

introduction

The body springs from a web of energy which dances through every cell; what occurs in one portion of our physical, emotional, mental and spiritual beings is likely to have an impact on every other portion, to some degree. An understanding of this energy is useful in being able to affect the changes we want to make in our lives, including dietary transitions.

—AMADEA MORNINGSTAR, *The Ayurvedic Cookbook*

bEFORE SCIENCE came to dominate medicine, the spiritual and the metaphysical were a part of almost every culture's therapeutic practice. People knew that all living things had energetic consciousness, as did the food and drink derived from them. Fruits, vegetables, and herbs were seen as gifts from the divine that contained universal life-force energy. Sages and ordinary people, therefore, turned to the natural world to find cures not only for the body but also for the soul.

These traditional cultures often used liquids for medicinal purposes, as they were easy for the body to digest and absorb. Shamans and practitioners of Chinese medicine, *jamu*, and Ayurveda used tonics and teas in healing and religious rituals, as well as in daily life. Clearly, people understood early on the vital importance of fluids.

Today, science tells us that our bodies consist of approximately 70 percent liquid in the form of water, our blood 94 percent and our brain 90 percent. Moreover, water is an essential element of all life on Earth, covering nearly three quarters of the planet. The water element is often taken for granted, yet it is crucial to every function of our body. We can live without eating for up to a month, but without drinking we die within days. Since our bodies depend on liquids, what we imbibe greatly affects our physical and emotional health—and also our spiritual well-being. Fluids, the first nourishment we receive as babies, naturally bridge the gap between the ethereal and physical planes.

Many popular drinks consumed in Western culture are depleted of vitality. Coffee, alcohol, sodas, some processed juices, and even some types of filtered water are lifeless as well as detrimental to the physical health of the body. In the scientific approach to health, drinks are not evaluated in terms of *chi*, or universal life force. Instead, it is the amount of calories, carbohydrates, protein, vitamins, and minerals they contain that matters. When examined from a mystical point of view, on the other hand, beverages are found to be either potent vehicles of life-affirming power or transporters of soul-deadening energies. Both approaches to the question are of value. Indeed, properly applied, science can indicate health-giving properties of food and drink, as well as validate the life-enhancing abilities of many ancient practices. *Chakra Tonics* utilizes scientific research and ancient wisdom to create delicious vital elixirs for the modern body and soul.

In the Vedic tradition, we believe that we are all souls attempting to have a human experience. The chakras, which

are energy portals located within the body (or in close proximity to the body) through which we process universal life-force energy. They are our link to divine origins, constantly translating the immense and immeasurable properties of the soul into our human experience. There are seven main chakras located along the spine, as well as other minor chakras located throughout the body and several out of body chakras as well. Each recipe in this book combines ingredients that relate to and focus on the functioning of a specific chakra.

Chakra tonics are healing elixirs that benefit the physical body and assist in raising the vibrational quality of life. Chakra tonics contain powerful superfoods, herbs, minerals, and pH-balanced liquids designed to affect the body's foundational energy system, the chakras. Each recipe possesses many healthful and balancing qualities and is intended to affect a certain chakra or mind-body vortex, while at the same time affecting the entire interrelated energetic body.

Many of the chakra tonics in this book are alkalizing, oxygen rich, and full of universal life-force energy. The ancient Indian sages noted the subtle influence of foods and drinks on the emotions and the spirit. Science would agree that our bodies are electrochemical laboratories in which the charge, or acid and alkaline balance, of the fluids we drink makes a tremendous difference in conducting energy through our cells, eventually influencing overall physical and psychological health.

Scientifically speaking, one of the reasons that cola, coffee, and alcohol are so detrimental to our systems is that they are acidic. The body tolerates and sometimes benefits in some cases from the consumption of acidic food and drinks; however, they must be balanced with alkaline foods and drinks.

Spiritually, most processed drinks are acidic and block universal life force and leave a residue of unconsciousness that can hinder higher awareness

Many people are coming to understand that their connection to a higher power beyond the physical is intrinsic to emotional and physical health. In fact, Dr. Theodore Baroody, author of *Alkalize or Die*, says the single most alkalizing thing we can do for our body is to feel the power of the divine or “holy spirit.” The Chakra tonics in this book for the most part are incredibly alkalizing and life affirming. Acid foods, drinks, and emotions must be balanced with disproportionate amounts of alkaline foods, drinks, and emotions; fresh juice; love; and herbal tea.

We are at a crucial turning point in our collective spiritual evolution. Degenerative diseases, which thrive in hyperacidic conditions brought on by stress and a Western diet, are reaching epidemic proportions. The vibration on the planet is accelerating. Now more than ever, the challenge of slowing down, taking time for a cup of tea or vital, fresh juice, is essential to those of us seeking peace and clarity or who wish to follow a more spiritual path. Instead of reaching for a prepackaged bottled tea or can of juice, take the time to prepare fresh homemade chakra tonics, which will nourish, replenish, and enthuse body and soul. Change the habitual beverages that you imbibe for the better and you will impart dramatic and extensive changes in your health, mentally, spiritually, and physically.

acid/alkaline balance

Understanding your body's pH is important in assessing the health of your fluid system, which has more water than anything else. Water's molecular structure, made up of hydrogen and oxygen (H_2O), can be ionized or separated into one positive hydrogen molecule, H^+ , and one negative hydroxyl ion, or OH^- . Potential for hydrogen, or pH, measures the proportion of OH^- and H^+ ions in any solution.

The pH scale ranges between one and fourteen. When there is an equal proportion of OH^- and H^+ , the pH is neutral, with a pH of seven. Most body tissues operate in a narrow range with a pH of about 7.4. When the body becomes either too alkaline, above 7.5, or too acidic, below 7.3, it can be dangerous to one's health. As the pH level goes up, the relative alkalinity or acidity increases exponentially. An 8.1 pH is ten times more alkaline than an eight pH, and a four pH ten times more acidic than a 4.1. A pH of 6.5 is 100 times more acidic than 7.5.

Even more alarming is the fact that to neutralize drinking one twelve-ounce soda with a pH of 2.5, you need to drink thirty-two glasses of alkaline water. Excess acidity is far more common today because many people are taxing their body with highly acidic foods, drinks, and stressors. In general, Americans tend to consume acidic foods and drinks, like fast food, processed food, meat, poultry, carbonated sodas, alcoholic beverages, and coffee. In addition, stress and

stressful emotions—anger, fear, jealousy, overwork—are all acidic to our system.

Meditation, love, and compassion, are alkalizing. So are most herbal teas, fresh fruit and vegetable juices, smoothies, and the chakra tonics in this book. They will assist you in offsetting the acidity in your body. For further information, read *Alkalize or Die* by Dr. Theodore Baroody.

the chakras

CHAKRAS, the plural of the Sanskrit word *chakrum*, meaning “wheel,” are filters through which our soul receives and broadcasts pure energy. Chakras are psychic centers that do not exist in physical reality, but in a spiritual dimension that defies logic and quantification. Nevertheless, chakras have been studied and celebrated by many cultures for thousands of years. Through the chakras we filter life’s daily events, dreams, hopes, desires, fears, regrets, thoughts, and communications. They are the ultimate devices for storing, sorting, and retrieving mind, body, and spiritual data. Yet understanding *how* exactly the chakras work is not intrinsic to their function. Like the plumbing or electrical systems in our homes, they operate invisibly, behind the walls of our physical bodies.

Existing on a level beyond ordinary perception, chakras serve to organize the psychological and spiritual lessons of the human condition in a philosophical system. Each chakra corresponds to thematic emotional and spiritual issues and challenges that can be overcome in order to move on to higher levels of self-mastery and fulfillment. Each chakra represents a spectrum of energetic frequencies that correspond to psychological and sociological stages of development that we continually move through on the journey of life. As we tune into internal reservoirs of

psycho-spiritual function of the seven bodily chakras

1ST: ROOT CHAKRA: survival, basic sustenance.

2ND: SACRAL CHAKRA: emotions, sexuality, procreation.

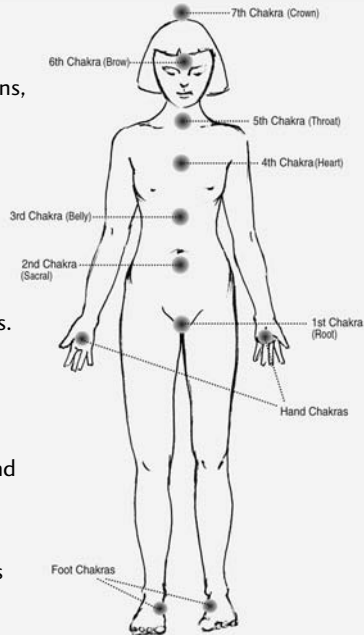
3RD: BELLY CHAKRA: physical and spiritual power, body/spirit energy center.

4TH: HEART CHAKRA: balancing center for love and affinity for self and others.

5TH: THROAT CHAKRA: center of eloquence and communication.

6TH: BROW CHAKRA: clear mind and intuition center.

7TH: CROWN CHAKRA: transcendence, instantaneous knowing, divine connection



power, we are internally empowered to deal with the specific life challenges of that energy center, or chakra, and as a consequence to live more whole, meaningful, and fulfilling lives.

Often lessons and situations repeat themselves throughout

life. We begin our journey at the base of a steep and pointed mountain and then circle around and around to climb to the top. Along the way we continue to circle back to areas where we have been before.

What sets the chakras apart is that although they can be viewed as a psychological or philosophical organizational system, they are intimately linked to anchor points in the physical human body. Unlike modern psychology and spirituality, the ancient Indian system of the chakras interweaves what Western science separates into separate disciplines. Psychology, physiology, sociology, even politics and economics are all linked by universal life force, which pulsates through the chakras of all living beings and drives the culture around them.

There are seven major chakras, each approximately two to three inches in diameter, lined up on the spine from the tip of the tailbone to the crown of the head. The locations of the chakras correspond with what science now understands as specific places along the spine where there are nerve plexuses. Linking, the spiritual world and the material world, the chakras spin like pinwheels as they process and transmit energy from the physical realm to the nonphysical realm.

Responding immediately to the conditions of the mind, the physical body, and the unseen spiritual world, the chakras originally were understood experientially, in terms of energy that moved through these psychic centers. The ancient Hindu science of yoga viewed the *tattvas* or elements (fire, water, earth, air, and ether) as driving the life force in nature and the universe. The chakras were recognized as the body's most direct and immediate link to these elements. As the late Indian author and tantric scholar Harish Johari wrote in *Chakras: Energy*

Centers of Transformation, “These elements are constantly coming and going with the circadian rhythms of the body. The ancient Indian science of Yoga therefore laid great emphasis on knowing these elements and on working accordingly, for the chakras are understood as playgrounds of the elements.” The chakras are constantly in flux with one another, influencing in tandem our mind-body-spirit connection.

The immediacy of the chakras’ regulation of energy has been connected theoretically for many years to the function of the endocrine system. The endocrine system consists of our ductless glands, which release hormones straight into the bloodstream; it is one of the body’s great communication networks. These hormones act as messengers, and they are crucial and intrinsic to almost every function of the human body.

First discovered in 1902 by British scientists, who named them after the Greek word *hormo*, which means to set in motion, hormones directly affect nearly every function of the body. Many of the ductless glands correspond in location and function to the chakras and their energetic domain. For example, the butterfly-shaped thyroid gland, located at the front of the throat, corresponds energetically to the throat chakra.

In general, the chakras’ locations and connections to physical health are as follows.

Root chakra: Located at the base of the spine, it is associated with survival and sometimes the adrenal glands, blood, and overall general health.

Sacral chakra: Located at the top of the sacrum. It is connected to the reproductive glands and the urogenital organs and the lower back.

Belly chakra: Found at the solar plexus, it is associated with the adrenals, stomach, pancreas, and liver.

Heart chakra: At the center of the chest, it is linked to the thymus gland, the heart, the lower lungs, the midback, and the shoulders.

Throat chakra: Located at the base of the throat. Its function is enjoined to the thyroid, parathyroid, upper lungs, ears, and neck.

Brow chakra: Between the eyebrows, it is also known as the third-eye chakra. Its physical correlation is with the pineal gland, the brain, the nose, and the eyes.

Crown chakra: At the top of the head. It is associated with the pituitary gland.

Keep in mind that the actions of the chakras can be separated only intellectually. In the nonphysical plane, the function of each chakra often blends with the functions of others, especially with its neighboring chakras. Although there is much agreement on the knowledge of the chakras, there are some inconsistencies among students and scholars. In some cases, knowledge of the chakras has been passed on from student to teacher in a guru relationship. Western and Vedic scholars have created their own schools of thought. So have modern-day clairvoyants in many countries. Each has a personal perspective and many interesting things to say about the chakras. Since the existence and practical function of the chakras cannot at this point be scientifically proven, I encourage you to discern your own valid opinions regarding their processes.

The chakras direct streams of energy through channels called *nadis*, which run through the body conducting universal life-force energy. There up to 350,000 nadis, of which fourteen are considered primary. The three most important are the *sushuma*, *ida*, and *pingala*. The *sushuma* runs along the line of the spine and is the body's main energetic power line. In addition, the *ida*, or feminine stream, associated with the moon, and the *pingala*, the masculine *nadi*, associated with the sun, weave in and out of the chakras, creating polar streams of energy that spin the chakras in a clockwise rotation. The image of these channels is mirrored in the caduceus, the internationally recognized symbol of medicine.

The chakras contain infinite color and energy frequencies, as they serve to process endless streams of data. At times the physiological or psychological flow of energy gets clogged and slows or comes to a standstill. When the chakras are slow, we may feel lethargic or shut down. When they are overdilated, processing or rotating at excessive speeds, we may feel vulnerable or spunout. We are “in the zone” when our chakras spin perfectly, like whirling multicolor pinwheels whose hues appear separate when still but become one in motion.

I use the analogy of a pinwheel because, likewise, the chakras have many colors that blend as they spin, and for each chakra there is a symbolic color that appears most often when the chakra is healthy, open, and vibrant. The chakras organize our inner light into the frequencies of a rainbow: the root chakra appears, red; the sacral chakra, orange; belly chakra, yellow; heart chakra, green; throat chakra, blue; brow chakra, purple; and crown chakra, violet or white.

cords: communication lines between people and their chakras

AS PROCESSING UNITS, chakras work like phone lines or e-mail. We can connect to others through our chakras, creating energetic lines, or cords, between our own chakras and those of other individuals. Individuals may also connect to whole groups, such as a teacher connecting to all of his or her students.

The communication cords that connect you to other people will hook up to chakras that correspond to the nature of communication occurring. For example, lovers may communicate from heart center to heart center, or they may set up lines connecting both parties' sacral chakras. Business partners may attach at the root chakra when discussing economics or join together through brow chakra connections when speaking about their visions for the company. Just as with our phone lines or e-mail, we may jam up or receive a virus.

In intimate relationships, we may leave connecting cords open at all time. These cords feel familiar and comforting—until one party disconnects them. When multiple chakra cords are suddenly broken in an intimate relationship, the human experience is heartbreak.

Chakra cords can facilitate communication, but they can also be misused. A person trying to manipulate another may drain a person's personal energy through the chakras.

As we said, understanding the subtle mechanical workings of our chakras does not affect their operation. They will continue to function without our knowledge of them. Chakras operate on a hidden level, and often people wait until they have a physical, spiritual, or emotional breakdown before they explore alternative methods of healing like balancing the chakras. Nevertheless, understanding the chakras can be a tool to assist in healthy physical and spiritual living. As we grasp our spiritual, physical, and psychological challenges and how they are interrelated through the model of the chakras we can become empowered.

In our efforts to understand the chakras, we often explain them in terms of three-dimensional models. While models lend tools for mapping the chakras and their activities, we cannot possibly be conscious of the level of information being processed through them. The chakras process and digest every thought, emotion, experience, and sensation each of us experiences. In this way they are somewhat analogous to extremely powerful computers with Internet service. The chakras store and process information and are connected to other chakras through a network of universal life-force energy. Yet this, too, is perhaps a poor model of their unfathomable complexity.

bija mantras

Repeating the sacred syllable and pondering its meaning lead to its understanding. It is then that one understands the self and gradually clears inner obstacles.

—YOGA SUTRAS OF PATANJALI, 1:28–29

The Sanskrit *bija* mantras are single-syllable mantras that introduce the primary sounds of each chakra, such as *Om*, *ham*, *lam*, and so on. The bija mantras work on deep levels to tune the chakras and have always been an important component in the energetic maintenance of the chakras in ancient Indian philosophy. “Sanskrit [is] a language of Cosmic consciousness,” writes Jay Deva Kumar in *The Sacred Language of Yoga*. The fifty letters of the Sanskrit language are encoded into the petals of the first six bodily chakras from the mulhadara (root) to the ajna (crown). Medieval schools of tantra believed that the letters of the Sanskrit language held certain powers and that by chanting them these could be accessed. For more information, you can read Kumar’s book and listen to the accompanying CD, which contains the bija sounds (mantras) and the petal sounds. The book is available at www.livingyourlight.net.

The bija mantras complement the chakra tonics and are the seeds from which more complex yet related mantras spring. Simple and essential, bija mantras are the easiest to pronounce and recite. “The plant transmits the seed-energy of nature into the body; the mantra transmits the seed energy

of the spirit into the mind,” write Dr. David Frawley and Dr. Vasant Lad in *The Yoga of Herbs*. The bija mantras are a great launching point for the study of mantras. For a more in-depth study of mantras correlating to the chakras, listen to Harish Johari’s *Sounds of the Chakras* or *Chanting the Chakras* by Layne Redmond.

In our modern age, as technology evolves to a new level, we are in turn accelerating the pace of our energetic bodies. Information is spreading at accelerating rates through the Internet, mass media, and other means of communication. There is more travel around the planet, too, resulting in deeper communication and better understanding among peoples. Chakras must “keep up” with the bombardment of all these copious amounts of data. The irony is that in this quickened pace we are too rushed to eat healthy food when we need it most. We are so busy that we forget drinking high-quality liquids and eating nutritious foods are exactly what we need to help us process the high levels of information and life-force energy that are being channeled through our bodies. With care and compassion, we can commit to a ritual of creating vital, fresh, and healthy foods, as well as drinks. In this we can offer our bodies as vessels for transformation and higher consciousness.