

# SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA

RAGE AND RADIANCE

Exalted is your power, O burning one, O sated one, O mighty one, powerful, skilful of flames, lady of the sky, mistress of the two lands, O eye of Horus and his guide ... lady of eternity, fiery one, O red one whose flame burns, Serpent Uraeus, who guides the people. O lady of fire, O searing one, O devourer, O scorching one, sovereign of thousands, may your awakening be peaceful.

*Egyptian papyrus, 1600 BC'*

## THE SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA: CORRESPONDENCES

**Sanskrit Name**  
**Meaning**  
**Main Function**

Manipura

Mani = jewel/gem; Pura = city: 'city of gems'

Supplies energy in the form of heat, power and enthusiasm

Quality  
Location

Feeling and Empowerment  
Base of the sternum

### *Spiritual Correspondences*

Colour	Yellow
Element	Fire
Symbol	Inverted triangle
Seed Sound	Ram
Petals	Ten
Planet	Mars ♂
Esoteric Anatomy	Physical heat layer
Yoga Path	Karma
Guna Quality	Rajas

### *Physical Correspondences*

Gland	Pancreas
Nerve Plexus	Celiac plexus
Body Parts	All digestive organs: stomach, small intestine, liver, gallbladder, spleen
Fire Energy Triad	Eyes, solar plexus and thighs
Expression	Full of energy and vitality
Disturbance	Hypoactive/hyperactive

### *Deities*

Africa	Ra, Hathor, Ogun, Shango
India	Surya, Agni, Lakini, Rudra, Kali
Europe	Brigit
Mythology	Myths relating to the inner and external sun

### *Psychological Correspondences*

Statement	'I feel'
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## EMOTIONS

### BALANCED

Feel and express  
emotion easily

Laughter

Joy

Happiness

Passion

Rage, anger

Sadness

Conflict

Chronology

Rite of Passage

Developmental Stage

### UNBALANCED

Controlled by emotions

Unfeeling

Uncaring

Quick-tempered

Flaring up

Violence

Despair

Depression

7 to 14 years

Puberty (ability to create life); blessed by fire

Creative and curious; ruled by will-power

## *Ways of Working*

**Foods**

Starch, grains, legumes, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds,  
hot peppers

**Herbs**

Peppermint, cinnamon, liquorice (digestive herbs)

**Oils**

Rosemary, juniper, geranium, peppermint, black pepper,  
ginger, elemi, citrus oils

**Gems**

Citrine, tiger's eye, topaz

## *Main Function: To Generate Power*

As we journey through the chakras, soul consciousness is raised. We become empowered and more of our potential is released. Ascending the chakras is magical: we return to the core and allow ourselves to enter the place of power deep within. At the root chakra we gained stability and courage from recognizing the innate gifts brought into this world. We enhanced this in the sacral centre, with self-knowledge and confidence. As knowledge increases we enter the solar plexus chakra.

The third chakra is concerned with the accomplishment of personal power and preparing for change. Balancing the solar plexus releases the abundance of inner wealth we have accumulated and moves us successfully towards the higher centres.

On a physical level, the digestive system is powered by the solar plexus. The stomach, liver, pancreas and other digestive organs are under its control. The fiery hydrochloric acid transforms food for life. The solar plexus is not only concerned

with the digestion of food – feelings and emotions also need to be swallowed and digested. For example, *'how do we stomach our relationships with people?'* Some people feed and nurture us, others make us sick. These feelings are processed in the third chakra.

The solar plexus is a shining sun within the body. It functions as a generator and power house that fuels the entire organism. Too much fire and we overheat; too little and we are immobilized by a lack of energy. When this chakra is in balance nothing holds us back. We reign as kings and queens on the throne of our power. We are filled with warmth and express an abundance of passion and enthusiasm. We are assertive and quick to act, trusting in our ability to achieve.

Throughout time the sun has been recognized as the generator of all life. Without light from the sun, nothing would exist or survive. The Ancients recognized the power of the sun and accepted the bright jewel in the sky as the great creator. Manipura, the Sanskrit name for the solar plexus chakra, means 'city of gems'; it reflects the richness of the sun within this chakra.

#### QUALITY: FEELING

Feeling, which many of us fear, is the quality associated with manipura chakra. Our richness and power is often buried under a mountain of feelings which we refuse to recognize. Pain, frustration, anger and humiliation are juxtaposed with passion, joy, ambition and success. Many of us have learned to be afraid of our feelings, choosing to identify more with thoughts. Large amounts of energy are wasted in the effort to hold feelings down. Acknowledging them frees up energy and gives us a glimpse of our power. The more we accept and work with how we feel, the more empowered we become.

This chakra, by its fiery nature, is fraught with problems. It is known as *the seat of opposites* – a place where conflict arises. Our heads tell us one thing while our guts say another. The ensuing battle is felt in the solar plexus. Self-development tends to be most difficult at this stage because we fear power as much as our feelings. Rage or radiance, which is the sweeter? We need to feel our pain and experience our power. As energy balances in this centre we come to see that all life experiences, particularly the painful ones, have the potential to propel us forward.

I took a break from writing this section to watch a television documentary. I watched, surprised, by the synchronicity of what I was witnessing. People in the documentary were sharing their experiences of pain and torture. One man's story really moved me because he had manifested the power and passion to transform his pain and re-build his life. He had survived the horrors of Hitler's concentration camps. This man, of African and German parentage, told his story with tears in his eyes,

pausing occasionally to wipe his face. I felt his pain yet it was his appreciation for life that struck me most. His passion is to sing and he was told by others in the camp, all of whom died, that if he ever escaped with his life he should sing professionally, which, by the grace of our creator, he went on to do. Though disturbing to hear his story, it demonstrated empowerment through pain. This man truly knows the richness of simply being alive. He had transformed rage into radiance.

Trauma, pain, loneliness, anger and fear can all be transformed once we are really willing to give them up. When we are honest with ourselves about our feelings, we can start to change them. Disturbances in the chakras often have secondary benefits. For example, holding on to pain may mean we don't have to forgive, or holding on to fear may mean we don't have to move forward. Whatever holds you back, is it time for you to let go of it? The solar plexus chakra is your centre of power; from here you can create whatever you want.

First be honest with yourself; take time in meditation to ask the universe for help and prepare to do the necessary work. Call on your will, which resides in this chakra. Will is conscious action; personal power has no direction without will. Like the sun and its rays, the solar plexus chakra equips you for brilliance and fuels you for success. It places your life in your charge.

### *Element: Fire*

*Close your eyes and visualize fire for a moment. See, feel and hear it ...* I immediately sense its warmth, brightness and sparkle. I imagine both the fear and excitement felt when the Ancients first learned to make fire. Fire is both friend and enemy. It can protect you and keep you warm, but if it gets out of control it can burn or even devour you. Fire fuels laughter and joy, but it can also flare up, causing anger and violence.

Fire is one of the most abused elements. As children, we learn quickly that to be vibrant, excited and full of energy annoys adults. To maintain their love we dampen our fire energy. Adults often misuse fire energy by overpowering people, particularly children. Children are often humiliated and treated in ways that no adult would tolerate; yet children are expected to accept it. Fire energy is often damaged and distorted very early on in life. As we grow we may learn either to block fire because we don't like the way we have seen it used, or to express it angrily. Few people seem to learn the balanced use of fire energy.

When balanced, fire is an amazing element. It is full of vitality, fast, cleansing and forceful. It fuels the shamanic warrior, who uses the clarity and strength of fire to eliminate adversity. It possesses the Goddess Durga, who stands on a lion as both

warrior and Divine mother. She uses fire to destroy ignorance and give birth to knowledge. We too can learn to channel our fire creatively. Fire is the element that provides the vision and drive needed to generate the change you dream about.

As a fiery centre the solar plexus is a great transformer. Working with the energy of this chakra changes followers into leaders, creates survivors from victims, and transforms the powerless into the powerful. A spark of motivation and a flame of will can swell into an all-powerful burning sun.

### *Planet: Mars ♂*

The ancient Egyptians gave the name Heru Khuti to the planet we now call Mars. Heru Khuti was one of the many forms of the fiery sun God Ra. The Sphinx that guards the pyramids at Giza in Egypt is said to be a monument to Heru Khuti. From the power of the sun Heru Khuti created himself. This beautiful, protective God is also a mighty warrior.

To the ancient Romans Mars was the fiery God of war. He symbolizes the ego and destructive nature of the solar plexus. Pride and ego can be the cause of much inner conflict. Sometimes it is appropriate to let go of ego and selfishness in order to move forward. In martial arts the concept of yielding is primary. Learning to go with the flow will bring results, whereas fighting fire with fire will only create an explosion. In personal relationships, for example, what are the needs of those close to you? Can you learn to yield without feeling you are losing your power?

Mars in his creative aspect is the God of agriculture. He rules Aries, which is the first zodiac sign (21st March – 21st April). Spring is a good time of year to start new projects, as Aries is the sign of new beginnings and abundance. People born under this sign often use solar plexus energy with ease and make inspirational leaders. The ram, associated with Aries and the Egyptian sun God Ra, is the sacred animal of the solar plexus chakra. Rams represent ego and mind power. They are sacrificial animals, who have to be slaughtered like the Lamb of God to save our souls. The fiery ego must be controlled and occasionally sacrificed in order to reap the abundant riches of the city of gems.

### *Deities*

RA

The ancient Egyptians called the sun God Ra. Ra is the great creator and sustainer of life. Ra's mother, the sky Goddess Nut, swallows Ra at night, embracing the sun in her belly; this creates darkness. Every day Nut gives birth to Ra, delivering light.

Solar energy is the powerful spirit deep within that we can birth each day to give us vision and direction. Pharaohs referred to themselves as 'sons of the sun' and inherited the power and wisdom of Ra. As we balance the solar plexus chakra we too can share this inheritance.

#### HATHOR

Hathor, of the sacral chakra, we meet again in the solar plexus. Here she is the fiery lioness Sekhmet, the embodiment of female rage, the fearless animal possessed by seven demons is ready to fight and kill all that stand in her path. As women we need not stand back and take all that comes to us. When you really need to fight for what you know to be right, don't be afraid to draw on the power of Sekhmet, protectress and keeper of Maat – the personification of Truth.



Hathor wears both the solar disc and crescent moons on her head-dress. She aims to unify the sun and moon. Hathor appears to give her name to hatha yoga – Hatha also means sun and moon. (In Sanskrit the sun is called surya and the moon is known as chandra.) Hatha yoga aims to unite the sun and moon. Hathor embodies lunar and solar energies and resonates with the sacral and solar plexus chakras.

#### SHANGO

Yemoja's son Shango is the Òrìshà of thunder. The spontaneous sounder of heavenly drums also produces lightning, a skill he learned from his wife Òyá. Shango is loud

and temperamental; his energy is present during arguments. Fortunately he is a great problem-solver who can be both intuitive and emphatic. Like his animal, the ram, Shango knows sacrifice. He hanged himself after seeing his own wrong-doing, only to be deified by his followers. Much can be learned from the fiery wrath of Shango, whose energy is often very productive.



A head from a staff of Shango, traditionally carried by Shango's Priests. Fiery Shango is one of the most feared Òrìshà. He uses his double-headed axe to make war. Shango's axe also symbolizes the balance of force and wisdom.

#### SURYA

Surya is the great sun God of Indian spirituality. When an eighth of his radiant brilliance was removed to entice his wife to return, it was used to make weapons for war. Surya's radiance became the tools of rage. Surya is called by 12 names to reflect his many attributes; among these names are Indra – Lord of the Gods and destroyer of enemies, Dhata – Creator of all things, and Vivasan – who causes good digestion.

#### AGNI

Agni is the Indian divinity of fire. He appears in the heavens as the flaming sun, in the air as the fiery lightning rod, and on earth Agni is fire. As the hearth fire he is the protector and guardian of all homes. Agni the son of heaven and earth rides on a ram with his body radiating seven rays of light. Agni is a great purifier and rapid transformer of negative energy.



### LAKINI

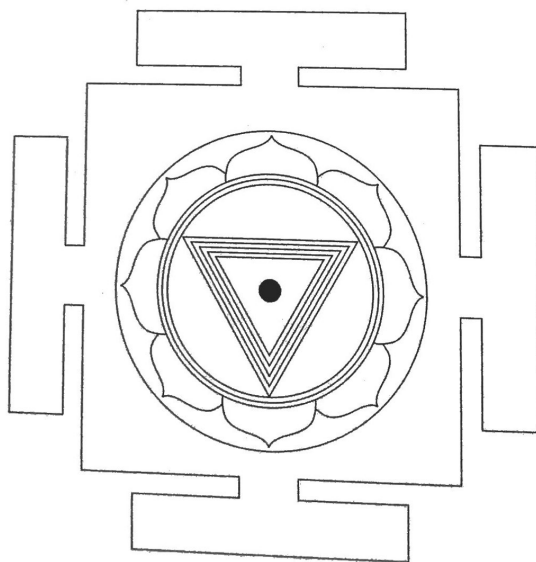
The Goddess Lakini is the triple-headed manifestation of Shakti energy in the solar plexus. She has four hands: in the first she holds the vajra (which is a thunderbolt); in the second an arrow shot from the bow of Kama, the lord of sex, symbolizing liberated sexual energy which can be focused and redirected; she holds fire in her third hand, and in her fourth she forms *abhye mudra*, the gesture of fearlessness. Lakini Shakti personifies courage and independence.

### RUDRA

Rudra, the God of fire and storms, is the destructive aspect of Shiva.<sup>2</sup> He is no stranger to death, striking mortals and animals with his arrow. It is said that even the other Gods fear him. Yet Rudra, as we have come to learn of fire energy, is not all bad. He is the bestower of blessings in abundance, with the capacity to heal. From Rudra we can learn the control needed to bring balance to the solar plexus chakra.

### KALI

Kali is the dynamic warrior Goddess, the mother who takes no nonsense, especially from husbands and children. She is a survivor who, having maintained her black skin colour, has met with much prejudice. Her character has been polarized into that of a ferocious, blood-thirsty black Goddess. Kali is fierce and, when necessary, will castrate and behead without thinking much of it, but she is also a compassionate mother who knows the pain of life and death and is not afraid of either. Kali is a powerful female who does not like ignorance and will go to any lengths to destroy it.



Yantra of primordial energy and creation. Kali is the Black Dot at the centre of this yantra. She is the womb from which all worlds emanate.

## BRIGIT

Like Kali, the Celtic Saint Brigit was originally a triple Goddess. She personifies the virgin, the mother and the crone. She is a teacher of martial arts and patron of warfare. As the Goddess of plenty, Brigit is at home in the solar plexus, which is our centre of abundance and richness.

## *Mythology*

Ogun is a blacksmith and hunter who never tires of work. He is a warrior and guardian of the forest. He makes tools from iron and metal to cut through the undergrowth in the woods, preparing the path for civilization. A strong man with a passion for trouble and war, who acts quickly and therefore makes many mistakes, although troublesome he detests lies. In parts of Nigeria, oaths were sworn over a piece of metal in his name. This quiet but fiery Òrìshà is the father of technology, providing all kinds of transport, machinery and surgical tools. Ogun protects all those who work with metal.

One myth tells us that Ogun, who is a loner by nature, took himself off to the forest following a fight with his brother Shango. Shango was having an affair with Òyá, who was originally Ogun's wife. Due to Ogun's primary role in creating civilization, all the Òrìshà missed him. After he refused to return, the Òrìshà decided to go and get him. Òrúnmilà, elder and master of divination, went first. The others were sure he would succeed, but Òrúnmilà failed to persuade Ogun to leave the forest. Ogun insisted on remaining in the forest even after several Òrìshà went to fetch him.

As they were despairing and the work of civilization was slowing down, the beautiful Goddess Òṣun had an idea. She asked her elders for permission to enter the forest and return with Ogun. Unsure exactly how she would achieve this, after others had failed, she was granted permission as the elders felt that everything must be tried.

Òṣun went to prepare herself. She tied five yellow silk scarves around her waist, and placed a pot of honey beneath them. She ran singing and dancing into the forest. Ogun soon heard her songs and smelled the sweetness of honey. On seeing her, he was intoxicated with desire. Òṣun danced and Ogun followed. When he got close she wet his lips with her honey; Òṣun tied her scarves together and used them to lead Ogun back to civilization. Forgetting his resolve, Ogun followed his senses. As soon as he left the forest and greeted the Òrìshà, he turned to see that Òṣun, having achieved her goal, had disappeared.

From Ogun we can learn many lessons. We see that stubbornness can halt our creativity, and that desire can lead us off-track. The anger and isolation of Ogun

The solar plexus is the body's powerhouse – it generates energy in the form of heat, power and enthusiasm. It is one of the most misunderstood and abused chakras. When energy is blocked at this level, we witness a person who is self-centred, aggressive and capable of inflicting great damage to Self and others. Many politicians have a solar plexus disturbance and seek to control other people. Our prisons are also full of people with distorted fire chakras.

Another effect of solar plexus imbalance can be self-harm. People who are denied power may use the little power they have to harm themselves. Women often suffer from depression, self-mutilation and eating disorders because of this imbalance.

As we have seen, fire energy is not all negative but can be put to good use. It offers protection, warmth and rapid transformation. It is the force behind the person we see as fun-loving, creative and assertive, the person who is clear about what they want and determined to have it, a person of sharp intellect who is not afraid to destroy in order to construct anew.

In the body, the solar plexus governs the digestive system and the fiery hydrochloric acid needed to transform food for life. Too much fire and we overheat, too little and we are immobilized by a lack of energy. Fire's dynamic force is perhaps its most essential quality. The warm light and glow, the charisma and passion of fire can be recognized within each individual. The solar plexus is the rich 'city of gems' which provides the raw materials that we can wear as rage or radiance, weapons or jewels.

## SEVEN WAYS OF OPENING TO SPIRIT AT THE SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA

### *Altar Work*

You are now ready to replace your water altar with a fire altar. Give thanks as you change things around. Feel your sacral chakra strengthened as a result of the work you have done. Begin to create your solar plexus chakra altar. This will raise fire energy. A dynamic, warm, passionate ambience is to be created – a feast for the eyes, since sight is the sense associated with the fire element.

Lay down a base cloth, choosing yellow or another colour from the rays of the sun. You will need four yellow candles to place in the cardinal directions. Chunky candles with big flames are really good for this altar. Burn incense or essential oils that have a warm aroma – try rosemary, geranium or ginger. Refresh your water pot.

Crystals to be used are citrine, tiger's eye, topaz or other yellow stones that hold the sun's energy. In the summer you may find sunflowers which can be placed on your altar; they have absorbed lots of energy.

Fire energy is about rapid transformation. Ra, Shango, Ogun and Kali are deities of change; have pictures of them on your altar. Symbolize the sun and fire in any way that feels appropriate to you.

The solar plexus – shining sun within the body – is our Divine source of light and life. From this centre we generate our direction in life; from here we see our potential, and produce the power required to fuel prosperity and abundance. These concerns are not counter to spiritual development, quite the opposite. It is when we have satisfied our earthly needs that we look towards heaven. From the light of this altar, begin to clarify your vision in life. Start to see what is really unfolding in your life at this time. Where have you been and where are you going right now?

## *Journal-keeping*

### ABUNDANCE

Beneath anger often lies pain, and below pain, treasure. This is true in the solar plexus, as it is the very place where we store and then bury our hurts. The diaphragm is a sheet of muscle, much like an umbrella, that separates the chest from the abdomen. If pain rises up and reaches the heart, then it really hurts. We all know this and have learned unconsciously to store pain in the belly, under the protection of the diaphragm. This would be the perfect answer, only the pain also entraps our richness. A tremendous amount of energy is used in holding the pain down. If you are really to shine and fully experience your abundant capacity for fulfilment, then anger, resentment and pain must be transformed.

The Goddess Hathor holds a double-sided mirror in her hand. One side is clear, in which she sees her reflection; the other side is rough, to ward off negative energies. Negative energy often comes at us because we project it outwards (not always, but often). In Niger (West Africa) they say 'Ashes fly back in the faces of those who throw fire.' The more we can look in the mirror and see ourselves, the more we can deflect negativity. As we release some of our anger and feel our pain we gain access to the buried treasure of the solar plexus, the city of gems.

### TRANSFORMING ANGER

If you are ready to begin transforming anger, answer these simple questions in your journal:

## ANGER

- ☉ What made you angry last week? or
- ☉ What could you have got angry about last week, but didn't?
- ☉ What does that remind you of from your childhood?
- ☉ How did you deal with the situation last week?
- ☉ How would you have liked to deal with it?

## APPRECIATION

- ☉ What do you appreciate about what happened?
- ☉ What do you appreciate that has changed now you are an adult?
- ☉ What do you appreciate about how you dealt with this issue?
- ☉ What do you appreciate about how you dealt with this issue?
- ☉ What have you learned about yourself?

Before setting this exercise down here in this book, I completed it myself. As a child of Ogun (my ancestral father<sup>3</sup>) born under the sign of Aries, I love fire. Mostly I have learned to use it to my advantage, which I appreciate, but I can also flare up. This exercise helped me see that in some situations I am guarded and find it easier to shout than to say that I am hurting.

As children we develop coping mechanisms, which are no longer needed once we are adults. Once we understand this we can sit fully in our power. The simple yet powerful exercise outlined above prepares us for journal work on the next chakra (heart chakra), which is about forgiveness of Self and others.

## *Yoga Path*

### KARMA YOGA

As I write I am reminded of how broad and challenging yoga is. Hatha asks for discipline, tantra for awareness, and now karma asks for selfless service. Karma yoga is service without thought of reward. Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Mother Teresa all demonstrated the epitome of karma yoga. They gave their lives completely to saving others. Humility is the key to developing the all-powerful solar energy, because it helps transmute rage into radiant spiritual power.

Karma yoga may sound as if it is reserved for the pious, but most of us have a need in some way to be of service to others. Karma yoga is the path of action. It provides the opportunity for your work to become your spiritual practice. We are accountable for our actions – this is the law of karma, which extends both before and beyond this lifetime. We enter this incarnation carrying karma from past lives,

which affects us in this life. The bible says, 'as you sow, so shall you reap.' Experience proves this to be true. We each have responsibility not only for ourselves but also for the greater good of the whole. As we work with consciousness, our work can be offered in service to the community, the world, and the Divine. I often think that selfless service means I should not enjoy my work, and as I love my work I imagine it doesn't count as karma yoga. This is untrue, as it is the attitude with which the work is done that is important. To work to the best of your ability for the highest purpose is karma yoga. Karma yoga prepares us for fully activating the heart chakra.

If we are really to do karma yoga then the ego must be reduced. We must consciously seek to work towards the good of all people and our environment. Let us assume for a moment that each person is an individual cell, society an organ made from many cells, and the world a body made from many organs. The body functions as a whole within the cosmos. As an individual cell we have the choice to function for the greater good of the body or to behave selfishly, like a cancer cell, changing the natural order of things, creating havoc, destruction and possible premature death.

When our ego-centredness is added to that of millions of other people's, picture the tremendous disharmony that is imposed on the world. With a predominance of self-centred lifestyles in modern societies we are creating mass destruction on a global scale. We are each in a position to halt this destruction and choose conscious awareness.

The work we do, whatever it is, should always be done to the best of our ability, for the highest good and with compassion. All work brings power and we can use that power wisely. Work then becomes an active meditation through which the spiritual can be expressed. We are merely vessels with the ability to open to the Divine.

**The lesson to be learned from karma yoga is selfless service.** As we learn to reduce ego and to work in service, we are cleansed. Karma from past wrong actions is burned and no new karma is built. We are all here to make a difference in the world, no matter how insignificant our contribution may sometimes seem. We are all required to be of service and we must all remember 'what goes around comes around.'



## *Mindful Exercise*

### FLAME OF RA

This practice activates the inner fire. The abdomen acts like a bellows that fans the flame. In yoga this is a purification exercise called *kapalabhati*. It cleanses the digestive tract and lungs and increases the brain's supply of oxygen, leaving your entire system feeling invigorated and renewed.

The practice consists of a series of 20 breaths, followed by a slow deep inhalation and a short breath-retention. It requires practice, and possibly an instructor.

Begin by pulling the abdomen in sharply on the exhalation, and then allow it to relax on the in-breath. Repeat this quickly for 20 continuous breaths. Breathe audibly, through your nose and create a pumping action with your abdomen, like a bellows. On completion of the 20 quick breaths, take a slow deep inhalation and retain your breath for 30 seconds. Slowly exhale and relax your breathing.

This is one complete round; repeat three times. Practise daily, before morning meditation to raise energy levels and maintain the power of Ra within you.

### WOOD CHOPPER

The Wood Chopper is a great way to release negative fire energy. When anger and frustration build up in the body and we just have to let it out, preferably without exploding, this exercise proves beneficial. It also has a stimulating effect that will warm the system and build a sense of confidence and assertion.

### CAUTION

Avoid this exercise if you have a bad back.

The Wood Chopper is simple but powerful, so start slowly and build a rhythm that will gently warm up your body.

Position your feet slightly wider than hip-width apart, with your knees slightly bent. Expand your chest, clasp your hands and raise your arms up above your head. From this position, swing down as if chopping wood. Let your arms hang relaxed, breathe out and then slowly raise yourself back up. Repeat the movement several times, using a loud **ha!** sound as you go forward. To rest, let your body hang forward in a relaxed position. Stay for a couple of minutes, and then begin another round.

When you've finished this exercise, be still for a moment and feel the movement of energy flowing through your body. This exercise releases tension in the whole body.



Wood chopper

## *Meditation*

You have journeyed from earth, to water and arrived at the fiery solar plexus. There are two main energy currents that emanate from this centre. One is the yellow downward-pointing triangle. The triangle of life is a symbol of the triple female. It is probably the oldest sacred icon. The triangle represents the yoni, which, like the sun, was seen as the source of all life. The lotus flower, which relates to each chakra, is also symbolic of the yoni. Sometimes triangles are depicted in this chakra facing upwards – this is a comparatively modern symbol for fire. The second energy current is the spiralling umbilical energy. It has the quality of warmth, movement and expansion. This current is used in polarity therapy and is seen to distribute vital energy out into the organism. This force is present during gestation and determines our constitution. Because it relates to the fiery sympathetic nervous system,<sup>4</sup> this current is also responsible for action. We will work with the triangle for dharana, and with the spiral for the dynamic meditation.





Spiralling umbilical energy, radiating out and embracing the body

## DHARANA

Prepare for meditation by making yourself as comfortable as possible. Close your eyes and follow the movement of your breath. When you are ready, gaze into the *chidakash*. Slowly bring the yellow downward-facing triangle into focus.

This is the sacred womb of the Goddess, she who gave birth to all.

The Divine woman who knows the mysteries of life, preservation and death.

She is the powerful one who is unafraid.

The destroyer of ignorance.

Feel the radiant energy of the Goddess surround you. Open wide, allowing your vessel to fill with her abundant force. Return to the protection and warmth of her womb. Feel yourself uplifted, revitalized and ever-blessed. Stay with the sensation as you bring your attention to the Black Dot in the centre of the triangle. Bring it clearly into your vision. Now rest your focus on the Black Dot, doorway to hidden knowledge. Continue your practice for as long as you find appropriate. As you finish, slowly re-focus on your breath.

## DYNAMIC: RADIANT SOLAR UMBILICAL ENERGY MEDITATION

This meditation taps into the fiery energy of the solar plexus. It contacts the primal umbilical current, the spiral force that develops the foetus in the womb. After birth it continues to distribute healing energy throughout the body.

In your sacred space, prepare for meditation. Let your system slowly relax as you focus on your altar and absorb the yellow ray. Draw this colour deep inside, feeling yourself enriched with warm, revitalizing energy. Connect the warmth you feel with the heat of your inner sun. Visualize the spiralling umbilical energy beneath your navel. Allow this solar energy to spiral out, filling every single cell in your body.

The sun contains the power to create health and destroy sickness. Direct this solar energy where it is needed and programme its dynamic force. Guide the energy, say what you want it to do, ask for destruction of unhealthy cells, thoughts or negative energies. Ask for healing and repair. Ask for knowledge and wisdom. Be clear about what it is you need, and know that the universe will bless you. Let the golden spiralling solar energy radiate beyond your body, holding you, embracing you in light. Be open to receive the gift of fire.

When you are ready to complete your meditation, visualize the sun's golden rays returning to your centre. Feel the glow within, knowing that whenever you need to revitalize your entire organism, this powerful energy is always contained within you.

## *Vibrational Work*

### COLOUR

It is not surprising to find that the sun in the body resonates with the yellow ray. Yellow is the beautiful glowing colour of heat, fire and sunshine. When the solar plexus is open and vibrating harmoniously its inner radiance shines out. It can be seen in the eyes and the walk, and heard in belly-generated laughter. It is a joyful colour, the colour of confidence and contentment. Take a moment to focus on your use of yellow. Is it a colour you like or dislike?

The mind and nervous system are stimulated by yellow. It strengthens the sympathetic nerves and the motor activity of voluntary muscles. Yellow powers digestion and balances the liver and spleen energies. It is an important purifying colour that helps clear the aura and maintain a high vibratory frequency. It has a positive effect on the intellect. Too much yellow in the aura, however, can lead to over-activity, fear and panic attacks. It is just too much to cope with for some people. The complementary colour is violet – this should be used to calm excessive heat. Amethyst is a good stone for calming the solar plexus and can be carried by anyone prone to panic attacks.

### ESSENTIAL OILS

Many essential oils have a stimulating effect on the solar plexus. Popular oils are rosemary, juniper, geranium, peppermint, black pepper and ginger. Rosemary is good to use in the mornings to add energy to your day. It stimulates the circulation and is a good 'pick-me-up'. You will notice most of these oils are culinary herbs. They can be used to stimulate appetite and regulate digestion. For this purpose the actual herbs are safer than the oils, which should never be taken internally.

### GEMS

Gems for this chakra are citrine, tiger's eye and topaz. Topaz will calm the mind and sharpen the intellect. It is good when clarity is needed. Citrine is a powerful gem for healing. It aligns solar energy with imbalances in the body and helps to eliminate toxic energy. Citrine is useful during turbulent periods in your life. It helps you to keep moving but also provides a sense of security. Tiger's eye, as the name suggests, strengthens sight. It is used to enhance both physical and psychic vision. These are the main gems used to affect the yellow ray. Other yellow gems, such as yellow sapphire, yellow jade and pericase, can also be helpful in balancing the solar plexus.

## VISUALIZATION TO RECHARGE A DEPLETED SOLAR PLEXUS ENERGY

*Imagine a hot sunny day in a busy city. There is noise, bustle and bustle. You are in the centre slowly walking towards a high point. You begin to climb a sacred hill that overlooks the city. As you climb, allow your breath to deepen. Release some of the busy-ness from your day with the out-breath. Feel your body getting lighter as you escape the crowds and move into your own space. The noise of the city quietens as you ascend. Keep walking, slowly getting higher and higher. Feel the cool breeze as the warm sun begins to fade. As you arrive on the hilltop, the sun arrives on the horizon. Both you and the sun are ready to rest. Lie down and observe the colours of the sunset as they dissipate around you. Feel your own energy field relaxed and open ... let your yellow ray shine out and fill the sky, uniting with the radiant sunset. As they merge, feel yourself cleansed. Stay for a moment letting any toxic energy flow out and be neutralized in the sky. Open your solar plexus wide and allow your energy to be refuelled, revitalized and harmonized with the creative solar force. When you are ready, slowly get up, face the sky and spread your arms open wide ... feel your solar plexus recharged with abundance ... smile as you walk away uplifted and on top of the world.*

The Yogi, focusing always on manipura chakra, achieves all attainments. Pain and disease vanish, every desire is fulfilled, and time defeated.

*Shiva Samhita 5: 106 – 107*

## *Ritual*

### FIRE RITUAL

Fire energy brings an abundance of power, passion and enthusiasm. This energy needs focus and direction. The rays of the sun, when focused through a magnifying glass, can create fire. Likewise, when the dispersed rays of your mind are focused through ritual, your fire energy can bring anything into being. Use this ritual to clarify your aspirations and goals.

You will need a journal, pens, drum or percussive instruments and fire, symbolic or real. If possible, invite some friends to join you. Fasting before this ritual increases its power, but if fasting is not possible, then cleanse yourself by smudging with smoke (*see page 79*).

Light a big fire outside, or have one in your home fireplace. Failing this, make a small fire in an old wok or metal pot. Traditionally cow dung is used, which burns slowly. You can use a little paper and wood. Be careful indoors; it is a good idea to light the fire outside and go inside once the fire is burning under control. Only a small fire is needed. Use mind power to visualize fire if you don't want a real one.

Create sacred space by visualizing a protective circle around you, and calling the directions as described in Chapter 5.

- ⊗ Sitting down, quietly observe the fire. Gaze into the flames and be aware of the fire and its qualities. Feel its heat and light. Watch its passionate movement. See its capacity to consume and transform.
- ⊗ Take your drum and begin to play. Be moved by the spirit of fire. Allow the drum to speak aloud. You will know when to stop and move to the next stage.
- ⊗ Consider your goals in life. What are you trying to achieve? What are your dreams? Write your thoughts as they enter your mind.
- ⊗ What stands in your way? Fear, lack of confidence, lack of money – whatever it is, write it down on a separate page. Whatever holds you back needs transforming to release energy. The resulting energy can be used to fuel your goals.
- ⊗ Hold your list of goals. Take the other list and ceremoniously throw it into the fire. As you do so, ask the fire to consume and neutralize this negative energy. Feel weight lifting from you, as you watch the flames devour your obstacles and light the path of transformation. (If in a group, take it in turns to approach the fire, while the others continue drumming.)
- ⊗ Without the great fireball in the sky, nothing on earth would exist. Fire is needed to create everything. To bring your goals into being, you need the blessing of fire. Fire energy helps propel you forward. It gives clarity, direction and enthusiasm.
- ⊗ Take your list of goals and charge them with fire energy. Chant the solar plexus seed mantra *Ram* before repeating your individual goals. Clear statements, voiced loud, are the first step in making your goals a reality.
- ⊗ Know the fire within has the ability to create.
- ⊗ Return to playing your drum. Fade the drumming until all is silent except the fire. You will sense when the ritual is complete.
- ⊗ Give thanks to the fire as you put it out.

Keep a copy of your goals written in your journal, with the date you performed this ritual.

Expect all goals to be realized.

### *Close Sacred Space*

Give thanks and dismiss the great guardians and spirit-keepers of the directions and elements.

