

## The Heart Chakra



Western Colour: Green

Traditional Colour: Green

Bija Mantra: Yam  
(pronounced with a short 'a' and a nasal 'ng' sound, rhyming with 'nun').

The heart chakra is located near the centre of the breastbone, sternum. The physical organs and parts of the body linked to this chakra are characterised by their actions of expansion and contraction and drawing in and pushing away. Traditional texts never linked endocrine glands to the chakras, but the thymus gland is often linked to the heart. Recent research has also found that the heart itself does excrete neurotransmitters/hormones.

The heart, with its rhythmic expansion and contraction is the powerful muscular pump that sends oxygenated blood to all parts of the body. The diaphragm, the powerful muscle below the lungs creates, by its movement, changes in pressure which allows us to breathe in fresh air. As the diaphragm contracts, the out-breath expels carbon dioxide from the body. These processes of expansion, interchange and contraction are reflected in our relationship to the world. The relationship created is in constant motion, if it stays stationary all balance is lost.

The art of balance is a theme through all levels of the heart chakra. The element associated with this chakra is air. The experience of love is characterised by the flows of emotion, but for every falling in love there is a falling out of love. Trying to hold on to any fluid emotional state like love will lead to an obsessive, possessive attachment more reminiscent of an imbalanced sacral chakra response. Good relationships experience a constant falling in/falling out of love.

A balanced and coherent heart chakra is shown in the ability to accept ourselves, other people and all sorts of situations. Without a real self-acceptance there is no way that we are able to tolerate the foibles and faults of others. Relationships can be heaven or hell. In a balanced relationship, each person has autonomy, but both also share. In relationships that are unhealthy, love is conditional to the point of being a weapon to coerce the other into behaving or responding as required. Many of us experience this threatened withdrawal of love as small children, and until our heart chakras become truly balanced, we may continue to play out the same pattern on our own children, family and friends.

We inherit many of our thinking patterns in the same way. Dominant beliefs, especially negative ones, can be traced through successive generations. If we remain tied to these beliefs we never discover who we really are and independence is never really achieved. Rules may have been enforced in some way, to mould us into the person the maker of the rules had in mind. This process can create, for the most part, a very harmonious society in which to live but this type of thinking has a robotic quality, producing members of the population who do not relate properly, where any interaction follows a set formula of etiquette.

Any repression and restriction suddenly becomes intolerable. Outright rebellion may seem to be the only way to break free of the suffocating pattern. The most desired outcome is the development of a personal set of values and ethics that comes from a fresh, up-to-date perspective that has a personal relevance.

At a certain point in the development and maturing of the heart chakra there is an opportunity to see oneself and the rest of the world from a very different perspective. The realisation dawns that while you can care, love and share with others you cannot live their lives for them or live your life through them. Everybody has their own personal path and unique direction in life. This releasing of another allows any possessiveness, misplaced sense of responsibility or dependence to disappear, allowing both of you to grow.

**Imbalances in the Heart Chakra:** heart and breathing problems, asthma, emotionally dependent, depressed, repressed, inhibited, inability to relate to others, not able to share, agoraphobia, emotionally manipulative, dominating, insecure, lack of boundaries, lack of sense of direction.