

The Root Chakra



Western Colour: Red

Traditional Colour: Yellow

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

The first chakra located at the bottom of the spine and is the rock upon which the whole of the chakra system, the subtle energies and the physical body relies, and without which disorder soon arises. The Sanskrit name for the base chakra is 'Muladhara' which means 'root'. Survival is the key activity of the base chakra, dealing with life at the level of practicality. It is our link to the planet itself.

Traditional texts never linked endocrine glands to the chakras, but since instinctive feel for survival is the 'fight or flight' response of the adrenal glands, the small organs that sit on top of the kidneys, the adrenals are usually linked to the root chakra. (In some books you will find the gonads listed.) The Root Chakra also relates to the skeletal muscles, the arms, legs and torso that allow us to move physically through the world and is responsible for maintaining the basic heat within the body – the core temperature that allows chemical reactions to take place in the cells at the correct rate.

The emotional responses of the base chakra are direct, explosive and strong, yet once satisfied, they should dissipate immediately, like anger, assertiveness and aggression. Remaining in a constant state of alert drains the body's energy and actually makes it more difficult to respond effectively when real danger presents itself. Lust, physical passion and sexual excitement are complex emotions involving many different chakras. However, the motivation of survival of the species underlies the immediate physical attraction. A build-up of strong emotions which release inappropriately or excessively or a tendency to selfishness, lack of any concern for others, a total withdrawal from emotions, especially anger show imbalances in this chakra.

The root chakra is essential to manifest any idea, dream or concept. Without its down-to-earth energy it makes no difference how wonderful our inspiration is or how useful a new invention may one day prove to be. As soon as it is taking its place in the real world, the job of the first chakra is done and unless supported by other energies, the creator will become quickly distracted by another new project. In a balanced base chakra, the energy, confidence, know-how and dexterity to survive and thrive in the moment-to-moment exploration of new territory. Base chakra imbalance at the mental level can show as obsessive focus, a rigid and materialistic outlook, deep insecurities about personal survival issues.

The spiritual purpose of the base chakra is the protection of individual integrity. The base holds together the fabric of the personality and is the very real foundation for every spiritual discipline.

The more someone works with spiritual growth and development, the more vital it becomes to anchor those energies. The Root chakra is that lightning rod, that earth cable, which prevents the unwanted energies from destroying our equilibrium.

General imbalances in the root chakra: chronic lack of energy, exhaustion following even slight exercise, problems with the movement of the body, particularly hips, legs and feet, poor physical co-ordination, poor circulation (a tendency to have cold hands and feet), inability to relax the body, excessive tension or excitability, lack of drive or motivation, an aversion to getting involved in practicalities, a sense of confusion or unreality.

Spiritual imbalances in the root chakra: ‘otherworldliness’, a loss of awareness and interest in the real world and practical survival issues, a lack of discipline, an unfocussed attitude, wishful thinking and fantasising, a disassociation from the body and its requirements, a desire not to be in physical incarnation, open to impressions, viewpoints and belief systems with little ability to discriminate, psychic impressions and clairvoyance with little or no control, a lack of grounding, hyperactivity, restlessness, inability to settle, very volatile emotions.