' for further discussion on chakra health relating to more 'natural' environments as well as the difficulties associated with the predominantly urbanised and technology filled 'modern world')

The dynamic of vibrational resonance and abrasion also explains, in my opinion, how different areas of the Spine can become locked and unlocked (see chapters 5, 6 and 7) – by either exposing them to the vibrations which are abrasive to them or vibrations which harmonise with them. I very much recognise this in myself – what activities – such as Yoga may unlock my Heart centre and therefore the area of spine which correlates to it, but also recognise how other activities are also constantly subtly adjusting my spinal alignment depending on how the vibrations resonate with me.

You can look at yourself and your preferences and tendencies to see what vibrations you like to expose yourself to in order find out a little more about your chakras. If this seems a bit difficult to identify, bring your attention to a slightly more exaggerated level of what music you like to expose yourself to. For example Heavy metal music is said to speed up a sluggish Swadhisthana chakra! (Reyo 2002) But by observing what rhythmical qualities you like, you may be able to identify which centres on your body you feel they resonate with or 'move'.

3 - Chakras and the Individual

Each Individual Has Unique Chakra Properties - DNA and Ancestry

We have seen from table 1 that each chakra has a particular frequency that is associated to it. However the subtle properties and energetic of each chakra and what nourishes or abrades against them is also personal to the individual – and their own genetic and cultural history.

We cannot discount this influence in the makeup of a person's energetic system – we are not identikit individuals whose energy centres should all resonate to a particular frequency and that's it done with. It just does not work that way.

Firstly we are made up of the genetic DNA of our parents and ancestors before them – within our physical matter, so whilst it may be general that people's Swadhisthana centre resonates to 417hz or similar, each person will have slight idiosyncrasies and vibrational differences within each chakra, made up from your own genetic past, as well as cultural present.

This will include years of absorbing the vibrations of the land and environment in which you were brought up on, in your own formative years. This is why a lot of people just feel at 'home' on a certain piece of land or area of the country, and if they return back having been away, their base chakra and legs just feel at ease when they are back – and also other centres may too. (However, of course, in the long term other energy centres may not feel nourished anymore by that situation - having extracted whatever nourishment they can previously from that place and moved on seeking fresh experiences and growth)

This genetic, cultural and formative lineage will influence the inclinations of people and what they need to support the health of each chakra. Whatever that may be – it may be the vibration of a particular type of food you had when you were younger that has stayed with you and you like to re-engage with; it could be a place or activity the vibration of which has stayed with you and you still like to go to now. For example when I was a child I used to go to Motorcycle Speedway regularly with my Father and the vibrations of that experience have stayed in me and I still like to go now.

Reyo (2002) also discusses how this accumulation of vibrational energy from our genetic past within our chakras attracts to resonant energies outside of ourselves (people, places, food, activities etc).

This goes some way to explaining some of our more unique individual tendencies. That indeed, some of these inclinations may have come from your genetic past or ancestry explains why in this present lifetime we quite often have inclinations or interests we don't necessarily know where they have particularly come from! The old saying that something 'is in your blood' is often used to explain away more apparent generational similarities within a family, but it's interesting to think what may also be 'in your blood' from less obvious familial connections.

I feel that I've often come across people and seen some of their interests in this light. An example which often comes to my mind is when I met a girl in her early 20's in

Oxford who had a strong fascination with a particular Russian poet from the 18th century. I wondered at the time that there was really no plausible explanation for it other than that somehow she had been connected with that person or culture previously and it was somewhere in her vibrational ancestry. Similarly, strongly traumatic experiences down our ancestral lines could also stay within our physical chakra vibration or ‘within our blood’, giving rise to difficulties for someone that need reconciling, clearing and healing in the present day.

Our Soul

A slightly different, or added, perspective on some of our personality traits away from the idea of our more genetic past manifesting its vibration through our chakras is the notion that our body contains within it our ‘Soul’. Although there are a myriad of different perspectives, my own personal understanding is that our Soul lands in our genetic body around the time of conception, and carries within it all the information from our previous incarnations. So in addition to the genetic vibrations of our physical bodies from our ancestors, there are in addition the vibrations which emanate from your being of your ‘Soul’. My own personal opinion is that we are constituted of both – our chakras vibrate with our genetic ancestry, and in addition our soul also sits within our body. A personal view that I concur with is that of Gabrielle Roth, founder of 5 Rhythms Dance and movement practice, who says the idea of passing through life is that you try to get as much of your Soul into your body as possible. I interpret thus; that as we are developing through life the genetic predispositions begin to fall or clear away and the tendencies of the Soul tend to begin to forge their way through into your DNA, so the body becomes more of a vehicle to carry your Soul through life.

Again, my own perspective is that we actually continually dance or shift between the growth of bringing our Soul tendencies into our body and returning back to and nourishing our default ‘genetic’ self. This is our growth in life – bringing our soul qualities in, but then between spurts of growth we rest in our regular genetic tendencies while we integrate the Soul qualities into our being, creating a gradual shift in consciousness towards the Soul. Much like we get up in the morning and move, and then lie down again at night and rest again while we integrate our experiences.

Or it could be likened to the dance between following the inclinations of our upper chakras; Ajna, Sahasrara, which are likened to our Soul bigger plan and direction, and then to balance it we need to nourish the more physical matter vibrations of our lower chakras which keep us structurally secure and stable on Earth. Our more central chakras help us to relate strongly to the people around us to help us on our way in the dance between Heaven and Earth.

We need to equally feed and nourish all centres. So we are constantly dancing between the intelligence and desires of both upper and lower ones.

4 - Chakras and Interaction

Chakra Interaction with our Environment

In figures 5-12 we've identified some of the key characteristics of each chakra and how ideally the qualities of each one would manifest when in balance. However, as we've also discussed it's also important to remember that your chakras energetic condition are always in a state of dynamic change, depending on your immediate situation and environment. Nothing in the natural world works in isolation from the Energetic elements around us

Whatever environment we engage with affects the energetic vibrations of our chakras to varying degrees, whether we are in a park, at a football match or in a factory as we are absorbing vibrations from around us, and also additionally emitting them out into our environment.

So our energetic state is constantly being adjusted and changed by that which we are engaging with – and obviously our vibrations are creating an impact around us. Every moment of existence we are creating a new unique energetic combination of our energy and that of the environment, as there are always subtle changes from one moment to the next.

Whatever we are engaged with – whether it's a person or a place we are always feeling, absorbing and interpreting vibrations through all chakras on our body, and then this is relayed to the mind via the nervous system. (Remember at the surface level of each chakra is a nerve ganglia 'bundle' which senses out into our environment around the body – these nerve ganglia feedback information to the spinal cord which transmits information to the brain) These vibrations are then sensed, felt, interpreted in our mind as concepts, mental projections, and also provoke feelings – due to the release of hormones associated with the chakras. There may also be emotions and memories (old vibrations within the chakras) triggered which we may also experience,

And similarly to how our chakras work in relationship to other people (see the section to follow 'Chakras in Relationship with Other People) different chakras may be more readily open and receptive than others depending on the environment we are in. Throughout this work I will mention my experiences in the pub and how in dealing with particular customers I can feel my Heart centre beginning to close and my posture shifting accordingly, becoming closed across the sternum (occasionally it does open too, although the conditions are generally not particularly conducive to Heart opening interaction)

However it's also pertinent to mention how secure and easy my legs feel on the ground in that environment, how my base chakra 'feels at home'. I particularly notice this as I spend part of the week living in another city, and particularly when I first went there it was very pronounced how my legs would tighten as if insecure, trying to grip on to the new terrain. It's less pronounced now, but when I return to my home city each week and work a shift in the pub its noticeable how at ease my legs are, familiar with the vibrations of the land where I grew up, with the vibrations of the pub where I've worked since the day it opened.

This dynamic of different chakras being stimulated to open or close depending on our environment and relationship's is fundamental throughout this work and will be discussed in greater detail throughout. It's worth noting at this stage, as intimated above, that different situations tend to provoke a simultaneous combination of chakras opening and closing which is why we need a variety of experience in our life that lends itself to the optimal health and nourishment of each chakra. It's also worth noting though, that when a particular chakra is closed down, as well as inhibiting receptivity and nourishment into that centre it can also prevent us from radiating our own energies out.

Interestingly, Native American Elder Joseph Real discusses how the interaction of our emotions with the environment is an essential part of a bigger balanced picture as our emotions which we emit also go towards feeding the plants and animals around us, similarly to how we often perceive they may help and nourish us. Sometimes we can tend to forget we are part of the natural world – we are often aware that plants and animals may nourish us, but do we realise we as human beings are also an integral part of nourishing them?

Food

Also it's important to note that it's not just external vibrations which affect the resonance of our chakras – the food and drink which we ingest into our body also has a significant impact at influencing the vibration of our centres. However I do believe it's a popular misconception that food and drink alone can meet a large proportion of our overall energetic nutritional needs. As we are establishing, we have 7 energy centres, all of which vibrate at increasingly subtle frequencies and need a wide range of unique vibrations to be met. Food can go some way towards that – but it can't do all the work. I often reflect that I see scores of people who go looking for some nutrition they aren't getting from their life / job / relationship in the local takeaway or indeed from a bottle of supplements from the local health food store and can't help but think we're all missing the bigger picture somewhere! Gabriel Cousins discusses in his book *Spiritual Nutrition* that he believes that Food based nutrition provides just 10% of our overall nutrition needs.

Similarly if an individual's own chakras and energetic systems are blocked to a degree, this again can lend itself to being overly focused on their food intake and diet in order to try to boost their energy, when the food intake isn't so much the problem but the blockages are. In this scenario I liken it to buying a very fast posh car, but taking it out on the roads when there is a traffic jam. It might look nice, and have other subtle benefits, but it's not likely to get you anywhere that much quicker! That's not to dismiss the importance of food, as like any other source of nourishment you want to do the best you can with it, but just using the car example to illustrate a point.

That being said, let's examine some of what is essential about food. Food can help to support different chakras. This is because the same as colours, light, and sounds, different foods resonate on different frequencies and therefore have a corresponding impact on different chakras. Similarly, from a Chinese Medicine perspective, different foods are associated to different organs such as Daverick Leggett identifies in his work *'The Energetics of Food'* where he has produced a chart showing common food items and which organs in particular they energetically effect.

It's also worth noting some of the more subtle vibrational dynamics around food. Although Gabriel Cousins may have discussed that food based nutrition provides just 10% of our overall nutritional needs, it's also important not to be too categorical about this, in order to do justice to some of the more subtle dynamics that are present around our food consumption. For example, the preparation process of your food can make a massive difference to its vibrational properties and overall energetic nourishment.

When we prepare food we also absorb through our body the vibrations of it during preparation, which in itself provides a degree of nourishment, and also importantly the food which we prepare is strongly affected by the vibrations present in our body as we handle it. It's very close to our energy field as we prepare it. Sometimes I go through periods of time, particularly if it's after a stressful period and I may be a bit depleted where I only want to eat food that I've prepared myself, to get those extra subtle degrees of nourishment both from absorbing from the food as I prepare it as well as what I add to it by radiating my energy into during the preparation. I also on occasions sit in front of my food and open my posture, my chakras and particularly Heart energy to radiate my vibrations over my food and similarly to open up and begin to receive the energy of my food into my chakras, before eating it through my mouth!

So there is a subtle quality to the food we eat depending on how it was prepared, on the surface we may have two identical meals, but prepared by two different people may somehow feel slightly different. We may particularly enjoy the meals that a certain person makes for us, family or friend, as it absorbs their vibrations when they make it, it is quite literally made with Love, and we feel it. If I buy food out, at a takeaway for example, I often note the demeanour of the person making it. All this adds a subtle something to the experience. In addition we have the vibrational input of the surrounding environment or company we are in as we eat; sitting down with others to eat also can bring further energetic nourishment to the experience. A modern tendency can sometimes be to try to break food down into its nutritional constituent parts, without appreciating these subtleties. I'm sure it is possible to produce 'food' in a powdered form which contains all the same nutritional values of the most delicious meal you may have ever have eaten, but which would you find most appetising, something out of a silver packet or something hand cooked with the energy of care and attention for you?

Self-Awareness of the Condition of your Chakras

It's possible to examine the qualities of each chakra as identified in figures 5-12 in order to gain some perspective as to how you think your chakras may or may not be balanced and to similarly look at your behaviour. However, it's also useful to remember you can amplify your experience and awareness of what's happening within your chakras from your own insight or self awareness.

The more we regularly practice meditation or self awareness we are able to more perceptively interpret and be aware of the condition or state of our chakras and the organs, glands and associated areas of spine. By practicing regular internal awareness we can get more used to interpreting our own emotional volitions and mental projections, and comparing and contrasting how we feel in accordance with what we've been engaging our time with. This is an excellent tool for personal growth, and

gives us valuable information about what may be feeding or abrading against our chakras.

We can also look at the postural state of our bodies for information about our chakras.

The energetic state of our Heart plays a massive role in our health and of course in the practice of Dru, so we can look at examples centering around the Anahata chakra, and its affect on posture, generally and from my own experience.

Living in cities and urban environments, it's apparent people often keep their Heart centre a little bit closed and protected, (which can often be seen in people's postures – closed across the Sternum and round shouldered) to avoid picking up or being affected by adverse vibrations which they may encounter making their way around in daily life.

The vibrations can be adverse in that they are disharmonious or toxic to the vibration of the Heart centre. For example when I'm at work in one of my jobs behind a bar, I quite often encounter people in abrasive states, low vibration, toxic, angry and I find myself shying away from them and crumpling my shoulders forward to stop the energy hitting my chest.

Then when we see a loved one, whose vibration is friendly to us, our Heart centre and physical posture will shift to allow in the vibration of the friend's Heart energy, and for our own Heart energy to begin emitting. I notice this a lot in my acupuncture practice – I often enter the clinic from the outside world being slightly stooped over – (as per the earlier example of my physical body compensating to try to protect my Heart from abrasive vibrations) but then in clinic, when I have my patients on the treatment couch and I enter the compassionate state of practitioner, I often find my whole physical structure shifting and my Heart centre opening and emitting a tremendous amount of Heart energy around my Patients – almost giving them a non physical hug or bath of Heart energy as they lie on the couch.

Trauma Affecting our Chakras

We can also have experiences where we may have been caught unawares or unexpectedly, as is often the case with trauma – where abrasive or adverse vibrations have entered into our energy centres and affected the precious vibration which they naturally resonate on. I recall a particular event with a neighbour of mine who was completely unexpectedly abusive to me at very close proximity before I had chance to shut down and at a time when my own energy field was off balance in terms of being a little bit too open, and the energy of that encounter wreaked havoc internally for me for a long time. The vibration of the encounter stayed with me for a long time, felt within my body and therefore interpreted in my mind via my nervous system as thoughts until it eventually was processed through and sufficiently healed so I could move on.

We will be examining this process in greater detail in subsequent chapters.

Chakras in Relationship With Other People

We discussed earlier how our energy centres are always in a state of dynamic change and interaction with our immediate situation and environment.

An essential component of this energetic interaction with our chakras is that which happens in relation to other people. I've discussed a couple of personal examples earlier where in particular my Heart centre has been affected by interaction with another person, as per the incident with my neighbour and occasionally when at work in the bar, but since relationships with other people make up such a large part of our life, it feels appropriate to write about the role of our chakras in our relationships with others in a more general sense.

In relationship to another person, different chakras may get stimulated and want to open or want to shut down and contract, depending on what energies are being radiated from the person you're engaging with. And likewise for them – the dance of the energies between you. Or again as we also touched on earlier, it is most likely a combination of these dynamics of some chakras opening and some closing going on within your energy centres simultaneously.

Engaging with another person is a bit like standing in front of a speaker stack with seven sections all emitting different bandwidths of sound, vibrations, making an overall tune (which may or may not be a harmonious tune in itself) split into seven sections – and some sound vibrations of the seven will resonate with us and some won't.

To extend out to look at the interaction as a whole, two people interacting is a bit like standing two speaker stacks with seven sections as above facing each other. Both speaker stacks again will have an overall individual tune playing, again comprised of seven frequencies roughly within a particular range. The overall tune each plays may in itself be harmonious or not – with the seven bandwidths blending together well or sometimes not. One may have more bass, one may focus more on a higher pitch, or any combination in between. Then you have to see what happens when the sounds that each speaker is making from each section engage with one another – some sounds may harmonise, some may complement, some may collide, and some may be completely out of tune with one another. This goes a little way towards exemplifying the myriad of different dynamics that can happen in relation to another person.

As humans we can consider our own role in a situation, how tuneful and harmonious are the vibrations being emitted from our own being? And in addition we also have to consider that we can also 'feel' the resonance of the person's vibrations within our own centres – so it affects us and the 'sound' we make. So in the overall picture alongside two people 'singing' or making vibration from each of their chakras, we also have the dynamic of their vibration naturally being affected by the presence of the other.

When we engage with another person, the process is also the same as with any moment of interaction of our energy to the environment around us – in that we feel, absorb and interpret vibrations through all centres of our body about the person, and then this is relayed from the body to the mind via the nervous system. These

vibrations are then interpreted and experienced in our mind as concepts, mental projections, emotions and feelings - due to the release of hormones associated with the chakras (there may also be memories - old vibrations within the chakras triggered)

This is how we have particular feelings evoked when in relation to another person - 'Chemistry'. This is the beauty (and sometimes the heartache!) of relating – when we engage with another person both people become more than their individual selves and a third dynamic is born, that which is created when you meet. Sometimes we absorb vibrations from other people into our chakras and body tissues, which is why we can still feel the presence of the person still with us after they may no longer be in close physical proximity. Literally that other people do 'rub off' on us.

So there are multiple different inputs being experienced simultaneously in relation with another person - some that may feel pleasant and open particular chakras and others that don't and close particular chakras.

A lot of people are not used to being able to perceive their relationships with others in this light, sometimes because they are unaware of this phenomenon of chakra dynamics, but other times because unfortunately, they live in a slightly grosser sensory reality, where subtle energetics may not be detectable to their conscious mind.

For example, a common misconception people make, particularly in opposite sex relationships, is quite often judging a person visually when they see them, when this is just such a small part of the energetic landscape and dynamics actually being experienced.

I quite often, having a more subtle awareness of my energy centres, can be in proximity to another person and almost work through every centre and see which ones may be more activated / opened or which ones may be shying away and wanting to close to protect themselves. I also often encourage some of my patients to do this as a personal growth tool, and to view their relationships with others in a more rounded holistic way, rather than just how the other person may 'appear'.

It also helps to do this exercise to sort through some of the chaos of our experiences in close relationship to others, particularly those looking for the perfect partner, since you need to remember you are receiving input from all chakras some of which may resonate and some which may be abrasive to you – and the chances of meeting someone whose all 7 energy centres resonate with your own must be very slim! And vice versa – it can also help us understand our impact on people we are close to, and how we may affect them.

For example, I've drawn out a few of the key chakra characteristics, resonances and abrasions from a couple of people I've had particularly close relationships with. With person A) the Mooladhara centre felt very open and active, felt grounded and at home with this person, but Swadhisthana, did not feel particularly active, in the sense of little or no sexual activation; but there was a competitive Element between us meaning that Manipura was slightly abrasive against one another. Interestingly, in Chinese Medicine Manipura sits above the Liver, which in that school of medicine is associated with our ability to assert ourselves and our direction in life, which can go some way to explaining why this energy centre can have an edge of competitiveness

about it – that when we are in close relationship this energy centre can abrade with one another with both wanting to assert themselves over the other. The Anahata centre resonated well, feelings of genuine non-conditional Love, as did Vishuddhi centre, communication was easy, and I would also say there was a strong spiritual correlation in the higher centres, that spiritually we felt on the same wavelength, following similar subtle vibrations of energy.

Whereas when i'm engaging with person B) I feel less secure in my legs, indeed they often slightly tighten, so Mooladhara base centre feels off resonance when I'm with the person, which on reflection I interpret it almost as if on the physical plane (as our base chakra relates to our most physical level) we're not quite comfortable on the same 'ground' - as if we naturally inhabit different land, and flow to different pieces of the Earth. But there would be a strong sexual inclination, meaning that Swadhisthana was well activated, no competitiveness – so ease at Manipura, a very strongly activated Anahata centre with Heartfelt feelings of Love towards the other and also a strong sense of Spiritual correlation from the higher centres. Interestingly I strongly notice with this person there is a tremendous ease of communication at Vishuddhi and indeed when i communicate with them I actually find my head and neck craning back slightly as if to open my throat and allow out the words i'm longing to speak from the deeper levels of my being, from my Heart. So as we can see there is often a number of different forces at work within any one dynamic with another person, (which can create havoc for the logical mind as it often tries to categorise our relationships with others into quite clear cut categories – i.e, friend or lover!)

Perceiving your relationships in this way of having several different elements is also similar to what Indian mystic Osho relayed in his discourse's – that the qualities of your relationships with another person will be dictated by how many of your energy centres correlate or not.

I also believe that particularly understanding the role of Anahata centre in relationships is particularly useful. Dru Yoga Stillness in Motion discusses the potency of the Heart centre, when in good health and function, as being able to bring the rhythm of all the other organs into alignment with itself.

This much explains the dynamic we often experience in relationship that there may be niggling things which irritate us with someone, but when the Heart energy is activated within connection it tends to over-ride some of the other signals we can pick up from some of our other energy centres. This is also similar to the Chinese Medicine model, where the Heart is seen as the Supreme Controller, having the final say, and the other organs as its soldiers to keep the conditions right for the sovereignty of the Heart to remain in balance. From the Chinese Medicine model I also particularly like the notion that the Soul resides in the Heart, and thus it follows that decisions that are precipitated from the Heart come from the Soul.

In effect, by opening up your Heart centre to a more optimal state of operation, you become a more compassionate, patient and peaceful human being as more of your life experience is predominated by the energy of the Heart. And as we have touched upon, what is strong within your own centres can resonate similarly with people around us, so it can catalyse more of that Heart energy being opened in people we engage with thus making more of our interactions more Heartfelt too.

Chakra Polarities in Males and Females

Another important point to note is that while chakra qualities (such as those described in figures 5 - 12) have a very general basic functional similarity in individuals of both sexes, (such as that the base chakra relates to our connection with the Earth and the crown to our higher states of perception, with the others functioning on the spectrum in between) they also have inherent functional differences related to gender. Zulma Reyo (www.zulmareyo.com) identifies these differences in her book *Karma and Sexuality* and as foundation principles in her ongoing body of work relating to chakras.

As we can identify from figure 4, each chakra on each gender expresses itself with an opposing polarity to that of the opposite sex. For example the Mooladhara chakra on a male has a positive charge, and the female a negative, and then each chakra changes polarity to be the opposite in each gender all the way through to Sahasrara.

It's a relatively obvious observation that we often make that chakra differences are mirrored within the physiology, for examples, we can observe that the male positive expressive centre of Mooladhara is accompanied by a Lingam (Penis) which evidently extends away from the body and the male is more energetically inclined to express himself from this centre, whereas the Yoni (Vagina) of the female receives inwardly, and again this can be seen at Anahata, where the Female breast is pronounced and expressive in comparison to the male counterpart.

However, Reyo identifies that alongside the differences on the physical level the opposing chakra polarities also manifest as inherent differences in the emotional and mental functioning of each gender, and that each gender relates to life according to their own chakra polarity play.

As examples, women deal with the mental world in entirely different ways than men, and men the same with emotional currents.

However, significantly in terms of our identification of the importance of promoting healthy and balanced Heart energy within a healthy and harmonious state of being, she identifies that although each gender has it's own inherent chakra polarities, when a person is truly stationed within the consciousness of the Heart there can be common perspective. (See also sections relating to Heart / Anahata energy in subsequent chapters, and particularly chapter 4; Moments of Stillness and Presence – Heart Energy)

As regards the differences of manifestation of each chakra, it's fascinating that we often acknowledge and more readily accept (and admire) the physical level differences between the genders, but we don't as readily accept each gender inherent emotional and mental differences, according to the chakra polarities. For example you don't often hear someone comment about the opposite sex in respect that they wished that they looked more like their own sex, (i.e. a man commenting about a woman saying that he wished she looked more like a man or vice versa) but we quite often hear such commentary as regards the mental and emotional functioning of the opposite sex wishing it was more like that of their own.

Having touched upon the inherent physical, emotional and mental polarities associated with each chakra polarities, it's also important to note that the chakra polarities can become polarised when in relationship with someone of the opposite sex.

This means that when we come into relationship with a member of the opposite sex, the males positive polarities promote themselves, as do the females positive polarities, (as they complement one another) thus to create a balanced energetic whole within the dynamic of the relationship. That is to an extent, the males negatively charged centres (with the more feminine principle) which when as an 'individual' need to still operate to a more significant degree to enable a relatively healthy balance become even more latent when in relationship to a female as she now provides significant input of those feminine energies, and the masculine positive centres have to promote themselves in order to balance the feminine qualities of energy provided by the female.

Similarly for a female, her negatively charged centres with a more masculine principle which are required to more significantly operate when operating as a single entity will also become more latent when in relationship as the male provides the significant input of those energies, and thus her feminine positive polarities have to express themselves even more to balance the masculine input from the male. I'm reminded of the phrase associated to relationships where the woman may say 'made me feel like a woman' or the man say that she 'made me feel like a man' as the exposure to the opposite energies promote your own positive polarities.

However, as mentioned earlier, despite these differences, at the level of the Heart centre there is common perspective, almost like the Fire that the other Chakra energies dance around, so each individual promoting the healthy functioning of their own Heart energy within a relationship (via practices on their own or as a couple) will help to keep a sense of a common core and perspective in amongst the manifestation of the other energetic differences. Without a significant input of Heart energy the vastness of differences between the other centres can appear more daunting as it lacks the balancing aspect of the common perspective of the Heart.

In relation to teaching Yoga, although it's a relatively subtle dynamic I perceive this phenomenon of oppositely charged chakras as having significance. Firstly, as an education tool, and where appropriate to the level of understanding of the class, it can be fantastic to relay some of this information. In the modern world, perhaps more so than ever I see confusion of gender roles where people tend to be relating from conceptual ideals of how men and women should behave, without understanding what the actual energetic differences are.

And secondly, within particular postures, maybe at a more advanced level, (and again where appropriate - perhaps if working with a couple, or couple's yoga workshop) it could be prudent to mention some of these differences.

Of particular interest from the Dru perspective is Anahata, and at this centre, in relationship, Women express from this centre and men receive. So for example, whilst practising Anahata breathing, the female could intentionally focus on the out breath giving out an expression of the Heart energy, whereas in relation the male could focus on the in breath, receptive aspect of bringing energy into his Heart.

In the greater energetic picture this dynamic of oppositely charged chakras is another facet of nature where it's prudent to observe the individual components as part of a greater creative context to more fully appreciate them, that in this case the broader qualities and polarities of men and women balance one another. And even considering our individual differences within each sex, interacting with the other can help to bring balance as they stimulate and complement your own energetic profile. (See also Chakras in Concert, within Chapter 6)

5 - Chakras and the Body-Mind

Body-mind Connection Overview

Of fundamental importance to any discussion around chakras and ‘the mind’ is understanding that what we experience in our mind is inextricably linked to that which goes on in the body.

As we have established, each chakra pathway feeds back via a nerve plexus to the spinal column and to the brain. Therefore we experience in our ‘mind’ nervous system input. If someone sat on your hand, you experience it, you feel it. If someone holds a lighted match near to your skin you feel it and so on.

We are generally, in the Western world good at recognising gross impact, (such as those two above examples) on our bodies and nervous system. However what we are not particularly adept at recognising and acknowledging in the Western world is the continual impact of more subtle vibrations on the nervous system, and therefore mind.

Like understanding the subtle vibrations of what we are engaging with in our environment also feeds back to the mind, and understanding that the energetic quality of the soft tissue of your body also feeds back continually to your mind (again we would recognise a more pronounced example of this such as an ‘itch’). And therefore that the energetic quality of your organs also feeds back to your mind. So whatever energies and vibrational qualities we have absorbed into our system, our chakra system, soft tissue and organs, becomes part of our mind, and what we experience alongside the external stimuli.

The Body and Vibrational Impact

Have you noticed how sometimes you may listen to a particular song and then for a while later you may find yourself still thinking about it, experiencing it in your mind. This is because the vibration of it has impacted into your chakras and is passing through your nervous system to your mind (via the nerve ganglia at each chakra location which feeds back nerve input to the spine and then to the brain). Usually, after a while the vibration gradually disperses and we cease thinking about it. This same process happens all day, with whatever vibrations, whether gross or subtle that we are exposed to. Perhaps you have a conversation with someone, and again quite often you may find the energy of it, the vibration of it still resonating in you for a while, still bouncing around in your mind, as the vibration is in your chakras.

Our bodies are literally like a drum being played by the vibrations of what we are exposed to – both externally, by what vibrations we are exposed to around us, and internally, by what vibrations are already in us. And we hear both inputs in our mind, as they both pass back through the nervous system to the mind.

And in the same way that you hit the skin of a drum and the surface of it may reverberate for quite a while before it disperses away, so exactly the same process is happening to our bodies. Recall what processes happen in your mind at a quiet time of day, such as when you ‘have a moment to yourself’ with little external distraction or when you lie down at night to sleep. Better still, when you go and lie down tonight be

observant of what is happening in you. You will find that many vibrations you have been exposed to and experienced during the day are passing through your mind, flashes of incidents, conversations, (and this includes things we have said and done 'ourselves' – will get the vibration of our own voice and vibratory affect of our actions in our chakras too) as your body, your chakras are taking the time to disperse some of these vibrations and return to re-harmonise back to it's more normal vibration.

During the course of a day we are constantly receiving input through all our chakras simultaneously to our mind via our nervous system, with whatever situation we are engaging in. So we are exposed to many vibrations, some of which may barely impact us – like the tiniest tap on the drum skin, or some which hit us harder. The tiny taps we tend to shrug off and process quite quickly - disperse the vibration of quite quickly, but the bigger hits can tend to bounce around in us for longer, sometimes ongoing periods of time.

And then you get hits which hang around somewhere between the two ends of the spectrum - I'm sure you've all experienced it – maybe someone says something to you that bothers you, and for a while it rattles around your head, but you just get the sense it will soon enough go away and you will forget about it. And you do.

The balance is in affording enough time and space and the correct conditions for the vibrations we have been exposed to filter away and be dispersed, so that the chakra pathway, soft tissue and organs aren't loaded with accumulations of discordant energy from the environment. And in addition to engage with situations which promote our chakras to radiate and exude the healthy expression, vibrations and virtues of the particular organs and glands which sit within them and give us the potential we need for a wholesome and meaningful human existence. (See figures 5-12)

We will be looking at some of the factors involved in maintaining healthy chakra balance as we progress through this work.

When we don't afford the right time and space and conditions for our chakras to disperse discordant vibrations and encourage our own healthy expression we become overloaded and get tired, continually trying to process the vibrations of what we may have experienced whilst trying to get on with life – then it can become difficult to fully engage and experience what is going on around us in that present moment as we have a 'backlog' of vibrations that need working through the system, to be filtered and dispersed.

Chakras and Body Memory

As we have touched upon earlier chakras do have a way to help the process of what we may or may not absorb. This is because they have a degree of built in intelligence; that depending on the nature of the energetic environment around us, chakras can instinctively be more open or closed.

Closing helps to protect ourselves from absorbing discordant and abrasive vibrations from our environment, whereas opening happens in order to help us to receive nourishment.

However, in some cases, our chakras more natural state of balance and harmony can be significantly adversely affected. This can happen when we have been unable to close our chakras to avoid absorbing disharmonious vibrations, or we have been chronically exposed to them, or we have been unable to disperse the vibration from them.

This is how we accumulate 'body memory' in some cases from a traumatic event, as the chakra has absorbed vibrations from the situation around it and failed to recover and return to balance. (See Chapter 6 for how more on how chakras naturally return to health)

Initially, when encountered with a mild abrasive energy the chakra will close down to protect itself so as not to absorb those disharmonious vibrations, as per my example of when I'm at work at the bar and encounter someone radiating an energy that feels discordant to me, my Heart and therefore posture across the sternum shut. If you aren't as sensitive as me in that particular organ, then it's quite likely the 'closing down' mechanism might not be so pronounced. Might not get so easily affected - literally being 'thick skinned' does pretty much what it describes!

In health you may then need a break from the unpleasant vibration, or to have an emotional response, for the chakra, organs, spine and glands hormonal output to reset themselves to the correct frequency.

However, repeated exposure to unpleasant or abrasive vibrations can accumulate into even the cellular tissues, as well as the organs surrounding the chakra, as the body isn't given sufficient time to process through the previous vibration and return back to a state of balance. It builds an energetic imprint of the vibration it's repeatedly exposed to, or has deeply absorbed. I am sometimes am aware of this not only in my own body, but when I work with an acupuncture patient I can feel a quality of energy that may be locked within a certain energy centre, and aware of it as it disperses as I treat them.

Any of the seven chakras can become 'blocked' or densely accumulate vibrations which inhibit their functioning, either at a more superficial level, nearer to the surface of the body in the body's electro-magnetic field, or more densely impacted into the chakra structure itself, both of which situations require the right conditions or sometimes in the case of deeper blockages, therapeutic interventions to help them clear. These are looked at in more detail in chapter 6. An accumulation on a more superficial level can almost feel like a layer of film, or 'crust' on and around the surface level of the body. Since I have quite a high sensitivity to what is occurring within my energy field, I quite often find myself 'brushing' myself down after a busy day, moving my hands over the surface level of my head and body as if clearing aggregations from my chakras and energy field. This type of clearing technique can also often be found within other healing modalities, especially those which work more within the more subtle electromagnetic fields of the body, and indeed with my acupuncture patients I also often find myself clearing aggregations from the subtle fields of their body, using my hands, in a similar fashion to that described above.

In addition, similarly to how the subtle energy around a chakra, the soft tissue and organs can become overloaded with discordant vibrations and energy from our

environment, so the vibration of the chakra, soft tissues and organs also become reflective of the vibratory quality which we ourselves radiate from within.

For example if we are chronically full of grief or sadness then this energetic expression from our own organs can also begin to permeate the soft tissue of the body further adding to any accumulation of discordant energy which may have been externally absorbed in the chakras. It can similarly create a 'coat' or 'crust' of energy and vibration which sits on our chest and becomes part of what we experience in our mind and being.

This is discussed in more detail later in the chapter, entitled 'Accumulation of the Vibrations of our own Organs and Energetic Expression'.

Body Shape

After a while a person's body may become locked into a particular shape associated with the repeated chakra disturbance for example, the sternum can lock shut, the abdomen can become permanently tightened, or the legs contracted (for more see Chapter 7, Symptoms of Chakra Dis-ease). As we will later explore, this is also where yoga and physical movement practices and therapies can be of great benefit to balance this out. (See Chapters 6 and 8)

Body Memory, Energetic Imprints, and the Mind

When these energetic 'imprints' of a particular vibration have built up in a chakra and your nervous system, it means that alongside any actual sensory input you are receiving to your mind in the present moment, we are also constantly receiving the input through our nervous system of the previously accumulated energetic imprint.

Anything that is particularly impactful to an individual can create a deep imprint in a chakra. But for example let's follow through the process of if someone is subjected to a traumatic experience with someone of the opposite sex. If the vibration is unprocessed and uncleared, the vibration of it will sit within their energy system.

They may re-experience the energy of this imprint being with them consistently; re-experiencing it frequently whenever they are not distracting their attention elsewhere, when they sit down quietly, go for a walk, or anytime when they allow their body to settle they could feel the imprint of the energy passing through their mind. To avoid feeling the energetic imprint within a chakra, the person may begin distracting themselves to draw their attention away from their feelings, or begin to lock their spine similarly to avoid feeling it, (as we will discuss in further detail in Chapter 7).

And of course it creates a strong imprint onto and possibly affecting their experience of any similar situation. As we have established the imprint is within the person, as it hasn't been processed or cleared, so when they do then re-engage with someone of the opposite sex they experience not only the new person in the present moment, but also the feeling within themselves of the energy of the trauma, creating a strong (and unhelpful) imprint onto the present situation.

We start to respond to the world through the ‘filter’ of these experiences and vibrational imprints (which are often not helpful) and they create a constant input to the mind through our nervous system, creating almost like a groove or pattern in the psyche and subconscious.

Projection

This is the classic notion of ‘projection’ on the mental level. In much the same way as we use the phrase of seeing the world through ‘Rose tinted glasses’, so we begin to see the world through the vibrations of our own organs. We ‘see’ what we are feeling in our own body, and this vibration is relayed to the mind via the nervous system. (The vibration also often comes with a language accompaniment in the mind too, applied by the left brain – see following section ‘the Ego and Language’)

So if we have a particular energetic profile in say for example, our Liver, of anger and irritation, affecting our Manipura chakra then we exude and experience that energy in relation to the world around us – whatever is around us. So the Anger and irritation is exuded by yourself, and may be disproportionate to the actual events around you, but that’s what we experience.

Similarly, we have to take care to understand that the level of our ‘inner’ emotional projection belongs to us (the thoughts and expressions of our vibrations that we experience in our own mind). When our attention isn’t distracted outside of ourselves, what we experience is the feedback to our mind from our chakras, both the chronic vibration of them and the current vibrational contents that have recently come into contact with them. We read the current contents, which can be more transitory and change relatively often, through the chronic vibration the organ carries. This affects what we experience in the inner world of our mind in moments of reflection and contemplation, whenever we are not distracted.

So using our anger example, if your Liver was particularly agitated one day, generating feelings of anger, you could be sitting alone and ruminating on how a certain situation has made you so angry, because basically that situation has provided the last set of vibrations which sit on that chakra and is being significantly coloured by the vibration of the organ.

Similarly, have you ever noticed how one day you might be worrying about something, and then something else happens and all of a sudden you are now primarily worrying about the new situation and the old one appears nowhere to be seen in your mind? Again this can be because you have a chronic energy of worry occurring through an imbalance in your chakras and organs, and again, whatever the most recent set of vibrations you have encountered then sit on the chakra and we then ‘read’ that situation through the vibration of the organ.

Each emotion we can do this with. It can happen with fear – we could be generally feeling fear through an imbalance in an organ, and then engage with a new situation which we then also experience in our mind through the filter of fear. It can happen with our Heart energy too, your Heart energy could be open, feeling passionate and full of desire, and then whichever person we meet their vibration can sit on the surface of the Heart chakra and we project all that Heart energy onto them, falling in and out

of Love at the drop of a hat as the person who sits on the surface of that chakra keeps changing. If your Heart was particularly open one day, you could swear to yourself when you are ruminating (and experiencing the feedback of your organs) that you feel totally in Love with the person you have just met, and so on, when you are experiencing the feedback of your Heart in a particularly pronounced way. So in our 'own mind' we can tend to take things out of proportion with the actual energetic involved depending on the state of our own organs.

In an ideal health picture we wouldn't experience exaggerations of particular emotive states as the organs would be sufficiently balanced so as not to create this, and the chakras would be regularly cleared so as to avoid 'fixations'. See Chapter 6 for more on optimum health of chakras.

A great way to observe the vibrations of your organs and the current vibrations that are within your chakras is to meditate (see also 'Chakra's and the Ego voice' 'The Cycle of the Contents of your Mind' and 'Mind Awareness Exercise'). As well as being a great self awareness tool, meditating also relaxes the body so allows chakras to disperse and clear.

Sitting and meditating, especially for lengthy periods can reveal the full gravitas of your inner vibration of your organs, since there is less going on around you to distract you and actually play or act out the vibrations of the projection onto. For example, perhaps if we are experiencing within us a strong vibration of anger we might call someone who has annoyed us and tell them, or shout at someone, or if it was fear we may play this out by backing out of a situation we are committed to, or if we were feeling sexual, contact a partner or lover and so on. Participating in Vipassana meditation courses of silence for 10 days taught me a lot around this, that it can be somewhat challenging to sit through the vibration of your organs without distractions as the mental level projections can feel even stronger!

So it's good to be aware how relatively well balanced your chakras are – and be compassionate to others – since no one is perfect, every person has a different balance of emotive projections. What we can do is work to best refine the qualities and balance of our own centres, through chakra clearing practices, so that we can more clearly interpret the incoming sensory input, and then when it does resonate with us it's resonating with as good a quality of energy within us as possible, and we act accordingly more in proportion. Chakra clearing practices also help us to avoid excesses of projection that are fed back from the chakra and we experience in our 'inner' world.

Imprints Can Come From Any Source

Earlier within this chapter we used an example of a traumatic event with someone of the opposite sex creating a significantly strong imprint but it can be anything which creates a strong imprint, depending on the impact of the experience – finding a spider in your shoe, a car accident, someone shouting at you.

An experience need not be traumatic to make a deep imprint on our chakras. Indeed some of them can be positively inspiring. The taste of a particular food, a ride on a rollercoaster that is so thrilling, the soft touch of a Lover when your Heart is open and

receptive, the thrill of mountain biking, the peace on the ocean. Nourishing ones, like the Love of our parents absorbed into our Hearts when young and positive affirmations into our system.

When we are young we are at our most innocent and Heart open and very susceptible to incoming stimuli, as our energy system tends to be open and malleable and we have yet to develop some of our more robust personality traits and energetic 'hardening' – such as can happen as we get older and we can shut down different centres to a degree that keep us 'protected' or away from feeling.

However, even if the experience or imprint is considered a 'positive' one, we need to in some respects treat it similarly to a 'negative' one in understanding it's in the past, as continually chasing after the same thrills or experiences or sensations because they were pleasant or exhilarating can also cause us difficulties in appreciating the present moment.

In the same way we can become scared of spiders due to the deep imprint of fear we may have experienced at finding our first one in our shoe as a child, we can become overly focused on chasing the pleasant sensations in our chakras from our first experience of chocolate cake as a child! We can actually get addicted to chasing pleasant sensations similar to how we can try to avoid adverse ones. If an imprint of pleasure runs so deep it can become that nothing in the present moment can seem to match up again – an extreme example is how someone may get addicted to drugs after consuming them just once – it creates such a deep imprint that they then seek another taste of it again, and again, much in the same way a traumatic experience see a person then walking away from what may appear a similar situation again and again, based not on the present circumstances, but on the imprint.

We need to learn to become aware of what our patterns and imprints are so as we can stand a chance of distinguishing what is real in the present moment and what is old input. And practice techniques which help to clear and heal our chakras, which yoga facilitates as we shall discuss later.

We can see how some of these energetic imprints give us 'personality' as they shape our tendencies but they can also hold us back and contribute to how we build up unhelpful 'body memory'. The imprints, whether deep or subtle can create a blueprint for our life that can sometimes get in the way of our best potential, which can need therapeutic or curative intervention, if our body has been unable to sufficiently process through the vibrations and they have become ingrained in our being.

My own thought is that life, in some respects is about clearing some of the unhelpful imprints in favour of allowing through the vibrations of our soul and soul growth.

Being Re-minded

What's actually happening when we are 're-minded' of a previous event is that a vibration is hitting or resonating with a previous vibration which we have previously absorbed (this can also be alongside input on the optical or auditory level – it looks or sounds similar!) and therefore already exists within our chakra network and nervous system. It triggers a message back through the nervous system to the mind – so the

person then experiences both the immediate sensory input of what is real in the present moment and the old memories – similar vibrations that have been accumulated into the system in the past.

It brings forth to the nervous system both the real sensory input (or as much can be absorbed through the chakra depending on the level of blockages / openness of it) as well as the previous vibrational imprint. Both these inputs are then experienced in the Mind.

That is why if you watch your mind you often have a particular train of commonly associated thoughts – for example each day you might walk past a particular garden on your way to work and the odour and plant / flower vibrations from the garden hit your body (and also in this case your olfactory bulb – sense of smell) and every day you may then also re-experience the same memory in your mind – for examples of your Nan’s garden when you were a child, the vibration of which is still in your chakras and nervous system.

Or it could be each time you walk into a certain room the vibration in there (the ‘atmosphere’) feels a certain way that again triggers a similar vibration in your chakra system so again you also then re-experience a similar memory from the past. Or on speaking to an old friend their unique vibration re-awakens the vibrations in you from the past and all the old memories come flooding back to mind.

It is very much, as people say, that it literally ‘strikes in chord’ in you – it resonates with something in you already. But to what extent it resonates or ‘strikes a chord’ within you depends how much the previous vibration is still within you and ‘active’ (or alternately that it’s been processed and cleared)

‘Internal’ Re-minders

This process can also happen with things we take internally into the body. We might often consume a type of food or drink and on eating it can triggers old vibrations, memories that are associated with it.

Interestingly, I can often see the strong impact of eating food on creating a short term imprint into my own system that I often can keep playing out. For example, I may have a chocolate bar after work one night, which I don’t do often, so when I do it tends to feel particularly sensually strong. The vibration of the chocolate bar then resonates in me very strongly for quite a while, creates a strong imprint and then the next night I can’t wait but do it again! In that moment the potency of the imprint lends itself to me playing out the same behaviour again. I often do that with a meal as well, if I haven’t had a particular meal in a while and try it again, it sometimes tastes so good that I want it again for about the next 3 days – in some respects seemingly savouring as much the sensual memory of the earlier experience as the present moment experience. We get addicted, to a degree, to the sensations we feel in the body through the vibration of the earlier experience.

Transplants

This process of organs becoming strongly imprinted by vibrational energies which have been absorbed into the body also goes towards explaining why when people have received transplanted organs they then can on occasions find themselves experiencing new memories, tendencies or attitudes which previously belonged to the donor.

Chakras and the Ego Voice

The condition and vibrational imprints of our chakras and organs particularly also goes some way towards understanding the ego, or internal dialogue which we experience in our mind.

As we have established, each organ is constantly feeding back via the nervous system to the mind. Again, when an organ is grossly impacted, such as with pain, we are adept at recognising it.

However, the subtle state of each organ is also constantly feeding back to the mind. We experience the quality of energy of each organ in the mind, whose vibration, or energy each forms an aspect of our ego or inner dialogue. In life all organs are constantly functioning, but depending on which organ is particularly energetically activated or not, will alter which ego character or quality we mentally experience. For example, let's take a moment of when you might meet a loved one. When we see a loved one our Heart chakra will open, and the Heart energy will become predominate in feeding back to our mind. This energy comes with an accompanying Inner dialogue of associated language or ego voice, so you might think, 'oh I Love you!' or 'it's good to see you!' etc. (see following section 'The Ego's Language')

Let's compare that with a situation where a person makes you feel angry, which creates a resonant vibration in the seat of our personal power, the Manipura centre, and the organs within its pathway. This activates predominantly the Liver, whose energetic quality is then also fed back via the nervous system to the mind, with an accompanying mental dialogue which again associates the commonly used language to the quality of energy of someone crossing your boundary. You may hear 'I hate you!' 'Go away' in your mind – it's just commonly used language tagging onto the quality of energy you are experiencing within.

Another classic example is if someone has a Hangover and the Liver organ, and therefore energy, is agitated and the person may have many more angry thoughts for a while than normal. Usually in an acute situation the organs naturally re-harmonise, but again, by extension, any chronic or continued stress on an internal organ will result in your inner dialogue or ego patterns reflecting this.

Interestingly, the awareness of the state of your chakras affecting your ego has direct parallels and similarities to the Chinese medicine model that each organ corresponds to an aspect of our mind. As an acupuncture practitioner I'm constantly observing and examining the mental inclinations and expressions of a patient, as quite literally the things that they think about tells me about the state of their organs. Sometimes there can be a degree of inner conflict on the mental level occurring which the patient

recognises – which again is of particular interest to me as it can indicate which organs are struggling to communicate effectively with one another, or that one is over-acting over another. For example, on simple level a patient with an over-active Liver and under-active Kidney energy may experience on the Mental level a sense of being over driven to get things done i.e. a mental voice constantly saying ‘come on, you’ve got to do this, got to do that’, and also an inner voice complaining of being really tired ‘I can’t do it, I’ll do it tomorrow’ as the drive of the Liver is overacting on the need to rest of the Kidney. To bring balance back would be for the person to express to me that they feel aware of what they need to do and also to look after themselves, without there being a strong ego voice ‘shouting’ in either direction – that the two organs are back in balance. This inter-relationship between all organs is constantly going on – The Chinese Medicine model recognises 12 organs, each with a slightly different energetic quality and therefore associated mental faculty to interpret.

Whatever organ is particularly activated in a moment will be experienced in a pronounced way in the inner dialogue. But similarly even when we are not receiving strong external stimuli activating a particular organ, they are still constantly feeding back to our mind and as the energy flows around your body you will experience inner dialogue, chatter, which will be associated to the quality of energy within them. Even when you are sitting alone in a room the resonances of the organs are still feeding back to your mind. This is why sitting in meditation is particularly useful as you literally get to listen to yourself. And also why sometimes it is so difficult to do that, or that we seek distraction away from our own inner dialogue as we don’t like the energies that we are experiencing on the mental level. This is another great reason to keep your chakra pathways clear and in good order as it helps your inner dialogue.

The Cycle of the Contents of Your Mind: The Five Elements / Phases and Yin and Yang

As we discussed in the previous section (Chakras and the Ego Voice) you will see how the ego or inner dialogue of your mind fluctuate or circulate between several different states depending on which organs the energy is particularly passing through, or is energetically pronounced.

We could say that depending on which chakras or organs are particularly active / inactive will affect the contents of your mind.

From my personal inner observation, I perceive a great deal of validity in the Chinese Medicine Model that Energy flows through different organs in a circuit. Within the Chinese Medicine Organs are paired into Elements, 5 Elements in total.

For example, depending on the state of balance / imbalance you may find yourself experiencing thoughts about thoughts loved ones or sexual thoughts for a period of time, as the Energy passes through your Fire Element of Heart and Small Intestine. Then you may find yourself thinking about Food and or things to do with sustenance and nourishment as the energy circulates through the Earth Element of Stomach and Spleen. Then you may find yourself being aware of things that you feel you want to let go of and de-clutter in your life – things that need to be let go of to create Space for new inspiration, and indeed thinking about possibly inspiring ideas – which comes from the Metal Element of Lung and Large Intestine. Then you may find yourself in a

having a thought pattern of reflection where you find yourself thinking about something that has happened and re-visiting it – which comes from the Water Element of Kidney and Bladder. And then you may find yourself thinking about planning things, how to organise things and get things done – decisions you might need to make as Energy is passing through the Wood Element of Liver and Gall Bladder.

Then the energy shifts back to passing through the Fire Element of Heart and Small Intestine and circulates round again. Obviously if one particular organ is particularly strained you may find yourself experiencing lots more thoughts from that Element and organ as it shouts louder for attention as it's been distressed in some way!

If you observe the nature of your moment to moment experience, you'll also be aware how for a period of time, say a few seconds, you'll be more outwardly aware and conscious of your surroundings and where you are, and the mind drifts back to a more internal place, like day dreaming for a few moments, before it then switches back to being more outwardly aware and so on. This is because as the energy flows through its cycles it passes through organs which are more responsible for relating to our exterior, and then naturally flows through to our more interior organs, and when it's passing through them we are naturally less aware of our exterior environment. This is the balance between the Yin (inward) and Yang (outward) aspects of our being and in ideal health we are always flowing in balance between these polarities.

What happens within a few seconds when you are observing your mind is also a microcosm of what happens in the macrocosm of our day, that for the most part of it we are generally more alert and then we more fully switch off at night and sleep. Or a microcosm of our year – that in the Spring and Summer we are generally more alert as the vibration of the seasons correspond to more Yang organs than in the Autumn and Winter where we are to an extent more dormant as the vibration of the season corresponds more so to organs which are related to our (Yin) interior nourishment.

As regards this natural balance and flow however, what tends to happen in our generally over-stimulated culture is that the demands of our exterior environment forces our attention outwardly more than the natural flow would be, and thus the energy doesn't have the ideal amount of time to return to and flow through the interior organs in a relaxed way. The over stimulation squeezes the amount of time and the concentration of energy that is afforded to the interior organs to do their work as a lot of the time even if we do slow down to rest part of us is still generally still outwardly engaged. Even when we get home at night a lot of people watch TV or something similar and that's as inward as they often get – but it's still drawing your attention outwards. When you take away the outward stimulation, such as through meditation it can promote a much higher quality of energy to pass through the interior of the body which is healthier. Remember the natural energy flow of the body is that it flows outward and then inward in a cycle anyway so you are just giving it more optimal conditions to mirror the quality of our outward experience with the same degree of potency inwardly.

As we will discuss further in chapter 7, this outward distraction can also act as a way of avoiding the contents of our more internal energies and disquiet which may be occurring inwardly, it can sometimes be quite difficult to sit with the 'internal' self depending on what vibrations are occurring within, so we also choose sometimes to

crank up the volume of our external stimuli so it can drown out the volume of our own internal energies.

The majority of people don't pay the same quality of attention to the internal self as to outward stimulation. So in the next sub-section will invite you to do that and give your inner self some quality of attention with the Mind Awareness exercise.

The chakra model could be similarly applied to the contents of our mind – that the energy perceived by your mind circulates and fluctuates between the contents of energy either vibrationally sitting within each centre, or being received by each centre.

Mind Awareness Exercise

Take a moment to be aware of what you are experiencing in this present moment wherever you are. There may be external sounds, smells, vibrations being felt from what is going in around you. This is input to your nervous system from external stimuli being relayed to your mind.

In addition you will be aware of the thoughts and images which are also going through your mind, that the mind regularly plays – might be things from the past, snippets of conversation, music, this is the input that exists within your own chakras, organs, vibrational imprints into the soft tissue that is also passing to your mind via the nervous system.

So what you are experiencing in your mind is the nervous system input from external stimuli and internally from your own chakras and organs.

Now go and find somewhere to sit that is even more quiet and still – take away some of that external stimulation, and just be aware of all the different thoughts, feelings, images, as they pass through your mind.

Congratulations you are meditating!

A lot of people feel that Meditation is all about having a still Mind with 'nothing' happening in there but in my opinion it's about the awareness of what is actually happening in your mind. And as we are establishing whatever vibrations are present in your body and what we have been exposed to will be interpreted via the mind, so there will be activity in your mind, particularly if we have been relatively busy and our chakras and body has a great deal to process.

Eventually as you sit for longer, your mind will become progressively stiller, since with no significant external stimulation for your chakras to respond to and process, the nervous system quietens down and the chakras begin to re-harmonise, which to 99% of us in the Western World will bring a greater degree of stillness since we tend to be overloaded with processing quite strong vibrations.

In terms of creating balance, as vibrations get filtered through your system they begin to re-balance with some of the more subtle vibrations of the upper centres (which

when you sit with a relatively upright spine and meditate begin to open and rebalance with the lower ones) it brings a greater sense of peace.

And as I explained in the previous section the sharpness of focus tends to naturally move from a place of being very aware of what we are doing for a while to a state where we appear and feel to just be within our thoughts, before then becoming more aware again. This is a natural process as the energy flow in our body activates different organs from interior to exterior, it's not possible to be permanently 100% concentrated 24 hours a day - any degree of concentration activates certain organs which is then balanced by relaxation, and naturally we flow between these polarities – so just observe that, then you are meditating!

I mention this as it's easy to also apply our western over-driven mentality even to meditation and give ourselves a hard time even within that if we don't feel we are concentrating the whole time!

Empty Mind?

As I mentioned above a lot of people have gained the misconception that Meditation is about having an 'Empty' Mind with nothing going on in there, with indeed it being considered somewhat of a 'Nirvana' to achieve this state. In respect of this perception of an 'empty' mind, there are a number of considerations.

As a reminder, once again, we are constantly receiving vibrational input from both our own bodily organs and the vibrational stimulus around us.

So, if you sit in a very silent place, in the surrounds of a natural environment then two things can happen. Firstly you are taking away the stimulation and need of having to process strong vibrations from your immediate environment, so this helps the volume of processing passing through your mind.

Secondly being in a natural environment you are also removing generally discordant energies which we experience from being within an urban energy field which tax the chakras body and also create processing. (See section 6 'The Dis-eases of Modern Living and Ideals of Nature!')

So both of these factors, the silence and a natural setting, help to relieve the amount of processing that will be going on throughout your system, by reducing the external stimulation, and externally this is as much as you can do.

However, internally we are also experiencing our own vibrations from our own organs, interpreted and felt in our mind so how the question regards experiencing an 'Empty' Mind would be how to stop those?!!

From my own experiences I've found that when I've sat meditations for extended periods of time, such as Vipassana courses, then gradually, after a while, my whole system begins to calm down, and the amount of significantly discordant vibration within my own system reduces. (To add that Vipassana courses are also held in the ideal conditions of silence, and natural surrounds so they do provide excellent conditions to facilitate high quality meditation)

Therefore, for moments of time, sometimes of seconds, possibly sometimes minutes, difficult to tell, it's felt like my internal energies and vibration have ceased to be stirred and I experience little or pronounced 'inner dialogue' conceptions, or images passing through my mind at all.

However, it's most definitely not a state of emptiness, since you are still subtly feeling and sensing the vibrations of your environment, although since the environment isn't particularly stimulating you or discordant I'd find my attention seemingly more filled with internal body awareness, experiencing the vibrations of my organs and my breathing.

For moments, I would be fully aware of my body sensations, receiving the vibrations of my organs but without strong inner dialogue or imagery as my internal energies weren't being stirred significantly enough to provide any, but I would still be getting richness of body sensation.

So I would characterise these periods of time as not being 'empty' but rather being 'full' which is also how my Dru yoga teacher Ruth Boaler has told me that state of 'stillness' is perceived within Dru.

But what would happen, naturally, is that these periods of time would fleet, they would be interspersed with periods of greater mental conception as different layers of vibration were being filtered from the chakras and organs, and as these were released I would then find the vibrational quality of them passing through my mind as images. I'd have memories that I'd long since forgotten about coming back to mind, where during those experiences I'd absorbed the vibrations of into my body, and then as they were being released again through the meditation process were coming back to mind.

So the process would fluctuate, between periods of little or no conception followed by periods of 'heavy' thought passing through my mind as my body processed what vibrations was being released. Obviously though, the more harsh, discordant vibrations we release from our body and organs then the more we generally experience a subtler mind space of less heavy thought, a lighter mind space.

So when you choose to sit even for twenty minutes in your daily life you are helping to lighten the load a little, as without the exterior input you are giving your body chance to concentrate on the interior and flush out discordant energy. Just sitting in a relatively silent still environment with little stimulation can provide, even by contrast to 'normal' life a sense of spaciousness and lightness, not to mention those fleeting moments of more complete stillness which we will discuss to in the following section.

Moments of Stillness and Presence – Heart Energy

We discussed in the previous section the notion of an 'empty' mind, and periodic moments of stillness and no conceptual thought which are experienced in our mind. I'm now going to explain those moments of stillness in greater detail. In doing so we're also going to revisit the discussion from earlier within the chapter (in the subsection The Cycle of the Contents of Your Mind: The Five Elements / Phases and Yin and Yang) of how the energy within the body courses through different organs in a cyclical fashion. During that subsection I detailed how depending on which organ in

the body is particularly stimulated at any one time will shape the mind state we experience, and how if you watch your mind it cycles between different states.

For example I detailed how if you have a preponderance of energy in your Wood element of Liver and Gall Bladder you may experience thoughts related to planning and decision making or things to assert yourself over, if the energy is in the Spleen and Stomach we may be thinking more thoughts around food and our comfort and so on, or that if the energy is in our Kidney and Bladder we may experience more reflective thoughts about events that have happened. (See also chapter 6 for reference to the function of the Kidney) And basically that we experience in our mind the body energy cycling between all Five Elements, namely Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water, and the organs which comprise them. You may also a more general distinction between thoughts that are concerned with the future, as our energy cycles through our more 'Yang' Elements to do with growth, or thoughts about the past as our energy passes through our more Yin Elements, concerned with processing what has happened.

However, in amongst all this we have the Heart, and the energetic properties of what happens when we have a preponderance of energy in the Heart (which as we have also identified is of prime importance in Dru Yoga – as it is in life in general!). Have you ever noticed when you are in a Heart opening situation how you feel more 'present', much less 'thought' passing your mind? Perhaps think back to moments of intimacy or peace with a loved one, the archetypal moments of feeling in love, for me it conjures images of being with a lover on a beach under the sunset, going on dates or moments when a loved one may gaze into your eyes. Or similarly moments of peace and security with a family member, it just when you may witness a beautiful act or scene of some kind. Whenever the Heart energy is strongly activated we feel more present, this is because, as discussed by Acupuncturist Michael Greenwood in his work *Acupuncture and the Heart - Mind Split*, the Heart has no reality of past or future, it operates in the reality of the present moment, and that the present moment is it's only reality.

Therefore when our Heart energy is particularly activated we tend to feel more present. So during the course of your everyday reality, if you notice, you have periodic moments where you find yourself neither thinking of the past, or the future, but just for a fleeting moment feel completely present in this moment, before the reality of the mind then shifts as the energy cycles through other organs which have other energetic properties as we have discussed earlier.

Incidentally, in Chinese medicine it is also identified that at different times of day the energy also cycles, more generally through different organs (as well as different times of year – as we identified in chapter 2 different seasons more significantly activate different organs). For functions around the Heart, this is around midday and also in the evening between 7pm and 11pm. I know for myself personally I do generally feel, particularly in the evening, much more 'present' in the moment and engaged with my environment at that time of day than other times of day. I also perceive this is reflected around me as people also generally socialise much more at this time of day, which also adds more weight to the correlation that when the Heart energy is more stimulated people feel more drawn to connect in a more social way with those around them at this time.

In terms of the time of year in which the Heart energy is most activated, it relates to summer, which again fits with the societal patterns of behaviour I also see around me. For example, we often refer to a 'Summer of Love' – thus correlating the natural dynamic of our Hearts being more energetically awakened with experiences of intimate relating. By contrast, we don't often hear people speak of a 'Winter of Love' as this is the time when our Heart energy is naturally at its most insular.

As well as particular situations, activities and relationships relevant to each individual which may stimulate their Heart energy and bring this sense of stillness and presence, I also relate some of the movement and therapeutic practices I engage with as having this same capacity for promoting Heart open presence, for example Dru Yoga and Authentic Movement.

Throughout this work I discuss the general Anahata focus of Dru, and the sense of peace this promotes, but it's also notable that within the teaching of Dru there is reference to the experience of 'still points' and the sense of presence and awareness of the moment which these bring. (Indeed the name Dru derives from a Sanskrit term relating to stillness). I similarly perceive these 'still' moments promoted through the practice as also being related to our Heart energy being opened and stimulated, much as we have previously discussed in this section.

To support this correspondence of momentary 'still points' in Dru yoga also being related to Heart energy it's significant to note that within the practice of Dru the physical origin of where we access this experience of a 'still point' is said to reside just inside the sternum, which once again corresponds with the location of the Heart chakra.

Authentic Movement is a movement practice originated by a Movement Therapist, Mary Starks Whitehouse in the 1950's. The dynamics of the practice are discussed more fully in section 6, however, in brief the practice supports non-judgemental observation from both a mover and witness, and since as we earlier identified Heart energy is non-judgemental, it therefore promotes engaging with Heart energy.

I also perceive the experience of Heart energy opening and sense of presence is more greatly amplified by the practice facilitating both Heart awareness on the part of both a mover and the person witnessing them.

This is because the mover, already encouraged to move with a more Heart open energy through the non-judgemental structure of the practice, is also encompassed within a circle of witnesses, so they therefore are also moving within an energy field of strongly radiated Heart energy. Radiated Heart energy does have a tangible quality – as we will also later discuss in chapter 6 it radiates an electro-magnetic field that is 5000 times stronger than that of the brain! (ref; Dru Yoga, Stillness in motion), so the energetic ambiance is more tangibly one of Heart energy.

The Ego, Language and Images

As we touched upon earlier in this chapter, when we are experiencing the vibrational resonance of an activated organ in our mind it can often come with accompanying dialogue – e.g., if our Heart energy is particularly activated we might actually experience the words ‘I love you’ passing through your mind, or likewise if we are angry we might hear ‘I hate you, I am angry’ and so on.

The conceptual language or ‘words’ which accompanies feelings we are experiencing is applied by the left side of the brain to associate and accompany the feeling or vibrational resonance of the organ.

Whereas one day in our evolutionary past we would have articulated ourselves through a more primitive grunt or gesture (prior to the further development of the language centres of the left brain), such as if we are angry we may have growled, (and still do occasionally) the left brain has evolved and language evolved to turn that growl to a more specific set of sound articulations ‘I am angry’ that accompany the energetic feeling. It is the left brain’s contribution to the right brain’s feelings. As we have evolved we have got used to and developed the left brain to associate language to a particular feeling.

When we are a child and learning language we would have felt the vibration of feeling, such as our Mother being angry and learnt that it is accompanied by the vibration of those words. So when we sit and meditate or be aware of what’s happening in our minds, all we are hearing in a conceptual language sense is the left brain tagging on words to the energetic feelings we are experiencing from our organs.

In balance, and when we are in a state of congruence, both the language we hear in our own mind and express are in a lot of respects just more evolved ‘growls’ and articulations of the vibrational energies we experience within ourselves, and they do ride on top of and accompany our feelings. When we are out of balance our words sometimes do not match in a particularly congruent way what we are experiencing mirroring the inner dis-order. This is something professionally in my role as an acupuncturist to observe.

Ideally we are a balanced fusion of experiencing the energy of our organs and our feelings, as in a balance of the left and right brain, so we can articulate what we are feeling within. More right brain oriented people may find their inner experience is one of more predominant feelings and emotions, whereas more left brain people may find a greater experience in their mind of language, and sometimes, to a lesser extent the experience of feelings themselves.

It’s still just vibrations representing a feeling, just more articulate, and in a healthy, balanced, congruent state is expressed riding on top of the feeling or emotional expression. The left brain’s contribution to the right brain’s feeling. That is why we hear words in our mind – because they are the accompaniment we have got used to hearing in relationship to a particular feeling vibration.

Hearing ‘I Love You’ in your mind in congruence rides as the language (left brain accompaniment to) expression and accompaniment of our Heart chakra actually opening and activating. In balance they are not just bland conceptual eddies, they are

direct expressions of the resonances and vibrations of our organs, feelings, carried up the windpipe out the throat and given the language form pertinent to that particular culture or society.

We can sometimes get 'lost' within language content, what someone has 'said' to us, but it's as important to recognise the energy which the words came with. Although language can be deceptive to a degree, it can't really betray vibrational body language 100% - saying one thing and meaning another, and you can often still sense that the person is still vibrating other energies if you can be sensitive enough to pick them up (our 'gut feeling' when we think someone isn't telling us the truth!). Indeed if someone is speaking one thing and experiencing and resonating lots of other vibrations, it can go some way towards indicating that internally they are aligned to a particular chakra or organ which predominates over the others.

In interaction, language also mirrors (albeit at a slower pace) the exchange or resonance that is happening between different energy centres of the body of you and the other person. Speaking with a particular friend of mine I can almost often hear her thoughts before they are spoken, and vice versa, as in this case our Ajna centres are exchanging information and we are interpreting each other's vibration of what is being radiated.

Similarly to how we hear conceptual words applied by a different area of the brain to fit alongside the feeling or vibration of the organ, we may also have an accompanying image. The image making process is very similar to that of language, that we feel something and then an area of the brain applies an image to fit to the feeling. So to return to our earlier example, if our Heart energy is particularly activated we may feel the activity of the organ itself (an opening of the chest) the hormonal and emotional effect of this (feelings of joy), alongside some conceptual words (I love you!) and also an image, say for example of wanting to embrace someone or give someone a hug! So the process works the same – that a different area of the brain applies an image to fit to the feeling. Similarly when we are hungry, or deficient of a particular type of food we get the image of that which we need – for example a particular fruit, or meat.

As we can see therefore there are different levels of how we perceive and experience our moment to moment reality, and depending on your own constitutional makeup and the state of your own bodily energy we may experience more of an affinity with a particular level. For example, when you feel angry, you may feel strongly the sensations in the body, or express the energy emotional energy with a shout, but not necessarily hear the language in your mind of 'I am angry' or see images of wanting to shout or throw a cushion.

Or conversely, for someone else, when their Manipura energy is strongly activated and they feel angry, they may not particularly feel the sensations, or express their energy outwardly with a shout, but may very strongly hear conceptual words 'I am angry' in their mind (applied by the left brain to accompany the feelings) and see images of wanting to shout and throw a cushion.

So notwithstanding our fairly broad constitutional differences, in an ideal state of being each person would be able to express their energy relatively freely with a

degree of appropriateness, for example to be able to express their emotions through the body or speech as appropriate.

However, given that we do all have individual differences and may relate more strongly to one level of expression than another, each individual may be drawn to certain activities which particularly support them and allow them to express.

For example someone who may strongly perceive images in relation to their feelings may find it easier to create art to convey these feelings. Another person who strongly experiences their feelings as conceptual words in their mind may find it easier to talk about their feelings, or for someone else they may find it easier to express their feelings via their body, such as with dance or movement practices which facilitate emotive expression.

Given the understanding that each individual can be more drawn or feel more of an affinity to a certain level of expression, we can also therefore see the benefit in having each of these approaches available in a more structured, therapeutic context, where an individual may need a greater level of support in expressing their feelings or where trauma has resulted in particular emotions being unexpressed.

Examples of this would be via art therapy, counselling, drama therapy and dance movement therapies.

The Process of Learning Language from Birth

To articulate the language learning process in greater detail; When we are first born, what we first experience is just the energy patterns of our internal organs responding to the stimuli from what is around us and from within, but since the language centres of the brain aren't yet developed, we would experience them without the conceptual language accompanying the feelings passing through the mind. For example, when we would feel hungry, you would still 'feel' hungry, but just not have the conceptual language of 'I am hungry' accompanying the feeling in your mind as you have yet to establish the language centre or begun to be able to associate that language to the feeling. As we grow, we are then taught that the words 'I am Hungry' are representative and articulate that feeling, and the left side of the brain accompanies the feeling with that conception in the mind, so we then experience both the right side of the brain feeling the experience of being hungry, and the left side giving the language we associate to that.

Similarly, let's say for example your Mother was leaning over the side of the crib looking at you as the precious child that you are, radiating her Love for you, and you are feeling that. What you would be experience would be the radiance and warmth of your Mother's heart open energy and alongside this the activation of your own Heart energy, beautiful subtle sensations within your body. However, once again without the development of the language centre, the experience within would be of the sensations and feelings but without a conceptual language dialogue of 'wow that feels nice' or 'I Love you Mom' which is language which we later learn that applies to those feelings so with the development with age of the left side of the brain, if we were to experience the same or similar scenario again of being in a very Heart open situation as an adult we would also then hear the accompanying language.

The conceptual language is just what we learn to accompany feelings as we grow. As we know our original communication as an infant child comes from a place without conceptual language but through our body language, inflexions of sound, and unfortunately as we grow we can tend to lose awareness of what someone is actually communicating to us through their body language and instead focus on conceptual content. As an acupuncture practitioner it's in my intention to read that body language! What would this child be saying to me now?

Language is just something we learn to accompany feelings; this is obviously how different people who speak different languages come to articulate the same feelings but using different words, applied by the language centre of the brain using language relevant to their particular culture.

The Ego – Friend or Foe?

Having now worked through a chapter relating to the mechanics of the mental level experiences of our energy, it feels more prudent raise this question about the ego at this point rather than at a prior juncture.

Although various modalities of healing, psychology and theoretical paradigms perceive the ego differently, it's not lost on me that a great deal of new age, spiritual or alternative perspectives perceive the ego to be somewhat the villain which can get in the way of our development and progress through life. Or for that matter, in everyday life we often hear people referring to another person as having a 'big ego' in a negative sense.

In one sense, ANY of the voices which you hear in your head could be said to be ego, since as we have identified all organs are constantly feeding back vibrational input which we experience in our mind, often accompanied with language that we associate with the energy pattern. For example, we start to feel hungry and we feel the vibrations and receive the message from our organs that we want to eat, so we hear in our mind 'I am hungry' as this is the pertinent language the language centre of our brain applies to accompany that feeling.

However, as we have discussed earlier in the chapter, some of what we also experience in our mind is the accumulation of old energy patterns in the body which can get in the way and inhibit our fullest potential in life. Where 'ego' in it's negative sense can kick in is where it starts to significantly impinge upon the healthy expression of our energy and energy centres, all of which have a role in keeping us healthy. So returning to our earlier example of being hungry, lets say for example, a person, perhaps as a child was repeatedly told, when then said they were hungry –'no you're not, you can go without'. The vibration of that communication gradually gets absorbed into the system, and begins to interfere with the highest functioning of the body's potential, as alongside feeling hungry, the person also now still experiences the message of 'no you're not, you can go without!' In this case, for example, the ego voice associated to the functioning of the Spleen and Stomach has become tainted.

So some expressions of 'ego' are balanced and appropriate, and they are the energetic expressions of our organs giving us an accurate appraisal of a situation, and

appropriate to a situation, and the internal language voice we hear relates to the internal organs expressing the balanced, life giving and evolving nature of us.

And the distinction for when the ego becomes a greater problem is when its expressions are grossly inappropriate to the moment. However depending on the state of our internal energetics, to some degree we can all experience ego voices which can be detrimental to what is actually going on around us. It also depends, as we've examined earlier, on the particular balance or imbalance each particular organ may resonate. If the Kidneys were particularly out of balance, a person may have a pronounced 'fear' or 'lack of fear' ego, if it was the Liver, a person may have a pronounced 'anger / assertion' or 'timidity' ego, and so on.

To re-iterate what I mentioned previously, what we can learn to do is know our 'ego' or 'projection' patterns and begin to distinguish them once we begin to recognise them, take care to act from a place of higher wisdom and engage with chakra clearing practices, as they in turn help move discordant energy patterns out of the body and in turn help alleviate the density of and inappropriate qualities of 'ego'.

Who We 'Think' We Are Versus Who We Really Are

Throughout this section I've identified how the mind, via nervous system input from the chakras continually relays back vibrations from experiences we've had which are being processed within the body, and also the chronic, consistent vibratory quality of the organs through which we often filter our perception of our experiences.

What we can often do is start to align our identity with the stories which 'play' in our mind, (as they can sometimes appear as quite a significant part of our make-up) when in reality we are so much more than that. In any one moment you are the cumulative input of emotions and vibrations from all organs in the body as (which can often be drowned out by the mind or mental level channel 'stories', as they can become like old friends) as well as the nervous system input in the moment from our environment and our reactive spontaneous self.

So it's important to remember the Mental level stories which play in our mind are not our spontaneous self in the moment. In fact the stories can't keep up with instinctive level responses that we are capable of. The body and nervous system responds to situations and events way quicker than your Mental Level channel can change its story, and indeed often continues playing a similar story or play no matter what is actually going on around us. This is because there tends to be a somewhat limited back catalogue of stories for it to relay from events that may have happened before that have created an impression on our chakras and nervous system, or similarly the future stories that the mental level channel creates are also generally based on the past events or again limited back catalogue we have in our system. Thing is, is that no situation in life ever identically repeats itself, so as much as the mind tries to create a future scenario or plan, it's generally based on the limited perception based on past information, and cannot hold or perceive all the real time creative possibilities for our path. You might be able to sense possibilities or get an instinctive or intuitive sense of direction, but these are generally more subtle inputs than the images conjured in our mind due to the aforementioned limitations.

I'll provide an example, relatively easy one that we probably all experience a lot, that of when we are hungry but don't know in our 'mind' what we want, because the mind can't sometimes come up with an image subtle and individual enough to meet the exact requirements of what your body is feeding back in the moment, so may play old meals through the mind, but I would hazard a healthy guess that if you actually had an array of food laid out in front of you, your body and instinctual self would instinctively know what to go for! We encounter this process numerous times during a day on lots of different levels. We have to begin to know our body and our body's energetic state and what it demands and the sensations we are actually experiencing, all beyond the images that may be played in our mind as they can be cumbersome and limited.

I watched myself recently when I unexpectedly had the day off work, and find my mind playing the tape of what I should do with that day off (which was sit at home and watch videos on my laptop, whilst indulging in an array of comfort foods! - Since this is the habit pattern which I'd most recently engaged with on a day off so it was playing through my mind. And to be fair, there was a degree of validity in the imagery as I associated it to relaxation, which my body wanted, but so much more of me also wanted other levels of nourishment, my Heart was seeking connection and my mind more subtle nourishment than my laptop! So I sat and observed as my body took command and instincts beyond that of the story of my mind and started striking up conversations with my housemates (with a fair degree of exuberance given the introverted imagery of my mental level play) and very shortly got myself invited to a friend's place in another city and before I knew it was in my car and en route!

Another classic example of the limitations of the mental imagery we experience in our mind via our 'back catalogue' of experiences already held within the body is that in relationship to other people, particularly those of the opposite sex. While some part of you is actually aware of the array of dynamics that are really happening between you and another person, the mind tries manfully to impose its preconceptions and memories that are stirred from previous connections. Going way back in my own personal history I well remember times when any time I was attracted to any lady I would immediately find my mind imposing its relationship template upon the situation, running it through the same expectation sequence based on previous relationships i've had and whatever preconceptions I'd also built up from relationships I'd witnessed earlier in my life. My previous cumbersome 'model' I would play in my head is that every woman I was attracted to could become my 'girlfriend' with all the ensuing sexual and romantic associations.

Nowadays i'm much more adept at realising that every relationships with every woman (and every person I know for that matter) is different and contains a completely different set of dynamics depending on what energy centres are activated within that relationship, (See also chapter 4, Chakras in Relationship with other People) and whatever happens will be a fresh creation walking down a different path. Previously I just based my expectations on what had gone before. The reality is that whoever we meet of the opposite sex any combination of energy centre activation and stimulation is possible, some of which may lend itself to an ongoing sense of affinity that more readily enables an 'ongoing' relationship, other times it's more transient in nature. Recently a friend of mine visited my house on a night when I had 4 of my female friends also visiting, all of whom were healthy vibrant ladies, and probably

more often than not who could be considered attractive to the opposite sex. He asked about how I get on being surrounded by so many beautiful women, and whether indeed I have to treat them all as 'sisters'.

It was such a beautiful realisation to me about how the mind initially works with its preconceptions, as his comments reminded me that actually when I first individually met each of those girls and was attracted to them my mind played its 'relationship tape' of perceiving how it could be and fit into my dream and expectations of ongoing romantic connection with each (my mind still does tend to play that tape whenever I meet someone, only now I tend to listen to it a bit less, and indeed need to remind myself to wake up from its overpowering volume at times!). However, having now got to know each of those ladies, I can see that with each one there are completely different dynamics of attraction at work. Just to note here, I don't deny there is attraction, I wouldn't spend time with them if there wasn't, it's all about what the nature of the attraction is! Just briefly and for example of some of the more primary dynamics, with one of them I sense a really strong kindred spirit heart connection, that I recognise the vibration of their Heart energy and resonate with it and feel at ease with them, communication is easy from the Throat and there is a sense of spiritual affinity from the upper centres (that we are on the same path) but there isn't so much of a sexual centre activation; with another it's that the sense of spiritual connection and Heart is strong but the communication less fluent and maybe a small spark of sex centre activation; with another I sense a strong sense of being grounded from the same energy from a similar upbringing (indeed we grew up in the same area) so I feel a sense of resonance at the base chakra level that we 'stand' on the same ground, again lots of Heart and more spirit level affinity, and with the other it's actually a fairly new connection so indeed i'm in the process of becoming aware of what the dynamics actually are (whilst trying to be aware of the 'model' my mind is trying to impose on the dynamic!) but it is noticeable to me there is more of a sexual centre awareness and also Heart activation.

The point is that at the initial stage, the mind creates that very basic and cumbersome imagery, indeed in this case for me the story on meeting each of these ladies is about whether they are the 'one' and could be the next person i'm going to have a relationship with. And in fact of course I do have a relationship with each one of them, and it's even better than the mental model as i'm paying attention to what is real! That's the pain and ecstasy of relating, it's not the dream, but if you can appreciate the connections for what they are and explore the dance of what is actually happening there can be untold riches!

Just remember you are much more than the stories you play on your Mental Level Channel. You could imagine if you like the stories you are hearing are like the radio stuck on repeat in the background in your house while you continue to live and move around it.

What we can do as individuals is re-iterate once again the benefits of engaging with chakra clearing practices as once again they help to clear old memories and stories but also make our responses more flexible and sensitive to the input we are engaging with from our environment, not so densely filtered and affected by old vibrations.

A teacher of mine, Ya'acov Darling Khan co-founder of the School of Movement Medicine (also see section 6, Nature and the Full Spectrum of Chakra Energies) often uses a phrase when he leads Dance and Movement workshops about 'the dancer inside of you' and that we all 'have a dancer inside of us'.

I find this quite interesting, as in my opinion it encourages participants to realise that they are more than just the stories and ego dialogue in their mind, (which they may be relating to themselves as, this is the position in which we relate to our 'being' from) and that the body has its own wisdom to move and interact with its environment and the rhythms we engage with outside of ourselves.

Basically in free, spontaneous dance your body and instinctive self moves in relation to the rhythms that are engaging with your body in a much quicker way than your ego mind can keep up with. Many has been the time, particularly if I have been dancing in relation to a partner, that i've afforded myself a wry smile or giggle as i've watched my ego mind making suggestions as to what I should 'do next' while I observe my body just spontaneously interacting and moving in relation to the other dancer, and that mind dialogue being a split second behind in time to what is just spontaneously happening. Dancing amplifies our awareness of this gap between our spontaneous creative self and our ego mind, but to a subtle degree it's always happening. Have you ever noticed how you might often pre-conceive what you might want to say or do in a situation and then your body or expression does something completely different? Or how during conversation words quite often come out of your mouth quicker than you can think of them!

So Ya'acov's assertion to find the dancer within you encourages you not just to relate to yourself as the ego dialogue but as the bigger sense of self of who you are beyond that. It changes your perception of who you are. So when you start dancing or moving spontaneously, it can be experienced almost as if the dancer is within you, that somewhere within that stream of dialogue of who we often think we are there is also someone who can dance.

However, at a more recent workshop I attended with him, it struck me when I heard him say it that you can also actually invert the phrase, and that indeed, each of us is actually inside a dancer!

This is almost completely reversing the perceptual reality of who we are, that the smaller sense of who we are in our mind and mental stream of consciousness or ego is actually contained within a much bigger you and always has been, only we don't always recognize it, or align ourselves to our 'bigger' self. In reality that stream of consciousness and ego is contained within a spontaneous, instinctive, creative body of self which is way bigger than our small mind.

This state of perception and alignment from which we often perceive life from is often referred to as our 'assemblage point', particularly within a Shamanic context. So changing our perception from that of the smaller ego dialogue mind to one which relates more to our spontaneous instinctive capacities and takes more into account the vibrations of energy which we relate to outside of ourselves (i.e. outside of our mental dialogue) could be said to be a shift of assemblage point.

Taking into account and being aware of the vibrations of energy which we resonate with outside of ourselves (outside of the confines of our smaller mind) could be seen to be of fundamental importance, as it gives us a clue to our path and direction in life, because the amazing thing is that while that path can shift or change and is constantly in flux, bringing us new and fresh adventures and challenges, the ego stories can still remain relatively consistently the same that we are playing in our mind! So paying attention to and following the actual flow of energy outside of ourselves is a path of adventure and growth while the mind can tend to be relatively static.

Absorption of Vibrations, Saturation and Instinct

Whatever we engage with sufficiently we tend to absorb the vibrations of and begin to resonate the vibrations of. This can happen both internally and externally. If you eat enough kebab, you will begin to resonate with the vibrations of kebab!

This is also similar to if we have been spending a great deal of time with another person, and we absorb some of each other's vibrations – they begin to resonate with some of your vibrations, and likewise you as you have vibrational elements of them in your energy field. We literally begin to ‘rub off’ on one another. You recognise yourself in the other.

In close relationships, the potential difficulty we can have is of saturation of the other person’s energy. Earlier (see chapter 4 and figure 4) we discussed the natural male to female polarity that exists, but if we absorb too much of our partners energy it can begin to conflict with the natural male to female polarity that occurs as it’s this polarity, differences between sexes that draw us together. If we become too much of a mixed bag of each other’s energy some of the natural attraction can be lost.

This saturation can occur with any energy source we engage with – same sex friends, lovers, places, people; anything in excess will saturate us.

However to avoid saturation, fortunately part of our basic human instinct is to seek out energies around us that naturally compliment and bring balance back to our own state. After too much kebab, there may be a natural desire to switch to a lighter food group. After spending a lot of time with one particular friend the desire may come to spend time with another person for a while. Or whatever other kind of nourishment a person needs to stay balanced. Life and chakra balance in this respect isn’t too dissimilar to a plate of food – we may have certain staple foodstuffs we eat regularly, but a bit of variety is also healthy.

However, we are not always surrounded by the conditions or variety of energetic nourishment which allow us to come back to balance, so we can stay saturated or inhabited by abrasive vibrations, aggregated and accumulated experiences within our system.

This is a compelling reason to engage with practices that help clear our chakras so that what we experience on the sensory level in the present moment can be experienced as clearly as possible without some of the residue of what it might invoke in ourselves from the past.

The degree to which someone is affected by the previous memories and vibration depends on the depth of the adherences and blockages within the chakra. If the previous vibration is deeply unprocessed then you can have a situation arise where people really struggle to experience the present moment clearly as they are deeply just re-experiencing trapped vibrations and memories within their own energy network.

In some cases, we may also come across a blockage that we may be unaware of, or only arises infrequently, or in particular situations, as it takes a unique vibration in the present moment to trigger it, to literally strike a chord with it. Blockages and imprints may sit latent in your chakras and nervous system until these times, and again this can lend itself to people avoiding particular situations, as once triggered the emotions can be too difficult to experience.

Accumulation of the Vibrations of our own Organs and Energetic ‘Expression’

Similarly to how a chakra, the soft tissue and organs can become overloaded with discordant vibrations and energy from our environment, so the vibration of the chakra, soft tissues and organs also become reflective of the vibratory quality which we ourselves radiate from within.

In optimal health each chakra radiates and exudes the healthy expression, vibrations and virtues of the particular organs and glands which sit within it. (The vibrations and expressions of each chakra all play a role in enabling us to experience a whole and meaningful existence, See figures 5-12)

So for example, in ideal health, the soft tissue around the Chest becomes permeated with the vibrations of healthy Heart expression – of joy. Similarly the soft tissue also begins to reflect the vitality of healthy lungs, of Lungs that fully inspire into an open chest. However, to a certain degree what tends to happen is that the vibrations and energetic quality of the soft tissue, organs and glands begin to reflect both what we are exposed to outside of ourselves and what can be our own lack of healthy expression.

To continue following our Heart and Lungs example, a person may be exposed to circumstances outside of themselves of discordant vibrations which result in them closing their chest down to try to inhibit the experience and absorption of those vibrations, for example, being part of an unhappy household.

They then also may experience a feeling of sadness (related to the Heart energy) or grief (related to the Lung energy) in their life related to that situation, which they then also exude from within, further adding to the accumulation of energy in their chakras. It can similarly create a ‘coat’ or ‘crust’ of energy and vibration which sits on our chest and becomes part of what we experience in our mind and being.

Irrespective of this dynamic of external exposure and internal response, it can also be an additional problem if a person doesn’t have circumstances around them which enables them to express the healthy virtues of their own organs and chakras to a satisfactory degree. (We will examine chakras and health in more depth in chapter 6)

This situation can occur even if there is no particularly discordant energy they are exposed to, but more they are just stilted in their own emotive expressions as their life situation doesn't cater to it. For example, a person may have relatively harmonious friendships, work and home life, but may not have an avenue for expression of the deeper expressions of the Heart. They may not have another person 'close to their chest' in order to exude expressions of affection of their own Heart opening. This same dynamic can happen with any chakra – it may not be particularly exposure to discordance from outside, but more the lack of healthy expression from within which is creating the chakra disturbance. Similarly, if a person doesn't have a situation in their life where they can take the 'lead' and assert themselves it can lead to 'frustration' from Manipura. If a person doesn't have an expression for their creative needs, or a situation where they feel they can engage with their greater life purpose, or someone to talk to in a free flowing manner, the upper centres can all begin to similarly suffer and fall out of 'tune'.

6 - Chakras Optimum Health

Optimum Health Overview

In optimum health, we can 'feel' through all chakras, through all parts of the spine, and as appropriate to the circumstances be able to receive and radiate essential energetic nutrition, in the form of the vibrations which relate to each particular energy centre.

This means that whatever situation you are in, you are capable of receiving and radiating vibrations of a healthy and balanced nature through your body as well as recognising the more regular senses we align to – such as speech, sight and sound.

You don't just see and hear what is around you, if you observe closely you are absorbing the energy, the 'feel' of your environment into your body – and this also is interpreted in our mind, as images, feelings, sensations. So the sensory input you perceive in your mind is also from all seven chakras, and whatever energy they are resonating with from the environment around you.

As a society we often recognise that we get 'mental' level flashes of what we have seen during the day when we sit down for a quiet moment, but somewhere along the path we have lost the knowledge that this is because the experience is stored in our body, in our chakras, and when we find ourselves re-experiencing something on the mental level it is the vibration within the body of the experience still being felt. Although we sometimes don't realise it, it's not that your mind is just a two dimensional computer replaying experiences we have seen or heard and is disconnected from the body.

Do you ever feel tingly and find yourself opening your chest when someone says something nice to you? – it's not just the conceptual language and sound quality of their voice that you are responding to – in that moment they may also be radiating significant vibrations from their Heart chakra which you are feeling in your body. And when we sit down to reflect at the end of the day and re-experience that moment passing back through our mind, bringing a smile and warm feelings, it's because that nourishing vibration is still with you!

Research by the Heart Math Institute cited in Dru Yoga, Stillness in Motion has shown the electro magnetic field of the Heart is over 5000 times stronger than that of the brain! So we are constantly engaged with our 'feeling' body as well as our mental level interpretations. Native Americans speak of 'listening with your whole body' – try being aware of this – see what happens when you engage with different people, places, do you open your chest or contract it? Do you tighten in your Abdomen (related to your 'gut feeling' about a situation) Do your legs tighten – do you feel on rocky ground or nice and secure? Many unique body dynamics are occurring and learning to interpret your body's messages is very useful!

For example, when in balance, and it's energetically appropriate you would be as capable of relating to your environment sensitively through Mooladhara and Swadhistana as much as Vishuddhi. Of being as articulate with the movement of our feet on the ground or sexual receptivity and expression as we are with our speech. It's

just a healthy expression of energy moving freely and in a balanced manner through all parts of the spine. (As we will be discussing in subsequent sections)
I perceive that greater awareness of this body-mind connection could work wonders for people's health, in terms of making choices of activities which nourish them.

Interior Factors in Chakra Health

Your chakras are always in operation to some degree (Reyo 2002) but as we have discussed, how open they are, and how efficiently they work, depends on both internal and external factors.

The interior influence, as we have been establishing, is concerned with the chakra's own innate state, such as whether they are relatively clear and open, or alternately blocked up with unprocessed discordant vibrations which has caused it to lock up and creates a situation where the organ within may begin to suffer from stagnation and the spine locked and nerves and glands affected.

The external influence (which we will discuss to follow) is concerned with placing ourselves in situations that nourish our chakras. Engaging with situations that energetically feed them, catalyse them to open and 'drink in' and absorb vibrations from the environment, and also allow them to radiate and express their own vibrations harmoniously.

Rebalancing Chakras and Dispersing Vibrations

As human beings we are constantly in a process of seeking vibrational nourishment for our seven chakra centres, and of dispersing vibrations which are discordant to us.

In this respect we could liken the whole of the chakra system to our digestive system as a whole - that each centre both needs to process and clear its waste and also, crucially, receive adequate nourishment!

When we don't engage with practices or situations which allow our chakras to clear, then we can begin to feel bogged down, and a sense of having no space, constantly pressured. This sense of spaciousness in ourselves is often linked to the amount of vibrations we are holding in our energy field, and sometimes less to do with how busy we actually are. Ever noticed how some days or weeks, even if you have as much to do, you just feel like you have more room for it? I often notice a sudden change in my perception around how much space I have in my life after being out in nature for a while and clearing and dispersing vibrations from my system.

Therefore in health, and a healthy lifestyle, the body, and each chakra, has the right conditions and circumstances around them on an ongoing basis to allow for the impact of the various vibrations they absorb to be adequately processed and dispersed.

In addition, the lifestyle circumstances will allow for more than just clearing old and discordant vibrations, but it will also facilitate receiving nourishment into each chakra.

Rebalancing after a discordant experience, or when some of your chakras are ‘out of tune’ can be achieved through finding somewhere to go which gives your body the chance to re-set itself and disperse the disharmonious vibration from your system, such as going home after a tough day at work, but remember wherever you go your chakras will still be operational and also exposed to vibrations in that location. (Most ideally you would be able to enter environments which allow your chakras to efficiently disperse as well as be nourished! – see section on being in nature to follow)

Alternately you seek a correct resonant frequency to retune your chakras to what they need. E.g., after the heavy day at work you go for a walk in the park or communicate with someone you like to reopen your Heart centre! Or you have an appropriate emotional response to push or keep that energy moving and flush it out the system, shouting, crying, laughing etc.

So using my pub job as a tangible example, if I’ve had a hard day with a few less than harmonious and irritable customers, I could come home afterwards and I would notice when I settle down to rest that the experiences I’ve had during the day are spinning around my mind, but gradually being dispersed as the vibration of them leave my chakras and nervous system, so over the course of a few hours they will disperse out.

In a lot of respects the process could be likened to that of how a washing machine works – that the discordant vibrations are being spun around in you, gradually getting dispersed like dirt from your clothes until clean again. This process would be noticed a lot more clearly also if attention wasn’t being distracted externally, like by watching TV, looking after kids and so on, which is why a lot of people when they go home probably aren’t quite as aware of the contents of their energy and chakras until they do actually lie down to go to bed. Then they often just think their mind is overactive and racing – a sure fire sign the body isn’t getting enough time to do its laundry!

If I’d had a particularly disharmonious interaction at work, then sometimes a healthy response is an emotive one – to quickly move the energy on – granted it’s not always easy at work but a quick walk out the back to let anger disperse or a few tears can be appropriate. Or I talk to a friendly colleague to quickly re-tune my Heart centre back to normal. So this involves removing – expressing the discordant vibration – so telling them what was said, what happened, what we generally think of as ‘not bottling things up’ or ‘getting it off your chest’, and re-open my Heart centre back to normal.

And then afterwards to actually feed my heart centre a little bit I meet a friend or someone who cares and receive some of their Heart vibration towards me to help rebalance further.

Usually to maintain the equilibrium of our energy centres we are doing a combination of all of the above – taking a break from some things that we have had enough of (but that which we need to engage with to move through life) engaging with things which allow us to re-tune and nourish, and having emotional responses to keep us in balance.

Using our digestion example again, sometimes we actually need to feed each chakra – but then we have breaks in between too to digest what we may have absorbed (and remove the waste products) while we also go and do other things to feed other parts of us.

We do all we can to actually re-tune the vibration of our chakras. The bigger the deviation from its natural vibration the more difficult and longer it can take to re-harmonise it back to normal. An extreme example would be if someone relatively healthy acutely injured an organ and had to have a transplant, in this situation the person's natural vibration of that chakra would be tremendously affected, and take a long time to re-harmonise back to normal. It also explains why people who have had transplants often speak of some personality traits changing, as they have another person's vibration within them!

Chakra System Comparison to Chinese Medicine and the Properties of Water

I'm fascinated by the comparison between different models of interpreting health and the functioning of the human body. I like the identification that when we rest our body takes the time to disperse discordant vibrations out of our chakras and out of the body, (the body is actually constantly trying to do this anyway, but particularly when we rest the body takes the time to do so) I personally relate this idea of chakra dispersal with the Chinese Medicine model of the function and state of balance of the Kidneys, and also the way Water is identified as a carrier of the vibrations which it is exposed to.

In more detail, in Chinese Medicine, the Kidneys are seen to be the organ which give us the 'power of reflection', act as a 'filter' and give us our life force or 'will' in life.

As regards vibrations and water, Dr Masaru Emoto, author of 'Messages From Water' identified that the Crystals in Water change structure depending on what they are exposed to. On a basic level, exposing water to natural, beautiful and nourishing vibrations creates beautiful crystals within the Water, whereas exposure to negative vibrations can be seen to alter the crystals into discordant shapes.

A huge proportion of body mass is made up of Water or fluids, so if we follow through Dr Emoto's idea that Water absorbs the vibrations of what it is exposed to, so surely it follows that all the Water and fluids within our body begins to take on the crystal structure and vibrations of what it is to exposed to in our environment.

Therefore when we lie or sit down to rest, and we find ourselves 'reflecting' on our day, I liken this to interpreting in our mind the vibrations that are contained within the fluids in the body as they are being filtered out through our Kidneys.

In much the same way we can look into a pool of Water and see our reflection, so we see reflected in our mind the vibrations contained within the Water, vibrations from whatever we have been exposed to. We are literally seeing the reflection in our own 'water' of what we have been doing as it has created an imprint into the fluids in our body - remember the fluids in the body aren't static, and so the fluids will be flowing through the soft tissues and organs that sit within the chakra's - so energy and vibrations that are absorbed through your chakra's will imprint upon the fluids.

Further, in Chinese Medicine, Kidney imbalance is seen as a state of tiredness, fatigue, lack of energy and incorrect use of our life force or 'will'. This also correlates to the phenomena of Water carrying the vibrations that we are exposed to. This is because it follows that incorrect use of our 'will' will put us in situations that are

strain to us – that ‘reflect badly’ upon us (literally reflect badly upon our fluids) so takes much more energy to process the vibrations thus tiring out the Kidneys. Or again being over busy could be said to be the wrong use of our ‘will’ so would result in not enough time for the Kidneys to process our experiences so again they become tired and depleted!

The function of the Kidneys to act as a filter to filter out disharmonious vibrations from the body also corresponds to why we need to rest to stay optimally healthy.

If you take the example of a Water filter jug – it doesn’t matter how quickly or vigorously you might shake the Water around it still takes a certain amount of time for the Water to be cleaned and processed through the filter. Therefore it’s like that in our body – you can’t force the process of your Kidneys filtering through and dispersing vibrations any quicker than it can actually manage. You have to give it the time needed to filter through. Even if we do lots of exercises to break up and disperse stagnation in our body, again it doesn’t matter you still have to give it time to filter through, in exactly the same way you could shake a filter jug around with stagnant water in, might break up the stagnation it would still need time to filter the water through! So this is how I see our Kidneys getting tired and overloaded, they aren’t given enough time to process what’s being thrown at them, so we become overloaded and bogged down. They have to be given enough time to do their work otherwise they get tired trying to squeeze in processing time while we are still busy in everyday life.

The Dis-eases of Modern Living and Ideals of Nature!

Following our earlier example of having a hard day at work and coming ‘home’ as a place to come back and re-set your chakras I also made a point of mentioning that wherever you are, your chakra’s are still operating. I did this because a lot of us, even when we are returning ‘home’ are quite often still entering into an energy field which challenges our chakras with discordant energies, even if the house or home itself may be relatively peaceful.

This is through no particular fault of the individual, but rather one of the difficulties of modern living, particularly urban is that the vibrations we often experience around us aren’t ideal. Generally speaking, in any modern, urban areas all around you in relatively close proximity will be a whole raft of activity going on, even when you are trying to be still! As we move even more towards a 24 hour day, 7 day per week consumer culture it’s more and more difficult to find times when the society around you are still.

When I was a child Sunday’s used to a relatively ‘still’ day, you could feel it, but now that’s progressively being eroded. Even at night, particularly in cities, the air around you, vibrations around you are still buzzing with activity, sending out vibrations from ground level upwards where we inhabit and are exposed to. The multitude of electronic devices which we are exposed to give off vibrations of energy which are unfamiliar to our body, and require it to ‘work’ to retune and compensate to maintain our balance – which takes energy.

So what is ideal? – In terms of our environment being out in nature is an optimal environment both for chakra relaxation and dispersal and also for chakra nourishment.

You could say that in some respects being in nature is the only true place where we truly relax to the deeper levels of our being. This is because, as Anodea Judith cites in her book on chakras, 'Wheels Of Life', the late Itzhak Bentov discusses a micromotion within the body that consists of a vibration of the Heart, cells and fluids which is similar to that of the Earth's resonance, so the vibration of natural life and contained within natural earthly matter resonates strongly with that of the body, and the more closely we engage with the Earth, by spending time in a natural setting, the greater the resonance.

This makes perfect sense on reflection, since we are obviously creatures who have evolved from a 'natural' setting and environment, it's only today that we lead lives that appear separate from the natural world, encased in densely populated concrete urban areas. Indeed, I often note how nowadays it's often seen as somewhat the 'alternative' option to spend time in 'nature', when of course that's actually on a deeper evolutionary level the environment we come from, and in fact it's the modern urban lifestyle and urban vibrations that are somewhat more foreign to the body.

It's this attunement to the same micro-vibration outside of ourselves in nature that resonates with our own body which allows our chakras to open up and to disperse and release. You need to open a chakra to allow it to disperse, and this is what natural environments allow as they have the correct resonance to do so.

Ever noticed how much better you feel after a day out in a natural setting? In cities, due to the vibrations that are around us we tend to hold a more generalised tension due to the vibrations that predominate around us being less comfortable, and often slightly 'disconcerting' to be around. (read as dis-'concert'-ing, as in balance the chakras work in 'concert' with one another to maintain health, and when you have some chakras not working in harmony with the others, often by trying to close to a degree, as often happens in an urban setting, it is literally dis-concert-ing)

Nature and Negative Ions

Alongside the harmonious micro-vibration to our own body that natural settings provide, another aspect of the healthy environment that a natural setting, or natural life provides, is that of Negative Ions. The air around us contains Ion particles, any natural environmental has an abundance of negative ion particles (despite their name, 'negative' ions are seen as the healthy ones, and 'positive' ions the unhealthy ones)

Negative Ions predominate natural environments, forests, countryside's, streams, mountains basically all the places we often recognise as feeling so much fresher and healthier after visiting. For example, negativeiongenerators.com discusses how the normal ion count in fresh country air is around 2000 to 4000 negative ions per cubic centimetre. At places with rushing water, this is even more greatly increased, citing the example of Yosemite falls in the U.S where the ion count can increase to over 100,000 negative ions per cubic centimetre. This compares to polluted environments, such as a motorway during rush hour where the level can fall to as low as 100 negative ions per cubic centimetre. Other producers of positive ions are indoors where a TV or computer monitor are operating, environments of warm, dry winds, and where air has flowed through ductwork such as in air-conditioning units

So we can see that modern urban environments with polluted air and preponderance of technological devices are a mass producer of the unhealthy positive ions. Regards the extra proliferation of negative ions around Water, it's because the effect of Water evaporation, and the breaking of surface tension of water creates negative ions, hence why at a waterfall it feels so fresh and abundant, but also why the air and atmosphere can feel so much fresher and clearer after rain, or indeed why we also feel so much better after a shower!

How this relates to chakras is that we also, due to interaction with our environment, get affected by these positive ions. We absorb energy from our environment, and in the case of polluted positive ions they will affect our chakras, be absorbed into our chakras, organs. The air we breathe is absorbed into our Lungs, into our blood and is circulated around our whole body, affecting every chakra, every system. Polluted energies, causing the body to work harder and use more energy to maintain balance.

Nature and the Full Spectrum of Chakra Energies

I've learnt a lot over the years from Ya'Acov Darling Khan, co-founder of the School of Movement Medicine, a moving meditation practice. Ya'Acov often refers to us human beings as basically being analogous to a tree, that in health we stay rooted to the Earth while reaching for the sky, growing towards the light.

Being in a natural environment, such as walking through a wood or forest, contains all these vibrations from Earth to Sky in their correct proportions. Trees stay rooted while growing towards the sky, connecting from the densest vibrations of the Earth to the most subtle of the air and light above while growing branches sideways which help feed in even more light. They are a fusion of all vibrations across the spectrum between Heaven and Earth. As human beings, in balance that is also a blue print for who we are. Our Root chakra connects us to the ground, tuning in to the frequency and vibration of the ground beneath our feet, our Crown chakra tunes us into our path of growth through life on a much more subtle, light, vibrational frequency, and the chakras between them act as branches to connect us to energy sources around us to bring in even more light.

In Modern living, particularly urban we can struggle to maintain this balance, of resonating in the correct proportion with each of the frequencies of energy which we need. www.worldwidehealth.com discusses the general strain that our chakras get placed under in an urban environment with the plethora of electromagnetic radiation, which is also said in particular to interfere with our connection with some of the more subtle energies of our higher centres. I know personally, that my dreams become much more lucid when I sleep out during the summer months in more natural environments, and indeed when I even go for a walk in the woods or drive out of the city conurbation into the country I feel a whole extra level of perception re-awaken in me as the frequencies that previously get jammed up with all the urban 'interference' become much clearer again. Reminds me of the phrase 'can't hear myself think' which people often use within a busy environment, well to an extent I think there's always an element of that in urban life.

The subtle energies of our Heart Chakra and our connection with Love towards others is distorted in urban living with grosser images of sexuality, people and body parts

seen as objects with scant regard for the subtle nature of Heart and soul that sits alongside a person's physicality, the list goes on, each chakra distorted.

What about base chakra level? Well we spend big chunks of time whizzing above the Earth in vehicles, not particularly tuned into the frequencies of the Earth, particularly as then too it's mostly encased in concrete, and even under that are mines, tunnels, sewage systems, degrees of geopathic stress which strain the optimal spectrum of vibrations of the base chakra.

And where is our true connection with the Earth, soil, ground, roots when we have little sense or connection of what we grow from the Earth providing our sustenance, instead our sense of security comes not from the produce from the Earth below us but rather from the pre-packaged shelves of a supermarket.

So we return to a natural environment as a place to rebalance, and to remind us of our core nature, who we are beneath the more superfluous and transient demands of modern life. Going for a walk amongst trees means you are exposed to the full spectrum of vibrations from ground to sky, trees act as a fusion of the light of the sky and Earthly matter. So therefore since they contain the full spectrum of those vibrations, they can resonate with any one of our centres which is out of alignment and allow it to rebalance.

And what a metaphor for (human) life they are too, as much as we've discussed the polarity of Heaven and Earth a tree embodies, I also touched earlier upon the role of its branches. The Trunk is truly like your spine, and the spine of your life, connecting to Heaven and Earth, following your path and being rooted, but along the way we have branches of our being which bring in extra light to our lives, and observe how on a tree branches balance one another.

We have branches of interest in our life, off a common trunk of our path through life, but while each branch can be vitally important to the overall health and vitality of our life, they need to stay in correct proportion. Imagine a tree if one branch becomes too heavy, or isn't balanced by another on the other side, then the whole tree and structure can be compromised. I see many branches in my life – each one of my interests is a branch off the 'trunk' of who I am. For example, one branch is the interest in health and wellbeing, and one to one work with patients, and another branch to balance this is my pub work, working as part of a team in a social environment. Too much of one or the other would unbalance the bigger picture, but both are integral parts (branches) of my core path (trunk) in life.

We've drawn the analogy of our human life as a whole to a tree, but to bring the analogy back full circle to our chakra model, it's also representative of our Spine being the trunk of our lives, and each chakra being the branches of who we are which also bring in more light and feed the whole.

And similar to how we earlier discussed the importance of how a tree's branches exist in correct proportion and balance on a continuum (or trunk) connecting Heaven and Earth, it's also of course vitally important that each chakra works in correct proportion to one another, on a continuum (or healthy spine) connected to Heaven and Earth and equally alive on all frequencies in-between. Using our tree analogy this

would mean the tree not being too top heavy with branches which may imbalance the tree or too little upward growth that no light can get in. We shall explore this proportionality of chakra balance more in the section to follow entitled 'Chakras in Concert'.

Asides from getting out into nature, there are other suggested ways to help ourselves in a modern urban environments both in respect of their high positive ion count and lack of natural vibrations. Visiting a park as often as possible, time in the garden, plants in the house are all good at engaging us with more natural spectrum vibrations. Trying to keep to a minimum exposure to chakra discordant electro magnetic and positive ion creating electrical equipment can also help, as can having a water feature in your house – this is said to be very good for negative ion levels, and strongly advocated, when placed correctly, within the Eastern culture practice of Feng Shui.

Bodywork, Therapeutic Modalities, Movement, Yoga, Dancing, Shaking

The effects of Yoga on balancing our chakras and helping disperse discordant vibration from our system are discussed more fully in section 8, Chakras and Yoga Specifics.

However, the general mechanics of how it works can fall under the same broad categorization as other bodywork practices. Intrinsicly all effective bodywork practices help to disperse discordant vibration from our system, and balance our energetic profile across the whole of our spine so that all energy centres are harmonised and we do not become fragmented, with some chakras and their physiological components out of proportion and balance with others. (See also Chakras in Concert to follow). Individual therapeutic modalities such as Acupuncture, massage, energy work can help to disperse discordant vibrations from our body, physical tissue, and organs and by association affect the alignment of the spine.

Therapeutic practices which don't necessarily involve physical touch can also remove discordant vibrations from our system. What is essential, and the common denominator for an effective therapy on the energetic level is that the person feels relaxed and opens their chakras to allow the vibrations to move so this can also happen during counselling sessions, or with therapists who don't necessarily engage with physical touch. What is paramount is that the person feels secure and safe enough to allow unlocking process to happen and that the counsellor has the correct energetic rapport with their client for this to occur.

Physical level therapies can then also complement this process of energetic dispersal as they can help to support the re-alignment of the body back into a balanced shape after the energetic stagnation has shifted. If a physical level practitioner does not have the correct rapport with the patient (and this can be down to an individual patients instinctive choice also) it's likely that for all the physical manipulation they may do the discordant energetic vibrations may be unmoved. All that's important in moving discordant vibration is the correct vibrational field for it to be facilitated. However do remember though we have different centres which need different vibrational input to resonate with them, so we need a variety of energetic interactions

Walking into a room full of people laughing, walking through a field of beautiful flowers, being hugged by a loved one, engaging with physical exercise – all these things that natural life provides can also all be healing in respect of opening up our chakras, only we don't always live significantly in tune enough with the different elements of what we need, so occasionally we need to play catch up or engage with a more concentrated dose of a healing energy to bring us back to balance, and that sometimes involves engaging with someone skilled in body work or therapeutic practices to help.

Free dancing or movement practices which similarly facilitate a person into a space of spontaneous expression can also similarly allow for the movement of discordant vibrations out of chakras in conjunction with moving the soft tissue and other physiological components within the chakra. We've discussed the importance of the spine throughout this work, and similarly to Yoga when we dance we move the spine and the entire chakra pathway with the movements. Amongst other practices I'd thoroughly recommend is Gabrielle Roth's 5 Rhythms Dance or Authentic Movement, however what is crucial is that the practice facilitates a sense of ease in you to move and relax. Your local nightclub on a Friday night, although it has its plus points, might not feel quite as harmonious to your precious Heart vibration and encourage it to open, or support the clarity of your third eye with so much consciousness distortion in the environment through Alcohol, as is often the case.

The beauty of a practice such as 5 Rhythms is that it recognises that we have a spectrum of vibrations which encompass our being, and therefore plays music which covers this spectrum, allowing all aspects of us to be met and moved. We discussed in the first section how each chakra pathway and area of the spine resonates on a different frequency, so attending a 5 Rhythms class enables each area of the spine, each chakra to be resonated with, exposed to the vibrations which allow it to open.

This can compare with other therapeutic practices which may target their initial influence on a single physiological component within a chakra, such as if you take Herbs, this will primarily target an organ, although as we have seen through the interconnectedness of all the elements any energetic improvement within an aspect of a chakra will also benefit the spine, glands and soft tissue, but dancing works the entire chakra pathway simultaneously.

Another great thing about free dancing is that the body is put back in charge, and its own intelligence and innate healing power is facilitated. Throughout the day we are frequently subconsciously engaging with body behaviour which brings balance; after a while in front of a computer you may find yourself stretching, when you get tired eyes you may find yourself pressing an acupuncture point in the corner of the eyes, after a nervous or stressful encounter we may press points in our palms which bring balance. So the body has its own intelligence to enable it to unravel tension and balance, however we don't often allow enough time or space for this process to balance the volume of energetic strain we experience in modern life. Allowing the whole body free space for it to move gives it much more opportunity to balance as a whole, rather than just individual parts.

Before I qualified as an acupuncturist I worked predominantly in a job that I felt my chest closing to protect my Heart, and in relation to this my arms were becoming

locked by my sides. Dancing regularly and putting my attention back in my body I became aware of this and it afforded my body the time and space to release some of this tension and return back to balance. However even dancing once or twice a week and doing Yoga and other Heart opening practices I was struggling to counteract the strains of my work. Fortunately nowadays my acupuncture work allows me to open more significantly in everyday life and now my arms are free again, but I've no doubt that many people around me get similarly locked through repeated exposure to discordant vibrations.

And then, there is the general stress of modern living. After doing a lot of typing or carrying heavy shopping bags around town we may wring out or shake out our hand which may be wracked with tension, but what about the tension we feel in our whole body after a day in urban life on planet Earth? Even without a specific stress source, just being in a city with all the unnatural frequencies and vibrations stress the body.

So letting the whole body move, regularly, can to help alleviate acute and chronic patterns of stress which can affect the body and posture through repeated engagement, such as through our job or relationships. And in addition it can also help alleviate the aforementioned general stresses of modern living – the electromagnetic stresses of any urban environment and electrical devices strain the body, so dispersal practices are a must to maintain good health.

So see you on the dancefloor!

I also particularly enjoy the practice of Authentic Movement, as previously mentioned in Chapter 4 in the section entitled 'Moments of Stillness and Presence – Heart Energy'

Similar to the Anahata focused energetics experienced during a Yoga class, I find Authentic Movement, a practice originated by Mary Starks Whitehouse in the 1950's, can be a particularly effective practice for promoting Heart energy. This is because the practice facilitates non-judgemental movement and observation, and as we also identified in the aforementioned section in chapter 4, Heart energy is non-judgemental, it just witnesses, so the practice of Authentic Movement promotes us engaging with our Heart energy.

As we have also previously discussed, your Heart energy produces the most powerful electromagnetic field in the body (approx 5000 times greater than that of the brain) and extends out from the body for several feet in all directions (ref: Dru Yoga Stillness in Motion) so when your witness is holding space for you from their own place of Heart open energy then as we have established they are emanating a very powerful Heartfelt energy field from their body.

Further to this the practise occurs in a circle of witnesses, so you have the multiplied effect of several people all 'containing' and enveloping a number of movers within the circle with the compassionate Heart energy which resonates from their body's.

This helps facilitate and catalyze, through resonance, the movers to move from a similar Heart space. Alongside this dynamic, the structure of the practice also supports Heart opening on the part of the mover since there is an awareness that their

movements will not be judged – which provides a sense of security and encouragement to move from a more Heart open place, without being fearful of potential criticism.

Earlier in this section I also mentioned above about shaking out our hands after carrying heavy bags to disperse tension from them, and it's also worth noting that in the natural world after a stressful experience animals shake to disperse tension. We might often make a joke about someone going on a dance floor and 'shaking their stuff', but absolutely sometimes it's exactly what we need to do to clear our energy field and dissolve stresses.

Multidisciplinary Approaches

We've discussed in great detail throughout this project how a chakra pathway is effected from the very subtle vibrations it resonates with or is exposed to at a very surface level of the body all the way through to how the spine can be effected. Therefore, different modalities of therapies can complement each other in the nature of chakra balance, depending on the individual.

In some cases, if someone had a discordant vibration which was around the chakra openings, for example the Heart, it may cause the person to stoop over forward and shut the Heart centre, by association, also effecting the internal organs and spine. However, the subtle touch of a healing vibration, within the etheric field of the body, such as by a healer who works within the etheric fields of the body, or being exposed to the correct vibration through our environment could help to release the discordant vibration and then the organs could return to balance and the spine straighten. However, if the vibration had aggregated within the soft tissues, organs and created a significant degree of imbalance within them, then massage, acupuncture or a bodywork modality could be helpful to facilitate the release. Similarly if the spine had been chronically affected then the work of an osteopath or chiropractor, or any modality which works on the skeletal level could be helpful.

These approaches can complement each other in returning the body back to balance. The subtlest touch at the etheric level is sometimes all that is needed to effect a change all the way including the spine, sometimes you also need help for the other physiological components in the chakra through to and including the Spine.

All these approaches have a place in maintaining health and wellbeing.

Other Curative Measures

This can be through whatever an individual needs to process or release a discordant vibration, counselling can also be effective – although there isn't any physical interaction during a counselling session there can still be a facilitation for the disharmonious vibrations to be released, and that is the significant factor. This could also be the case with art therapy, drama therapy, dance movement therapies, these can all be ways for an individual to access and move discordant vibrations (See also Chapter 6; section entitled The Ego, Language and Images) Also it doesn't always have to be via a skilled therapist to help us release, various spontaneous acts of kindness by other human beings who sense our distress, walks in nature, time alone, a

healing moment is any moment which facilitates balance in a person and this can come in many unique forms.

It could also be that a break from repeated exposure, a different 'scene' around them, or less frequent exposure to the disharmony can allow the vibration to disperse – 'Time is a great healer'.

Relaxation

In terms of dispersing vibrations deep relaxation is also essential, as we have discussed earlier, when a chakra is locked to a degree or similarly the spine it does not efficiently allow for chakras to open and disperse discordant vibrations. A Dru Yoga class facilitates this process of deep relaxation. The more a chakra is relaxed the more it can open and disperse. This is why after only a 20 minute relaxation at the end of a class a person can feel so refreshed as chakras have opened, of course aided by the fantastic workout the spine gets during a class. Having practised postures within the yoga class also primes the discordant vibrations and toxins within the body to move as they become dislodged.

Meditation

There are lots of different meditation styles and techniques, and commonly we perceive them as conducted by being seated with the body being relatively stilled. In this section I am referring to meditation practices in that form, such as Vipassana.

I also acknowledge it's possible to achieve meditative states through other practices, and indeed I also practice movement techniques which I would say facilitate meditative states, such as some of the forms of movement and dance I practice and Chi Kung and Tai Chi, but this is written in relation to sitting practices.

As well as being a fantastic inner awareness tool to give us insight into what is happening in our body-mind, meditation also aids relaxation, promoting chakra clearing and balancing. (Also see section 5 for lots more on meditation)

Generally in Western culture we are prone to over stimulation due to the demands of our exterior environment, and this forces our attention outwardly more than the natural flow would be, and this strains both the organs responsible for our alertness and activity and also doesn't allow sufficient time and conditions for energy to return to the interior of the body and allow the body and organs the deep rest and replenishment also needed in order to balance.

When you reduce the amount of outward stimulation, such as through the conditions we engage in when we meditate, it can promote a much higher quality and concentration of energy to return to the interior of the body, and promote a healthier body and mind.

Meditation allows discordant vibrations to be cleared from the system, and as these vibrations clear chakras can begin to re-balance bringing a greater sense of peace and wellbeing. Sitting with a relatively upright spine also allows the more subtle vibrations of the upper centres to rebalance with the lower ones, as the posture enables

a clearer energy flow up and down the spine and therefore between all seven centres, as opposed to in everyday life activities where areas of the body and the spine can contract or be affected by what we are doing (Also see chapter 7)

Chakra Clearing and Sun Moon Dances

One of the more concentrated ways I've personally engaged with of chakra clearing would be from participating in Sun Moon Dances over the past 10 years or so. These ceremonial dances were envisaged by a Native American, Beautiful Painted Arrow Joseph Rael, and involve dancing for extended periods of time without food and water. Not taking in food and water means that the body is not pre-occupied with processing incoming matter and can therefore direct attention at clearing blocks in the energetic system, further facilitated by the physical movements of dancing.

A mechanism that occurs is without the input of food, the body begins to weaken, which means we do not have the same strength available to hold tension in our bodies. As we have discussed, we can lock down an area of the body which holds a feeling or vibration that is disharmonious to us, but without the food we no longer have the energy to hold that tension (as it takes energy to hold tension) so the area releases, the spine starts to move and natural order begins to resume.

Interestingly, an explanation I once heard anecdotally offered by someone at the dance is that the dancing changes your neural pathways, which matches that of our discussion, that as chakras clear it does alter the nervous system input from your body to your brain.

Chakras and Age

It's interesting that we are considered at our most energetically impressionable and malleable when we are young. If we do consider that it's because our energetic system is open, and it's creating imprints into our nervous system and therefore shaping the nature of the mind, it does actually follow that even an adult, if sufficiently energetically open, can significantly change their 'mind' This would be done by changing or clearing the imprints that build up within their chakras. By doing this they would therefore also change the nervous system input to their mind, and reshape their interior circuitry and mind landscape by leaving them open to fresh input or the rebalancing of the natural vibration of the chakra.

I surmise that while we are perhaps not quite as energetically malleable when we get older, we are also generally, unfortunately, more closed than we need to be due to the difficult conditions of modern life, in respect of satisfactory conditions to relax and emotionally engage.

Therefore regular yoga practice, and for that matter other types of therapeutic work, is essential as it consistently works to change what we experience through its effect on clearing the chakra system.

Chakras in Concert – Seven Levels of Nourishment

I've mentioned several times during this work that in balance each chakra is equally able to both radiate its own vibrational expression and equally receive.

In ideal health, the chakra pathway, soft tissue and organs aren't loaded with accumulations of discordant energy from the environment. Instead they radiate and exude the healthy expression, vibrations and virtues of the particular organs and glands which sit within that particular chakra –each of which plays a role in enabling us to experience a whole and meaningful existence. (See figures 5-12)

Equally in health, all seven chakras work in correct proportion to one another, so the energetic input we receive, and experience internally in our mind is harmonious to one another.

Each chakra sits on the continuum of the spine, so what is essential to facilitate this is keeping the spine in good health and flexibility from sacrum to crown, this promotes an equally balanced energy flow between all centres, and obviously yoga practice supports this! When each centre has the capacity to equally express, we have greater potential to explore new possibilities and ways of relating to the world around us, as we can react with a greater degree of appropriateness and range of possibilities to whatever energy source we engage with.

What can often happen though, is that particular centres begin to over predominate and others begin to become, to a degree, redundant, and this will reflect in our expression of ourselves, and what we experience in our mind. For example, despite a situation being appropriate for it, when we are locked down across the Heart (Anahata) centre instead of offering a hug the tendency of our energy may be to express predominantly from our throat (Vishuddhi) via words. Or we may be closed down within our upper centres and feel disconnected from the greater plan for our life and sense of spiritual connection. An observation I often make in myself, and others, is that when particular centres close down, others have to compensate for it. Lack of nourishment from upper centres I often see correlate with behaviours which result in excesses from the lower centres of the body such as over-eating. Sexually as well, if our expressions and receptivity at the Heart centre is significantly compromised, then our sense of connection with lovers can become overly focused on being engaged sexually, as we are not adequately receiving connection through the Heart. Any combination of dynamics are possible, it could equally be that if someone is significantly energetically compromised at the lower centres then they may find it difficult to include a healthy degree of sexual interaction within their lifestyle and relationships and instead their may be a preponderance of relating vocally from Vishuddhi, or lots of connections on a Spiritual level of the upper centres.

When we haven't significantly activated or stimulated a particular chakra for a while, it can become almost redundant and we can almost forget what it's like to experience through that chakra, as other chakras take over the majority of input to our mind. They each need activity as they balance one another, both in terms of what we experience in our mind and because of their more physiological functions and connections, such as with hormones. I notice that if my Anahata chakra hasn't been particularly active for a while (which can be common in the Western world through a lack of nourishing

connection) I notice how my inner world and mindscape becomes filled with the desires of the Manipura chakra in particular, to achieve and get things done, constantly feeling like I have to get on with one thing to the next, because I haven't received or activated the softening function of the Heart to relax me and balance out the push of the Manipura. The energy gets channelled through other centres for expression. It's similar for me with Swadhistana, again an Earthing centre, which when I feel in connection with and significantly stimulated will slow me down and relax me! Interestingly both centres are receptive centres on a male, (see Chakra Polarities in Males and Females, chapter 4) so I do not naturally have an abundance of these qualities but rather they become activated and nourished through connection, particularly with females (although other males can also radiate more or less of these energies to a degree, so interaction with a male with a greater degree of these vibrations can also help). So interaction is necessary to balance my chakras, otherwise their natural polarities become over driven. Likewise for a female, she may find herself distanced from some of the qualities of her receptive chakras unless she interacts with males (Or to a degree, other females who offer a greater preponderance of the vibrations which are deficient).

The overall balance of your chakras is essential, and it can be easy to fall into a pattern of neglect for some of them, or indeed be operating with some of them being extremely well fed and others less so, which is sometimes not helped by the over driven society that we live in. In our western society we often align a sense of achievement to our occupational work, but not to the same degree with the overall picture including the rest of our life. I often say to my Acupuncture patients that true achievement is in balancing all of our Elements (or in this case chakras) rather than just the work one!

In health you would feel as connected with your path through life from your Sahasrara, be clear minded from Ajna, able to communicate effectively from Vishuddhi, have good nourishing relationships from Anahata, be able to apply our direction from Manipura, be emotionally well balanced from Swadhistana and feel secure in our situation from Mooladhara. However, depending on what our tendency might be, or unhealthy habit patterns we may have become accustomed to, we might be enjoying a greater sense of connection to our life plan, and applying ourselves through our work to the neglect of the needs of some of our lower centres, looking after ourselves physically, or emotionally from the Heart. It could be any combination of these factors, it could equally be as possible to focus on the needs of the lower centres and feel disconnected from our life direction of the upper centres. Each centre is equally as important – I often remind myself there is no energetic kudos obtained to knowing where you are going and the greater plan of my life, if I'm not going to look after the vehicle I'm in on the way. This is because I've noticed that somewhere along the way I must have decided at some point in my earlier life that the greater consideration, quite often, is to get things done and apply my mental level direction without giving the same attention to my body and more physical needs. Now I notice this it enables me to make sure I listen to all the messages I'm getting from all my chakras and try to ensure they all receive the same level of attention.

Exterior Factors in Chakra Health

The external influence is concerned with placing ourselves in situations that energetically feed our chakras and allow them to radiate. Situations that resonate with them and catalyse them to open and absorb nourishing energies from the environment. Each chakra is equally important, and therefore, each person, to stay in health needs to ensure that they engage with the energetic vibrations and activities that they individually need, at the right level of regularity, to ensure that each chakra receives the continued nourishment it needs.

Much like as we sit down to regular meals, so we all need to make sure we feed the more subtle vibrations which also predominate our being. For example, depending on their own state, a person may need to engage with the grounded energy of a walk in the park to feed their Mooladhara chakra, once a day, or maybe once a week. They may need to have close contact with a loved one to feed their Anahata centre once a day or every three days, or to engage with a higher vibration spiritual energy to feed their Sahasrara centre every week or every month. And so on, for the qualities of each centre and the regularity that someone needs to really engage and feed them is dependent on the individuals own state.

If a particular centre has taken a bit of an energetic battering for a while, or undernourished, it may be that it needs more attention in particular for a while. For example after a lonely period our Anahata centre may feel particularly in need of the nourishment of close contact. Neglect of our spiritual needs and we may feel in need of a concerted period of time to feed Sahasrara chakra and so on.

As regards the regularity we need to feed each centre, as a personal thought, it's not lost on me that at some point in time we identified seven days as making a rounded cycle of energy, comprising our week. Seiyaku.com discusses how the moon changes phase every seven days, so it makes sense to me that within one natural phase of energy of seven days, we would ideally fulfil the energetic requirements of each of our seven centres! In reality nourishing your chakras isn't quite such a linear exercise, as we are actually constantly engaging them, (and maybe ideally everyday would contain elements to feed each centre) but I consider it may be useful as a starting point to consider whether in one natural cycle of seven days do you roughly meet the needs of each of your seven centres? Or extending out further, one whole moon cycle takes one month, so it could also be useful to consider whether you attune to a balanced cycle of activity within each month.

7 - Symptoms of Chakra Dis-ease

Chakras lock and start to shut down so as not to feed back (in some cases at all) the energetic information / vibration from within the chakra to the nervous system and therefore to the mind, as they are so abrasive and disharmonious to the individuals system.

This can be energetic vibration from within the immediate environment, or indeed what may have already been absorbed into the chakra and has remained unprocessed, not emotionally released or broken down and filtered out. This can occur when a particularly traumatic vibration has been experienced. Or it can occur when a chakra has become overloaded with particular vibrations which it has struggled to assimilate, and needs to 'break' from them (have a break from them) in order to filter them out and allow the normal energetic profile of the person's chakras to re-establish itself.

Distraction and Avoidance (of Feeling)

Either way, when there is a vibration being felt acutely or imprinted chronically within a chakra which we don't want to experience it can lead itself to people choosing to distract their attention onto other things to avoid feeling it. The problem with this is it obviously lends itself to other potential health problems, as some of the methods of distraction, which obviously vary, from drink and drugs to food addictions to TV addictions aren't usually very healthy. And the vibration is still sitting in there, experienced in the subconscious. Curative measures are outlined in chapter 6.

Locking the Spine to Inhibit Feeling, Trauma and Body shape

On a more physical level being aware of how vibrations enter our body through our chakras and can be abrasive also goes some way towards understanding how trauma, or indeed just continued disharmonious life experiences can affect our physical body.

A vibration might be so disharmonious to the individual that they seek to immediately shut down feeling from that area of the body – to harden and lock around that area so that the experience cannot be fed back through the nervous system and continually re-experienced in the mind

Locking off input from a chakra by association locks the corresponding area of the spine so as to prevent the information passing through the nervous system to the brain and mind.

Since nerves, glands, organs and spine are all interconnected with a chakra, any locking of the chakra / spine also by association effects the functioning of these integral components within the chakra, the glands and the organs too. Nothing works in isolation within a chakra – its one continuum containing all those components.

Therefore, note that the energetic problem may not be solved just by working to re-align the spine, just as the root of the problem may not have originated just from a spinal misalignment. Rather the spine may have taken on that alignment because of the input via the chakra being disharmonious and causing it to shut down, and the spine to lock up or be impinged accordingly.

Working with unlocking some of the energetic disfigurement within the chakra as a whole and re-tuning the chakra passageway and the organs and glands in question to a more healthy vibrational state can help to unlock the affected part of the spine, or facilitate the correct conditions for it to unlock.

As we discussed earlier, we can also lock our spine to shut down a chakra input in a more temporary manner, when perhaps there is some vibration agitating the chakra such as my example of being at work in the bar and being confronted by an unpleasant customer. This is slightly different as it's temporary – related to the present moment and can re-open afterwards.

Where we can get into difficulty and require a more therapeutic intervention is when it becomes a chronic problem and the absorbed vibration has caused a lock that won't immediately release or be processed without therapeutic help. Or that we are continually exposed to the vibration before our body gets chance to recover – literally then people's bodies can get locked into a certain shape relating to the trauma or repeated stress of exposure to the disharmonious vibrations.

Internal Conflict

Interestingly, we can also inhibit input from our chakras (through distraction or locking our spine) not only from when it's an immediate external source or from a vibration we've absorbed, but also to avoid hearing the intelligence of one particular chakra as it conflicts with what another is experiencing!

For example, previously in chapter 4, Chakras and Interaction we discussed how when engaging with another person we received simultaneous input through all chakras in relation to the person we are interacting with. In this situation it could be that we have a very strong Anahata resonance with the other, but that a vibration at another centre, such as Mooladhara or Swadhistana could be particularly abrasive. So internally what we would be experiencing would be feeling heart-opening feelings of Love coupled with a feeling of insecurity and lack of ease around the person, creating a confused and conflicting mental picture. It may be that the feelings of the Heart outweigh the sense of insecurity, and so overall we've got a picture where the individual stays in close relationship. However, Mooladhara or Swadhistana will be constantly indicating their lack of comfort with the situation – even out of proximity with the other, and so to avoid experiencing that energetic feeling the person may choose distraction or locking down the chakra (or both) to stop having to hear it resonating that intelligence.

Fatigue and Lack of Energy

When an energy centre gets seized up, such as the Heart centre, it drains a person's energy and creates fatigue as it actually takes energy to hold that particular part of the body shut, to tense the muscles, to protect itself from experiencing the unwanted and disharmonious vibration.

That's irrespective of whether that's from an acute, direct input in the moment, repeated input, or whether it's because an errant energy chronically within your system (when it's been unable to be processed due to a lack time or the wrong

conditions for it to be healed and dispersed.) For example, just clench a fist right now – and see how holding that tension takes energy – eventually you would get tired. Any held tension in the body takes energy.

Take a second example, think about something that makes you angry, or maybe adopt the body pose and body characteristics of when you feel angry – you will notice it involves a degree of muscle contraction and tension, clenching of arms, sometimes fists, jutting jaw, a generalised tension. Again this can be necessary, indeed instinctual as an appropriate response – but consider the amount of tension of energy it consumes and requires if a person was chronically angry, or chronically exposed to a vibration which prompts anger. That an event had occurred and the vibrational imprint has stayed unprocessed with the person, has angered the individual, it lends itself to a great deal of energy consumption to feed the tension, rather than being directed into healthier life force.

If people have little or no energy, it's in my personal and professional experience less likely to be connected to how much regular food energy (as in regular food you'd buy from a supermarket) they are putting into their system but rather that the energy system is, to some degree, blocked, or it's other types of vibrational nutrition they are deficient in, which feeds the other energy centres. We don't need excesses of actual physical food (as in food that we buy from shops) to keep us going when the system is clear. But what we do also need to make sure we are getting is the other levels of vibrational nourishment we also need alongside the food.

Conscious Release of Trauma and Vibrational Imprints

While understanding that vibration gets locked in the body explains how bodywork and yoga can release trauma, it also explains why it often has to be re-experienced on the conscious level to do so. This is because as the area of the body is reopened so the input from the area of the body back through the nervous system is re-established and therefore passes back through the mind. This is also why in any Therapeutic setting people need to be held in the correct therapeutic environment or energy to deeply open up – they need to feel safe. Within the context of a Yoga class this means having the correct energetic ambiance in the room.

Beneficial Effect of Yoga Relaxation and Anahata (Heart Centre) Focus

However, I do believe there are occasions when we don't have to re-experience trauma on the conscious level for it to be released, and I consider that Yoga has the capacity to provide the correct conditions for this to occur.

This is because after practice, the deep relaxation that people experience at the end of the class can take the person into the most deeply relaxed brainwave pattern of delta waves (nidrayoga.com) where the person is very deeply relaxed, but of course the body is still feeling the opening and releasing effects of the yoga. This means that the releasing process is going on while the person is very deeply in the subconscious.

'Relaxation is the Key to Healing! The Body cannot heal unless it is relaxed'

Julia Visaka Hotchkiss (Dru Yoga Teacher Training Book 5)

The beauty of Dru is also that it is a 'light' practice; the energetic ambiance in the room creates conditions that enable people to be relaxed on all levels. The focus on the Anahata centre during practice creates joy which means that the feel-good factor is present while a lot of subtle but deeply effective energetic clearing is occurring.

8 - Chakras and Yoga Specifics

Why do Yoga?

So why do Yoga? As we have seen each chakra or energy centre, has an optimum state of health, resonance and attunement. And as we have identified, that different experiences can negatively impact on the chakra attunement.

We have discussed how different experiences, vibrations affect the different energy centres, and they can create a kind of energetic 'wound' or blockage where a foreign vibration can hit part of our energy field and require 'work' on behalf of the body to filter through, break down and remove the offending vibration.

Circumstances do not always allow for these processes to naturally occur, we may not have the time, space or conditions around us for them to happen and then these vibrations become significantly imprinted into our body and can have a negative impact on a locking down of chakra activity.

Similarly, we are often not surrounded by the optimal conditions in modern life to actually emotionally nourish the centres, or indeed even if we are, the degree of how much a centre is locked down or full of vibrational adherences will affect the fullness of that receiving. In addition, it will similarly affect our ability to radiate and express the energies from our centres.

Practicing Yoga stretches the soft tissue of the body which enables it to remove aggregated vibrations and imprints which can get stuck in the body and its energy network. It's as if sometimes vibrations enter our energy system through the doorway of a chakra and it can almost then be as if the door can get stuck closed and the vibrations can soak their way into the tissue and organs. By practising Yoga we can ensure that areas of the body, muscle groups that become dense, are stretched, along with physical organs palpated and moved which ensures that gross vibrations cannot accumulate and get stuck in our system. A bit like sometimes if you left a bottle of liquid, such as milk for a while, it may gather a layer of sediment, which may become too dense, for even the milk underneath to move through and pour out. So it is with vibration in our body, if we don't stretch and move, vibrations gather together and can almost form a layer of crust, density, blocks in our system. Little can get in, or emit (radiate) out.

Very occasionally, when I've been in fairly highly energised states such as while I'm dancing or in my acupuncture practice I feel that through my own visual acuity I can sometimes see a shrouded area around the energy centre which may be indicative of blockages. I also remember reading a book many years ago by a Shamanic Healer, Alberto Villaldo if I recall correctly, who can also visually perceive people's energy bodies and he says that when a chakra gets locked down and full of very dense vibrations, he can see a form of 'crust' that is sitting over the chakra.

By moving and stretching dense vibrations cannot accumulate in our muscles, in our flesh or into our internal organs. It reopens the doorways of our chakras to move vibrations, imprints and emotions which may be trapped within them and the corresponding organs and tissues of that area to be moved. It creates the optimum

conditions for energy to move freely around our system, for the internal organs to work in conjunction with one another to keep optimum health and balance.

Then when we relax, it gives the body time to wick away and process some of what may have been dislodged during a session.

Yoga refines us. Stops us getting cluttered up with things that have happened in the past and clears our sensory perception to be more aligned to what is happening in the present moment. By clearing energy from the organs, it then clears energy patterns that the nervous system will be relaying back to our brain and that we see in our mind as imagery and conceptual dialogue, thus creating a much more harmonious mind space after a session.

Chakra Nourishment in Yoga

The class setting and energetic ambiance, as well as providing the effect of chakra clearing, also has the added dimension of also providing essential nourishment to the chakras. The joyful Anahata focused practice, which is obviously further amplified by practicing as a collective provides a feel good factor for all concerned. In the modern world communal activity is diminished by the strains of modern life and advent of technology, replacing situations where once we may have engaged with other people and benefitted from the energetic exchanges which can take place. In this way Yoga supersedes the relative time and space and social and cultural differences of modern life and reconnects us to a common need of all human beings since inception of nourishing our Body, Mind and Spirit.

Posture Planning

As we have established, the condition of a chakra is indicative of the condition of the physiological components within it, namely the internal organs, glands and nerve plexus and area of spine. In addition, all these physiological components are interconnected so when any one is affected it will have an associated effect on the others.

Therefore postures can be planned with this in mind. For example, if working one to one with an individual, from health and wellbeing information they give you, you could ascertain which chakras may be in particular need of attention. They may discuss a particular hormone or organ imbalance which you could relate to the relevant chakra.

Even without a person having a recognised 'medical' condition, the fact that each chakra works on a mental and emotional volition also enables us to plan postures with any reported issues or observations we may make regarding these.

Even without any specific information, by observing an individual's posture, in particular what area of the spine is locked or less mobile can give us an idea which chakra or chakras are most out of balance and plan postures and remedies accordingly.

Posture Example, Physical, Mental and Emotional Affects

The beauty of Yoga is that it enables us, within one posture, to clearly observe and experience the whole spectrum of physiological actions, from the movement of the spine to the stretching and compression of soft tissue and organs, to not forgetting of course how we *feel* when we do the posture on both a mental and emotional level and not forgetting the effects on the hormones too!

Take Trikonasana for example – the movement of the spine is obvious, and when we go to the right we can see that the organs on the right side – Liver, right Kidney etc are getting compressed while the organs on the left - Spleen, left Kidney, Stomach etc are being given space to stretch as that side of the body is elongated. This is obviously vice versa when we take the posture to the left.

I made a distinction between observing how we may *'feel'* the effects relating to a posture on the emotional and mental level as regards to the hormonal level.

This relates, from my perspective, to the difference between more transient emotional states which alter from moment to moment day to day, and indeed could be related to what is particularly imprinted within the chakras on that day, and the accompanying mental imagery associated to them, as opposed to the Hormonal impact which changes your feelings on a more consistent underlying level.

For example you may enter the posture and find an emotion of anger which you felt towards a colleague from a dispute earlier that day disperse, along with the dialogue of what you'd like to say to them and also the image of how, where and when, whereas the hormonal shift wouldn't be so transitory but more an underlying change in how you are feeling.

Having discussed how Yoga simultaneously works and moves all physiological components within it a chakra, it's worth comparing that to other therapeutic practices which may target their initial influence on a single physiological component within a chakra, such as if you take Herbs, this will primarily target an organ, although as we have seen through the interconnectedness of all the Elements any energetic improvement within the chakra will also benefit the spine, glands and soft tissue.

Relaxation

Several times throughout this work we have discussed the importance of relaxation, as a means to allow the body to disperse discordant vibrations and return to balance. Dru Yoga classes facilitate an optimal state of relaxation through their heart warming ambiance which encourages the body to deeply relax as well as the energetic effects of alleviating tension from the body and internal organs.

9 - Summary

I believe that one sentence, containing three essentials considerations, is pertinent in summarising this project relating to chakras, and that each person can contemplate in relation to their health and wellbeing:

Are your own chakra energies in free flow, and what practices can you do to help them heal and clear, and are you getting the correct energetic nutrition from what you are doing in your life to continually feed each chakra to the best of it's potential?

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