



ANAHATA

The Heart Chakra is focused on love. The center of the chakra system is also your center of balance and equilibrium. It integrates the world of matter (chakras 1 -3) with the world of spirit (chakras 5-7). In Sanskrit the word means “unstruck” or “unharmmed.” This implies that at the core of our beings, through all our painful stories, we remain unharmed. An infinite pool of love is there.

And because it is unstruck, and therefore perfect, it can create perfect balance.

BIG IDEA: We refer to this as the heart “center” – unlike the other energy zones in our bodies. It is a reminder that everything emanates from the heart energy – this is the center of the Self. It harmonizes and balances so we can achieve smooth flow in life; from there we can begin to open, understand, and ultimately connect body, mind and spirit.

In yoga practice, as in life, the lower chakras form the core: our physical strengths. We add the heart so we can achieve a smooth, energetic flow in everything we do. From there we can confidently and compassionately begin to open, understand, and ultimately connect body, mind, and spirit. When we are in our heart “center” we are compassionate, nurturing, and accepting.

The element is AIR, which spreads, fills, and energizes everything around it. It takes the shape of whatever space it is in.

The first 3 chakras represent self-preservation, (I'm alive), self-gratification (I want that), and self-definition (here's all the cool things I can do to get it). The 4th is self-acceptance (I am a beautiful human being). Negative judgments and material stuff are blown away, we see ourselves clearly.

When we're heart-healthy, we are friendly, confident, in tune with our feelings, and we're out going and active. When we are newly in love, it's good to add grounding reds to keep you from getting swept away. People with too much energy here can be possessive and demanding in love; they need forward folds. The sluggish heart makes you clingy and paranoid about love, strong balancing poses and warriors are for you. That's the "wounded child" needing support. People who round forward (leading with the head) are cut off from the emotional center and the grounding lower body. They think too much and feel too little. That leads to shyness, loneliness, feeling sorry for one's self, yet lacking compassion for others. Lots of backbends can help. People who are bitter, unforgiving and overly critical need backbends and 12 hugs a day.

Characteristics: self-acceptance

Color: Green

Element: Air

Seed sound: Yam

Yoga Path: Karma

Foods: Vegetables

Rights: To love

Gemstones: Aventurine connects us to unconditional love; it promotes harmony, forgiveness, sincerity and compassion, and cleanses and balances our energy. Also, emerald, tourmaline, jade, rose quartz.

Scents: lavender, heliotrope, rose, jasmine, chamomile, ylang ylang, tangerine

Physical functions: circulatory, respiratory, immune systems, lymph, thymus

Other Traits: emotional empowerment, unconditional love, non-judging, letting go, trust, compassion

Assignment: EXPLORE GREEN

- Write down 10 things you love about yourself. Each evening, write 3 things in a gratitude journal before bed. Stick your list of 10 things in your gratitude journal, and read it often. Add to it, or make a note in your journal of things you did each day that reflected one of those traits.
- Eat green, wear green, pull out green in your home
- Work in the garden, be in nature
- Do something loving and good for the environment: take on a "green" project in your home or community

- Let go of your biggest heartache. Write it down – the thing in your life that causes you the most stress or heartache. Think about how much it has affected your life, and then burn it.
- If there is someone in your life you would like to make amends to, or heal a broken relationship, think about doing that now.
- Write a love letter to someone who has changed your life.
- Begin an avalanche of compliments. Every day, try to focus on the good things you and the people around you do, rather than the negative things, and practice giving compliments out to yourself and everyone you meet. This is harder than it sounds.

Mudra for fourth Chakra



Let the tips of your index finger and thumb touch, with your hand gently curled. Put your left hand on your left knee and right hand in front of the lower part of the breast bone. Concentrate on the heart chakra.

Pressure point: base of big toe and thumb. Gently rub the spot in circles, then press and visualize soft green light pouring in to that spot. Do both sides.