

The Chakra System

Chakras, the Elements and Glands

SAHASRARA

Element: Space (*Akasha*)

Endocrine Gland: Pineal

Sense Organ: n/a

AJNA

Element: Space (*Akasha*)

Endocrine Gland: Pituitary

Sense Organ: "Sixth Sense"

VISHUDDHA

Element: Space (*Akasha*)

Gland: Thyroid/Parathyroid

Sense Organ: Hearing (*Shabda*)

ANAHATA

Element: Air (*Vayu*)

Gland: Thymus

Sense Organ: Touch (*Sparsha*)

MANIPURA

Element: Fire (*Agni*)

Gland: Adrenal

Sense Organ: Sight (*Rupa*)

SVADHISTHANA

Element: Water (*Jala*)

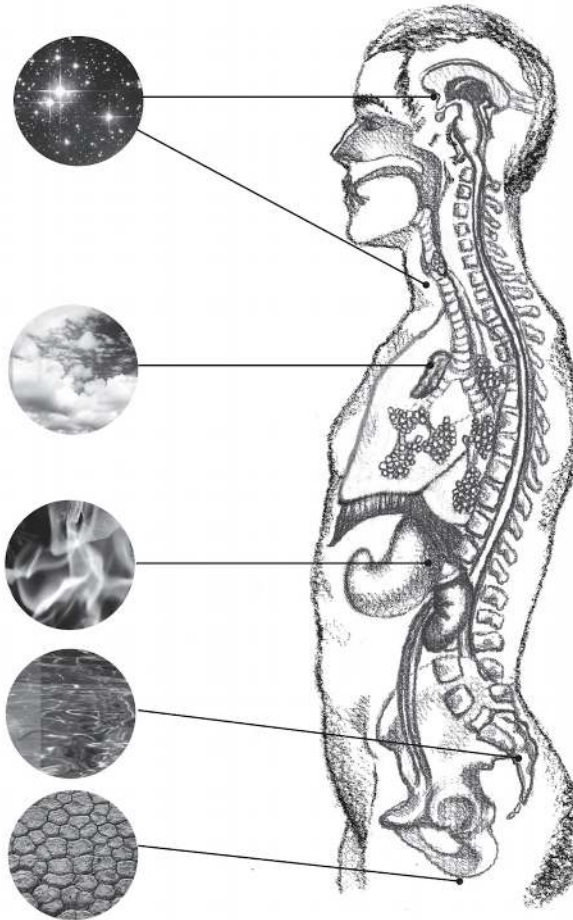
Gland: Ovaries/Testes

Sense Organ: Taste (*Rasa*)

MULADHARA

Element: Earth (*Prthivi*)

Gland: n/a



The Cakras		The Sounds
Sahasrāra सहस्रार <i>"thousand-petaled"</i> Crown of the Head		OM̐ or Silence
Ājñā आज्ञा <i>"enhanced knowledge"</i> Third Eye		Om̐ ham̐ kṣam̐
Viśuddha विशुद्ध <i>"purified"</i> Throat Area / Space		Ham̐ am̐ ām̐ im̐ īm̐ um̐ ūm̐ ṛm̐ ṛīm̐ ṛīm̐ ṛīm̐ eam̐ aam̐ oam̐ aum̐ am̐ aḥm̐
Anāhata अनाहत <i>"unstruck"</i> Heart Area / Air		Yam̐ kam̐ kham̐ gam̐ ghām̐ ṅam̐ caṁ chaṁ jam̐ jham̐ ṅam̐ ṅam̐ ṅam̐ ṅam̐
Maṇipūra मणिपूर <i>"jewel-filled"</i> Navel Area / Fire		Ram̐ dam̐ dham̐ ṛam̐ tam̐ tham̐ dam̐ dham̐ nam̐ paṁ pham̐
Svādhiṣṭhāna स्वाधिष्ठान <i>"self-basis"</i> Reproductive Area / Water		Vam̐ bam̐ bham̐ mam̐ yam̐ ram̐ lam̐
Mūlādhāra मूलाधार <i>"root support"</i> Base of the Spine / Earth	Laṁ vaṁ śaṁ saṁ saṁ	

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Muladhara Chakra- Root

Mūla" – root, source, origin, beginning

Element - Earth - We connect to this by practicing on the ground

Our legs are the channels - Half moon pose , down dog. Feet are the base into this. Physical location is the pelvic floor, pubococcygeus, perineum. We physically access this location using the lower limbs. The energetics here are downward flowing - The physical capacity to

eliminate, to let go, is the work of the mūlādhāra. Like how rivers flow into the sea. Erosion downward flow of mud - elimination, defecation, menstruation, birth, Natural downward flow

In the subtle body- pathway of nerve flow up through the spine Mūla Bandha is an opposing, uplifting practice that takes place in the same region. The pelvic floor is like a hammock. We need to keep these muscles toned.

Geometric symbol = The Square- most stable geometric - always used as a base. The petals (4) relate to the complexity of the nerve bundle. We begin very simply.

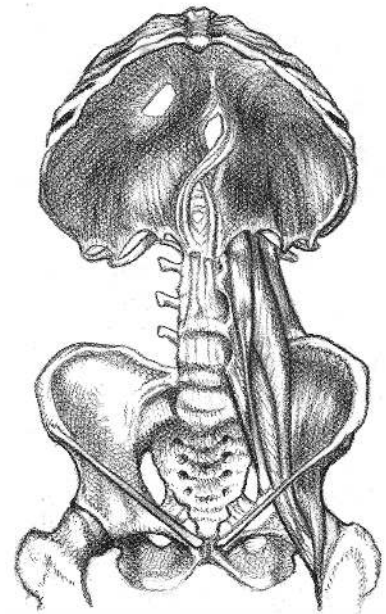
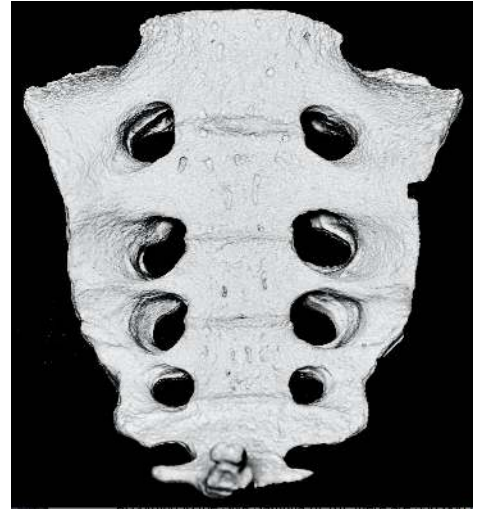
Sense - Olfactory nerve is the 1st cranial nerve. Most primitive. Most basic.

Totem Animal = Elephant - Stability - wisdom keeper - memory - the capacity to connect to the subtle body. The wisdom, knowledge and enduring intelligence of this base supports us through our journey of the chakras.

Color = Yellow/red is the color of the earth = composting, autumn

Sound = Lam - think deep reverberation - deep base

Physical ways to promote this chakra - Standing poses one 1 leg - warrior 3, settling into the lower earth element, lying on the ground, be on the earth,



grounding, working, gardening, savanna with sandbags, being breastfed, being held psychological safety, building a safe space in your yoga practice, having stable boundaries.

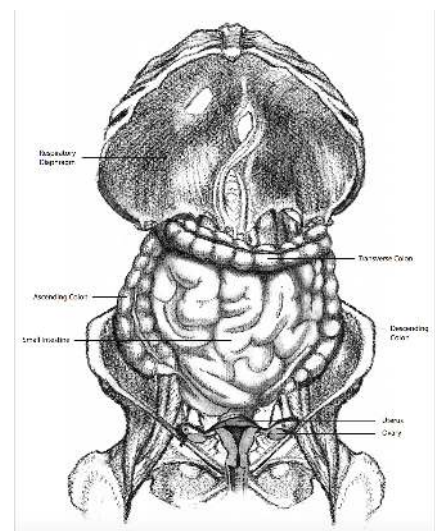
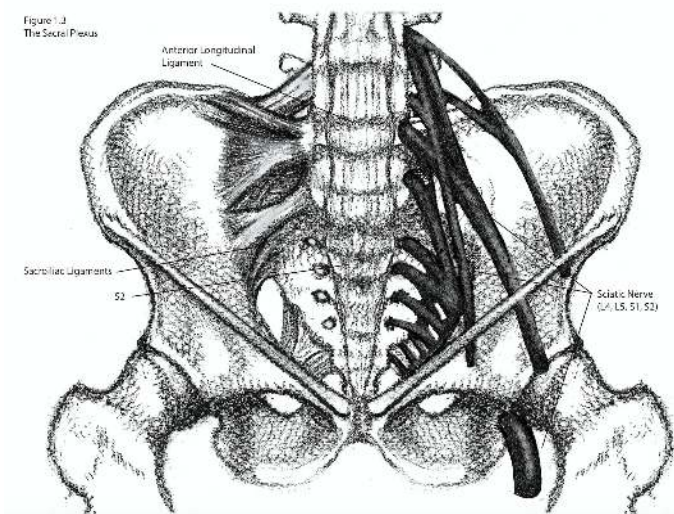
Most associated with the annamaya kosha. - The Physical body.

Physical and psychological deterioration - too much sitting congests pelvic region, eating in excess, disconnected from the body, weak knees, fallen arches, lower back strain, lack of a good container for the pelvic floor, the pelvis relates to the mandible, sexual frigidity, excess air travel, holding onto things - i.e. stuff, rhythms - having irregular i.e. children, overly controlling like a parent, militant psyche, hyper vigilant,

Dynamic Yoga Poses For
Restorative Poses For

Svadhishthana- Sacral Chakra

Sva" – self; "ṣṭha" - steady, stable, established literally means self stability



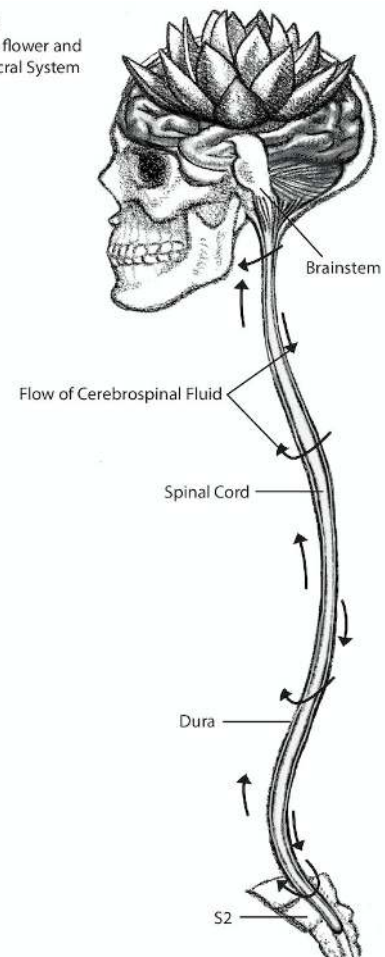
The sacrum: half spine, half pelvis. The sacrum holds the entire spine. Innervates the reproductive organs, the sciatic nerve is found here. The seat of the soul is thought to be in the sacrum. Kundalini energy resides here. The sacrum's role parasympathetic (facilities passivity)& sympathetic (active). The sacrum and the back of the skull are the home of the parasympathetic nerves. Associated anatomical structures (related to the water element): large intestine, uterus, bladder and ureters. This is also where we absorb water back into the body. Fluid dynamics in lower pelvic region. Vinyasa yoga, salsa, hulu hoop brings fluidity. Reproductive organs. The reproductive organs correlate with svādhiṣṭhāna: the uterus, ovaries, fallopian tubes, testes, and seminal ducts. The fluid portion of this system makes it a part of this chakra. Sacrum is held in place by Sacroiliac ligaments. If the sacrum is locked or fixed the energy is confined. the fluid or movement is confined. To open the sacrum - Lunges, cow pose, triangle pose, wide leg pose to open sacrum.



Uḍḍīyāna Bandha – the yogic practice of drawing the belly up and back towards the spine with the exhaled breath.

Geometric symbol- Circular pattern the way water falls from the sky. Blood moves through the arteries and vein to the heart. A circular flow. Flow of the cerebrospinal fluid. Feminine, that which is round, all inclusive, The crescent moon related to cerebrospinal fluid. The tidal flow of

Figure 3.6
The Lotus flower and
Craneo Sacral System



CSF goes from back of skull to sacrum and back up again. The moon at the sacrum and the moon at the back of the skull suggest a corollary between the pelvis and the base of the skull. Moon energy. Feminine presence of cupping or holding.

Element = Water

6 Petals = relate to the seat that the buddha sat on.

Sensory organ = tongue - hypoglossal nerve, sense of taste, Mobilize tongue- top of palate, lions breath, The tongue is a gateway into the fluid system just as the sacrum is. We all come from the uterine waters of our mother. Born from the amniotic fluid at the center of life force.

Totem Animal = alligator = makara - half terrestrial chest upward, lower form is aquatic. Half ocean, half land. Describes conjunction of pelvic floor and the aquatic center of the pelvis.

Color of this center is glowing white associated with the moon and semen as well as the water element. The red petals suggest the complimentary menstrual fluid.

Sound = Vam = sound of gurgling water, like the percolation of water, creek, waves of ocean, the sound of the flow of water.

Physical ways to restore= dance, vinyasa yoga, spiralic slow movements, tai chi - hula, belly dancing, restorative positions that open up the sacrum, be around water, along the ocean or river, bathtub, being sensuous, warrior 2, half moon, groin openers, outer hip openers,

Psychological ways to restore = being open to change, looking at our own desires & shadow

Physical causes of deterioration - being blocked in and around the sacrum, bound lower back, Stifled with emotional and psychological tension due to physical or sexual trauma. Excess weight. stagnation in lower region, Constipation, menstrual flow complications, impotency,

Psychological deterioration - lack of self confidence, fear of change, fear of growth in life, when we can't shed our skin and grow to the next level in life, unable to change direction, lack of playfulness.

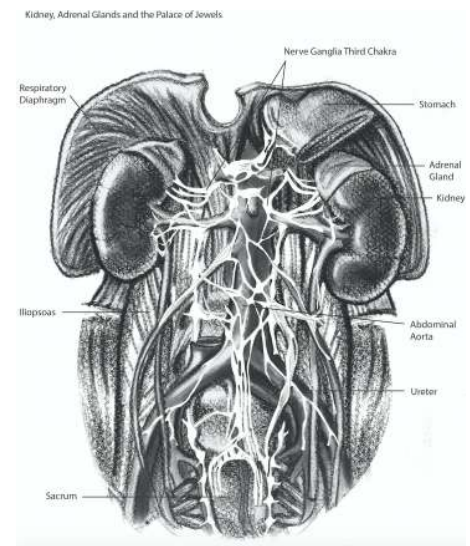
Prāṇamaya kosha is the second layer.- relates to the fluid body.

Dynamic Yoga Poses For
Restorative Poses For

Manipura - The Solar Plexus - Most Central - 3rd Chakra -The nerve center in the abdominal center. The power center, the will lies here. This middle balances the lower and upper chakras. This is the mediator between the two, Ram is the seed syllable.

Physical location: abdominal cavity - the navel itself, The navel connects us to the mother, life energy in utero. After birth, power center moves up. When infant goes from crawling to walking. Goes to lift up into standing the iliopsoas. Psoas is the strongest hip flexor in the body. Keeps us upright. Yoga postures stretch. Warrior one. Lifting arms overhead. Kidneys think of them as batteries- They hold our charge. Adrenal Glands lie on top of your kidneys. Give you your vitality, computer chips that govern and oversee lower organs. Adrenals govern the testes, ovaries, FSH, sex drive, flight or fight, collapse or freeze. This is self protection and fight and power. Adrenals govern 3rd chakra. Other related structures: liver, gallbladder, spleen, stomach, pancreas (organs of digestion). The breakdown of food stuff happens here.

Shape= Triangle = fire flames lick upwards. The nature of the manipura upward rising force. 10 petals.



Element = fire- hardest to control - The sun energy in the body. The top of the skull is related to the moon. Has digestive capacity - transform food into blood. Spiritually, fire transforms prayers into actualization into the world, to move into space. Hatha yoga - the fire is internal. Yoga practices are fire driven. Sun Salutation. We live in a very active, very driven world. The lunar practices are very helpful.



Sense of sight- eyes in your stomach - the eyes consume. The world of the screen - phone, TV, computer. The eye consumes visual stimulation and the stomach consumes food. Yogis look to gaze inward and balance the eyes of the belly. This is why yogis moderate their diets. Softening the eyes relates to balancing the fire in the belly.

Totem Animal = ram - suggests the driving wills of the personality.

Color: sunrise fiery red. The blue outer ring is the cooling or regulating of the fire.

Sound: Ram

Physically Support Chakra - Supported back bends - support the kidneys. Draw the kidneys into the body. Supported bridge. Restorative postures Full diaphragmatic breathing. The psoas connects to the diaphragm. Supine pranayama. Lying on a bolster and doing diaphragmatic breathing slowly. Breath into song, belly laughter, chanting.

Psychologically Support - Coming into one's own personal power. The question of the third chakra is how to come into your own power. Healing = community vs



going at it alone. Channeling ones will in a positive way. Doing selfless service, generosity, non-possesiveness. Practicing kindness, altruistic motivation, Finding right effort - the act of pushing and letting go. Not over working. Work Work Work - solar driven. The lunar and reflective practices are critical to healing the subtle body.

Physical Deterioration : distrust, taking people's belongings, power, essence, ideas, the excess consumption of food, poor food combining, excess salt in diet, dehydration makes tension in this area. Poor digestion - too fast or too slow.

Psychological Deterioration- competitive, conquer and take over all I can. Greed and strong desire for name and fame. Very dominating, manipulative. Because the liver is in the solar plexus. Anger, intolerance, impatience all are fire energy. It's hard to be generous and accommodating to others. Feeling victimized, deflated will lead to passive aggressiveness. Fear is associated - real or imagined. Anxiety can creep in and get lodged in the belly. "Butterflies" in stomach more like "mosquitos" in stomach. Tenderizing this area, making sure it doesn't constrict. Power yoga types need to work on this. Self condemnation, self deprecation. Coming into our own power work thru personal shame. Learning to trust our deep gut feelings, If we can listen to our gut. We can really connect to dream and vision. Learning I 99ife isn't all about me. Most people never make the leap from the third to the fourth chakra.

Relates to the Manomaya kosha- the psychological body.

Dynamic Yoga Poses For
Restorative Poses For

Anahata - Heart Chakra- the center of the chakras-The heart is the mediator - the equalizer in terms of sentiment and prana. Anahata- literally means un-struck, Forever open, receptive, giving. A place inside of us. The seeker heart. Interior to all the passing moods and outer things. The pure resource of kindness and generosity and love. The essence of the heart itself.

The heart is on top of the diaphragm. It rides piggy back. As we breathe the heart moves ever so slightly up and down. That's why breathing - pranayama is the primary means to work with the cardiac rhythms. The heart has 4 chambers. Just like the brain. The heart is always taking in and giving out blood. Taking in and give out structurally and spiritually. The heart is paired with the lungs. The upper chest is really paired with the atmosphere and the breath we take in with the nostrils. If we take an inhalation the diaphragm drops down and expands. When we exhale the diaphragm comes up back to its dome shape. The breath is a heart pump. The lung is soft and impressionable. Easily torn or blocked or congested. Many little tiny grape like sacs - alveoli. Can be blocked by

smoke in the environment or particulates.

On the surface and the outer sheath. Sternum and pectoral region are the exterior of the chest. When the pectoral region is tight it causes less expansion. This is why backbends are so important. Lifting the chest upward. Expanding the sternum, pectoral area. Note the Pericardium - a cocoon or sheath that rests and shrouds the heart. Resting on top of the diaphragm.

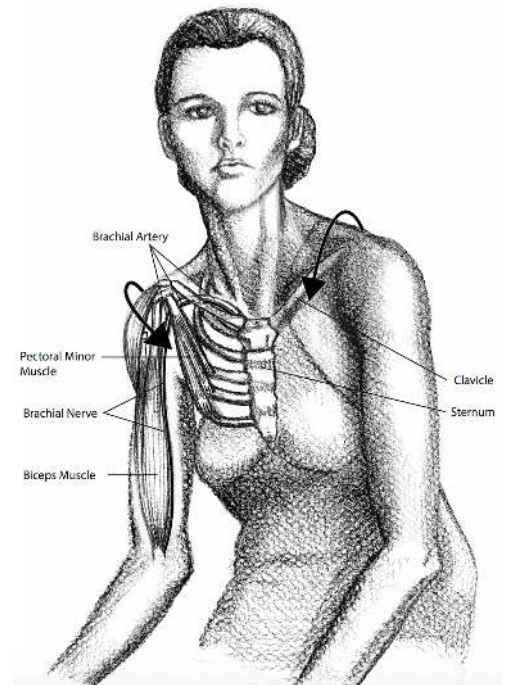
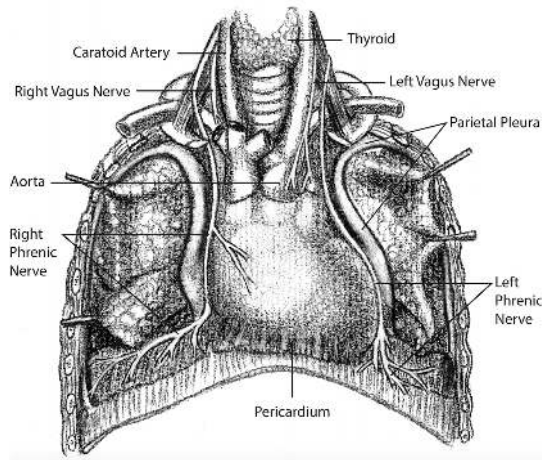
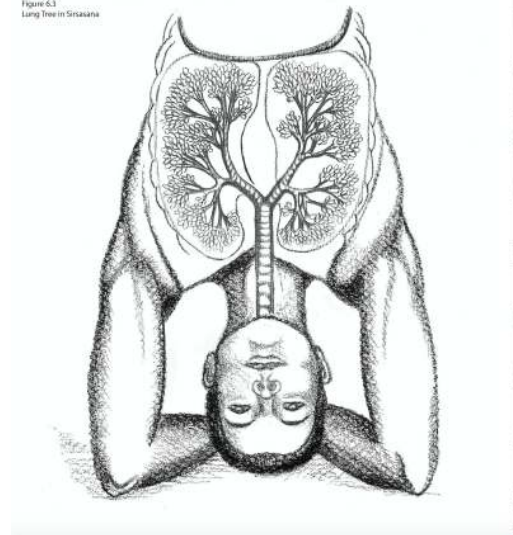


Figure 6.3
Lung Tree in Sitalasana



This region is also home to the cardiac nerve. It has its own neurological loop. Regulates itself and pulsation of blood through whole body. Can feel heartbeat in whole body. The heart is the great regulator of itself and the whole body. The heart regulates the rhythm of every blood vessel in the whole body.



Gland associated with the heart is the thymus which is important in immunity. The thymus helps build our immune system when we are young, producing specialized white blood cells (T lymphocytes). Helps us to keep good immunity. Our overall well being in our immune system.

Geometric Shape - Star of David - Overlying triangles. Both pointing up and down. Suggests complexity, Ascending and descending energy. The heart can move in all directions. Upward rising feelings of joy, celebratory feelings. Downward feeling- grief, loss, For the heart to hold moods and sentiments it must be supple in this way.

Note: The golden lingam. The first lingam is at the base, the 2nd form is in the heart, the 3rd lingam is in the 3rd eye. The pelvic cavity = desire, material world. The heart is moving through the emotional center. Most challenging to move thru this one. 3rd eye - viewpoints and attitudes. The 12 petals of the heart is more complex in the subtle body. vs in the pelvic.

Element = Air = the breath. The sensory organ is touch which is experienced through air and the skin. Skin is way of contact with the outside world. just like the air is our contact with the outside world.

The skin is the largest organ in the body. Our boundary with the outside world. In yoga we look to stretch the skin.

Totem Animal: Deer - nonaggressive, kind, adoring. Capacity to listen.

Color = gray - like where smoke dissolves into space.

Sound - Yam

"When all the knots (granthis) that fetter the heart are cut, then a mortal becomes infinite.

A hundred and one are the nadis of the heart, one of them leads up through the crown of the head. Going upward through it, one reaches the infinite, the others lead to various directions."

– Kaṭha Upaniṣad, II.15-16

Ways to physically support - Meditate on the heartbeat. Feel the pulsation of your own heart. Feel the heartbeat on the left side. Bring into the heart the spirit of metta - loving kindness, friendliness, Metta should lie at the heart of all we do. We don't have to like everything however we can hold the space in our heart for this kindness.

Otherwise our heart becomes critical. Reflect on impermanence - The Buddha said, "Everything changes, everything passes, things appearing, things disappearing. But when all is over, everything having appeared and disappeared, being and extinction both transcended, still the basic silence and emptiness abides and that is blissful peace." When we reflect on the passing of every moment we see the fragility. Chanting, celebrating inwardly thru vibration. Those echo thru the nadis. Focus on inhalation (life giving, creative breath, expansive breath) Reflecting on joy and pain.

Psychological ways- working for the benefit of all. Working to extend ourselves for the benefit of helping others. Setting good boundaries in relationship with others - i.e. bleeding hearts overextend. When to be receptive and inner containment. Practice of self acceptance. "Having compassion starts and ends with having compassion for all those unwanted parts of ourselves. The healing comes from letting there be room for all of this to happen: room for grief, for relief, for misery, for joy." - Pema Chodron

Physical causes of deterioration in anāhata. - Exaggerated heart, throw chest forward, shoulders back. "Puffed up" - Excessive exaggeration. Kyphotic posture - pulls heart and lung downward- this

compresses airways. High blood pressure - constricts. Shallow breathing - the heart can't pump. Arms are the gateway to the heart, chest, pericardium, - side plank, down dog. Just like you to access the abdomen you come thru the legs.

Psychological causes of deterioration in anahata - pulling back from the world, self hatred, shame, caught up cycles of blame (ourselves and others). Attitudes of rejection to others.. I don't like them. Feelings of isolation. Being open to different people and life experience. Prone to depression (related to lung) seat of depression and grief in the body. Depression can pull us inward. Excess grief can be confining.

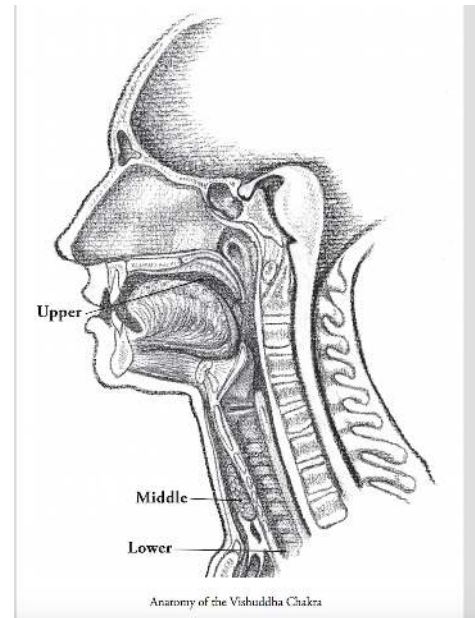
The kosha related to the heart is the Vijnanamaya kosa - literally means knowledge. This is not a head wisdom but a heart wisdom.

Dynamic Yoga Poses For
Restorative Poses For

Visuddha - Throat Chakra - The throat is the bridge between the heart and the head.

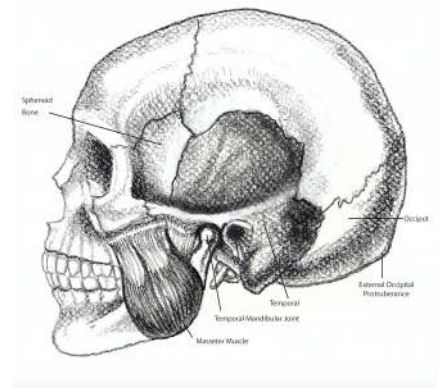
Physical location - Structures in and around the throat. The throat, tongue, palate, cervical spine. Delicate and more moveable. More prone to dysfunction. Nerve blood lymph bony tissue between the head and the neck. Palate to lung. Includes the cranium and mandible. The mandible is the highly mobile structure at the base of the skull. Enables us to speak, eating, capacity to express thru intimacy and kissing. The muscle that holds the jaw to the cranium is the masseter muscle. The jaw is a common place for holding- grinding teeth, mandibular dysfunction, mandibular strain. The mandible attaches to the temporal bone - circular bone on side of skull. Slowly open your jaw you might notice it may swing to left or right as you open. Just as the sacrum can be pitched out of position so can the TMJ. The mandible attaches to the temporal bone. The temporal bone houses the ear. The ear is located in the temporal bone and is a pathway into the spiral shape of the inner ear. It looks like a conch.

The primary nerves is the vestibular-cochlear nerve (CN 8) which governs balance. All of yoga posture is inner ear training. Keeps us upright and gives us proprioceptive awareness. Key to balance. The ears are portals to the inner listening or into subtle body. The inner ear has fluid and little tiny hairs. It is easily disrupted, especially with head trauma. The ear is how we connect to sound and vibration.

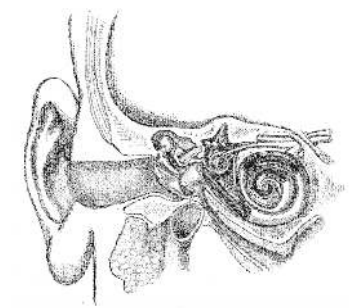


Gland = thyroid and the parathyroid. The thyroid gland is the "master" gland. The thyroid is a master gland that is extra cranial. It governs metabolic function. How fast you hum. How much energy. So closely paired to adrenals. The loop between the thyroid and adrenals.

Jālandhara bandha – the throat seal. The pelican is an example of the throat block. The chin goes down and the neck elongates. Siphons fluid related to blood and lymph. Plow and shoulder stand.



The internal wind vayu is the udana. Goes upward. The upward moving wind. Hard to control. Upward moving wind in neck and cranium is difficult to manage. Fear, Shock, startle response. Yogis look to pacify wind.



Geometric shape - energetic qualities - very light and delicate -The circle is the full moon. 16 Petals - becomes more delicate and refined. The petals of this chakra have the 16 Sanskrit vowels. The vibratory tones also have more refinement. Just like the anatomical structures.

Element is Space - Just like in everest air gets thinner. Correlated with the ear. The spiral shape of the inner ear is related to the element of space. Sound travels thru space . Hearing and sound are associated with the space element.



Animal totem is the bird - often depicted as an eagle. Fly into the region of space.

Cool = is white of the moon and lavender is associated with healing. The sound is Ham. The purest of all the consonants -light and expressionistic. Turning the tip of tongue on top of the palate. Widening the cave of the throat region. Helpful if you have had a lot of dental work. Or grind your teeth.

Building Physical vitality - Chanting is invaluable for the throat chakra. We extend the tongue like the lions breath or turn the tongue on the palate. Gateway to the subtle body. Right speech - appropriate speech. Internal & External speech is how we articulate ourselves with the world. Covering the neck is a valuable way to protect the neck. Home of many lymph nodes which doesn't like cold air. Shoulder stand - the mother of all asanas.

Psychological building - speaking our truth, being able to express emotion, being able to say how we feel, express humor and laughter and love and kindness.

Causes of physical deterioration - forward head thrust, upper spine becomes kyphotic. The neck compresses the region of thyroid, lymph, cervical spine. When the head is oriented over the spinal centers the throat will open. The 3 scalene muscles (the psoas of the neck), hold upper rib to vertebrae will pull the head forward. SCM holds the startle response - backfire of a car- going to protect ourselves and our vitals. Protecting the throat is an old survival strategy. The carotid and

jugular arteries are here. Emotional holding - lump in the throat - over dominant parent "shut up" if a young person can't express there will be a held tightness in the throat area. Dehydration, fatigue and exhaustion. affects adrenal thyroid loop.

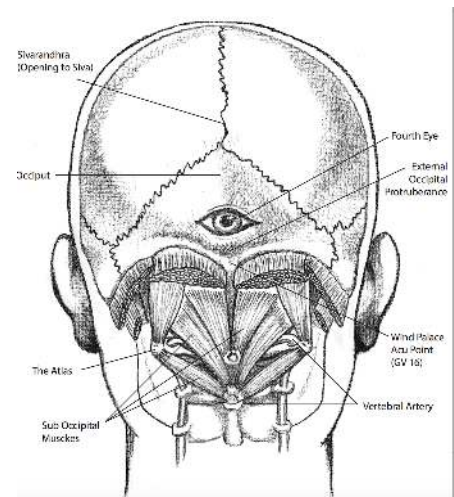
Psychological deterioration - being exposed to verbal abuse. Talking too much, excess speech. Defensive speech, excessive criticism. Being in counseling is valuable. Alchemy happens when we put words with feeling. Chanting and verbal expression. Gut and throat tension tend to go together.

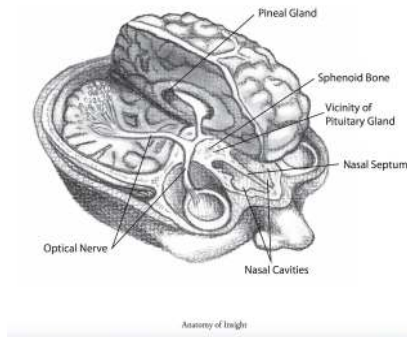
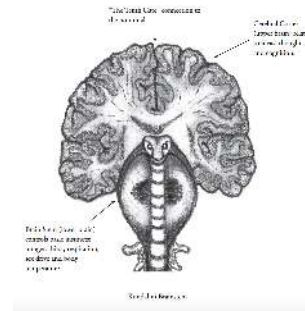
Ānandamaya kosa - refers to most delicate, emotive place. Related to joy and spaciousness and sense of levity and light. Comes thru chant and being able to speak our truth.

Ajna Chakra - 3rd eye - The third eye is the conjunction of male and female, right and left, sun and moon, dark and light. It leads to an experience of the non-dual. The ida, pingala and shushumna nadi all come together in the third eye.

Optic nerve passes through sphenoid going into the occipital nerve. The sphenoid bone articulates with every other cranial bone.

The optic nerve - half from left eye to R brain. Half from Right eye to L brain. The bindu or bindi (literally the drop or dot) marks the center of the brow - believed to be the pathway into the sushuma. 40% of the entire brain is devoted to the visual field. Anatomically, the third eye center is correlate with the brain stem. Basic biorhythms are controlled by the brain stem. The brain stem governs the pulse of life. Almond shaped glands are called amygdala - they govern memory and emotion. Fear, hunger, sexual drive, joy. Regulation - pranayama, diet, meditation, The corpus callosum connects





the left and right hemispheres of the brain with 200-250 million nerve fibers.

Gland: Pituitary gland - related to 3rd eye center located in sphenoid bone. Located in the sella turcica. The pituitary is the command center of the entire hormonal system.

Shape - Circle with a downward triangle (secretions of pituitary into the body)
 Lingam - relates to attachment of concepts, ideas, impressions. Connected to the intellect. The syllables on the two petals- duality of ājñā are "ham" (left) which symbolizes creation, and "kṣam" (right) which symbolizes destruction. Male/Female, Light/Dark, Sympathetic/Parasympathetic.



Element = Space but some say it is beyond the 5 elements. Beyond the five elements also means beyond the five senses. That which is not made of matter and cannot be seen with the senses.

Sense organ related to this region can be associated with the "sixth sense", or with intuition, insight, and psychic powers.

Animal = None

Color - White glow related to the moon - Shrouded with transparent blue. Like the light of dawn before the sun rises. The dawn is celebrated as the best time to practice yoga .

Sound = OM. A short OM. Very much connected to light. Light impressions come into the brain thru the visual field.

Physical ways to promote health - Regular Meditation Practice - 15 minutes, Insight meditation - gaining insight into ourselves. Long meditation retreats, Restorative yoga, and deep sleep- which allows brain to rest. Poses - Svasana, leg up the wall pose. Receiving craniosacral therapy. Lifting the back of the skull (curve in the cervical spine.)

Psychological- Mindfulness practice - being aware. Reading sutras. Listening to dharma talks. Recollection of dreams. Being more intuitive. Receiving counseling. Being contemplative in yoga practice. Contemplative time in nature. Unplug. Finding time for inner communion. Silence. Taking the backward step away from the world. Reading poetry, connecting to art, Connecting to things outside of language.

Physical causes of deterioration in the ājñā chakra. - tension in brow, eye, head trauma, TBI, affects energetics, displacement of neck anterior or lateral, headaches, migraines.

Psychological causes - being chained to work in the world, keeping lives together, being overburdened. Stress & anxiety stem from this, to do lists, overthinking, excessively intellectual. Being dogmatic, excessively controlling, being stubborn, hard headed. Lack of imagination, lack of connecting with artists and music. Nightmares, trauma.