

Class 3 09/12/2006

Chakras

Merriam-Webster Dictionary

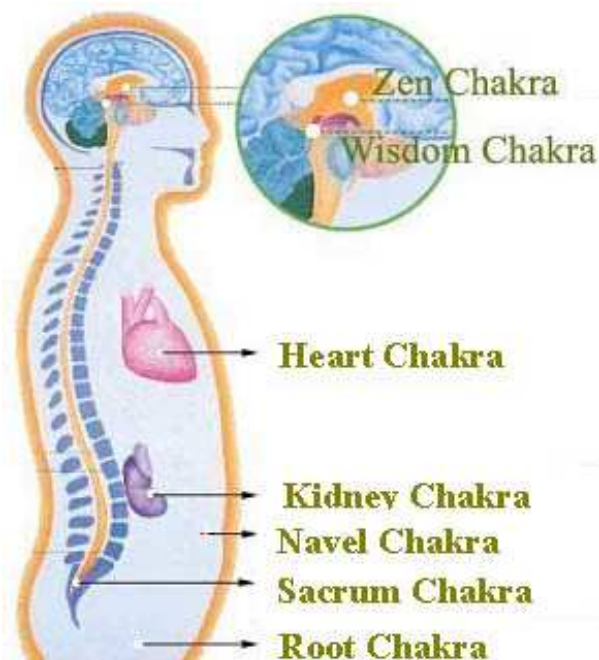
Chakra

Etymology: Sanskrit *cakra*, literally, wheel

: Any of several points of physical or spiritual energy in the human body according to yoga philosophy

Focusing on the Chakra

When we meditate, we focus ourselves completely onto a particular chakra is "Focusing on the Chakra". Through this power of concentration, we can turn all other random thoughts into one singular force. Other than the feedback from this particular chakra, we shall feel no pain, soreness or numbness. Therefore if we can really focus ourselves, we can surpass all pain. Furthermore, the original potentiality embedded in your organs can be enhanced due to this energy focus. This is the true development of our "hidden potential". When we focus on a particular chakra, this chakra will eventually transform based on the level of our concentration. It can strengthen our organs and glands, because it can turn this energy into electricity or light.



Navel Chakra

The very first thing we need to know is "What is chakra?" A Chakra is an energy point in our body. Think of the acupuncture, the needle is not to be placed just anywhere; it's to be placed only at energy points. Biologically, each chakra points to our important organs, glands, nerve bundles, or energy channels, where our bio-electricity is produced. By observing and focusing on these chakras, we can strengthen our organs and glands, and improve our hormone secretion, metabolism, immune system and nutrition absorption.

Among all the chakras, Navel Chakra is the most important one in our body. First of all, Navel Chakra represents the beginning of our lives. It is through this navel that a fetus absorbs nutrition and oxygen from his/her mother. Second of all, Navel Chakra is closely related to all other chakras. If we consider all the charkas as "switches" to turn on the energy in our body, then Navel Chakra is the main switch. Therefore, if we can relate to our Navel Chakra well, it can channel our energy to all other chakras. So when we focus on our second chakra, it can quickly respond to us.

Although Belly Breathing and focusing on Navel Chakra sound very simple, these basics are the most important. They are the groundwork of practicing Sitting Zen, just like the foundation of a house. Many powerful foundations in this world are truly simple. For example, the famous equation $E=mc^2$ is not a complicated one. It does not contain integrals or notations which no one understands.

Surpassing Soreness and Numbness

The first challenge in meditation is to conquer the soreness, pain and numbness that arise during meditation. It is our legs determining how long we meditate. "Why do I experience such discomfort during meditation?" "Why is my pain worse as I continue to meditate?" These are common questions often asked by beginners.

In fact, human body is like water. If it is clear you can see through it. If it is murky or muddy, it is probably blocked by some filth. Our body is no different. If our body is not "clean", then our Qi is blocked. And we will feel pain where it is blocked. This kind of pain, however, is relatively minor compared to the benefits of Zen meditation that could be brought to you after this short-term physical discomfort. This kind of pain is like a flu shot. It pains you first then protects you after. Once you surpass this stage of physical uneasiness, you will be healthier.

When you begin to meditate, your lower back and legs cannot escape from soreness, pain or numbness. How do you be relieved from it? Just follow the three secrets outlined below.

1. Practice, practice and practice.

Honestly, practice is always the best way to master anything. Just meditate once or twice daily at the same time and place. You will overcome these discomfort and find yourself able to sit longer and longer.

2. Switch legs with your eyes closed.

In case you truly no longer can withstand the discomfort, you may switch your legs with your eyes closed. But still try to spiritually remain in a meditative state. Since Zen meditation is about reinforcing your willpower to surpass difficulties, it is desirable to try to retain the same posture. If you are unable to overcome the difficulties of your body, how could you face the even more challenging world outside? In fact, your body and mind are both in your control. It is your willingness to master that truly matters.

3. Utmost concentration

The best way to overcome physical discomfort is not to "confront" but to "accept" it. As you focus totally on a Chakra, your thoughts are gone except your intense concentration. Thereby your will not feel anything else. Besides, as your concentrate more, the Chakra being focused on will generate energy, from physical to spiritual state. It incubates your inner potential energy, as your true life force, which can energize your entire body.

To excel is the spirit of Zen.

-- Zen Talk by Zen Master Wu Jue Miao Tian

The spirit of Zen is to excel. One who could not excel will be obsolete, because the world always evolves and does not stop. We do get older because time is ever moving forward. Thus, we age with time. If we don't excel, we just wither away.

Then how do we excel? Zen meditation is one of the best ways to equip oneself with the spirit of excel. Because our legs do get sore or numb and it takes spiritual power to overcome. Once we win over these states of physical discomfort, we excel. This is true spirit of Zen.



Recommended home practice:

Turtle breathing (5 cycles) → Belly breathing (5 mins) → Navel Chakra (10 mins)

Practice daily at the same time same spot!