

The Human Subtle Body

The knowledge of subtle energy centers called CAKRAS is unique to Yoga Psychology. These Cakras form bridges between body and mind and are associated with our endocrine glands.

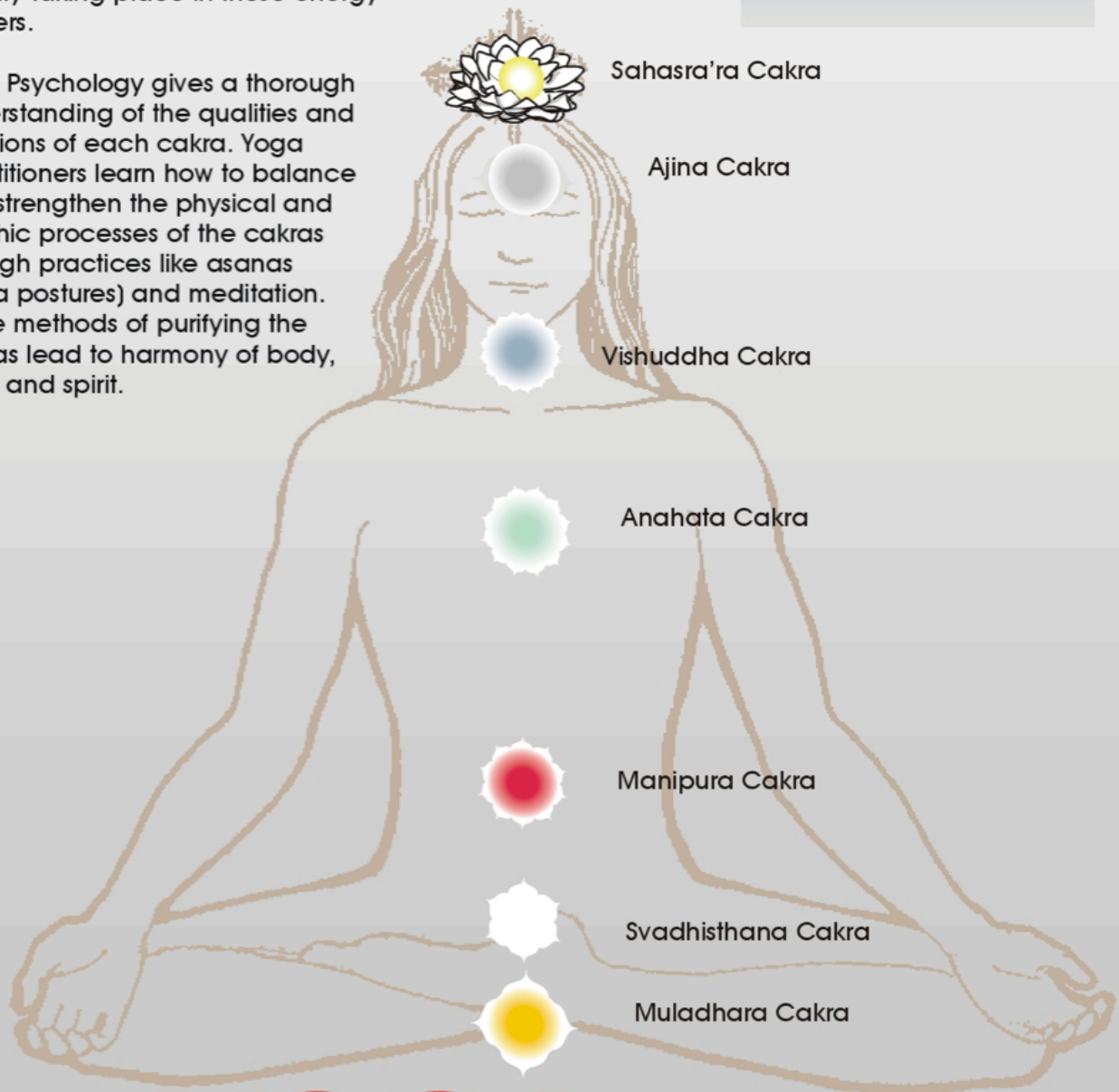
There is a constant interplay of thoughts, emotions, hormonal and neurological activity taking place in these energy centers.

Yoga Psychology gives a thorough understanding of the qualities and functions of each cakra. Yoga practitioners learn how to balance and strengthen the physical and psychic processes of the cakras through practices like asanas (yoga postures) and meditation. These methods of purifying the cakras lead to harmony of body, mind and spirit.

THE CAKRAS

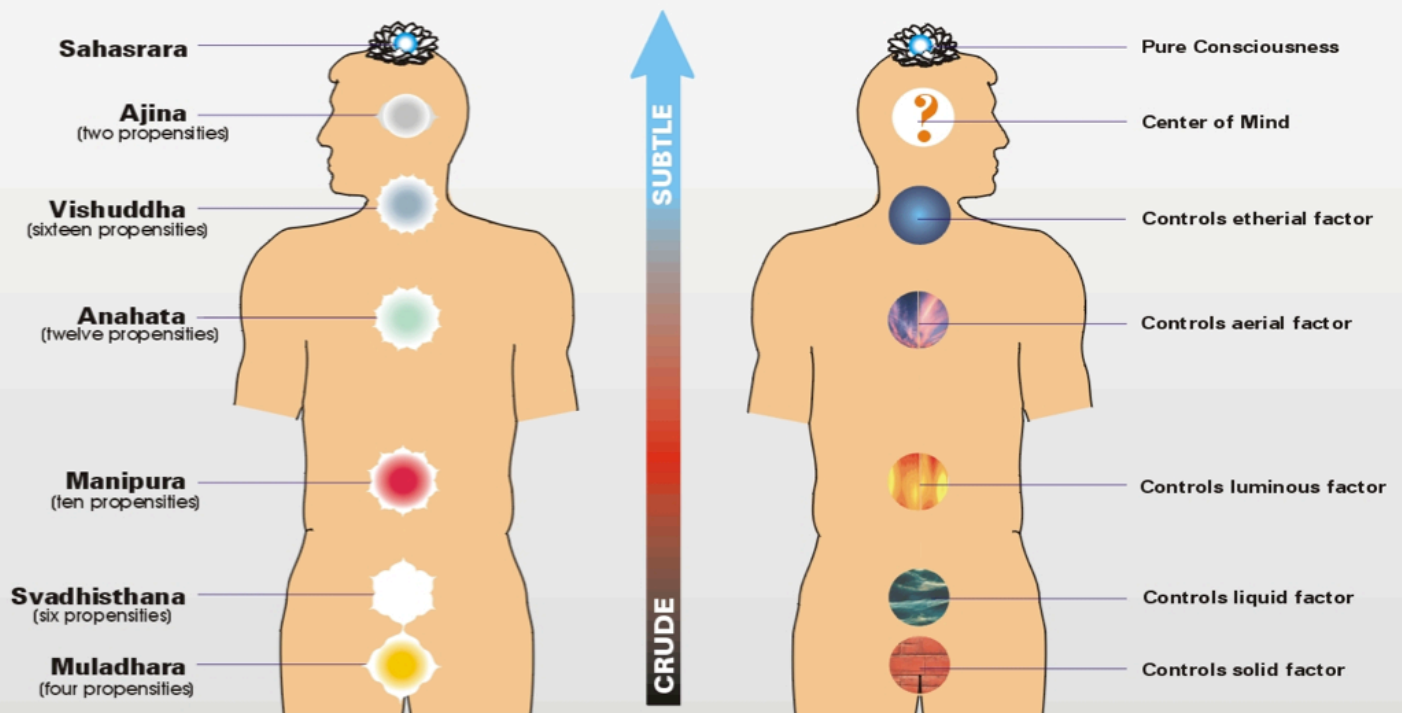
ASANAS & MEDITATION

By performing asanas and meditation regularly, human beings can control the propensities associated with each cakra, and hence the thoughts which arise in their minds, and their behaviour.



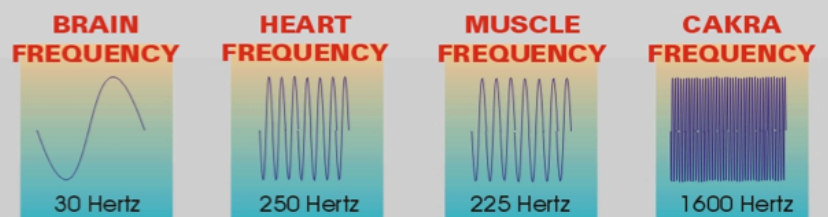
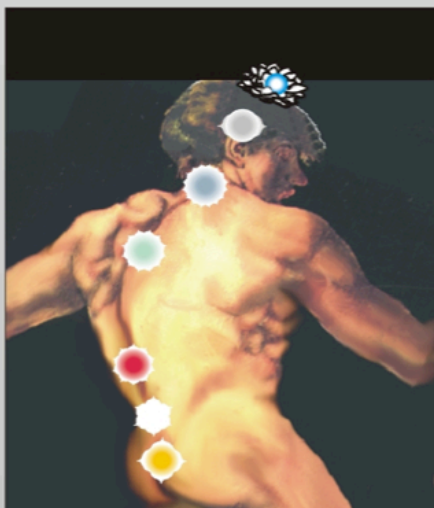
YOGA Psychology

Energy Centres



Thousands of years ago yogis in India described 7 subtle energy centres (cakras) located along the spinal column. Since then people of more than 82 cultures have described the location and functioning of these cakras.

There are five fundamental elements in the human body (solid, liquid, luminous, aerial, etherial), each controlled by one of the five lower cakras. Distortion of any cakra causes an imbalance in the energy flow associated with these factors.



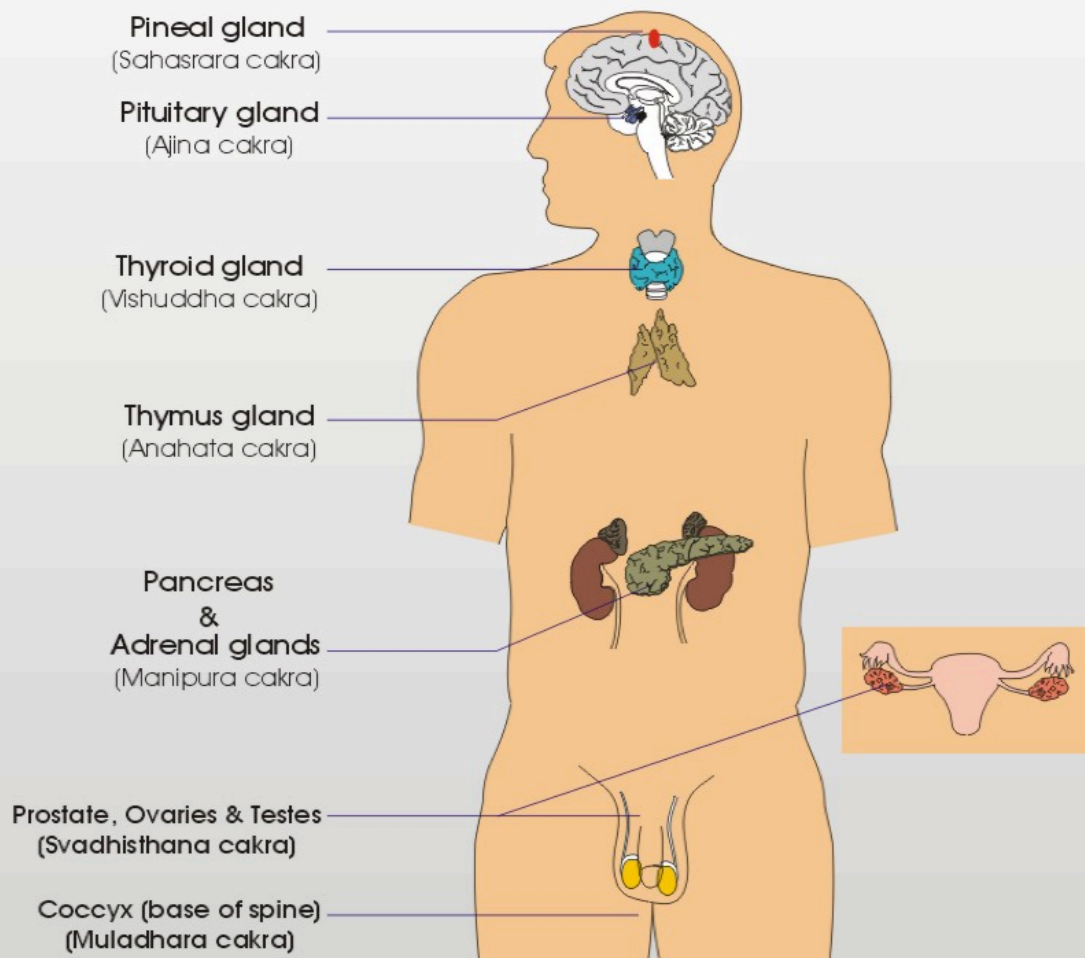
Electromyographic measuring techniques

In 1979, Dr. Valery Hunt at the University of California at Los Angeles, using highly sensitive instruments, detected energy emanations higher than any frequencies ever known to come from the body at the exact position of the cakras.

Dr. Hiroshi Motoyama in Japan found that when people concentrated on their cakras there was a higher energy and higher frequency electrical field emanating from that area of the body.

Cakras

The Endocrine system



The endocrine glands regulate physical processes occurring in our bodies and may directly influence our minds. Each gland secretes specific protein molecules (hormones) that increase or decrease the activity of target organs or tissues.



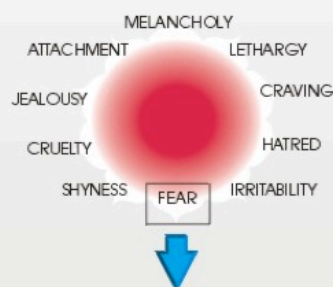
The rate of secretion of hormones from these glands is determined by signals coming from the brain via the central nervous system or by the activity of subtle energy centres (chakras).

These chakras are directly related to the endocrine glands. The Muladhara and Svadhishthana chakras are related to the sexual glands, the Manipura chakra to the pancreas and adrenals, the Anahata chakra to the thymus

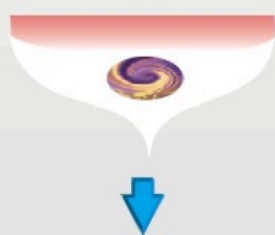
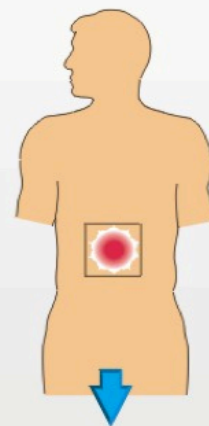
gland, the Vishuddha chakra to the thyroid and parathyroid glands, the Ajina chakra to the pituitary gland and the Sahasrara chakra to the pineal gland at the top of the head.

Hormones

Mental Propensities:



Each cakra is a whirling vortex that sucks 'vital' energy from the universal energy field. In each cakra there are a number of smaller subvortices that correspond to various psychic or spiritual tendencies.

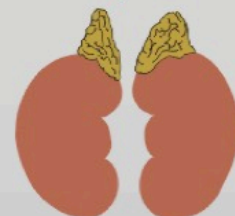
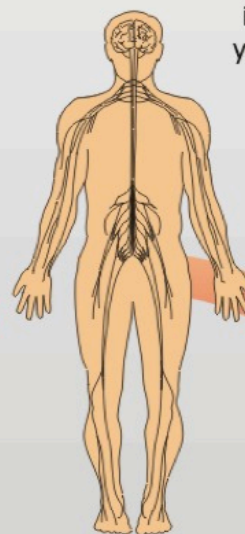


Each subvortex vibrates at a particular frequency, stimulating a vibration in the mind that corresponds to a specific emotional state or VRTTI.

An imbalanced energy flow results in negative emotional and/or physiological states. Practices such as breath control, yoga asanas and acupuncture help rebalance the energy flowing through the cakras.



Whenever any vrtti becomes imbalanced or overactive it disturbs the flow of vital energy throughout the entire body.



- Vrttis are the root cause of all the thoughts and feelings that are constantly emerging and dissolving in our minds.
- Vrttis are formed according to our *samskaras*, our basic personalities and the potential with which we were born.

Vrttis

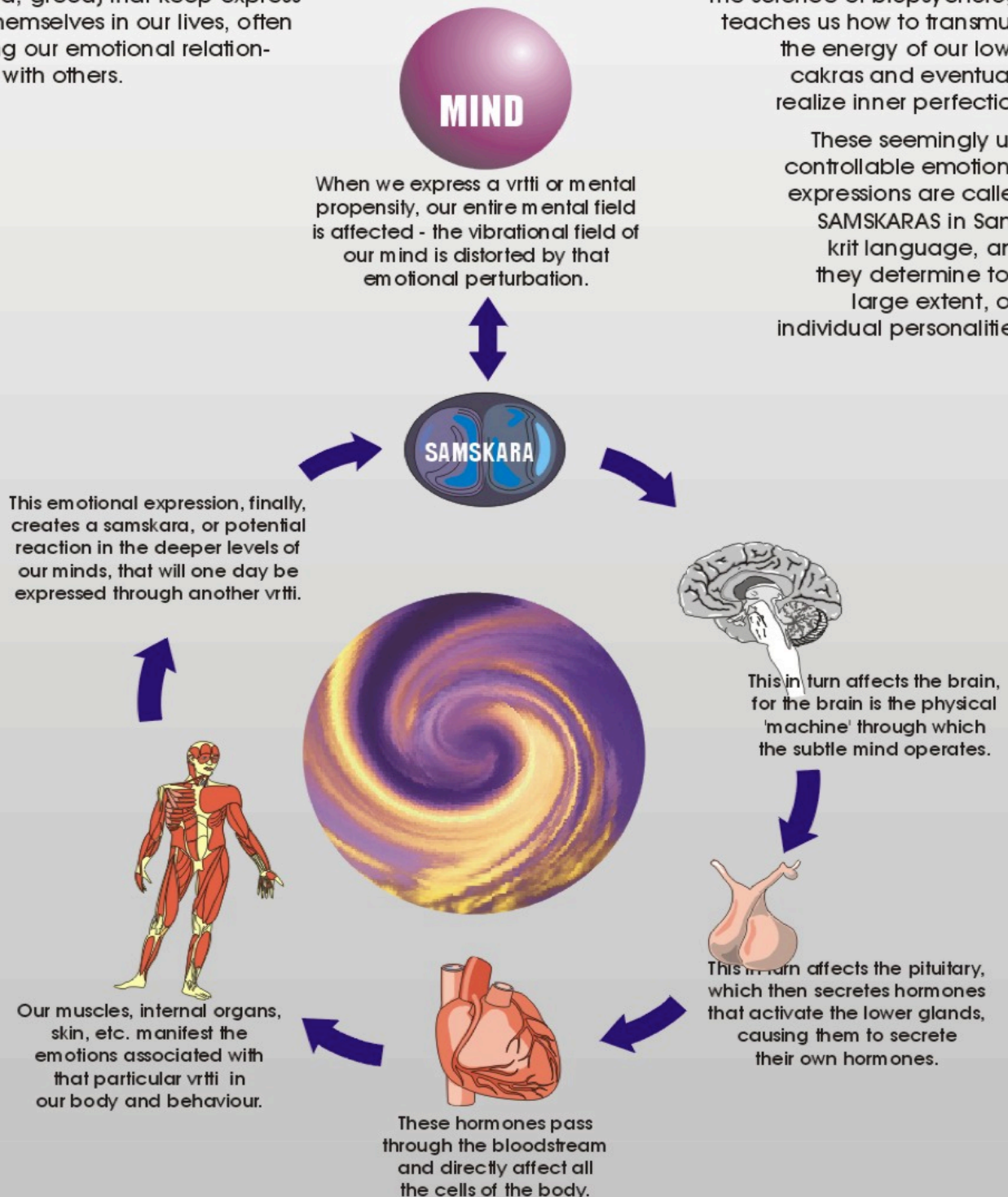
The cycle of emotions

The anguish most people suffer today is a result of mental tension and turmoil caused by the lower *vr̥t̥ti*s (melancholy, fear, hatred, greed) that keep expressing themselves in our lives, often ruining our emotional relationships with others.

Fortunately we need not be slaves to our emotions; we need not be forever dominated by animalistic tendencies.

The science of biopsychology teaches us how to transmute the energy of our lower cakras and eventually realize inner perfection.

These seemingly uncontrollable emotional expressions are called **SAMSKARAS** in Sanskrit language, and they determine to a large extent, our individual personalities.

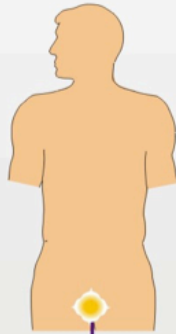


SAMSKARAS

Basic desires

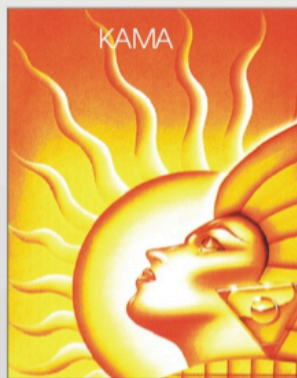
The Muladhara cakra has four vrttis which correspond to the basic desires of human life.

It contains the seeds of all the desires of life on all levels, from the lowest to the highest -- from crude physical desires to the subtlest spiritual yearning. It is also the seat of the kundalini or cosmic energy.

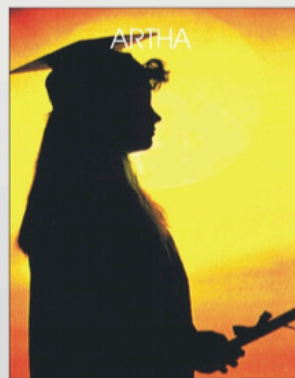


ASANAS & MUDRAS

- Diirgha Pranama (Long salutation)
- Yoga Mudra (Yoga pose)
- Gomukasana (Cowshead pose)
- AMBHASII MUDRA



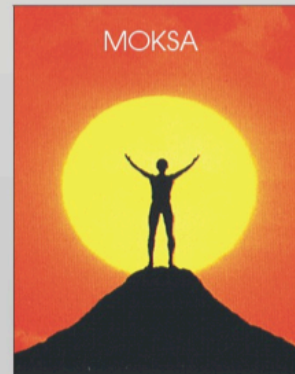
Physical longing
Desire for essential and non-essential material objects, (food, shelter, etc.)



Psychic longing
Desire for intellectual achievement, security and peace of mind.



Psycho-spiritual longing
Desire to fulfill life's purpose, achieving those things that give us a subtle inner satisfaction.



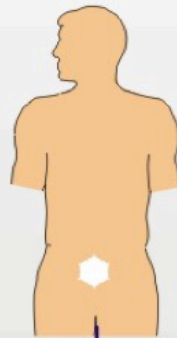
Spiritual longing
Desire for self-realization; to become one with the Supreme Consciousness.







Muladhara Cakra

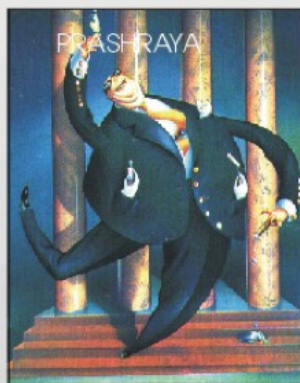
The second cakra

The second cakra, the Svadhisthana cakra, has six vrttis or propensities, all of which are associated with lower, often negative, states of mind. It is called the sexual cakra because it is associated with sexual feelings and the sex glands.



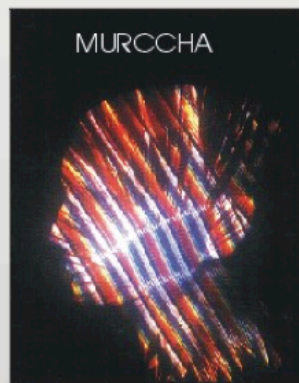
ASANAS & MUDRAS

-  Gomukasana (Cowshead pose)
-  Diirgha Pranama (Long salutation)
-  Yoga mudra (Yoga posture)
-  AMBHASII MUDRA



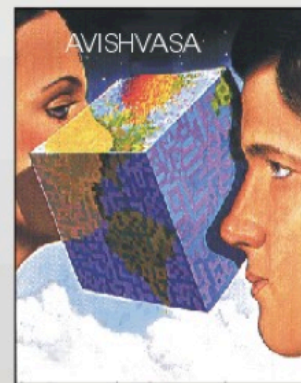
PRASHRAYA

Over-indulgence
Taking anything in excess
Addicts of any kind (e.g. food, drugs, sex, etc.)



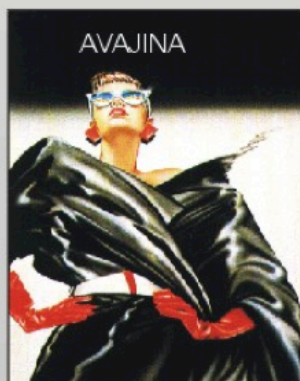
MURCCHA

Psychic stupor
A dazed, spaced-out state in which the brain is not functioning properly.



AVISHVASA

Distrust
When one does not trust in others and has no faith in oneself.



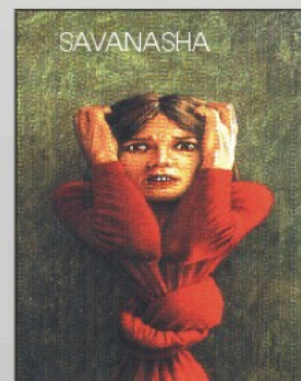
AVAJINA

Disdain
The attitude that looks down on other people, devaluing their worth.



KRUJATA

Pitilessness
No feeling at all (indifference) for the suffering of others.



SAVANASHA

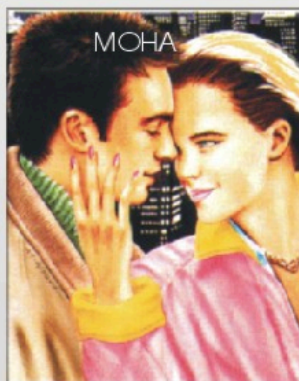
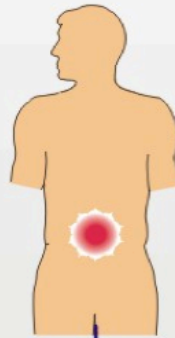
Terror
A gripping intense fear that can be physically felt lower part of the body.



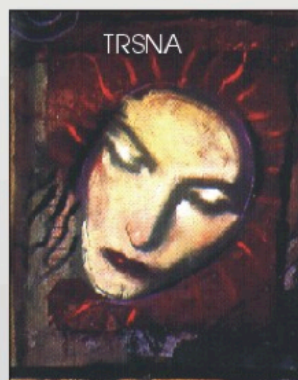
SVADHISTHANA CAKRA

PASSIONATE VRTTIS

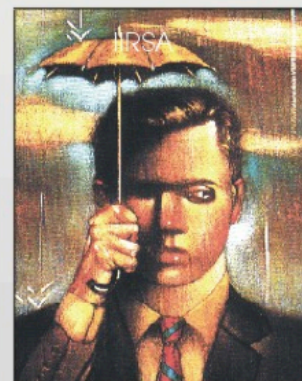
The navel cakra or Manipura cakra has 10 vrttis. This cakra controls the luminous factor in the body, and is the location of the most passionate vrttis.



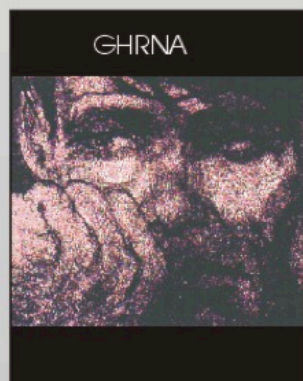
Attachment
Uncontrollable fascination for someone or something (blind infatuation).



Craving
Thirst (desire) for wealth, fame, possessions and success.



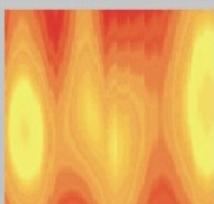
Jealousy
Resentful suspicion of another person.



Hatred
Possessing a strong dislike or ill will for a person, place or object.

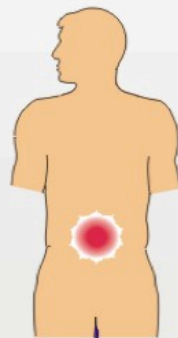


Fear
Anxiety caused by the presence of danger or potential loss, pain, etc.



MANIPURA CAKRA (I)

Passionate vrttis



ASANAS & MUDRAS

- Cakrasana (Wheel pose)
- Naokasana (Boat pose)
- Mayurasana (Peacock pose)
- AGNEYII MUDRA



Shyness
Not at ease with
other people (timid,
easily frightened)



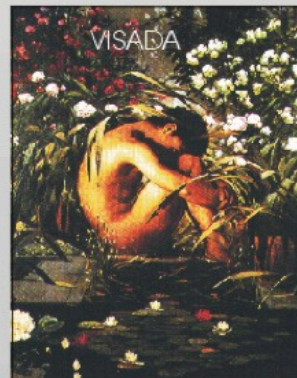
Cruelty
Taking pleasure in the
suffering of others. (causing
pain and distress).



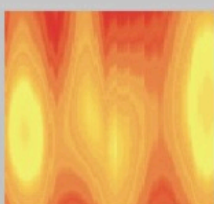
Irritability
Inner restlessness; one is
easily frustrated, impatient
and prone to angry outbursts.



Lethargy
Always feeling tired, apathetic,
and bored (physically,
intellectual and/or spiritually).



Melancholy
Chronic depression. One
feels a black cloud of
gloom over one's life.

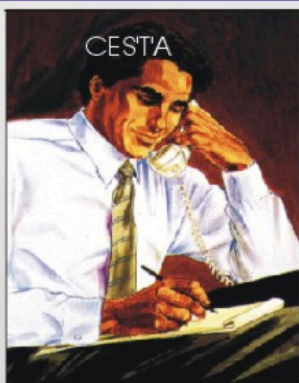
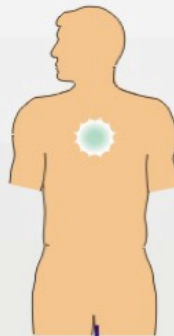


MANIPURA CAKRA (II)

Egoistic sentiments

The Ana'hata or heart cakra has 12 vrttis -- what have been called the "egoistic sentiments" of conceit, doubt, hope, etc. Unlike the lower cakras the psychic sentiments of the Ana'hata are expressions of a developed mind -- a human mind.

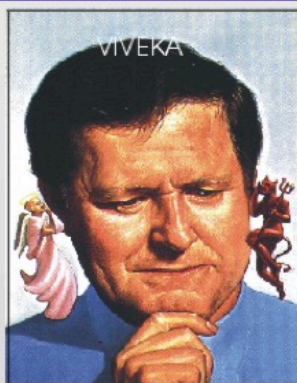
Whereas the vrttis at the second and third cakras were negative states of mind, those at this cakra are half positive, half negative.



CESTA

Effortfulness

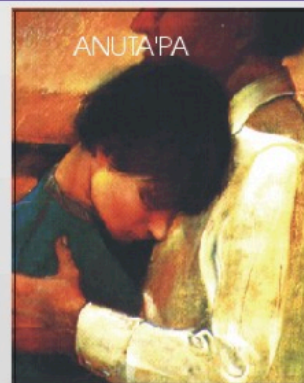
The sincere effort to achieve tasks and fulfill responsibilities. (efficient, hardworking people)



VIVEKA

Conscience

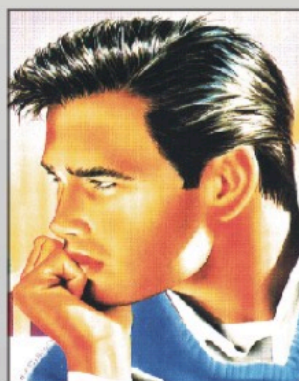
The 'small, still voice within' guiding our sense of what is right and wrong.



ANUTA'PA

Repentance

Sinking feeling in the heart area when we regret having done something wrong.



Thoughtfulness

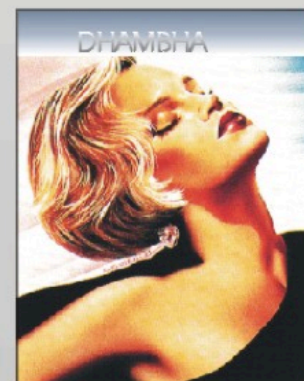
Deep thinking that occurs moment by moment as we analyze our lives.



AHAM'KAR

Conceit

Egoistic sentiment relating to how we see ourselves and want others to see us.



DHAMBHA

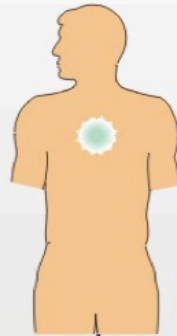
Arrogance

Conceit in its extreme form. The feeling that one is the greatest.



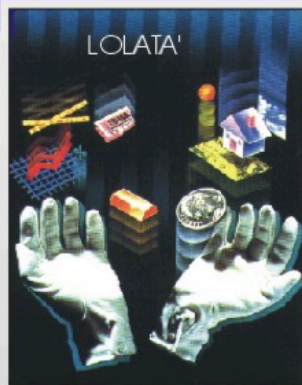
ANAHATA CAKRA (I)

Egoistic sentiments



ASANAS & MUDRAS

-  Hala'sana (Plough pose)
-  Bhujanga'sana (Cobra pose)
-  Bhava'sana (Ideation pose)
-  VAYA'VII MUDRA



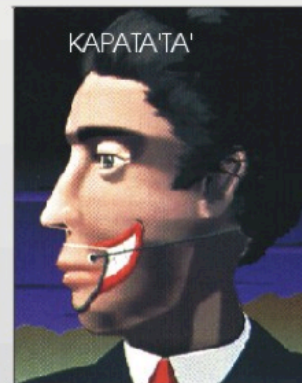
LOLATA'

Greediness
Selfishly wanting or taking all that one can get.



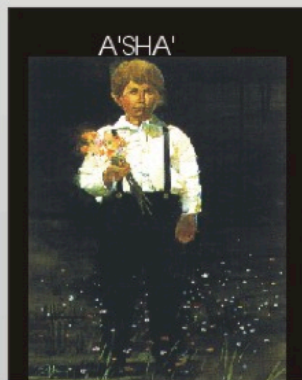
VITARKA

Talkativeness
Compulsive need to talk usually about oneself (self-absorbed).



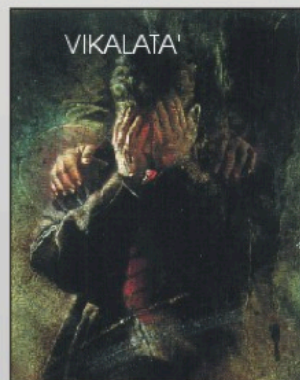
KAPATA'TA'

Hypocrisy
Seeking to protect oneself by presenting a false face to the world.



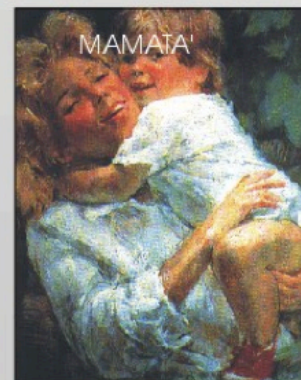
A'SHA'

Hope
The feeling that what is wanted will still happen.



VIKALATA'

Depression
Is a kind of psychic paralysis that occurs in the absence of hope (asha).



MAMATA'

Love & Affection
The warm feeling we feel for those that we care about.

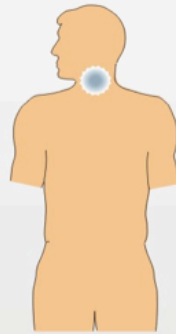


ANAHATA CAKRA (II)




Higher propensities

The Vishuddha or throat chakra controls the etherial factor and has 16 vrttis. It is less bound to the physical world than the lower cakras and represents an elevation of human consciousness over animalistic sentiments.

When this chakra is properly developed one expresses the vrttis of selflessness and service (e.g. great saints, and humanists working for the collective welfare)



ASANAS & MUDRAS

-  Sarvaunga'sana (Sholderstand)
-  Matsyamudra' (Fish pose)
-  Bhujanga'sana (Cobra pose)



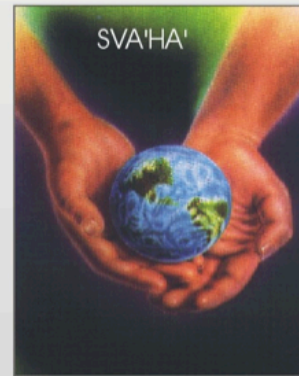
Desire for collective physical welfare

Working to provide proper nutrition, shelter, clothing, etc. to everyone.



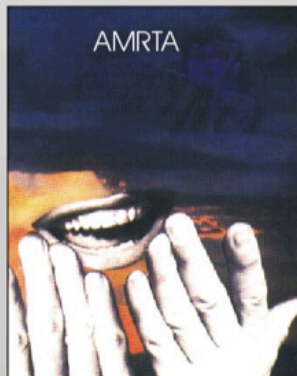
Desire for collective psychic welfare

Dedicating one's time educating others or alleviating their mental suffering.



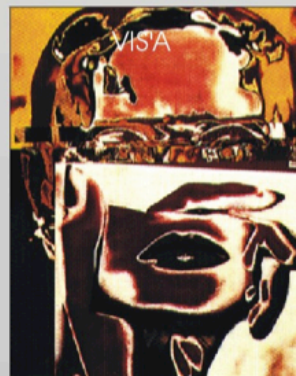
Desire for universal welfare

Working for the welfare of not only humans, but the whole creation.



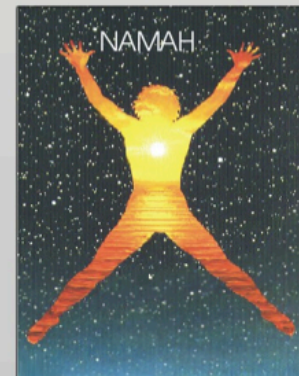
Harmonious sweetness

This gives one's voice an entrancing quality that attracts the listener like nectar.



Poisonous harshness

One's voice repulses the mind of the listener, no matter what is being said.



Complete surrender to the Supreme

Seeing oneself not as an individual ego but as an instrument of the divine power.




VISHUDDHA CAKRA (I)

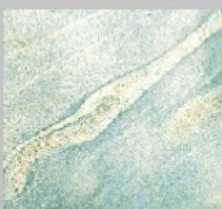
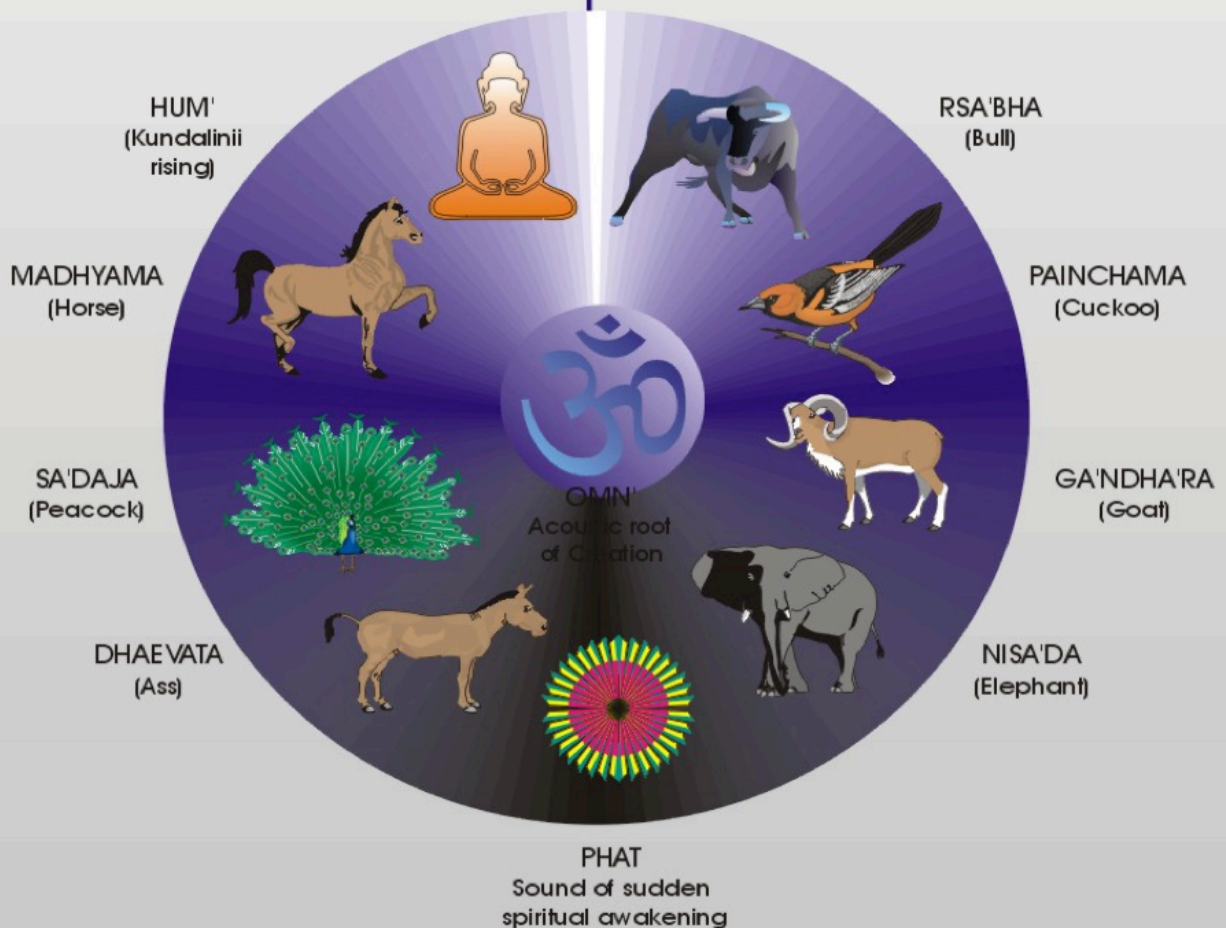
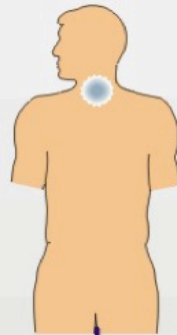
Higher propensities

The Vishuddha cakra controls etherial factor in the body, and this factor carries sound waves. As a result ten vrttis are pure sound vibrations and have no emotional expression.

These vrttis may be regarded as vibrational frequencies or acoustic roots, and some are named after animals that produce similar sounds. Other sounds such as OMN' (acoustic root of creation) are more abstract and universal.

ASANAS & MUDRAS

-  Sarvaunga'sana (Sholderstand)
-  Matsyamudra' (Fish pose)
-  Bhujaunga'sana (Cobra pose)

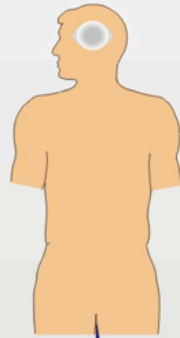


VISHUDDHA CAKRA (II)




Intuitional insight

The Ajina' cakra controls the mind and is the cakra of intuitional insight. There are only two vrttis in this cakra, worldly knowledge (apara') and spiritual knowledge (para'). This cakra is related to the pituitary gland.

When the vrtti of worldly knowledge is stimulated, the mind's energy is directed below. When the propensity of spiritual knowledge is stimulated, psychic force is directed upward, towards the highest cakra, and towards God-realization.



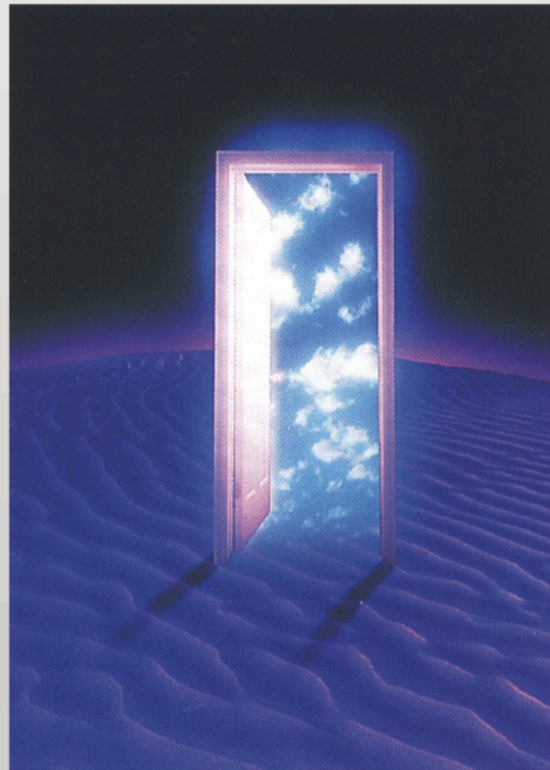
ASANAS & MUDRAS

-  Bhava'sana (Ideation pose)
-  Jina'na'sana (Knowledge pose)
-  MEDITATION



Worldly knowledge

Intellectual and experiential knowledge that one attains through study, experience, and training. Such knowledge is essential for maintaining one's physical existence and improving the material standard of life.



Spiritual knowledge

Spiritual knowledge cannot be taught or read from a book. It involves direct experience of the Supreme and occurs only when one's mind is moving towards the Supreme (e.g. Kirtan, meditation, inspired service).

AJINA' CAKRA

Cosmic consciousness

The Sahasra'ra cakra is related to the pineal gland, situated at the very top of the head, and is the seat of Cosmic Consciousness in the individual. This cakra controls all the other cakras below it.

Those who, by proper practices, can control this cakra, can control all the possible expressions of mind, and attain perfection in human life.

The practice of meditation which most effectively strengthens the Sahasra'ra, and the associated pineal gland, is Dhya'na, a higher lesson in meditation that involves concentration and visualization on this cakra.



ASANAS & MUDRAS

- Shashaunga'sana (Hare pose)
- MEDITATION
- DHYA'NA



When our glands and cakras are over- or under-active, our health and mental balance is lost. The simple yet powerful tools of Bio-psychology (meditation and asanas) allow us to harmonize our bodies and our minds.

This gives us the mental equilibrium necessary to attain elevated states of consciousness.

SAHASRA'RA CAKRA

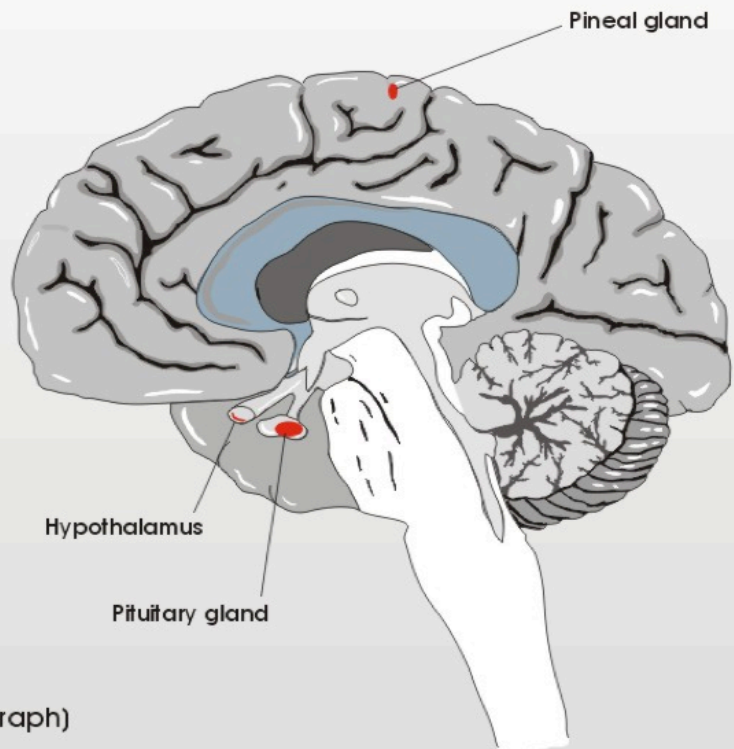
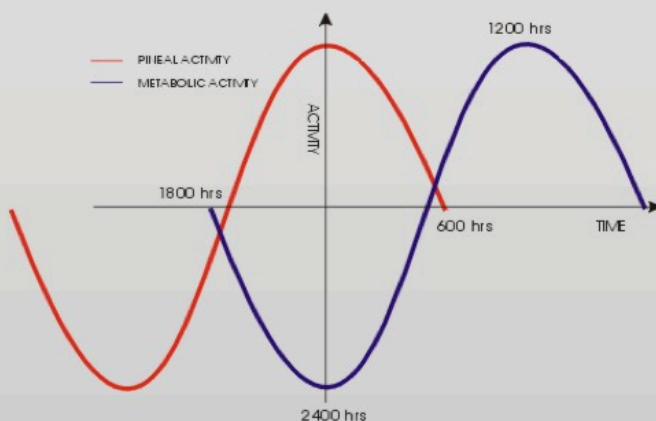
'Regulator of regulators'

The pineal gland is somewhat of a mystery to scientists. It is less than a centimeter long and only 100 milligrams in weight, yet it is one of the most active organs in the body.

It produces a few millionths of a gram of its hormone MELATONIN per day, but this affects the entire body for, through the pituitary, the pineal gland indirectly controls all the other glands: thyroid, thymus, adrenals, etc.



For thousands of years yogis have taught that the best time for meditation is from midnight to 3 AM (Shiva's hours). At this time melatonin production is at a maximum (see graph)



Other glands activate us to do things, whereas the pineal gland restrains them. When the other glands are active the pineal is at rest. And when the pineal is most active it inhibits the functioning of the other glands.

This remarkable control is achieved because the pineal gland is able to turn the hypothalamus (a section of the brain related to the pituitary) 'on and off' by means of its hormone melatonin. Melatonin also has other, more subtle effects.

MELATONIN

- Maintains the body's biological clock (sleep and waking states)
- Delays the aging process - may increase lifespan 20%
- Stimulates the immune system - prevents disease
- Reduces the harmful effects of stress and anxiety
- In excess, it induces a feeling of intense happiness

PINEAL GLAND

Yoga postures

Asanas are a scientific system of exercises developed thousands of years ago by sages living in the forests of Asia. They are a central aspect of the school of Hatha Yoga, which recognizes over 50,000 different asanas and mudras.

These exercises stimulate circulation, limber the joints, tone muscles, and massage internal organs. They also normalize the hormonal secretions of the endocrine glands and create balance and harmony in the mind.



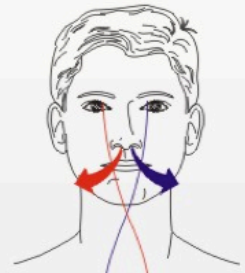
Asanas are totally different from vigorous or strenuous exercises. In asanas, slow, gentle movements accompanied by deep breathing are alternated with periods of complete immobility. This creates deep relaxation in the muscles and nerves.

ASANAS

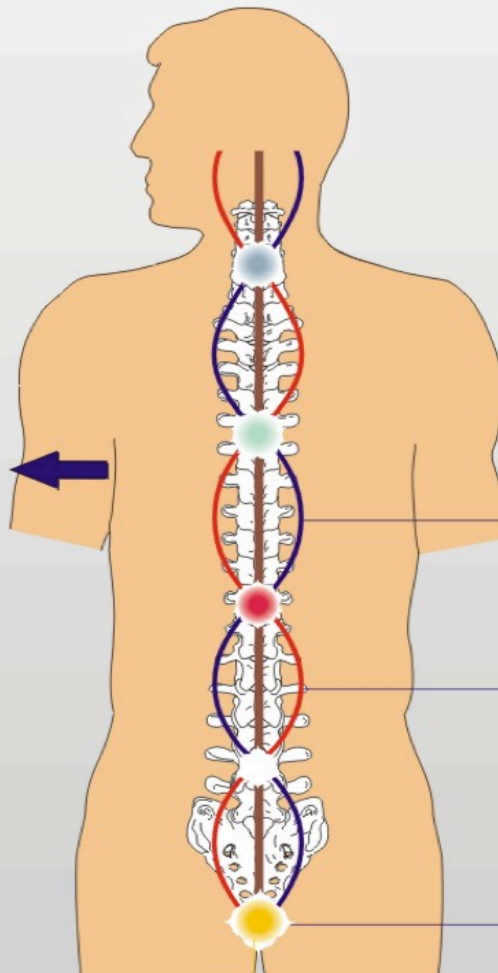
The serpentine force

Kundalinii is an expression of universal Cosmic Energy in the human body, lying dormant in the lowest cakra. The ascent of the kundalinii, up the spine to the highest center in the brain, leads to realization of our oneness with the Infinite.

The science of kundalinii is an essential part of the Tantric practice systematized 7000 years ago by the great yogi Shiva.



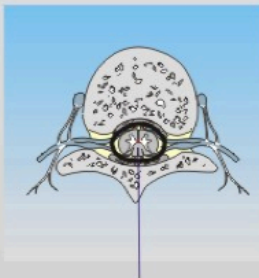
Just as our breath flows predominantly through one nostril at a time, and alternates from one to the other in a cycle of 2 or 3 hours, so the flow of vital energy also alternates between the id'a and piungala.



When vital energy is flowing predominantly through the piungala nad'i we feel cool and calm (associated with the moon).

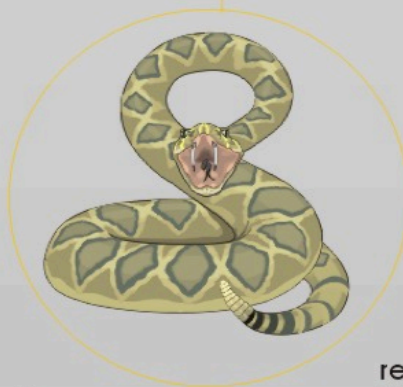
When vital energy is flowing predominantly through the id'a nad'i our bodies become hot and excited (associated with the sun).

The five lower cakras are located where these three nadis cross each other at the spine.



When the kundalinii ascends it passes through a subtle nerve canal in the center of the spine called the 'shushumna'. There are three main nadis or subtle nerve currents in the body (Ida, piungala and shushumna).

If the nadis are impure or blocked the kundalinii is unable to rise. These blockages correspond to the vrttis in each cakra. As the vrttis are controlled and the cakras cleansed the kundalinii moves up, piercing the cakras one by one.



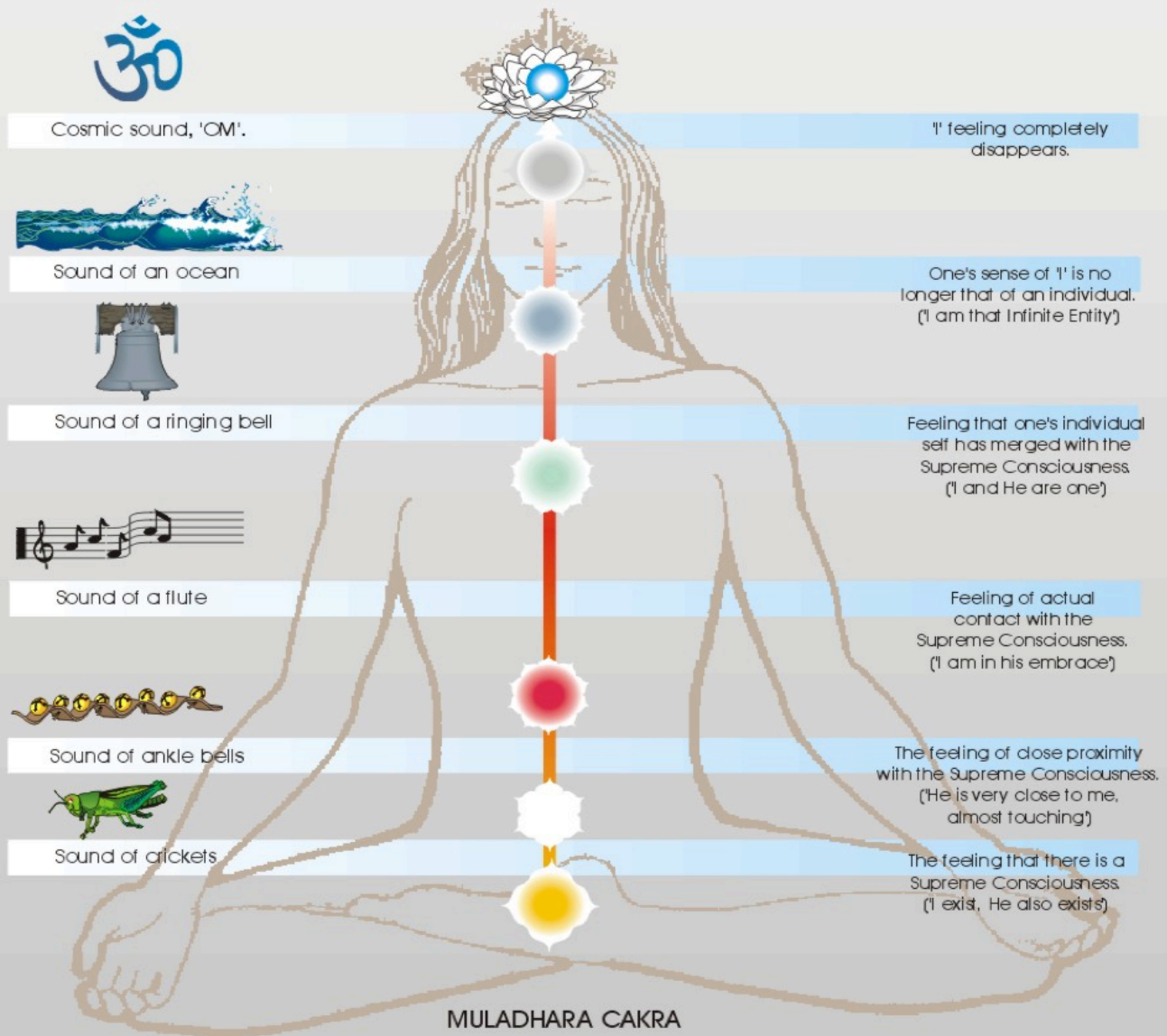
The kundalinii has been compared to a coiled snake, lying quiescent at the base of the spine (muladhara cakra). It represents the infinite potential energy of the universe waiting to return to its state of union with Cosmic Consciousness.

KUNDALINII

Spiritual awakening

The movement of the kundalini up the spine is effected by the repetition of a subtle sound wave called a 'mantra'. This mantra creates a vibrational impact on the kundalini, arousing it from slumber and elevating it up the spinal column.

All spiritual realization, no matter which religion or group, involves the elevation of the kundalini. As it passes through different cakras on its way up the meditator will experience occult sounds and feelings deep in the mind.



Tantric meditation involves focusing the mind on a particular cakra, incanting a spiritually charged mantra and ideating upon the ultimate goal of human life, that final merger with the Supreme consciousness in the Sahasra'ra cakra.

MEDITATION

The ultimate solution

Biopsychology, unlike psychotherapy, works to eradicate mental complexes from their root in the vrttis, glands and cakras. Tranquilizers such as Valium and Prozac only suppress symptoms of mental imbalance, and do not cure the problem.

The techniques of Biopsychology, however, comprise an array of practices that affect not only our physical bodies but the subtle layers of our being, thus weakening the chain of emotional bondage at every link.

ASANAS

Are physical postures that directly affect the lower glands, balancing their hormonal secretions and thus balancing the mind. There are over 40 asanas taught by Ananda Marga meditation instructors, each affecting a specific gland.

MORAL DISCIPLINE

Without some guidelines defining how one should treat oneself and others we may inadvertently do things that negatively affect our physical and psychological state. In Tantra there are ten basic moral precepts known as Yama and Niyama.

BRAHMAVIDYA

The practice of Cosmic Awareness (Brahmavidya) is a special mental technique of higher ideation while doing any action in the physical world. It helps us control our external behaviour and keep our minds fixed on the Supreme Consciousness.

VARNA'RGHYADA'NA

The practice of Offering of Colours (Varna'rghyada'na) is a psycho-spiritual exercise where all our thoughts, positive and negative, are offered to the Supreme. It helps cleanse our minds of deep-rooted sam'skaras or stored-up emotional reactions.

TATTVA DHARANA

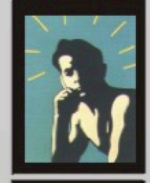
Tattva Dharana involves colour and sound visualization of the five fundamental factors at their respective cakras. This, along with mudra's and deep breathing techniques, helps revitalize the cakras and balance the vital energy in each cakra.

AUTO-SUGGESTION

The habit of autosuggestion of the opposite vrtti is extremely effective in controlling the vrtti at the moment of its expression in our mental field. For instance, a feeling of hatred for someone can be transformed by imagining love instead.

MEDITATION

The daily practice of meditation directly affects the pineal and pituitary glands and the hypothalamus. It also balances the energy flow between the right and left hemispheres of the brain and is a powerful practice for permanent emotional control



BIOPSYCHOLOGY