

## **The Solar Plexus Chakra – Manipura**

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### **Personal insight into the Solar Plexus Chakra**

Why do some people leave a mark on this world, make a difference and seem driven to succeed? They seem to have it all together - to have a sense of purpose and direction. They know what they want and they go and get it. Everyone wants to be like these people but there always seems to be something intangible that holds us back or hides our true purpose from us.

The Solar Plexus Chakra is the key to manifesting what it is we want in our life. It is like the body's grand central station for energy direction. It channels where the energy goes. To know the Solar Plexus Chakra is to understand that it transforms will power into energy in the body. Your "Chi" or "Qi" becomes your warrior energy. It aids your self-esteem, governs and manifests intent, creativity and balance. It works as a psychic shield, to prevent negative energy being deposited in your body.

As a student and teacher of Anderson Bushi Kai, I have seen people come training because they are looking for something more meaningful in their lives. The structure, the discipline, the challenge and the battlefield provide the secret to discovering personal power and a sense of self that only comes from immersing yourself in martial arts training and the study of way of the warrior.

Training is the key to the Solar Plexus Chakra.

### **Key Principles for the Solar Plexus Chakra**

#### **Overview**

The third of the Chakras, the Solar Plexus Chakra, Manipura, is about doing, accomplishment and defining yourself. To know what you want and be able to go and get it. It is directed by the principle of power and intellect and by the expression of will power, mental abilities, and personal responsibility. The Solar Plexus Chakra is what allows you to set and maintain healthy boundaries.

**Challenge** – self-control and self-confidence. To know what you want, to be able to assess your strengths and weaknesses accurately and to control impulses.

**Purpose** – direction, intent, delivery.

This is the stage where raw power from the Hara is given meaning, purpose and direction. It is the pinnacle of the lower three physical carnal Chakras. This is the place from where you project your power and charisma into the world.

**Proverb** - "Patience is the garden to paradise" - *Sutra Dialect Arabic*

**Location** – between the navel and the lower part of the chest at the solar plexus level.

**Symbol** - a circle with ten petals and a downward-pointing red triangle. The inverted triangle represents fire and the transformative power of this energy center. Fire turns matter into energy that can be used to propel and move forward. The ten blue petals represent flame and the ten mental afflictions that may affect the Solar Plexus Chakra - jealousy, shame, fear, treachery, foolishness, envy, sadness, delusion, disgust and ignorance in spiritual matters.

**Energy** - warrior energy and the power of transformation

**Colour** - yellow.

**Element** - fire, the energy of light, vital energy and heat.

**Mantra** - Ram.

**Vowel sound** - Oh

**Musical note** – E

**Drum** - beat 70 beats per minute

**Rights** – to act

**Organ or Gland** – Adrenals, pancreas

### **Physical Association**

Digestive system and helps turn matter into energy to fuel your body. This Chakra governs metabolism, especially the processing of carbohydrates.

**Psychological function:** will

**Identity** – ego

**Plane** – Celestial

**Planets** – Sun and Mars

**Deity** – Rudra, Lakini

**Animal** – Ram – symbol of determination, action, initiative and leadership

**Incense** – saffron, musk, sandalwood

**Affirmations** – I am strong and have courage, I direct my own life

**Crystal and stones** - bright yellow and golden crystals and light yellowish green stones like citrine, amber, yellow tourmaline, tigers eye and peridot.

### **Rune**

The two runes closely associated with the Solar Plexus chakra are Eihwaz and Tiwaz.

Eihwaz represents the vertical axis, indicative of the energy of the human spine being the channel for the powerful energy of the Kundalini fire. Eihwaz gives the power to recall your past lives and can be invoked for communication with the underworld and the dead.

Tiwaz is balance and justice ruled from a higher rationality. Tiwaz is a warrior rune named after the god Tyr who is the Northern god of law and justice. It symbolizes the positive ordering of the cosmos and humankind through law and justice and our moral compass.

**Tarot cards** – Hermit and Justice. **Tarot suit** – wands

**Lesson** – you have the power to choose

**Diet**

Yellow foods - bananas, sunflower seeds, yellow peppers, cheeses, squash, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, lentils, yellow and orange peppers, lemons, corn, yellow pears, golden apples, brown rice, oats, spelt.

**Tea** - chamomile

**Herb** – cinnamon, ginger, mint, and cumin.

**Stance** – Arrow in flight

**Kata** – ones that strengthen your core and help you to feel powerful and confident such as Sanchin Kata.

**Yoga poses** – warriors pose, bow poses, boat pose, lion pose.

**Exercise** – the Archer.

Stand in shoulder width stance. Bring hands together at Root Chakra, palms facing and fingers touching pointing down to the floor, rotate hands to prayer position and move up the Chakra lines to the solar plexus, rotate hands around an energy ball at solar plexus height. Rotate right hand up to head height in a reverse elbow whilst reaching left hand out on front at eye height in an archer's stance. Project the right hand forward rotating the palm up as if to release an arrow. Visualise sending an arrow to represent taking action in a forward direction.

**Cycle or hertz solar plexus vibrate at 320(10:1)Eb**

**Balance**

A balanced Solar Plexus Chakra allows you to have control over your thoughts and emotional responses, set healthy boundaries and to be at peace with yourself. Its physical association is with the digestive function. When the Solar Plexus Chakra is balanced, you are assertive and exert your will in a way that leads to results and harmonious relationships.

A blockage can be serious because it is where our sense of self and self-confidence is located. When you face a difficult or traumatic situation, the coping skills you develop to get through it may cause disruptions in your energy and prevent you from healing fully. Blocked chakras can cause mental, emotional and physical issues.

People with an unbalanced Solar Plexus Chakra may be unable to set or maintain boundaries, be unable to accept criticism and fear rejection. Imbalance can manifest as excessive control and authority over others by misuse of power, feelings of helplessness, irresponsibility, being manipulative, addiction, lack of clear direction, lack of purpose or ambition and having a lot of ideas without finding a way to realize them.

Chakra imbalances occur as either an excess of energy or an energy deficiency.

An overactive Solar Plexus Chakra can result in controlling, intolerant, or excessively competitive behavior, overeating, fatigue or excessive laziness, anger issues, excessive stubbornness, desire for control, perfectionism, being overly critical and digestive problems. It can turn you into an arrogant, self-centered power grabber that can ruin relationships and result in stress.

Symptoms of an underactive Solar Plexus Chakra include low self-esteem, insecurity, hyper-sensitivity, anxiety and fear, low body weight and poor appetite, lack of confidence and poor self-image, inability to focus, disorganised, attention seeking behaviour and indecisiveness which can prevent you from turning dreams into reality.

## **Healing**

### ***Meditation and visualisation – the sun***

Meditation is an effective way to help soothe an overactive Chakra.

Sit or lie down in a comfortable position. Visualise the warm of the sun on your face, your arms, your chest, your body. Feel the heat in your solar plexus. Visualise the sun as a bright golden light emanating from your solar plexus. Breathe in and breathe out. Feel the power of the sun building the energy of your Hara. Feel the glow and warmth of your personal power strengthen and grow as strong as the sun. Relax, breathe, feel the fire in your belly and focus on moving forward with the power and strength of the sun within you.

For martial artists visualising the power of the Hara energy in the solar plexus should be used in kata meditation and training.

### ***Environment***

Wearing yellow and surrounding yourself with yellow can assist in the healing process. Wearing gold jewelry, gold and yellow gemstones can help open your third Chakra. Surrounding yourself with the opposite color can also help calm an overactive chakra. Purple is the opposite of yellow so wearing purple and using lavender as aromatherapy or burning purple candles may be soothing. The Solar Plexus Chakra is associated with the sun and fire so simply getting outside can help.

### ***Cleansing***

A good diet of yellow foods and cleansing teas like chamomile.

### ***Healing with Daily Affirmations***

Affirmations building your personal power and self-confidence can open up your Solar Plexus Chakra.

### ***Essential Oils***

Aromatherapy using essential oils like orange and grapefruit can be of benefit whilst meditating. Essential oils can also be worn as perfume or used in oil diffusers and in a hot bath. The

essential oils for the Solar Plexus Chakra include chamomile, lemon, ginger, black pepper, cinnamon and clove.

## **Key Principles for Solar Plexus Chakra**

### **Principle 1 – The Hara**

The solar plexus is where the Hara or energy field of the body resides. Having a strong and balanced Solar Plexus Chakra works as a psychic shield to prevent negative energy being seeded in your body. To be able to generate fire in your belly and connect the physical, mental and spiritual realms requires an understanding of Hara and how to call it, use it and project it which is of paramount importance in kata and Zen meditation.

### ***Exercise to strengthen the Hara***

#### *Centre*

You need to be centered to be able to empower Chi energy flow. Centre is where you find balance and great power. All your movements should begin and end from center engaging the Hara. The Hara is the reservoir of vital or source energy - our Chi energy. It is where we find centre, gravity and is the source of movement and direction.

Take time several times a day to mediate for centre this can be as simple as an intentional focus on centre in a quiet, calm manner for a few moments each day. In Zen meditation the hands are placed in front of center which martial artists practice when we move through matsubi-dachi.

If you are centered you can find your momentum to move forward through a balanced Solar Plexus Chakra.

#### *Breathing*

Chi is linked to breathing. Breathing deeply is invigorating and spirit inspiring. When engaging the Hara deep breathing from the belly or diaphragm stimulates your Chi energy flow. The important thing is to see the movement as three-dimensional.

Breathing exercises where attention is focused on the Hara can strengthen the Chi. Concentrate on Hara while breathing deeply into the lower abdomen, let your diaphragm come out as you inhale. Feel the breath being expanded into the depths of the belly. Exhale, drawing the belly in, and letting the energy circulate through the body.

Sanchin kata at brown belt level is an excellent example of breathing deeply into the belly and learning how to engage the Hara. It is not uncommon to feel slightly dizzy from an increase Chi flow when focusing on breathing in this kata and this in itself is a mediation to engage Hara as a Solar Plexus Chakra balance.

#### *Throwing the Hara*

Hara is the seat of life, the centre of intrinsic energy. It is a state of mind in the development of character. If you can control the Hara you can control your sense of self and be in balance. The only way you will be able to throw your Hara is through the direction of Manipura. You can

shake off forces that take you off centre being free from ego and can return to the deeper power of essence.

Train to capture and throw Hara is to throw your energy beyond your body as if throwing it before you in a semi-circular movement. Once you learn to project your Hara you can then capture the energy projections of others breathe it in through your Chi and expel it back after absorbing the energy. Speak with your Chakra Master regarding the discipline of Hara projection.

### **Principle 2 - Seven breaths**

If your Solar Plexus Chakra is blocked it can prevent you from moving forward. It can also lead to you being dependent on others, being indecisive and stagnant. Seven breaths is where you make a decision within seven breaths and accept the consequences of that decision.

By engaging the principle of seven breaths you are healing yourself by making a decision. There is nothing wrong with making a decision. The consequences of that action is what you need to deal with and often a bad decision or mistake can be fixed but an absence of decision means you have never backed yourself or you wait for others to make your decisions and then blame them when your life doesn't take the direction you would like.

Exercise in this space is to start small, make decisions within seven breaths, act, celebrate making a decision both the successes and mistakes as a learning.

### **Principle 3 – Intent**

In martial arts we refer to intent. This is the focus on what you are about to do and a belief to your very bones that you will realise your intent. To be a warrior and to have the heart of a warrior you need to have the intent to follow through on your actions to completion. If your life is in danger do you have the intent to do what it takes to survive? Ideally most people will never be in this life or death intent moment but you need to be able to engage intent in your everyday life to unblock your Solar Plexus Chakra.

A blockage of the solar plexus is about not having forward movement or direction. Establish for yourself the why. What is your reason for change? What is your discomfort that you need to resolve? If you want to lose weight, get fit, find a better job. Once you have your catalyst for change, picture what your vision of success will look like and then ask your friends to assist and support you in your mission. Establish your sense of urgency to achieve your goal and remove the barriers that will get in your way. Work in small steps towards your goal celebrating milestones along the way.

The key principle with intent is to have a plan and to set specific, measurable, actionable and realistic goals with a timeframe. Have a plan and celebrate on the way.

For martial artist the best exercise is to get on the training floor!