

HOW TO CLEANSE AND BALANCE YOUR CHAKRAS

By Trisha Howell

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What are the twelve primary chakras and mother centers? What relevance do they have to my journeying?¹

Chakras are the major energy vortices in and extending out from your body through which you process much physical and emotional material. There are between seven and twelve major chakras from your pelvis to the top of your head (depending on what system you use). The system that includes twelve splits the heart chakra in two and calls the remaining four chakras (beyond the primary seven) mother centers. Some systems include major chakras outside your head and torso.² If you become quiet and attentive enough, you can actually feel the energy swirling in many of these vortices. The energy is concentrated in each chakra location inside your head and torso, and it spins out from there in ever-widening cones projecting from the front and back sides of your body.

Because many journeys below deal with the various chakras and mother centers, the following is an explanation to prepare you to get the most out of those journeys. Any physical, emotional, or mental illness you experience is first present in your energy field. Since it is the health of the chakras that controls the health of your energy field, having clean, strong, and well-functioning chakras is absolutely essential to enjoying robust health. With healthy chakras, all aspects of your life flow with more ease, including journeying.

Interpretations of chakra colors vary, so I am describing the chakras and mother centers as I have experienced them. There are actually well over one hundred chakras in and around the human body, but these are the twelve that seem to play the largest role in overall energy. Two chakras are said to balance one another when an excess in one can be corrected by focusing/adding energy into the other. That is, these chakras are in some sense opposites of each other; the lower chakras are the yang to the upper chakras' yin.

Red chakra

The red or root chakra, which is located at the base of your spine, creates a foundation by promoting overall vitality and the ability to survive. It is concerned with the basics of physical survival in the world: food, shelter, haven from danger, reproduction, and the emotions that stem from these: feeling nourished, protected, safe,

¹ Much of the information in this section came from my Body M.A.T.H. studies with David Malin.

² See *Shaman, Healer, Sage*, by Alberto Villoldo, Ph.D., Harmony Books, New York, New York, 2000. Dr. Villoldo lucidly discusses the nine major chakras in the Incan tradition, among many other fascinating topics in this fine book. Other books I recommend on the chakras include: *21st Century's New Chakra Healing*, by Michael and Eva Nudel, Ph.D., Bio-Energy System Services, Los Angeles, California, 2000. *The ABC's of Chakra Therapy: A Workbook*, by Deedre Diemer, Samuel Weiser, Inc., York Beach, Maine, 1998. *Kundalini and the Chakras: A Practical Manual*, by Genevieve Lewis Paulson, Llewellyn Publications, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1996. *Wheels of Life: A User's Guide to the Chakra System*, by Anodea Judith, Llewellyn Publications, St. Paul, Minnesota, 1995.

and secure. Red governs reproductive male sexuality, rules the earth element, and balances blue.

Fire mother center

The fire mother center, which is located at your clitoris or penis, concerns sensual or sexual expression as pleasure. Fire balances opal.

Orange chakra

The orange chakra, which is located about 3” below your navel, governs your sense of self or identity, including feeling autonomous and setting personal boundaries. It also drives desire, ambition, creativity, physical energy, and reproductive female sexuality. Orange rules the water element and balances indigo.

Golden mother center

The golden mother center, which is located at your navel, is the seat of the universal nurturing mother energy. This energy is the origin of the first pulse of life, and the navel is the entrance to your core energy. All organs revolve around it. Gold balances cobalt.

Yellow chakra

The yellow chakra, which is located about 4” above your navel, relates to personal power: the power to fully be oneself in all situations. It deals with security, intellect, and the abilities to relax and to digest well. It promotes common sense, strong inner knowing, and, as a result, the ability to be a leader. Yellow rules the fire element and balances violet.

Green/pink chakra

The heart chakra used to be one but has split into two as humanity’s masculine and feminine sides have lost their natural integration with one another. Green (feminine) and pink (masculine) rule the air and balance out the red, orange, and yellow of the physical centers below them and the blue, indigo, and violet of the spiritual centers above them.

The green half of your heart chakra, which is located on the left side of your chest, expresses feminine energy, compassion, understanding, healing, conscience, and sympathy. It promotes taking good care of yourself. The centers below it are physical or earth-oriented.

The pink half of your heart chakra, which is located on the right side of your chest, expresses masculine energy, abstract unconditional love, and empathy. The centers above it are spiritual or heaven-oriented.

Opal mother center

The opal mother center, which is located around your thymus, concerns protection (especially of your heart, immune, and skeletal systems) and is the balance point between the yin and the yang. Opal balances fire.

Blue chakra

The blue chakra, which is located at your throat, is about communication, sound, body awareness, and understanding your own emotions. It promotes all aspects of expression, especially the expression of your will. Blue balances red.

Cobalt mother center

The cobalt mother center, which is located at the level of your tongue, governs basic taste and smell, receiving data, displaying animal-like intelligence, and telepathic communication. Cobalt balances golden.

Indigo chakra

The indigo or third eye chakra, which is located at the base of your forehead, is the seat of spiritual sight or clairvoyance, which is the ability to dream, visualize, and see the invisible. It promotes seeing the whole, wider picture—having the sweeping vision in which everything else can be located and explained. Indigo balances orange.

Violet chakra

The violet chakra, which is located at the top of your forehead (hairline) or even farther up (at the crown), is the home of spiritual ideas and insight as well as of the ability to feel and look at emotions in a spiritual way. Higher wisdom and inspiration come through here. Violet balances yellow.

Cleansing your chakras

Your journeying can be enhanced if you cleanse and ground the chakras you habitually operate out of. The grounding techniques below are borrowed from David Malin's *Body Math (Multidimensional Approaches To Healing—see "Resources for this Book")*. The cleansing technique is mine.

Your chakras can accumulate energetic debris as you experience various (especially negative) emotions, mental extremes, relationship issues, and physical illnesses and injuries. Other people's energy fields can also negatively affect your chakras, especially if you aren't energetically protected. Keeping your chakras clear and functioning properly is important for vitality and health.

In this regard, it's worth repeating what was said above: Any physical, emotional, or mental illness you experience is first present in your energy field. Since it is the health of the chakras that controls the health of your energy field, having clean, strong, and

well-functioning chakras is absolutely essential to enjoying robust health. With healthy chakras, all aspects of your life flow with more ease, including journeying.

There are many methods for cleansing your chakras. Some are hands-on; others involve using your or another person's intention to shift the energy.

Here is one way to cleanse your chakras. Close your eyes and visualize your red chakra. Imagine that you can feel the energy swirling in it. See the energy and really feel it. Be present in the chakra as much as you can.

Take a deep breath, imagining that you are bringing healing and invigorating life force into the chakra on each inhale and are letting go of everything you no longer need in the chakra on each exhale. Move your hands in small circles in front of and behind your body at the level of each chakra to assist the cleanse. Use your fingers to pull out any foreign energy that may have corded into that chakra, releasing it into the earth for recycling.

Start with the red and move up through each successive chakra, using at least three³ slow, deep breaths per chakra. You may want to imagine the breath swirling in that chakra, scrubbing out all old energy or other debris, and then that debris flowing out of you and sinking deep into the earth, where it will be recycled. Once I've inhaled fully, I usually hold my breath for a few seconds while I visualize this scrubbing action taking place. Do whatever works for you.

When you have finished all twelve chakras and mother centers, take three more breaths. Feel the healing inhalation moving through all your chakras, starting from above your head, into the violet chakra and down through the other eleven chakras. Feel the exhale carrying out everything you don't need from the violet chakra through the other eleven and down into the earth where it can be recycled. Notice how you feel after this exercise. Are you more energetic? Do your chakras feel lighter and cleaner?

You may then want to further energize the cleansed chakras with a few more breaths. I usually take one deep breath per chakra, starting with the violet, visualizing the energy of all love and healing flowing through the top of my head and into that chakra on the inhale. Then I briefly hold my breath while I visualize that energy soaking deeply into the chakra. On the exhale, I imagine the energy of all love and healing swirling around with the chakra in its normal clockwise spin.⁴

This may sound complicated and lengthy, but once you're used to it, you will be able to do it all in just a few minutes.

Grounding your chakras⁵

I talked above about the importance of grounding your whole energy field into the earth so that you are fully present in your body and thus have all your bodily wisdom and resources available to you. It is equally important to periodically ground your chakras

³ As your ease and strength with visualization and cleansing improves, you may be able to cleanse your chakras with just one breath each, but in the beginning give yourself at least three breaths to accomplish this. You will eventually (or maybe right away) be able to perceive when the chakra feels clean, so you'll know how many breaths you need.

⁴ A physician friend of mine tells me that she's helped woman go through labor by having them do a similar chakra-cleansing exercise. This had been very helpful in expediting the labor and limiting its pain.

⁵ For more information on grounding your chakras, please see David Malin's excellent details at www.bodymath.com

outward by making sure that, in at least one chakra, your energy is strong and full on the four levels described below.⁶

In order to ground your chakras, it's best to choose a chakra that's strong on the fourth (spiritual) level—the egg-like cocoon whose outer boundary lies about twenty-four inches away from your physical body. With practice, it's possible to feel the strength/activity level of a chakra on the fourth level by placing your hand about twenty-four inches straight in front of that chakra, with your palm facing towards your body. Compare the various chakras in this way to determine which one feels the strongest.

If you can't feel this, just pick whichever chakra you like to ground from. It will, however, be easier if this is one of your stronger chakras, so ask yourself which chakra appeals to you most, occurs to you first, is where you feel yourself to be more of the time (e.g., are you a heart, head, or gut person?), really draws you to it, etc. But don't stress over this. In the absence of any intuition that guides you, just pick any chakra.

If you are grounding **violet, indigo, blue, pink, or yellow**, you must ground **from the heavens down**. To do this, imagine a reservoir that extends twelve to eighteen inches above the top of your head. As you inhale, imagine breathing in your chosen chakra's color into the reservoir until you can feel that color intensely present in your reservoir. (It will help to visualize the color as clearly as possible in your mind's eye.) Keep doing this until your reservoir feels full and overflowing with your own life-healing energy in your chosen color.

Then, as you inhale, breathe your color strongly into your reservoir, and as you exhale, send this energy down through the center of your chakras and out your body to the grounding of the **first level** by filling the space between your hips and a ring extending (perpendicular to your body) about four inches out from your body. Imagine the color expanding outwards into the ring like a billowing cloud. Again, as you inhale, breathe the color strongly into your reservoir, and as you exhale, send this energy down and out to the grounding of your **second level** by filling the space between your knees and a ring extending about eight inches out from them. Then, as you inhale, breathe your color strongly into your reservoir, and as you exhale, send this energy down and out to the grounding of your **third level** by filling the space between your feet and a ring extending about twelve inches out from them. Then as you inhale, breathe your color strongly into your reservoir, and as you exhale, send this energy down and out to the grounding of your **fourth level** by filling the space between a point about a foot below your feet and a ring extending about twenty-four inches out from that point. Keep repeating this sequence until you feel the color strongly present in all four rings. You have now grounded your whole body with your color.

Each lower level (closer to your body) must be cleared before an upper level can be adequately accessed because upper levels are filtered through the lower. For example, the first (physical, conscious emotion) level extends outward from your body about four inches in a sort of energetic cocoon surrounding your body. The second (subconscious

⁶ These are two different types of grounding. You generally ground your whole energy field—especially the energy in your core/belly, which is the source of much of your physical power (as explained in every martial art)—down into the earth to enhance your stability, strength, physical presence, bodily wisdom, and power. But you ground your chakras outward into at least the first four levels of your energy field to deepen your physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual wisdom and well-being. One technique is not a substitute for another. You need both.

emotion) level extends outward about eight inches from your body, through the first level. The third (mundane and spiritual beliefs) level extends outward about twelve inches from your body, through the first then second levels. The fourth (vital life force and healing energy) level extends outward about twenty-four inches from your body, through the first then second then third levels.

If you are grounding **golden or fire**, you must ground **from the earth up**. To do this, imagine a reservoir extending twelve to eighteen inches below the bottom of your feet. As you inhale, imagine breathing in your chosen chakra's color into the reservoir until you can feel that color intensely present in your reservoir. (It will help to visualize the color as clearly as possible in your mind's eye.) Keep doing this until your reservoir feels overflowing with your own life healing energy in your chosen color.

As you inhale, breathe up your color strongly from your feet, sending this energy up through the core of your chakras and inside your body to the grounding of the **first level** by feeling the energy soak into your diaphragm. Imagine the color washing through your core and splashing onto your diaphragm like an ocean wave and then fully absorbing inward. Again, as you inhale, breathe up your color strongly from your feet, and as you exhale, send this energy inside your body to the grounding of your **second level** by feeling the energy soak into your thoracic dome (top of the lungs). Then, as you inhale, breathe up your color strongly from your feet, and as you exhale, send this energy inside your body to the grounding of your **third level** by feeling the energy soak into the base of your brain (mouth level). Then as you inhale, breathe up your color strongly from your feet, and as you exhale, send this energy inside your body to the grounding of your **fourth level** by feeling the energy soak into your mid-brain (eyebrow level). Keep repeating this sequence until you feel the color strongly present in all four rings. You have now grounded your whole body with your color.

If you are grounding **cobalt, opal, green, orange, or red**, you can ground **from the heavens down or from the earth up**. Choose whichever way is most comfortable for you. Keep your intention clear and focused while you are grounding. The more you ground your chakras, the easier it is to stay in a grounded place with your whole energy field.

Guilt, judgment, fear, and stepping out of your truth cause your colors to drop (i.e., your chakras to weaken). Societal and emotional suppression (the primary cause of most soul loss) can also cause your colors to drop. Energy leaks arise when you are holding onto physical or conscious emotions (first level), subconscious emotions (second level), mundane or spiritual beliefs (third level) and spiritual energy (fourth level: your vital life force and healing energy) that no longer serve you.

If you go into denial about any issue, you lose your chakras' color grounding, and it must be reestablished. You must be totally present and deal directly and honestly with what is (all events and issues that arise) in order to stay permanently color grounded. The longer you spend being grounded, the easier it is to be grounded (the harder it is to become disconnected), and the more aware you are when you lose your grounding and thus can easily and quickly reestablish it. Be very aware of how you feel before and after you deal with anything, and you will know when you are grounded and what causes you to disconnect. As much as possible, stay centered and in a positive, accepting, harmonious, and flowing mode in your life.