



CARING FOR OUR ROOTS: A GUIDE TO SELF-CARE THROUGH THE ROOT CHAKRA

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- MSSA from CWRU
- 9 years at WomenSafe, Inc., Trauma Therapist and Chief Clinical Officer
- Currently at Cleveland Rape Crisis Center, Director of Clinical Services
- 300-hour Hatha Yoga Certification, Awaken Yoga, Mentor, OH
 - Integrated Yoga into Supervision with Advocates, Trauma Therapists, Case Managers, and other community partners.
 - Created Empowered Path: Yoga for Survivors
 - Community Teaching through Jasmine Dragons Studio, Chardon OH
 - Supervising Trauma-Informed Yoga Programming at CRCC



OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

- 1. Define the Root Chakra and its connection to our work.
 - 2. Apply the basic concepts of intention setting to regularly develop intentions that support your self-care practice.
 - 3. Practice Chair Yoga, basic meditation and breath techniques that support the Root Chakra and fit into our busy schedules.
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- We will be invited to: Set Intentions, Breathe, Sit in Meditation, Practice Chair Yoga.
 - You can: Do what feels right for you, listen and observe, briefly turn off your camera during movements and meditation.



SAFETY

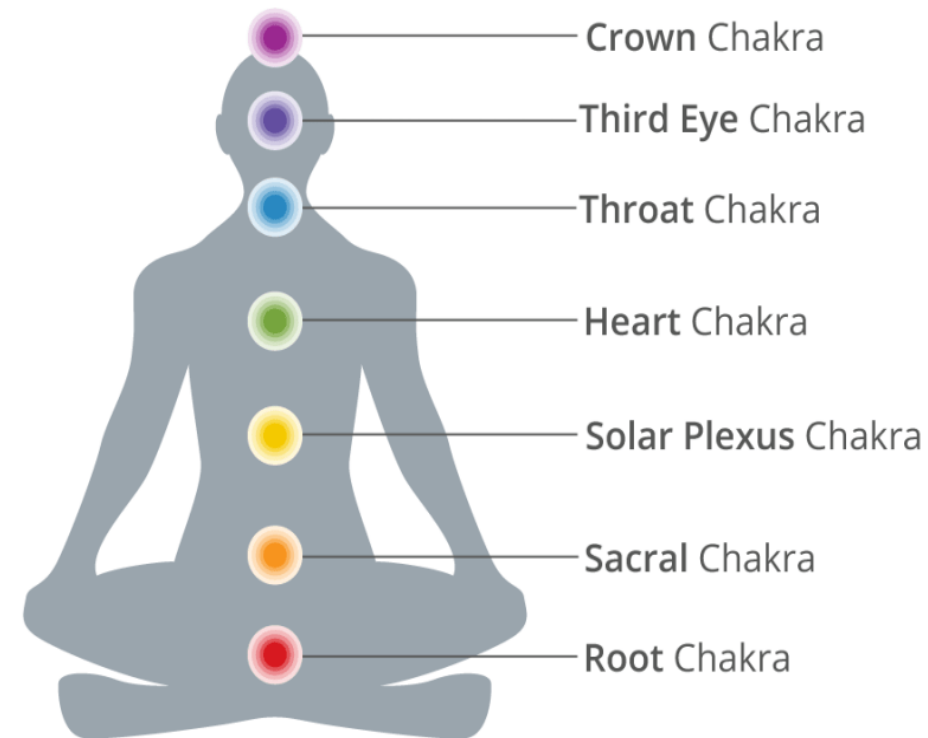
- Be your own guide
- Stop immediately if you are uncomfortable in any way
- Rely on alternative shapes/postures and breath when something does not feel safe/comfortable
 - Mountain Pose (Chair or Standing)
 - Resting Pose (lying relaxed on the earth or sitting relaxed in a chair)
 - Yogi's Choice
 - Eyes slightly open or closed
 - Return to your comfortable breath rhythm at any time
 - Understand that you know what is best for your own body

WHAT IS A CHAKRA?

"The Chakras are gateways between various dimensions-centers where activity of one dimension, such as thought and emotion, connects and plays on another dimension, such as our physical bodies."

- Anodea Judith, 1999

- Access Points
- Energy Centers
- Studied for thousands of years



THE 7 MAIN CHAKRAS



Figure 1. Chakra Plaza (2021)



CHAKRA PSYCHOLOGY

- Root
 - Function: safety and security, stability and foundation
 - Imbalanced Attributes: creates fear and anxiety.
- Sacral
 - Function: Creative energies and desire
 - Imbalanced Attributes: repressed creative expression and emotional isolation
- Solar Plexus
 - Function: Self-Esteem, willpower, and responsibility
 - Imbalanced Attributes: Misuse of power, low self-esteem, control issues

CHAKRA PSYCHOLOGY

- Heart
 - Function: Love, Self-Love, and Governs Relationships
 - Imbalanced Attributes: Sadness, difficulty in relationships, lack of self-discipline
- Throat
 - Function: Ability to speak and communicate effectively
 - Imbalanced Attributes: Shyness, withdrawn, arrogance, anxiety
- Third Eye
 - Function: Intuition, foresight, imagination
 - Imbalanced Attribute: Lack of direction and clarity
- Crown
 - Function: state of higher consciousness, divine connection
 - Imbalanced Attributes: Cynicism, closed minded, disconnection with spirit

OVERVIEW OF THE ROOT CHAKRA

Muladhara-

- Symbolized in a red four petal lotus
- Located at the base of the spine
- The word in Sanskrit means “Root Support”
- Element-Earth
- Main Theme- Survival
- Represents: safety, stability, and foundation
- Imbalanced Attributes: fear and anxiety
- Intentions begin with “I Have” or “I Am”



THEMES FOR SELF-CARE

- The Root Chakra can help us to channel certain themes in our self-care practice through intention, forms/poses, breath, and meditation:

- Tribe
- Safety
- Belonging
- Support
- Connection
- Grounding



HOW ROOT CHAKRA WORK RELATES TO OUR EXPERIENCE AS PROVIDERS

- **Tribe-** Do I feel supported by my colleagues/ leader? Do I fit in with others that are supporting this cause?
- **Safety-** Am I safe and are my clients safe when I conduct _____? (Home Visits, Crisis Work, Suicide Assessments, an Investigation or Arrest, a Hearing)
 - Do we address themes of safety in our supervision?
- **Belonging-** Imposter Syndrome, Equity and Inclusion, Personal Values
- **Support-** Do I have a good relationship with the leaders or team around me? Can I rely on friends and family?
- **Connection-** Am I still connected to this work? Do I believe in our mission, collaboration, or SART? Am I still connected to myself and my needs?
- **Grounding-** We are often on to the next crisis/ project/ meeting with little time to find our footing. Do we have the resources and time to focus and collect our thoughts?



BASICS OF MEDITATION

- **Meditation Is**

- A specific technique for resting the mind
- Mind is focused on what is inside not outside
- Can limit our reactions to stress and strain
- Helps us become self-reliant in times of stress

- **Meditation Is Not**

- contemplating or thinking
- hypnosis or autosuggestion
- religion or prayer

- (Swami Rama, 1998)



INTENTIONS ARE...

- **Simplistic and Singular**
 - I am here. VS. I am here with awareness and strength in my convictions.
- **Positive**
 - I'm not mad. VS. I am calm.
- **Present Focused**
 - I will be kind. VS. I am Kind.
- **Intentional**
 - Take a few minutes to think on what you need. Journal, meditate, reflect.
 - Revisit your intentions after use and notice the experience.



YOUR INTENTION

- Activity: Meditate and answer the following questions in a free writing style. (15 minutes)
 - Brief Guided Meditation (adapted from: Leigh & Mercree, 2016)
 - Post-Meditation Questions:
 - How do you want to feel in the next week?
 - Are there any goals you would like to accomplish in the next week?
 - Personal or Professional
 - Have you noticed any themes?
 - Can you find one word in these themes to focus your intention?
 - Add the beginning: “I Have” or “I Am”...

PRACTICE WITH INTENTION

- We can practice
 - While driving
 - While meditating
 - While doing the dishes
 - While waiting for an answer/ outcome/ event
 - Before sending that email or text
 - Before responding to a client in crisis
- Where else could this practice be helpful?



UJJAYI (OO-JAI) BREATH

- Breath that sounds like the echo of an ocean in a seashell
- The sound of the breath gives the mind a more tangible way to adhere to breath movements
- Even stream of oxygen into the lungs relaxes the respiratory system and the nervous system through Vagus Nerve stimulation
- Slight closure of the vocal chords at the base of the throat
- We do this naturally when falling asleep
- Easy to master and take with you anywhere
- -Farhi, 2000
- Activity: Practice Ujjayi Breath with Intention (5-10 minutes)



POSTURES THAT CAN SUPPORT OUR ROOTS

Mountain Pose
Kundalini Circles
Butterfly Pose
Spinal Twist
Goddess Pose


Forward Fold
Arms Up
Pigeon Pose
Warrior I and II
Triangle Pose

Reverse Warrior
Cat-Cow
Chair Pose
Tree Pose
Easy Seat



DISCUSS HOW TO INTEGRATE YOGA PRACTICE INTO DAILY LIFE

- At your desk
- During lunch or breaks
- Wake and Sleep times
- Waiting in Line
- At a sporting event or movie
- Talking on the phone
- With the kids
- In the water
- While making dinner
- While binging Netflix



PRACTICE: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

- Activity: Chair Yoga Sequence (20 minutes)
- Cameras options
- Remember Safety Tips
- Be your own guide
- Focus on the intention and breath
- Pause anytime



CHECK-OUT QUESTION

- What is one word that describes how you are feeling?

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