

# Astrology and the Chakras

Michelle Proctor, 2005



There are myriad opinions on how astrology and the chakras connect. Here I explore a model based on Indian tradition, Western mysticism, and my own work as a Western psychological astrologer and chakra-based energy healer.

## History of the chakras

The origins of both the chakras and yoga can be traced back to the Vedas, the oldest written Indian texts.

Other ancient cultures also recognised the body's energy centres, but didn't call them 'chakras' ('chakra' is a Sanskrit, ancient Indian, word). For instance, Native American Indian cultures have always known of the body's energy centres. And certain energy centre rituals of the Freemasons are said to have been passed down from ancient Egypt.

Mystics throughout history have also spoken of the chakras. There's evidence that the Rosicrucians and 17<sup>th</sup> century European mystics knew of the body's energy centres. In modern times, mystics continually bring through new information on the chakras.

## How the chakras work

There are said to be more than 360 chakras in the human body, but the seven major chakras are located at specific points along the spine. In addition to the chakras, the body's energy system is made up of tens of thousands of nadis (energy channels) that branch out from the chakras.

The main seven chakras are joined by a vertical energy column known in Sanskrit as the sushumna. In addition to the sushumna,

two wave-like energy paths connect the chakras, one representing an ascending feminine energy, known as Ida, and the other representing a masculine descending energy, known as Pingala.

Ida and Pingala intersect between the chakras in figure eight configurations much like the double-helix of our DNA. Once the masculine and feminine streams are unified, a higher energy known as kundalini can flow uninterrupted along the sushumna from the base chakra to the crown and out.

In yogic traditions the kundalini has been seen as the path to higher consciousness. Yet it's equally important for uninterrupted energy to flow from the crown chakra down to the base of the spine. Ideally, the chakra system should flow in such a way that a person has the ability to both manifest their dreams (energy flow from crown to base) and surrender their attachments (energy flow from base to crown).

Most traditions make a distinction between the lower chakras and upper chakras, the lower chakras being associated with physicality and the upper with spirituality. The heart chakra can be seen as a bridge between the two levels. Ideally all seven chakras should be balanced in order for both the human and spiritual elements of a person to operate in unison.

## 7 Planets, 7 Chakras

Before the advent of telescopes, astrology drew meaning from the seven planets that are visible with the naked eye – Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Mercury, Sun and Moon (for convenience' sake astrologers call the Sun and Moon 'planets'). These are the

only planets used in Indian astrology and therefore in traditional chakra systems.

Saturn was assigned to the 1st chakra at the base of the spine, and each planet followed in order (from furthest from earth to closest), finishing with the Sun and Moon assigned to the head. So, Jupiter was correlated with the 2nd chakra, Mars with the 3rd, and so on.

Before the discovery of Uranus, Neptune and Pluto (the outer planets), the Sun and Moon were connected with chakras six and seven (the 'head' chakras). But now that the outer planets are part of the Western astrological tradition, the outer planets can be assigned to the head chakras.

It still makes sense for the Sun and Moon to be correlated with the head chakras, but in this article I'll explore the outer planet connections.

## Saturn / first chakra

The Sanskrit name of the first chakra is *Muladhara*. In English it's generally known as the base or root chakra. **It resonates with the earth element and its planetary ruler is Saturn.** Its physical location is the perineum, at the base of the spine.

Like Saturn, the first chakra symbolises foundations, stability, grounding, strongly built structures and manifested goals. The first chakra is very much concerned with survival, the kind of survival that leads people to stay with what they know, control their environment and protect their territory.

It's related to our pasts and the first set of rules we were taught (by parents, school teachers, religious/cultural leaders), which offer a sense of belonging in childhood.

Astrologically, if you have a lot of earth or lack earth in your chart, you might find you are challenged with first chakra issues. **The earth zodiac signs are Taurus, Virgo and Capricorn.** In addition, if your Saturn is over- or under-developed, the same could be true.

## Jupiter / second chakra

The Sanskrit name of the second chakra is *Svadhithana*. In English it's called the sacral or navel chakra. **Its element is water and its planetary ruler is Jupiter.** Physically it's located in the lower abdomen between the navel and the genitals.

Both Jupiter and the second chakra are concerned with growth beyond established foundations. Once we have created a solid sense of security in the first chakra, we are challenged in the second chakra to explore beyond our usual territory. We feel a strong urge to connect with others so that we can learn about lives that are different from our own.

The second chakra and Jupiter are associated with sexuality and the pleasure principle. Our sexuality enables us to create new life beyond our original roots.

## The Moon / chakras 1 & 2

The first two chakras are linked with the feminine elements of earth and water. These elements are passive and receptive, linked with the past and resistant to change. It's ironic that the second chakra urges us to change while simultaneously resisting change. The fiery nature of the planet Jupiter urges the individual forward but the water element itself keeps the individual in the past. The Moon is strongly connected with the water element and many traditions link the Moon with the second chakra.

## S. Node / chakras 1 & 2

In addition to Moon issues, the second chakra also seems to be a reservoir of South Node memories. The North and South Nodes, although not planets, are powerful points within a horoscope. The South Node represents what our soul remembers, be it past lives or our family's ancestral past.

Astrologically, if you have a lot of water in your chart or little or no water, you might

experience second chakra difficulties. **The water zodiac signs are Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces.** An under- or over-developed Jupiter, Moon and/or South Node can also indicate second chakra difficulties.

## Mars, Sun / third chakra

Known as *Manipura* in Sanskrit and the solar plexus chakra in English, **this chakra is connected to the fire element and ruled by the planet Mars.** It's located in the solar plexus area, which is just beneath where the lower ribs join in front of the spine.

Mars and the third chakra are related to willpower, action, energy and vitality. Our ability to pursue what we want is generated from this chakra. It relates to self expression, confidence and courage, and gives us the strength to take risks to become visible and effective as creative individuals.

Representing the creative expression of our life force, the Sun also corresponds to the third chakra. When we are strong within our Suns we shine from doing what we love. We offer vitality and light through sharing our gift or essence. Mars helps us express our Sun.

The masculine energy of the third chakra helps us move onward and upward from the first two feminine chakras. If you have a lot of fire or very little fire in your chart, the third chakra could be a focus. **The fire zodiac signs are Aries, Leo and Sagittarius.** Similarly if you have an over- or under-developed Mars or Sun, this chakra is emphasised.

## Venus / fourth chakra

The fourth chakra has the Sanskrit name *Anahata* and is known in English as the heart chakra. **Its element is air and its planet is Venus.** Physically, it is found in the centre of the chest.

Venus and the heart chakra both relate to love, compassion, balance, peace, calm, forgiveness and connectedness. The heart chakra is at the centre of the body's seven

main chakras and acts as a bridge between the first three physical chakras, and the last three spiritual chakras. When we have our heart chakra in balance, we have a far greater chance of uniting the physical and spiritual aspects of ourselves.

The Indian symbol for the heart chakra contains a six-pointed star representing balanced and equal energy flow. The star is created from an overlapping of two symbolic pyramids. Visualise the top three chakras within an inverted pyramid, illustrating the descent of spiritual energy, and the bottom three chakras within an upright pyramid, representing the ascent of physical energy. These two pyramids overlap in the heart chakra once the spiritual energy has descended and the physical energy risen.

At first it might seem strange that the element air (associated with thought) relates to the heart chakra (associated with love). Yet air is fundamental to this chakra because it helps us express love with awareness. The love energy expressed without awareness can lead to addictive or self-sacrificing tendencies in connections with others. When love is combined with intelligence, balanced relationships are created, whether they be with a lover, a friend, a parent or a group.

If your chart has a lot of air or too little air, you might have difficulties with the heart centre. **The air zodiac signs are Gemini, Libra and Aquarius.** If you have a strong or a weak Venus, the same is the case.

## Chiron / fourth chakra

Some astrologers assign Chiron (a 'Centaur', first thought to be a small planet, discovered in 1977) to the heart centre as an additional 'planet' that helps bridge the gap between the physical and the spiritual. It comes between the orbit of Saturn (associated with the three physical chakras) and Uranus (associated with the three spiritual chakras). Chiron is known as the 'wounded healer'.

Your Chiron zodiac sign indicates the wounds you have suffered and how to address them.

If you have an over- or under-developed Chiron, this chakra is likely to be significant.

## Mercury / fifth chakra

Called *Visuddha* in Sanskrit and known as the throat chakra in English, **the fifth chakra is ruled by Mercury and resonates to the element of sound.** In the body, the throat chakra is located in the lower neck region.

Being the first of the spiritual chakras, the throat chakra's element does not belong to the traditional physical four. Anodea Judith, a well-known author on the chakras, ascribes the elements 'sound', 'thought' and 'light' to the last three chakras, helpful associations to highlight their spiritual aspects.

Mercury and the fifth chakra both relate to communication and self-expression. When we use our voices we are expressing, on a vibrational level, our unique sound and adding it to the harmony or cacophony of sounds that vibrate around us everywhere. The power of the 'tone' or sound in our voice determines how people respond to our messages as much as, or more than, the words themselves.

The state of your Mercury will offer information on the challenges you face when expressing yourself. Any planets in Gemini will also be significant.

## Uranus / sixth Chakra

The third-eye chakra, known in Sanskrit as *Ajna*, is located at the centre of the forehead slightly above eye level **and ruled by Uranus.** Anodea Judith offers 'light' as its element, and 'thought' to the seventh chakra, but I prefer to assign **'thought'** to chakra six.

Given that the outer planets are seen as transmitters of transpersonal energies, they resonate with the two head chakras, the most spiritual or otherworldly. The first outer planet Uranus relates to the higher mind. Both Uranus and the third eye are to do with the power of thought.

The ability to see clearly through exercising detachment relates to this chakra. It acts as a container for the myriad of images and thoughts that enter the human mind. Uranus helps us use the gift of sight to sort the dross from the valuable. Uranus and the third eye enable us to see on inner and outer levels and direct the thoughts and images we wish to use to manifest our realities.

If you have a dominant Uranus, or lots of Aquarius, you might be at risk of this chakra being awakened before you've learnt how to stabilise the lower chakras. If Uranus, or Aquarius, isn't emphasised in your chart, this chakra is likely to strengthen naturally in its own time as you mature through each of the chakra developmental stages.

## Neptune / 7th chakra

**Neptune rules the seventh and final chakra,** known as *Sahasrara* in Sanskrit and the crown chakra in English. **It resonates to the element of light** and is situated at the top of the head.

Neptune and the seventh chakra both relate to our spirituality; our connection to a divine source. They describe experiences of surrender, transcendence, devotion and faith. Through Neptune and the seventh chakra we experience being guided by an inner or outer higher force that seems connected to divine truths.

Being the least dense of all the elements discussed so far, the crown chakra is connected to light. Light vibrates on many different frequencies and the crown chakra acts as a kind of antennae for receiving the multidimensional experiences of light.

Like the sixth chakra, it's difficult to deal with the energy of the seventh chakra if it is awakened before the chakras beneath it have been balanced. If you have a dominant Neptune, or lots of Pisces, you will need to balance the lower chakras in order to handle the strength of this chakra. If your Neptune, or Pisces energy, is relatively balanced the

seventh chakra will awaken gradually as each of the other chakras develop.

## N. Node / chakras 6 & 7

Earlier I discussed how the South Node is connected with chakras one and two and is related to past life or ancestral patterns that need to be remembered, released and transformed. Often these are the deep-seated seemingly fated soul lessons that occupy our attention throughout our lives. In contrast the North Node represents our new soul lessons for this life.

## What about Pluto?

My feeling is that Pluto relates to the sushumna and helps transform blocks in any of the chakras, but most particularly the second chakra, which is often the most afflicted in terms of unconscious wounding.

Yet the Pluto energy helps assist any of the chakras that are in a shadow state. Once all the chakras and the Ida and Pingala energies are flowing naturally, perhaps Pluto then represents the kundalini running along the sushumna. Pluto is often associated with the serpent, and kundalini is represented as a coiled serpent at the base of the spine that unfurls and ascends when the time is right.

If you have an over-developed Pluto or lots of Scorpio in your chart you might be at risk of becoming stuck in your shadow. Your journey is to become a master of shifting from dark to light, and often a good therapist can help with this. If you do not have an over-developed Pluto or Scorpio, your transformative energy, and therefore your kundalini, is likely to awaken as each chakra naturally develops.

Each of us has strengths in some chakras and weaknesses in others. It's important not to rush chakra development. Sometimes we think we're progressing well, but then realise we might've ignored a chakra and need to go back to complete unfinished business.

Be careful not to force any chakras, as the results can be unpleasant. Similarly it can be stressful, even dangerous, to force the kundalini energy.

When we connect the ancient lineages of both astrology and the chakras, we get a double dose of wisdom to guide us with our personal development. Enjoy the journey.

### Further Reading

- \* Ray Grasse, 'Astrology and the Chakras' in *Eastern Systems for Western Astrologers*
- \* Joan Hodgson, *The Stars and the Chakras*
- \* Anodea Judith, *Wheels of Life*
- \* Caroline Myss, *Anatomy of the Spirit*

### About the Author

Michelle's astrology writing has appeared in *LivingNOW*, *AstroLog*, *theLounge.com* and *Portmans.com* since 2002. She has published the *Radiant Living Monthly Forecast* since 2006.

Since 2007, Michelle has contributed to the *FAA Journal* (Federation of Australian Astrologers) and the *APA Newsletter* (Association of Professional Astrologers).

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