



CHAPTER

3

Prana The Life Force *Chakras : The Center of Life Current*

*“ Wisdom is not assimilated with the eyes, but with the atoms.
When your conviction of a truth is not merely in your brain
but in your being, you may diffidently vouch for its meaning.”¹⁶*

— Sri Yukteswarji

Chapter 3

Prana : The Life Force Chakras : The Center of Life Current

Life Force or Life Energy or *Prana*, in Sanskrit, *Lom Pran* in Thai, *Chi* in Chinese, and *Qi* in Japanese

The ancient teachers believed that *Prana*, or the life force, had a vital effect on the body and mind. The Vedas, the sacred scriptures of ancient India, have served as the fundamental wisdom of life and creation record for all mankind. Indian rishis have long taught the meaning of life force, or *Prana*. For example, Paramahansa Yogananda wrote in his sacred book “*The Second Coming of Christ: The Resurrection of the Christ Within You: A revelatory commentary on the original teachings of Jesus*” (Self-Realization Fellowship, 2004, page 1589):

“Sparks of intelligence finer-than-atomic energy that constitute life... In essence, condensed thoughts of God; substance of the astral world... and life principle of the physical cosmos. In the physical world, there are two kinds of *Prana*: (1) the cosmic vibratory energy that is omnipresent in the universe, structuring and sustaining all things; (2) the specific *Prana* or energy that pervades and sustains each human body through five currents or functions... the five functions are crystallization, circulation, assimilation, metabolism, and elimination.”¹³

Prana – Life Force, the Vital Force of the Body

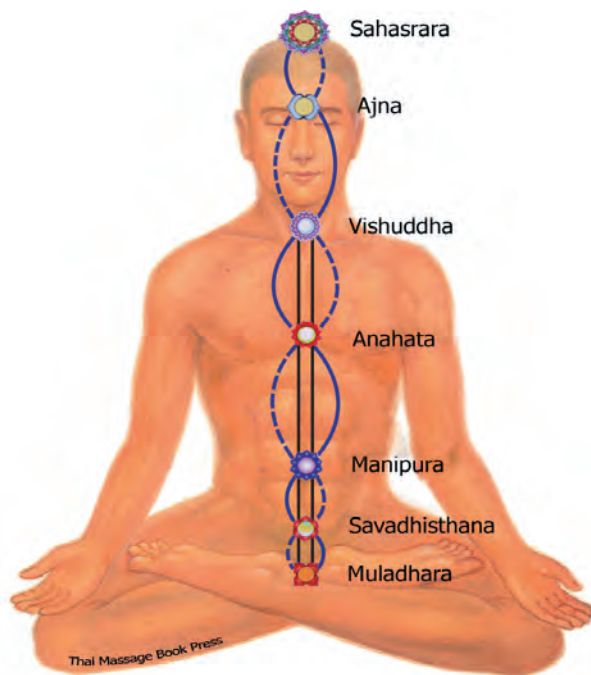
Wherever *Prana* is, there is life. *Prana* – life force has certain centers in the body. It lives in the heart and in the spinal centers. The highest center is between the eyes. The flow of *Prana* in corresponding with the flow of Cosmic Energy or the vital force of the body is downward along the spine.¹⁴

Life force supplies energy directly to the brain. The energy, cosmic energy, emanates from outside the body and enters the brain via the medulla oblongata—the lower portion of the brain stem—and keeps the body cells charged with life. The body requires food, oxygen and water but we can survive only when these substances are filled with the life force that is actively present in the body. Life force is the intelligence power that enables it to convert food matter into different forms of bodily tissues and others. It converts these foods, oxygen and sunshine into living energy. The life energy that transforms food into energy is the real sustainer of life. When man’s body, mind and soul energy are low, they can only be recharged by cosmic energy.¹⁵



The physical body is directly created and sustained by the forces of life current or *Prana*. Life current is a mixture of consciousness and electrons or “lifetrons” as termed by Paramahansa Yogananda.¹⁶ The creative life energy descends into the physical body through seven subtle centers in the spine and brain. It remains concentrated inside and expresses outwardly through these centers.¹⁶

The main channel in the spine that life force or *Prana* flows through is *Sushumna*. *Sushumna* extends from the *Muladhara* chakra, or coccygeal center, to the brain. Auxiliary to the *Sushumna* are two channels or *nadis* situated on either side of it — on the left, *Ida*; on the right, *Pingala*. These two superior among 72,000 *nadis*, constitute the primary channels of the *Prana* sympathetic nervous system—which, in turn, controls the corresponding sympathetic nervous system of the gross physical body.¹⁶



Prana Channels: Sushumna, Ida and Pingala

The *Ida* negative life current and the *Pingala* positive life current are the two primary *Nadis* of the *Prana* sympathetic nervous system feeding into and out of the main current of *Sushumna*.¹⁷

The physical spinal cord and the chain of ganglia of the sympathetic nervous system that run alongside the spine coincide, respectively, with the *Prana* channels *Sushumna* and the *Nadis Ida* and *Pingala* on the left and right of the *Sushumna*.¹⁶ Within the *Prana* spinal centers, the activities of the elemental creative, powers of *earth*, *water*, *fire*, *air*, and *ether* may be seen as light rays of various hues and forms.¹⁷

Chakras - the Centers of Life Currents

There are seven cerebrospinal centers, with varied in numbers of rays at each center.

The coccygeal center has four rays; the sacral center, six rays; the lumbar center, ten rays; the dorsal center, twelve rays; and the cervical center, sixteen rays.

The medullary center, the sharp two-edged sword, has two rays of currents, positive and negative, that supply the two hands, the two feet, the two lungs, all dual branches of the nervous system, and the dual organs; two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, two tongues (the tongue being forked or bifurcated, i.e., divided into two sections), and the two hemispheres of the brain.

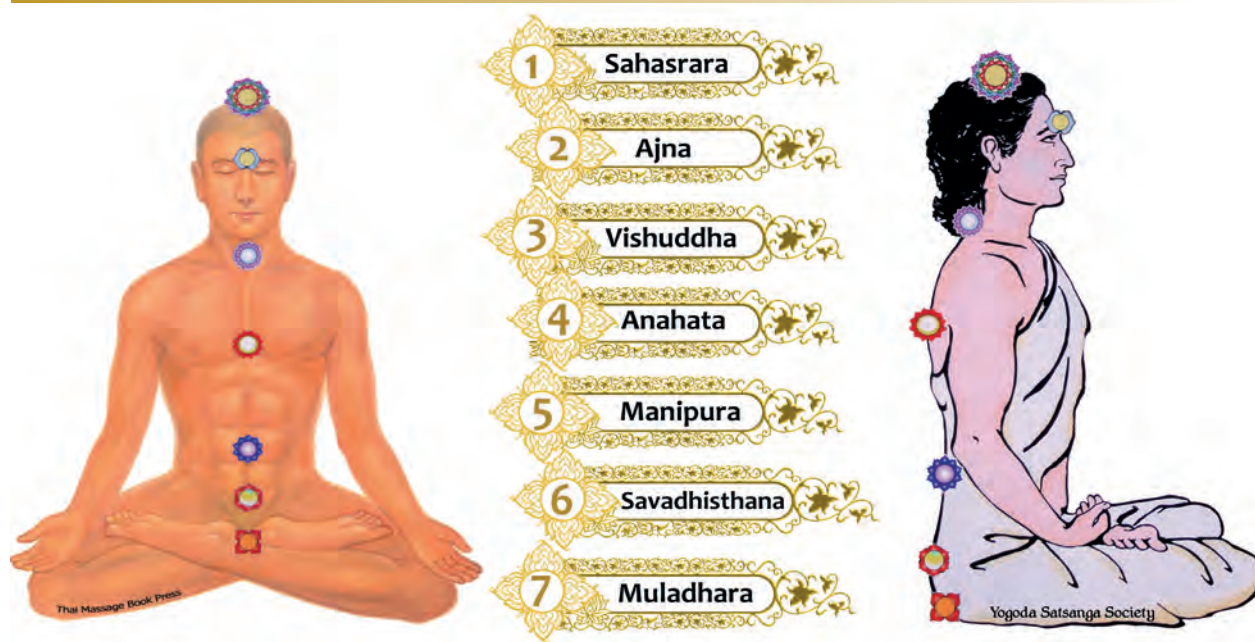
The medulla is scripturally referred to as “the mouth of God,” “the door,” and the “holy opening.” Cosmic energy enters the body through the medulla and then passes to the cerebrum, in which it is stored or concentrated. The brain is thus the major reservoir that sends current to the six other minor plexuses. These centers or sub dynamos are busily engaged in remitting

currents to the different nerve branches and to the various organs and cells of the body.¹⁷

Chakras are represented in term of specific petal on the lotuses in the spinal centers. “Petals” mean rays or vibrations. These vibrations, singularly and in combinations, and in conjunction with the five elements and other principles of

nature, are responsible for various psychological and physiological activities in the physical and spiritual (astral) bodies of man.

There are a total of fifty corresponding petals: coccygeal 4; sacral 6; lumbar 10; dorsal 12; cervical 16; and medullary-Christ center 2.¹⁶



Chakras on the Front and Sideway

