

LIVE YOUR YOGA

Mind | Body | Spirit

“Find out who you are, and do it on purpose.”

- Dolly Parton

“Everything in the universe has a purpose. Indeed, the invisible intelligence that flows through everything in a purposeful fashion is also flowing through you.”

- Wayne Dyer

“Commit yourself to a mighty purpose.”

- H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

“There is a divine purpose behind everything - and therefore a divine presence in everything.”

-Neale Donald Walsch



“It's not an accident that musicians become musicians and engineers become engineers: it's what they're born to do. If you can tune into your purpose and really align with it, setting goals so that your vision is an expression of that purpose, then life flows much more easily.” Jack Canfield

Who/what were you born to be? That is the question we're addressing for the month of May. There are as many answers to this question as there are people in the world, and only you can answer that question for you.

This month, we'll focus on Manipura, or the Solar Plexus/Navel Chakra, which relates to our personal power, our imagination, self-esteem, our divine purpose, and our desire for action. Deficient characteristics of this chakra include poor self-esteem, passive nature, sluggishness, or fearfulness. Excessive characteristics in this chakra include blaming, the need to be right, aggressiveness, wanting to be the center of

attention, and being scattered. A person may have both excessive (cluttered) and deficient (blocked) characteristics.

As I described the excessive and deficient characteristics of this chakra, you may have noticed you have some of both. That's common. We all carry emotional baggage and "issues in our tissues." By mindfully meditating and practicing poses that stimulate this chakra, we can bring it back into balance. However, be mindful that because life is ever-changing, we must practice mindfulness, meditation, and yoga asanas consistently because as life changes, so do we. We must go inward again and again to find and maintain mental, physical, and spiritual balance.

Mind

"There are receptors to these molecules in your immune system, in your gut and in your heart. So when you say, 'I have a gut feeling' or 'my heart is sad' or 'I am bursting with joy,' you're not speaking metaphorically. You're speaking literally."

Deepak Chopra



As we focus on the third chakra this month, I want you to think about your answers to the following three questions:

1. **What unpleasant experience or relationship from the past are you still carrying?** Remind yourself you have the power to let it go. You may have to do this several times. That's okay. Forgive and wish all involved all the best you would want for yourself, and then move forward with faith and confidence.
2. **Is there an experience or relationship currently in your life that you need to steer in a new direction or let go of altogether?** Know your boundaries and make them known to others. The more firm and confident you are, the more respect you will command and the better your relationships will be. Honor yourself and your purpose and others will follow suit.
3. **What is your fondest dream for your future?** Stoke the fires of your imagination! Envision things exactly as you want them and then move forward and make it happen. This is easier once you've taken care of #1 and #2 above. The less baggage you have, the easier it is to move.

The element of fire can cleanse, illuminate, and give power to these areas of your life. Practice chanting the mantra "Ram" to clear your mind and help balance this chakra. As you clear your mind, you will be able to step into your power and let go of old feelings and relationships that are blocking your path forward. You will also be able to see things in the present more clearly and make decisions that are right for you without being intimidated by others. Finally, the fire you kindle will fuel your passion to make your dreams your reality.



Body

“The process of eating is divine; the food itself is divine; the person who is eating is divine. Therefore, eating is a process by which the eater makes a sacred offering to the divine. And the fire which consumes the offering (digestion) is also divine. Thus, by seeing the divine everywhere in action, one reaches that divine state.”

Bhagavad Gita, IV. 24

Digestion is the physical action associated with the Solar Plexus Chakra. When this chakra is out of balance, we may experience digestive issues such as constipation, irritable bowel syndrome, eating disorders, and issues with the pancreas, liver, and colon.

As you’ve heard me preach time and time again, please feed your body the best REAL food possible. Your body truly is the temple of your spirit, and you can’t live your best life in a sick body. For better health, notice when you have digestive discomfort and avoid those foods that cause it, no matter how much you love their taste. Many times we cause our own discomfort and imbalance because we fail to listen to the body’s warnings/pleadings. I think if we contemplate the above quote from the Bhagavad Gita, we will approach eating in a more reverent manner. At least, I hope we will. We are all divine beings with a divine purpose.

Spirit

“Be a lamp, or a lifeboat, or a ladder. Help someone's soul heal. Walk out of your house like a shepherd.”

- Rumi



The Solar Plexus Chakra is all about personal power, and that power comes from knowing who you really are, why you’re here, and living out that purpose every day. As you follow your heart and live your true purpose, make no mistake about it, you will be serving the greater good.

That's what's so beautiful about creation, about you and me. Living our purpose serves our innermost longings, feeds our spirit, and brings us and those whose lives we touch joy. In regards to the element of fire, when we are on purpose, we radiate a love, light, and energy that is undeniable and irresistible to others. That's why doors just seem to open and barriers are overcome. As Dolly Parton said, "Find out who you are, and do it on purpose."

Yoga Vocabulary

Manipura- translates to "lustrous gem of the city" or "jewel city." It is the name of the third chakra, also known as either the Navel Chakra or Solar Plexus Chakra. It is the third major chakra and is located between the navel and the sternum. It is associated with the element of fire, the sense of sight, and the digestive organs. ****I'd love to have a picture of it here if you can find one for \$1 or so :-)** **Google Solar Plexus Chakra.**

Agni (fire) Mudra - To perform this mudra, rest your left hand against your solar plexus chakra with your thumb extended away from you. Next, make a fist with your right hand, leaving the thumb extended. Rest your right fist in the palm of your left hand. We will practice this mudra during our meditation this month.

Mantra of the Month - Ram

Chanting **Ram** helps balance our Navel/Solar Plexus Chakra. This chakra is the seat of our personal power, and it governs our self-esteem. Chanting Ram can help us learn to set boundaries and stand up for ourselves, as well as increase our self-control. It is here that the fires of our Divine purpose are stoked.

Affirmations

I am a divine being with a divine purpose.

I can admit when I'm wrong.

I will honor my body temple and my convictions and stand firm in my purpose.

I can let go of past mistakes made by others and myself. I choose love and forgiveness.

The future is whatever I make it. The power is mine.

Join me on the mat this month as we practice both strength and twisting poses that will stimulate our Navel/Solar Plexus Chakra. We will allow the inner fire we kindle to burn away that which is hindering our growth and progression. As it burns away the dross, that same fire will light the way to a new and better path as we learn to overcome spiritual ignorance, fear, aggressiveness, the need to always be right, a scattered nature, sluggishness, and poor self-

esteem. Finally, as we learn to tend that inner fire and direct its energy, it will give us the power we need to transform ourselves and make our dreams a reality.

Whew, that's A LOT of work! Let's get moving and watch great things happen. Namaste'.

