

The Interrelationships of the Chakras and Mental Health

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ABSTRACT: This research is part of master's degree research at the University of Metaphysics. The seven Charkas, also referred to as the seven psychic centers or energy centers, each have influence upon every individual's mental health. Starting with the Base, where instincts reside, we have mental affects upon everyday choices which affect our overall wellbeing. The sacral chakra impacts our femininity, our sensitivities and mental moods. The solar plexus, whose color is yellow, affects our masculine features and characteristics. The Heart Charka is the Centre of the Chakra System and processes our energy into feelings. At the Throat Charka these feelings and emotions are transformed into expressions, creative and physical. Our Third Eye Charka is where our sense of knowing is developed, and finally at the crown Chakra we integrate all the Chakras for an overall sense of purpose. Each chakra impacts our mental health in different ways, through color, mood, psychologically and physically. As the Chakras become imbalanced, so does our mental health and stability. The treatment of these imbalances metaphysically can be achieved using Essential Oils and Crystals. Each Charka has unique oils and crystals which correspond and can be used as treatment of imbalances.

BACKGROUND

This article came about through review of my thesis for the Masters of Metaphysical Sciences at the University of Metaphysics. The thesis for the Masters' contained 10 cited references and took approximately 6 months to compose.

Charkas also govern different physical body parts and have different effects on everyone. Each Chakra has a corresponding element, Zodiac, planets and principles. Many studies have been conducted on the Charka system and knowledge of the Charkas dates back more than 30 000 years. The ideas of the Charkas originated in India and is a part of the Hindu religious belief system, although adopted by other spiritual believers and systems. In yoga, the Charkas play a significant role in relation to Prana, the life force and the direction of energy flow within the body. Mental Health is defined by the World Health Organization as a state of wellbeing in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to contribute to their community. This definition clearly states that mental health is related to one's own abilities.

It is also a common belief that all physical dis-ease is directly related to mental dis-ease. As we experience thoughts, we develop meaning and beliefs, and it is these beliefs which shape our reality. If we are not at ease with our beliefs, we are in a state of mental illness (Alberg 15).

The Mental Health of any individual can change due to the contribution of risk factors and protective factors. Risk factors contribute to negative mental health and include factors like socioeconomic status and prevalence of illness, whereas protective factors contribute to positive mental health and mainly consist of an individual's support network.

DISCUSSION

The Base Chakra is located at the base of the spine, also called Muladhara, and is the color red. The color red is a stimulating color, warming, active, energizing and awakening our physical life force. Red stimulates deeper passions within us and too much can overstimulate and aggravate. When in harmony the individual feels a profound sense of connection to nature, trusting in nature's laws and has a deep understanding of life's flow (Boyer 21).

This Chakra is associated with an individual's level of grounding, their ability to survive including the ability to meet basic needs such as food and shelter, as well as a person's roots and the earth. The Base Chakra impacts a person's mental health through their ability to meet basic needs, when basic needs are hard to meet, a person will suffer ill mental health. The Base Chakra is also associated with a person's inner security and stability, mental traits and when they are lacking, again the person will suffer ill mental health. The Base Chakra is one which all other Chakras rest upon, it is the manifestation of consciousness in its most tangible form, the physical reality. Its primary concern is with our ability to survive through our fight or flight responses. When blocked, the Base Chakra is said to cause us mental health problems, such as feelings of depletion, hopelessness, ungrounded, anxiety and loneliness. It is our ability to feel grounded that assists us to effectively cope with stress and provides us with clarity. Imbalances of the Base Chakra may lead to addictive behaviors, volatile emotions, restlessness and loss of interest in the 'real world' (Leadbeater 18).

The Sacral Chakra is located at the lower abdomen, also called *Svadhithana* and is the color orange. Orange is the color of joy and wisdom and can diminish depression. The effects of this Chakra include stimulating desire and rejuvenation. When out of harmony the individual feels unsure, unstable and cannot express feelings, suppressing natural needs.

This Chakra is associated with change, movement, pleasure, emotions, creativity, confidence and sexuality. When blocked or imbalanced this leads to lack of pleasure in one's life, and dependence, which leads to poor mental health. Excessive amounts of unhealthy pleasure, such as drug use and substance abuse, or excessive materialism also lead to poor mental health, and it is the Sacral Chakra which is associated the strongest with pleasure. Emotions are our reactions to pleasure and pain, also influenced by the Sacral Chakra, they begin in the unconscious mind, and are the evolution of consciousness through the body. Pleasure helps us

to relax and release tension, which are essential to good mental health. Wilhelm Reich conducted experiments and researched bioelectric currents of the body to discover that sexual satisfaction was essential to physical and mental health. He also discovered that unreleased sexual energy led to ill mental health including causing anxiety (Coppock 23).

The Solar Plexus Chakra is located at the navel, also called *Manipurna* and is the color yellow. Yellow stimulates mental faculties, and reawakens enthusiasm for life, counteracting depression. When in excess this energy leads to nervousness and excessive thinking. In this Chakra is the integration of feeling and being. When out of harmony the individual experiences a lack of trust in the natural flow, with a need to dominate, emphasizing the material and having a great need for material security (Andrews 18).

This Chakra is associated with power, will, transformation, action, purpose and self-esteem. When balanced the individual experiences joy, laughter and inner peace. The spectrum of health of this Chakra ranges from inert and passive to dynamic and active. It is through our will which we create healthy behaviors, which lead to good or poor mental health. It is also our will which enables us to overcome challenges, transforming us into states of well-being. It is our intelligence which forms intention, which shapes our will and directs activity, all of which impacts our mental health. When imbalanced, we feel withdrawn, lacking power, depleted and are of ill mental health. When our enthusiasm is depleted, we turn to substances like coffee and sugar, developing dependence and ill mental health. It is the struggle for power which causes the great illness of man, such as warfare, political conflict and environmental crisis. The lack of individual power and societal power leads to social isolation, loneliness and ill mental health (Horn 36).

The Heart Chakra is located at the center of the chest, also called *Anahata* and is the color green. Green is abundant on earth and balances our energies, increasing our sensitivity and compassion. The Heart Chakra is associated

with love, balance, relationships, unity and healing. It affects our ability to love, feel loved and be compassionate towards others.

This Chakra is our spiritual center and our core uniting the forces above and below, the physical with the spiritual, bringing wholeness to the individual. Ultimately the individual needs a balanced Heart Chakra to have good overall health. When needs are met and the empathetic connection is made a deep sense of inner peace and harmony is experienced, complete mental health. As this Chakra is associated with air and breath, it is through breath that mental transformation occurs. It is through the love from this Chakra that allows change and freedom, essential to good mental health. Love and our relationships affect our mental health, and vice versa. When we have healthy relationships, we experience good mental health, and when imbalanced we experience jealousy and attachment. It is the Heart Chakra which connects mind and body (Koenig 59).

The Throat Chakra is located at the throat, also called Visuddha and is the color blue. The color blue is calming to our systems and relaxes us. This is the most healing color for children. Excessive blue can result in procrastination and sedative (Andrews 36).

The Throat Chakra is primarily concerned with truth, communication and honesty. When functioning to optimal ability the Throat Chakra enables telepathic communication and clairaudience, the ability to hear voices. This ability of clairaudience may be mistaken as mental illness such as Schizophrenia.

The Throat Chakra is also described as the gateway to consciousness and is the center of all communication. Communication refers to the process of transmitting and receiving information through symbols, including the communication of DNA through life, often linked to mental illness. Communication also refers to with the self as well as with others, including creative processes like speaking, listening, chanting, telepathy and arts, as processes of translation of symbols into information. Imbalances with this psychic center lead to fear,

doubt, uncertainty and habitual living, all which can lead to poor mental health (Judith 17).

The Third Eye Chakra is located between the brows, also called Ajna and is the color indigo. The color indigo is healing both spiritually and physically, it balances the hemispheres of the brain and nerve synapse between them. The use of the color indigo can be used to reach deeper states of consciousness during meditation. This can also be used to remove obsessions (Andrews 26).

The third eye is associated with psychic vision, stepping beyond the mind and into the realms of knowledge and vision. The link between the Third Eye Chakra and the hormonal balance of an individual are of great significance. This Chakra is linked to the Pituitary and Pineal Glands, controlling hormones like Serotonin and Melanin, well-known hormones relating to mood, mental health and states of well-being. It is Serotonin which, when imbalanced, leads to depression and anxiety disorders, and regulates mood, sexuality and appetite. It is the Third Eye Chakra which governs spiritual direction and wisdom, it is the center of dreams, inner visions and spiritual lives. When balanced we experience the ability to see things clearly, inner wisdom, intuitive thoughts and feelings leading to positive and life enhancing actions as well as improved intellectual abilities, all of which are clear signs of good mental health (Ruffles 16).

The Crown Chakra is located at the top of the skull, also called Sahasrara and is the color white. White is cleansing and purifying, healing on a spiritual and physical level. An excess of white can lead to depression and bring past issues to the surface. The Crown Chakra symbolizes the balance of masculine and feminine energies, yin and yang within us, and our ability to experience super consciousness, blissful transcendental consciousness and states humans are unable to describe in words.

The Crown Chakra directly relates to the individual's Mental Health through the connection to the person's higher self, their true life's purpose and their connection to the divine. When the Crown Chakra is imbalanced the individual

feel a sense of lacking true purpose and meaninglessness, which is often experienced by those with Mental Illness.

This seventh Chakra is said to be the seat of enlightenment with infinite levels of awareness and reaching higher dimensions, leading toward ultimate states of consciousness. The function of this Chakra is 'knowing' relating to what we know through experience as the mind.

This Chakra physically is associated with the brain, the center of mental health, and could be considered as the single most important Chakra in influencing Mental Health and wellbeing. It can be said that it is our attachment to limitation which creates mental illness and other obstacles to the individual's spiritual growth and development (Gathergood 32).

CONCLUSION

Ultimately optimal health is created throughout the Chakra System which creates optimal Mental and Physical Health. For holistic health and wellbeing, the individual should be moving towards a state of transcendence bringing liberation from illness and entering blissful states of freedom. It is said that it is the ego which forms attachments and limiting beliefs for the sake of selfhood.

It is essential for each Chakra to be open and active for the healthy flow of energy through the whole mind and body. Each Chakra has an impact upon the individual's mental state of being, from hormones to the brain. Through balancing with essential oils and crystals we can reach optimum health. Our Chakras govern mental states of wellbeing, and therefore have a significant impact on our mental health. The functioning of our Chakras is pivotal to optimal health.

About Philippa Richardson

Philippa lives, works, and plays in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. She earned a master's degree in metaphysical sciences and bachelor of metaphysical sciences degree. She also has completed certificates in many alternative therapies including Crystal Therapy, Aromatherapy, Energy Healing and Spiritual Support, as well as Chakradance Teacher Training. Philippa has worked in the special events

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