

Chakra Workshop Notes

The source of most of this information is Nischala Joy Devi (pronounced Day Vee). I attended a workshop presented by her March, 2019 and these are my personal notes.

Basic chakra notes: Remember to chant the MMMM sound longer than the VAAA or LAAA or RAAAA. Also, remember that while we say a chakra is 'closed' no chakra is ever FULLY closed. We simply mean it is partially closed – not fully opened.

When trying to balance the chakras, think of the 3 gunas. Rajas – activity, Tamas – stillness or inactivity and Sattvic – harmony. All 3 are good but are called for at different times. It's not wrong to be 'in your root chakra' because that may serve you at the moment, so don't feel as if you should always be 'living in your 7th chakra' or "living in your heart chakra".

The bottom 3 chakras are called the Earth Chakras and the top 4 are the Heaven Chakras.

Ages 0 – 7 is a time for chakra 1 development

Ages 7-14 is a time for chakra 2 development

Ages 14-21 is a time for chakra 3 development

Age 22 up develops the Heaven Chakras (4-7)

If a body part is removed, the subtle energy of it is still there, so many people will have pain after having a body part removed (gall bladder, appendix, and limb amputation).

If the heart comes into balance, the other chakras will come into balance, but sometimes we can't get the heart to balance without taking care of the other chakras first. In other words, fallout from an imbalance in another chakra may be impacting the heart. You may have to correct the other chakra first, which may automatically fix the heart chakra. For example, if we are greedy due to a chakra 1 issue, this obviously impacts our ability to have an open, loving heart. Correcting the greed issue may correct the heart chakra, too, unless there are multiple issues impacting the heart chakra.

Meditation may be best done with eyes and chin slightly pointed up toward sky and hands open toward sky.

Chakra 1 – Muladhara – Root, Base (LAM)

Location - Base of spine, perineum

Sound - LAM

Color - Red or Black

Black can be grounding, but be careful if overdoing it because it can lead to depression.

Wear clothes that are red or black

Element – Earth, Grounding, Stillness

Functions – Survival, Instinct, Basic communications

Sense – Smell – sense of smell is linked to memory and survival. Sense of smell is first to go with dementia.

Emotion – Fear/Courage

Glands/Organs – adrenal, organs of elimination (kidneys, skin, colon), bones, muscles, hair, nails, legs

Foods – Protein, Red foods

People who live in chakra 1 find stability important. They may keep the same jobs for a long time, live in the same houses, go to the same church, and keep the same friends and routines. They value feeling rooted. People who are needing to feel grounded and rooted (seeking balance in chakra 1) generally do not like change.

Poses: Any poses where we are grounding down through the earth

Things to Do:

Make contact with the earth

Wear red/black. Make areas around you red/black, such as covers, décor

Hug a tree – Yes! Nischala tells a story of Germans who didn't want to do this, but they did and loved it

Bhasti (enema)

Fasting

Dancing

Seva – especially feeding people. Nischala told the story about feeding folks from a truck by collecting food from stores/restaurants and the cops wanted to arrest them, but they were able to find a compromise – put the food out but don't hand it to people (in the park).

Seva - Habitat for Humanity – feels grounding to build a house from the earth up

Mud bath – big in India

Epsom salt

Jewels that are red or black

Buddhi Mudra – pinky finger to thumb LAM



Chakra 2 – Swadhisthana – Dwelling Place of the Self – Sacral (VAM)

Location – Lower abdomen, sacral area

Sound - VAM

Color – Orange

Element – water

Function – Creativity, procreation, emotions

This chakra is about harmony, friendship, relationships and community. These things are so important to people living in chakra 2 (or striving to find balance there). Remember the story of the people who donated the water wells in an African village that kept getting blown up at night. After the 3rd time, they put up cameras and discovered it was the women of the village who used to have to walk 5 miles each way and carry the water back in buckets on their heads. Why did they do this? These women valued their relationships and community time that they had on their daily walks. When the well was brought to them, they lost their community time so they took drastic measures to get the time back.

Also, people living in this chakra may have an attitude of ‘let every day I live be different from all other days’ because they are like water – flowing and meandering, never taking a straight path.

Sense – taste, esp. sweets. Sweets represent comfort and safety. Nutritionally, mother’s milk is sweet. Cow’s milk is made of more fat and protein, but human milk is higher in sugar content. Eat sweets in moderation to balance this chakra. Particularly when we get distressed, we should allow ourselves something sweet as this may calm us like mother’s milk. “If you have never tasted the sweetness of life, you won’t know it when it comes”.

When our 2nd chakra is well balanced, we can ‘find the sweetness’ in life more easily. A little boy in an African village met Nischala and when he found out she was from the US, he said, “Can I ask you a question”? He went on to say that he had heard that American’s had so much water that they actually put it in a bowl and peed in it and he wanted to know if this was true. Nischala explained indoor toilets to him and he was full of joy to have met someone who had access to so much water that they could pee in it! He had very little in life, but he was content just to hear her story and meet someone who had

access to indoor plumbing. This means we can have well balanced Earth Chakras even if we have very little.

Color – orange

Glands/Organs – gonads, all liquids in the body

Foods – liquids, orange foods, sweet foods

We all need creative outlets, especially teenagers. If we take away arts as a creative outlet, teens are more likely to explore with sex or drugs so we need the arts! Yet, what are we taking away in the schools?

This is a chakra of duality, so people can go to extremes. We must work on harmony to keep from being too polarized in this chakra. Love can turn to hate, health to sickness, wealth to poverty.

We find strong emotions in this chakra. This is a passionate chakra.

People who live in this chakra may experience opposites very strongly. If they feel pain, it is extreme pain. If they feel pleasure, it is extreme pleasure. There is not much middle ground.

Teenagers are working hard to find balance within this chakra and they may test us to see how much we love them. “Can you see me as Divine even when I am not nice?” Think about how extreme teenagers can be. They are totally in love with a friend or can’t stand them at all.

When chakra 2 is out of balance, even adults find themselves experiencing extremes. Have you ever known someone who got married quickly because they were so in love with a person, but two years later they seem to hate this person?

When chakra 2 is out of balance: The first thing we see go wrong is with the gonads. This is the ‘canary in the coalmine’ because they are more sensitive than other organs, so the dangers with air, soil, water, food contamination often show up in the gonads first. 40 years ago, when Nischala was studying to be a PA, she hardly saw any ovarian, testicular or prostate cancer, but it is very prevalent now.

Other issues we see with chakra 2 problems: bladder infections, incontinence, blood/lymph issues. White blood cells work to ‘gobble up toxins’; the lymphatic system is the ‘garbage collection’ system, but if chakra 2 is out of balance, this toxin cleanup does not happen, leading to disease due to low immunity.

Poses – mula bandha – engage and then release. Belly breathing – enlivens both chakras 1 and 2. Nodi shodhana – to bring balance to the extremes. Try equal ratio breath, bringing balance to dualities. Garland, Forward Folds to compress the area and then release it to bring fresh blood into the organs of elimination, Twists for the same reason. Flowing yoga poses

Things to Do:

Crying – a good release for both chakras 1 and 2

Avoid 'pushing' while urinating – this can lead to incontinence over time because this muscle is not designed to work this way. Just relax.

Bath, shower

Movement of lymphatic fluid thru exercise, Thai yoga, massage

Hip bath (cold h2o drains blood inward)

Swimming

Dancing

Crystals – tape crystals to the body or in the navel

To find a crystal, go into a crystal shop and run your hand over the top of them using your non-dominant hand and you'll feel which one you need. You don't have to physically touch them with your hand – just skim the hand above them.

Surya Ravi Mudra – Ring finger to thumb VAM



Chakra 3 – Manipura – Lustrous Gem – (RAM)

Location – solar plexus

Sound - RAM ("RA" is the sun God in Egyptian mythology)

Color – yellow (gold is an alternative color)

Element – fire. We 'see' from light, so the sun (fire in the sky) is important to this chakra. If out of control, chakra 3 can be the most destructive chakra. This chakra is where our thinking and intellect come from.

Fire is about vitality and power. Fire contained is great. Think about a controlled burn, a campfire, or flame in your fireplace where you relax and warm yourself. Contained fire in a person looks like Gandhi.

He was very passionate, but his fire was contained so he was able to lead India out of British rule without violence. The Gita tells us “When will is thwarted, anger comes” so this starts a fire. Think about a person who uses their fire to exert power over others, such as Hitler. Both Gandhi and Hitler were very dedicated to their causes and had lots of fire, but one knew how to contain and control it, while the other did not.

Function – power, vitality, intellect

Sense – sight, cognitive thinking

Emotion – anger, will, happiness. This is the charismatic chakra. People who are living in this chakra are often good at getting others to do what they want.

Glands/Organs – pancreas, organs of digestion. Digestive system – mouth, esophagus, stomach, small intestine (25-30 feet), gall bladder (right side), the entire tube from the mouth to the anus. The gall bladder stores bile, which is very hot. The liver, which is above the gall bladder (right) has 265 known functions). Pancreas is on the right, and it goes across to the left with a tail. This tail is where most of the endocrine functions occur, so the pancreas is both an organ of the endocrine and digestive systems.

Foods – starches, oily food, fed by sun, too

Ancient medical wisdom tells us that liver is connected to eyesight. So it is interesting that sight is the sense of this chakra.

Digestion starts in the mind. When we think about food, we begin to salivate, which prepares our body for the food intake. This kicks the digestive processes into gear. So it makes sense that our ‘thinking’ is related to stoking the fire of digestion.

Taking in the right food without the right attitude still will not nourish you. There was a man in prison for many years. He and all of his fellow prisoners were given only 1 piece of bread each day for a long period of time. He decided he would cut the bread into 4 pieces. He took 3 pieces out to the prison yard and gave away one piece to 3 different prisoners each day. He then returned to his cell and imagined that he and his 3 ‘friends’ that he had given the bread to were sitting at a table and enjoying a feast. This is how he ate his ¼ of a piece of bread each day. At the end of several years, the prisoners were released. Most had extreme health issues due to malnutrition, but the man who had feasted daily in his mind suffered no ill effects.

Americans have a lot of digestive issues because we eat on the run. Mercedes Benz (a Germany car company) didn’t put cup holders in their cars until Americans refused to buy the cars without this feature. Why? Because Germans didn’t need to eat and drink on the run!

The key to good digestion: Don’t put any more food into your body until you are done with your last digestion. If food is still in your belly, don’t eat again.

Allopathic – ‘against’. Anti-acid, anti-biotic. We focus on ‘against’ instead of living in harmony.

“itis” is inflammation, which lives in chakra 3, but may migrate elsewhere. If it migrates to chakra 1 into the bones, it may cause arthritis.

Our treatment for inflammation may not be helpful. For example, we put cortisone on the skin for psoriasis but this pushes the inflammation inside, which then leads to psoriatic arthritis.

Shuni Mudra – middle finger to thumb RAM



Top 4 Chakras are called Heaven Chakras and these have only positive emotions associated with them, according to Nischala. I interpret this as saying that the negative emotions come from the Earth chakras, even though they may also manifest in the Heaven Chakras (ex: hatred may be felt out of fear – 1st chakra - but show up as heart disease or powerlessness – 3rd chakra – may show up as heart issue.

Pinky finger – earth
Ring – Water
Middle – fire
Index – Air
Thumb - Ether

Chakra 4 – Anahata – Unstuck, Stillness – (YAM)

Location – heart center
Sound - YAM

Color – green, secondary color is pink – it is usually seen as pink when we are in complete balance and are very content

Element – air, which goes everywhere without discrimination

Function – love and intuition. **This intuition is different from the intuition of the 6th chakra. 4th chakra is “I just know it in my heart” whereas 6th chakra is “I just know” and 3rd chakra is “I have a gut feeling”**

Gland/Organs –heart, lungs, chest, arms, breasts, thymus gland, which is the “seat of the immune system”

Foods – air, veggies (esp. green veggies), love, breath, air, prana

Sense – touch, feeling, clairsentient (to feel)

We get heart disease from heart chakra issues. Apanavayu – air moves down toward earth. Pranavayu – air moves up toward heavens.

If the 3rd chakra doesn't get enough air, it will be deficient/sluggish because fire needs air to burn. On the other hand, if the 3rd chakra gets too much air, the flames get high and reach into heart chakra, heart disease or issues may occur.

Children born with heart disorders often are born to a mother who is in a powerless or loveless relationship. This can transfer to the baby as heart issues.

Hatred and anger deplete the heart. These emotions stem from the Earth chakras, but impacts the heart. Anger is from the third chakra and we can hate because we feel afraid (1st chakra) repulsed (2nd chakra), or from other negative emotions from the Earth chakras.

The 4th chakra symbol has 2 intersection triangles, one pointing to Heaven and one to Earth, which represents, “I reach from Earth and Heaven in Balance”. This is the Jewish Star of David symbol and symbolizes God as the Protector of David.

When you are “living in the 4th chakra” you are in balance. But you can’t just work on the 4th chakra because problems from the Earth chakras can manifest in the heart, so you have to work on the issues at their root, too.

“Be Good. Do Good” is a nice slogan for the heart chakra. Mother Theresa said, “You might not be able to do big things, but you can do small things in a big way.” You can’t always give money, but all of us can spare some time for another person. Mayo Angelo said, ““Since time is the one immaterial object which we cannot influence—neither speed up nor slow down, add to nor diminish—it is an imponderably valuable gift.”

The heart has a very strong electromagnetic field “The heart’s electromagnetic field contains certain information or coding, which researchers are trying to understand, that is transmitted throughout and outside of the body. One of the most significant findings of HMI’s research related to this field is that intentionally generated positive emotions can change this information/coding.” (Source: <https://www.heartmath.org/articles-of-the-heart/science-of-the-heart/the-energetic-heart-is-unfolding/>)

Challenge yourself to do a big or small kindness for a stranger every single day. It can be acknowledging someone who may not always get acknowledge. Look in the eyes of a homeless person and say hello with a smile. You may be the only person all day who treated him/her with dignity.

“Always give from the overflow of your well, not from its depth.” – Sufi saying

This means we should always take care of ourselves. Depleting ourselves can deplete the heart chakra.

Lung disease is a 4th chakra issue. Pollution is so high in some places that it is like smoking 33 cigs per day. This was recently the case in New Delhi when Nischala was there.

Circulation issues are 4th chakra related. Sitting is very bad for us. Especially sitting in a chair (better to sit on the floor as we tend to move more).

Autoimmune diseases – heart/emotional connection. Nischala includes cancer as a 4th chakra disease. “Not recognizing the Self as the Self” causes us to attack our own bodies. Even with cancer, a cell may become cancerous because it doesn’t recognize a cell as normal, so it attacks it until it becomes cancerous. Cancer go to other chakras (bones, chakra 1, sexual organs, chakra 2, etc.). There are some genetic factors for cancer. Cancer has been found in mummies.

Working with the 4th chakra

“Don’t give in to suffering”. I think about my dog K.O. who lost his leg but never let it hold him back. He didn’t know he was supposed to feel sorry for himself or be ‘injured’ so he didn’t act any differently.

Release fear of disease

Service to others

Laughter, singing, joyful dancing, chanting

A study with 3 groups of people watching a film about Mother Theresa doing service for others. 3 steps:
(1) Take blood to measure immunity markers (2) Watch film of Mother Theresa doing good works (3)
Measure blood again

People's responses were grouped into 3 areas:

- 1) People who believed she was a fraud or doing this only to get praise/attention.
- 2) People who said, "She's ok, but anyone would do the same in her situation" (or something along that line)
- 3) People who said, "She's amazing!" or something similar

All 3 groups of people improved their immunity, so even if we don't believe 100% that doing good works for others can help us, it can!

AIDS – 1st immune problem with an STD that did not impact the genitals but impacted the entire immune system. It was a sad time in the late 70's and early 80's because so many people judged those with HIV or AIDS. Remember, your principles should be secondary to the love in your heart, so don't alienate someone, even if you don't agree with

Boundaries – We can't 'love too much' but we can get hurt because our other chakras get involved, so we expect something in exchange for the love we give. We revert to other chakras at this time. We have to do self-care, so we can love fully and stay balanced. Otherwise, we feel resentment for giving love if we don't feel we are getting anything back. Avoid this by giving yourself love and care. Then you won't feel resentment. Burn out is moral injury, which we avoid thru self-care.

Compassion: com = 'with' so it is 'with passion'. Be with others in their pain, but don't try to take it away from them or put it upon yourself.

The heart is like a revolving door. You're not inside or outside. The door must open to receive and give. Both are important.

If we are chanting, we have to be sure we FEEL the devotional and not just say it. Otherwise, it won't impact our heart chakra.

Asanas – work with muscle structure that surrounds the heart, such as chest expansion. Nischala doesn't like the word 'heart opener' because it reminds her of open heart surgery, but it's not 'wrong'...simply her preference.

Besides chest expansions, cow face, cobra, fish, mild inversions.

The heart is happy if circulation is good and blood gets to the head.

Chin Mudra



Index fingertip to thumb

Another mudra is Avaya Mudra for 'fearlessness'. The Abhaya or fear dispelling mudra can be seen on seated, standing and walking images. The gesture can be made with the right hand, the left hand or both hands. The hand is held upwards, palm facing outward, the fingers together, the arm bent at the elbow.



5th Chakra – Vishuddha – Purity (shuddha means purity) pronounced “vee-shoo-duh’ - HAM

Location – throat

Element – ether

Sound - HAM

Function – higher communication, speaking and hearing, listening, understanding

Sense – hearing, clairaudience

Emotion – faith / understanding

Color – blue (sky)

Glands/Organs – thyroid, parathyroid, throat, mouth, tongue, ear, nose, larynx

Foods – fruit, prana

Faith is when you don't understand the bigger picture, but believe there IS a bigger picture and that whatever is wrong will be righted with the Universe.

Thyroid – target of pollution. It is the main gland besides the pituitary that resides over all the other glands. If people have a psychotic break, doctors usually test for thyroid function because it can cause this type of mental break. Hashimoto's is an immune system disorder that attacks the thyroid.

Nuclear testing – Remember Chernobyl Nuclear Disaster? When nuclear testing occurs, radiation gets into the soil, which impacts our thyroid and other glands.

Parathyroid – 4 tiny glands that manage calcium in the body. It has nothing to do with the thyroid except that it 'rents space' from the thyroid. Parathyroid issues can also impact speech, thus we connect it to the 5th chakra and Purity of Speech.

Cursing – The thyroid vibrates with every word, so cursing gives bad vibrations.

Words should be true, kind, and needed.

Loss of hearing can be 5th chakra related, too.

To work with the 5th chakra

How we posture our body impacts how chakras respond.

Clairaudience – Song of Bernadette - Based on the popular novel by Franz Werfel, this drama focuses on Bernadette Soubirous (Jennifer Jones), a young French woman who experiences vivid visions of the Virgin Mary. While many dismiss her claims, certain people, including the priest Dominique Peyramale (Charles Bickford), slowly begin to believe her. Eventually, Bernadette is deemed a saint, and becomes a nun at a convent, where she must deal with jealousy from others who resent her revered status.

When we meditate or pray, we might posture the chest expanded and looking up toward the sky with open hands. This opens the throat chakra. Why would we pray by looking down? We were taught this as humility but we are cutting off messages that may be coming in to us, so we should tip the neck up slightly and allow a smile to come to our faces.

Shoulder stand or half shoulder stand to compress throat and fish to release it. Lion's pose is good. Of course, all asanas work together so don't just do these, but work them into your practice. Put emphasis on yoga mudra, ocean breath, alternate nostril breath, throat lock. Ocean breath (Ujjayi) also called victorious breath because it is 'victory over death'

There is no sense of time in the 5th chakra, so if you feel like it's been 5 minutes but it has been 2 hours, you may have transcended the 5th chakra. If it feels like 2 hours but has been 5 minutes, this is not transcending the 5th chakra usually.

Bharmari (Bee's Breath) is good for 5th chakra. So is adding breath retention to bring prana to the throat and when you release it, it moves upward

Cultivate faith thru gratitude and looking at the blessings we already have.

Mudra – thumb to base of thumb (where thumb and hand meet)

6th Chakra – Ajna (AJ, rhymes with RAJ – na) – Third Eye – Beyond Wisdom – KSHAM or OM

Location – between eyebrows

Element – light

Function – wisdom

Emotion – knowing

Sense – clairvoyance, auric fields, angels

Color – purple, violet to ultra violet which the eye cannot see, so it blends into the 7th chakra

Gland/Organs – pituitary, eyes, head, lower brain, CNS

Foods – light and prana

We can touch our 6th chakra in deep meditation but we can't live there because we would not even care enough to eat or get up. It is not physical at all.

(It's beyond Ida and Pingala, so beyond duality)

Pituitary – pea shaped gland, has 2 lobes. It is the master gland and creates oxytocin – feel good hormone and several others

Gems have “back open” so light comes thru into body

Asanas – headstand, eye movements, balancing poses. Focus on third eye during meditation. Candle gazing meditation. Alternate nostril breathing, bee's breath, yoga nidra. Anything that takes you out of the ordinary thinking mind.

Everything moves from subtle to gross, chakra to physical.

3 monkeys – hear, see, and speak no evil.

Mudra – thumb to middle joint of thumb

Another one:

Yoni Mudra – one of introspection



7th Chakra – Crown - Sahasrara - Emptiness – Thousand Petal Lotus– OM

Location – crown of head and slightly beyond

Element – cosmic consciousness

Function – connection with the infinite

Sounds – Technically, it is the sound of silence, but we chant OM to vibrate all the chakras

Mudra – Chin mudra – index and thumb – “wisdom mudra”

Color – clear/opalescent or ultra violet

Gland/organs – pineal, upper brain

Foods – light