

POCKET GUIDES TO PRACTICAL SPIRITUALITY

SPIRITUALITY AND PERSONAL GROWTH

*There's more to you than meets the eye.*

*Your Seven Energy Centers* contains powerful insights and tools for wholeness based on the science of the body's subtle energy system. It draws from the wisdom of the world's spiritual traditions to show how you can nurture your soul through seven stages of personal growth.

Includes an overview of holistic techniques that help restore the body's energetic balance — from homeopathy, vitamins and spa therapies to meditation, affirmation and visualization.

*"Marries ancient healing wisdom with practical spiritual insights to help you create your own dynamic and uniquely personal healing journey. Your 21st-century guide to integrating and healing body, mind and soul."*

— ANN LOUISE GITTLEMAN

author of *The Living Beauty Detox Program*

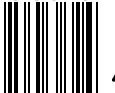
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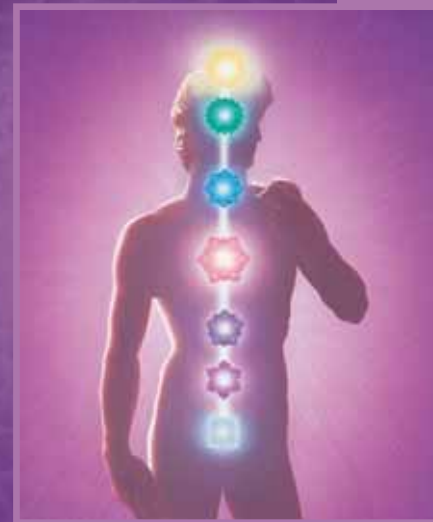
YOUR SEVEN ENERGY CENTERS

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# YOUR SEVEN ENERGY CENTERS

*A Holistic  
Approach  
to Physical,  
Emotional  
and Spiritual  
Vitality*



ELIZABETH CLARE PROPHET

and PATRICIA R. SPADARO



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## YOUR SEVEN ENERGY CENTERS

*A Holistic Approach to Physical, Emotional and Spiritual Vitality*

by Elizabeth Clare Prophet and Patricia R. Spadaro

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Note: Because gender-neutral language can be cumbersome and at times confusing, we have often used *he* and *him* to refer to God or the individual and *man* to refer to people in general. These terms are for readability only and are not intended to exclude women or the feminine aspect of the Godhead. Likewise, our use of the term *God* or *Spirit* is not meant to exclude other expressions for the Divine.

## Integrating Body, Mind and Spirit

*The human body is only  
vitality, energy, and spirit. . . .  
If you want to learn the Great Way,  
you must value the three treasures.*

—LÜ YEN

**V**itality. Everybody wants it, but in today's complex and stressful world few of us know how to capture it—and keep it. That's because real vitality is more than a matter of good sleep, vitamins and pumping iron. Real vitality is physical, emotional *and* spiritual.

Vitality comes from understanding your most important natural resource—energy. It comes from knowing how to tap into your energy source. How to clear the blocks to making that connection.

How to master the flow of energy so you can express your full potential.

The ancient wisdom of the world's spiritual traditions has much to teach us about the science of vitalizing body, mind and soul. Again and again these traditions talk about seven levels of being and seven centers for the exchange of energy from the spiritual world to our world.

The seven heavens of Judaism, the seven tiers of Kabbalah's Tree of Life,<sup>1</sup> Christianity's seven sacraments, and the seven chakras of Hinduism and Buddhism—they are all ways of describing how we can tap into higher levels of spiritual awareness to accelerate the flow of energy from Spirit to matter, from heaven to earth, from within to without.

In this book, our starting point is the ancient Eastern science of the body's seven energy centers, or chakras. The network of the chakras forms a road map that can help you explore your physical, emotional and spiritual worlds. For there is much more to you—and to your vitality—than meets the eye.

### *Coordinates of Spirit*

Our energy centers operate at subtle levels, invisible to the physical eye. Yet they affect every aspect of our life, including our vitality, our creativity and our well-being.

In simple terms, you can think of the energy centers as receiving- and sending-stations for the energy that flows to you, through you and out from you moment by moment. Each center is like a step-down transformer that translates this powerful energy from Spirit to a different level of our being, nourishing body, mind and soul. Each one has a unique part to play in the process of daily living and spiritual growth.

The seven major energy centers are situated at etheric levels of our being along the spinal column at the base of the spine, midway between the base and the navel, at the navel, the heart, the throat, the brow and the top of the head.<sup>2</sup> We have all experienced energy flowing through our seven chakras, whether we have realized it or not.

The energy of the base-of-the-spine chakra enables us to connect with the earth and nature and to stay grounded and practical as we master

the day-to-day, physical level of existence. Along with the seat-of-the-soul chakra, it governs our sexuality. Through the seat-of-the-soul chakra, we also receive our gut reactions and hunches and we liberate our soul to fulfill her life plan. Through the solar-plexus chakra, our center of peace, we express and master our emotions and desires.

Our heart center inspires us with the compassion and generosity to be love in action. Through the throat center, we have access to the tremendous power of will and the spoken word to create personal and world change. Our third-eye center enables us to focus, see a situation clearly and tap into the highest truth. And through the crown chakra, we engage our intellect, receive those sudden flashes of illumination and experience enlightenment.

The chakras are points of contact with dimensions of our being beyond the physical, and yet they mesh with the physical. They are coordinates, so to speak, of Spirit right within our own bodies.

The idea that the spiritual world is mirrored in the material world and in our own physical body is an ancient one. “As is the atom, so is the universe,” say the Upanishads. “Within the pulp of a millet seed an entire universe can be found. . . . In

the pupil of the eye, an endless heaven,” writes Sufi poet Mahmud Shabestari. And the famous Hermetic axiom states, “As is the great, so is the small; as it is above, so it is below.” In other words, the pattern of Spirit is indelibly imprinted within the very fabric of our being.

The world’s sages and healers tell us that as a result of our inner resonance with the divine, the power to heal ultimately comes from within ourselves. Twentieth-century seer and healer Edgar Cayce, for instance, taught that all healing comes from “at-tuning each atom of the body, each reflex of the brain forces, to the awareness of the divine” that lies within each atom and cell of the body. He also said that true healing can only take place once there is an awakening of the spiritual self.

Our body’s seven energy centers are the gateways to that spiritual self. When we understand how these centers work, we can work with them to bring our body, mind and emotions back into balance with our true nature.

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*What lies behind us and  
what lies before us are  
tiny matters compared to  
what lies within us.*

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

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## *Wheels of Life*

The word *chakra* is Sanskrit for “wheel” or “disc.” Each chakra is symbolically depicted as a lotus that has a different number of petals. The more petals the chakra has, the higher its frequency or vibration. The ancient sages taught that the primal spiritual life-force (known as the Kundalini) is sealed within the chakra that is located at the base of the spine.

We can unlock that powerful latent energy through acts of love, service to life, meditation and prayer. As the Kundalini rises along the spine, it activates each chakra along the way and causes the “wheel” to spin, the “lotus” to blossom.

The seventh energy center, the crown chakra, is known as the thousand-petaled lotus. When this center is fully opened, we reach what the Buddhists call enlightenment. Statues and thankas depict the Buddhas, who have reached this stage, with an aura of fire around their form and a flame-like protuberance springing from the top of their heads. Christian artists portray this attainment as a golden halo encircling the heads of the holy ones.

As each energy center “spins,” it emanates its own unique frequency and color that keys into one

of the seven rainbow rays of light. If we could see ourselves at spiritual levels, however, we would see that the light emanating from each chakra varies in its intensity and purity, depending on whether the energy flowing through the channel of our chakras is balanced or blocked. The stronger and more pure emanations indicate a strong and balanced flow of energy. The weaker and duller emanations indicate a blocked flow of energy at that chakra.

When an energy center is blocked, we can experience fatigue or health problems, emotional imbalances and lethargy. When energy is flowing freely through an energy center, we feel energetic, creative and at peace.

## *The Science of Energy Flow*

All of life is energy. The mystics even defined God as light, as energy and as the flow of that light and energy.\* The first letter of John in the New Testament proclaimed that “God is light.” “In each atom,” said Shabestari, “lies the blazing light of a thousand suns.” And in the Tao Te Ching, the Chinese sage Lao Tzu teaches, “Something mysteriously

\*Some traditions call this energy *ch'i* or *prana*.

formed, born before heaven and earth. . . . Ever present and in motion. . . . I do not know its name. Call it Tao. For lack of a better word, I call it great. Being great, it flows. It flows far away. Having gone far, it returns.”<sup>3</sup>

For Lao Tzu, the definition of the Universal Spirit was flow, movement. Life coursing through our veins, our minds, our hearts is energy, is movement, is God. Lao Tzu also tells us that there is a natural order to the universe and to our own lives, and when we work against that natural order we create inharmony and unhappiness.

The choice is ours. At every moment the crystal clear stream of life descends to us from our Source in its natural rhythm. This energy is distributed first to our heart center and then to our other chakras. It is the life-force that beats our heart, gives us the impetus to grow and evolve, and energizes the organs and systems of our body.

But we always have free will. We can express this energy in a positive way or we can upset the natural flow by acting out of sync with our spiritual nature. We can, for instance, use the energy of our heart center to be naturally kind, loving and charitable, or we can use it to be selfish and stingy.

We can express the power of our throat center through communication that is caring or critical.

These choices have consequences. When we use energy to think, feel or act in ways that are positive, we attract to ourselves more of that positive energy, as if we were priming the pump. When we mold that energy in ways that are not true to our inner nature, we create mental and emotional toxins that block energy flow. Just as physical toxins and substances like cholesterol plaque

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*Think of yourself at  
all times as an energy  
being as well as a  
physical one.*

—CAROLINE MYSS

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can build up in our arteries and veins, choking off the vital supply of blood, so mental and emotional toxins that collect energetically in and around our chakras inhibit the free flow of energy within us.

Because each chakra externalizes the energy it receives through a different gland and area of the body, these blockages affect our health, causing us to become fatigued, depressed or even ill. Or maybe we just can't seem to get where we want to go in life. Overstimulating a chakra (by placing continual stress on it), understimulating it (by

ignoring it and letting it become weak), or depleting its natural vitality (by unwisely expending its energy) can all create blockages in our body's energetic system.

Since our energy centers are interconnected, what happens in one chakra affects our entire energy system. If any one center is blocked, it can throw the rest of the system off kilter.

Not only that, but the condition of our chakras impacts those we interact with. That's because the energy of our chakras colors and helps create the electromagnetic forcefield, or aura, that surrounds each of us. This energy field interpenetrates and influences the energy field of those around us—for better or for worse. You know how it feels to be around someone who is kind, cheerful and loving in comparison to someone who is depressed or grouchy. Either way, it can be contagious.

### *Holding On to Energy*

It's not just the *quality* of the vibration we send out through our chakras but the *quantity* that can make a difference in our vitality and resilience.

How much energy can we actually hold on to? Those who perpetually get angry have a lot of energy coursing through them, but they can't hold on to it and they don't have a lot of mastery.

It's a simple equation: the more energy we can actually hold on to and master, the more personal power we will have at our disposal. And the more power we have, the more energy we can use to create positive change in our lives and in the lives of those around us. In fact, those who hold an extraordinary energy in their chakras are able to change their corner of the world, and much more than their corner. In this book, you will learn how to recognize when an energy center is blocked and how to clear that block to increase your own vitality and your ability to help others.

### *Different Ways of Expressing Our Spirituality*

Another way to think about the chakras is that each one offers us another way to express our personal spirituality. When you engage the fires of your heart chakra to help someone in need, you have an entirely different experience than when you tap into your creative genius through your

crown chakra to teach someone. But they are both ways to get in touch with your spiritual essence and share it.

The direct experience of our spiritual essence is the common thread that unites the mystics of the world's religions. No matter what direction they approach it from, the mystics all seek a direct connection with the divine, whether they call it Christ or Buddha, Tao or Brahman, Allah or Ein Sof or the Great Spirit.

The science of the body's energy centers gives us a practical way of understanding how we tap into the power of the divine—how, as the mystics say, we can become an instrument God can use to reach out into the world. That is the real meaning of empowerment—the power to use the pure energy flowing through us to do good on earth.

### *Seven Stages of Personal Growth*

At each chakra, we have the opportunity to master another dimension of energy and thereby gain another level of awareness, insight and personal power. These rites of passage are stages of personal growth that engage our soul and shape the

course of our life. For at each level of awareness, there is a dividing of the real from the unreal, the light from the darkness.

In some traditions, this is known as initiation—the testing of the soul to see how much light she can garner to offset her self-created darkness. These rites of passage are archetypal. Every one of us will face them—no matter who we are, no matter what path we have chosen.

On the pages that follow, we explore the rites of passage corresponding to the chakras. We also share some techniques for smoother sailing through the sometimes narrow straits of life.

### *How to Use This Book*

In today's complex world, the integration of body, mind and soul doesn't necessarily happen by itself. It takes conscious attention and focus, and an awareness of the personal initiations associated with the energy centers.

In this book, you will find keys that can help you with the ABC's of developing your energy centers—activating, balancing and cleansing. Each chapter, devoted to one chakra, reviews the

initiations we are called to master. It gives questions for self-reflection, affirmations and spiritual techniques that can help you move through the initiations. These life lessons are not something we face only once. They return to us cyclically, sweeping us up a notch with each turn of the spiral.

We all have areas of strength and areas of weakness. As we walk our individual path of self-transformation, we are meant to use our strengths to overcome our weaknesses. As we become more aware of the archetypal initiations we face, we can identify those areas that need bolstering and concentrate our attention there.

These chapters will help you look for the patterns in your life. If you keep running into the same issue, just dressed up in a new guise or circumstance, take a look at the chakra that corresponds to that issue. See how you can incorporate the keys and techniques in that section to help you work through the issue and move forward. You may want to give some of the affirmations in that chapter or create your own affirmations. You may want to devote a special journal to the meditations and thoughts that come to you as you explore the issues that surface.

As an adjunct to your chakra work, you may also want to experiment with holistic techniques that take an integrated approach to healing. In our final chapter, we review some of the holistic therapies that deal with the physical, emotional and spiritual components of our well-being.

Each energy center is an archetypal matrix, and therefore each one correlates to different attributes, including a different color, part of the body, positive quality, spiritual tradition, musical instrument, and so forth. To help you attune with the chakras, we have listed some of these correlations at the opening of each chapter. Please note that sources vary on which parts of the body each chakra governs.

In the varied literature on chakras, you will also find differences in the way colors are assigned to the chakras. Some of this information is based on the work of clairvoyants, who can see the vibrations and colors with their “inner” sight. At times the colors denoted by clairvoyants and others may reflect the subdued or even muddled

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*The seven chakras . . .  
are the windows  
of the soul.*

—DJWAL KUL

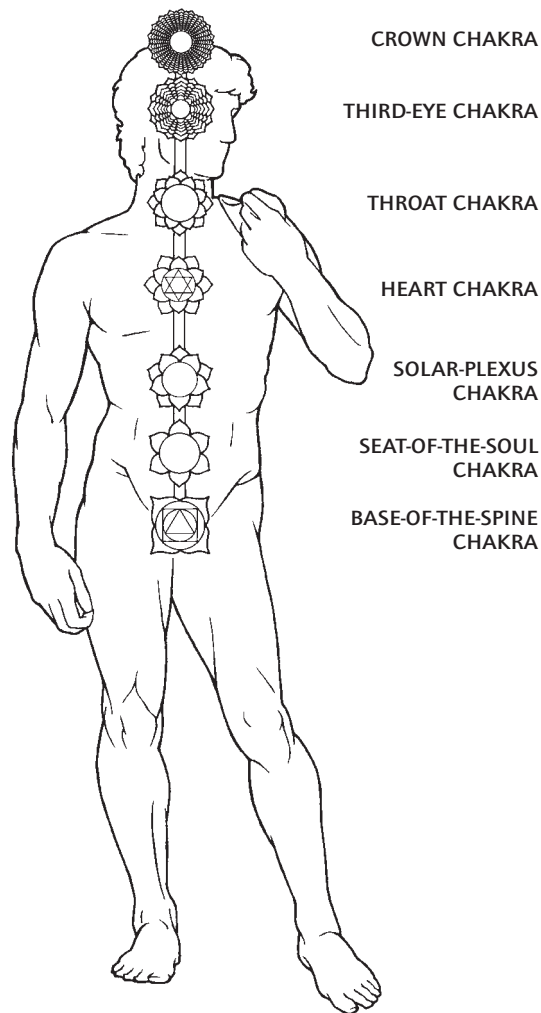
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## YOUR SEVEN ENERGY CENTERS

tones that can surround our chakras when they become blocked.

The colors of the chakras given in this book represent how these vibrant vortices of light would appear at spiritual levels if they were working at peak performance. We have found it important when meditating on the chakras to concentrate on the pure, original color patterns.

Finally, there is no magic formula to vitalize your energy centers. The beauty of life is that each of us is spectacularly unique. Like alchemists of the spirit, it is up to us to take the tools in hand and experiment within the laboratory of self. Fortunately for us, personal growth is a creative process and a sacred adventure.



FIRST ENERGY CENTER:  
**BASE OF THE SPINE**



LOCATION: base of spinal column

COLOR: white

SANSKRIT NAME: Muladhara  
("root" and "base," or "foundation")

PETALS: 4

POSITIVE EXPRESSION: purity, hope,  
joy, self-discipline, integration,  
perfection, wholeness, nurturing

UNBALANCED EXPRESSION:  
discouragement, hopelessness,  
impurity, chaos

PART OF BODY: adrenals

MUSICAL INSTRUMENT: drum, tabla

GEMSTONE: diamond, pearl, zircon,  
quartz crystal

SPIRITUAL TRADITION: Hinduism



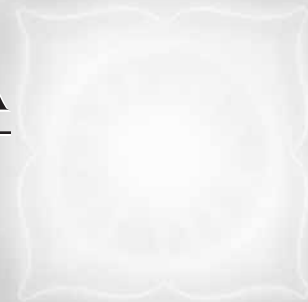
*Through practicality,  
self-discipline and joy,  
we nurture life to wholeness*

# **BASE CHAKRA**

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LIFE LESSON:

Wed the Material  
to the Spiritual



*Why separate your spiritual  
life and your practical life? To an  
integral being, there is no such distinction.*

—LAO TZU

**O**ur ascent begins at the ground level—the level of the energy center known as the base-of-the-spine, or base, chakra. It takes its name from its location at the base of the spine, but it is also the base (foundation) of our inner and outer development. At the base chakra, we access the life-force that enlivens us both physically and spiritually. This energy is the creative power of Spirit anchored in our physical bodies.

The base chakra represents the point where we

connect with the physical world, with nature and with our environment. Balancing the energies of this chakra is therefore fundamental to our practicality and effectiveness in the physical world. When used in harmony, the pure and vibrant energies of the base chakra can endow us with hope, joy, self-discipline and wholeness. Along with the soul chakra, the base also engenders the activity of procreation.

This energy center and its white light are associated with planning, striving for excellence and perfection, and externalizing inner patterns and divine geometry in outer form. The base chakra is also associated with the expression of purity, harmony, perfection, symmetry, order and integration in fields such as music, art, sculpture, architecture, technology and mathematics.

One of the reasons this first energy center is foundational is that its health and vitality affect all the other chakras. How we use the energy that resides at the base chakra will determine whether the potential of our other chakras remains dormant or becomes fully awakened.

Some of us have a greater momentum of mastery in the base chakra than others, but at this

level we are all called to learn certain lessons. What are those lessons and initiations? And how can we master the flow of energy through this center?

The ideas we're about to share with you are springboards you can take off on. Your own thoughtful reflection on these concepts, as you carry them with you into daily life, will deepen your understanding of how to accelerate, balance and clear the energies of your first chakra to express more of your inner power.

*I value the material world  
and my body as chalices for Spirit*



We cannot evolve spiritually without having a secure physical platform. The two go hand in hand. Sometimes because of our religious upbringing we have the mistaken idea that Spirit is good and matter is bad, or that spiritual things are good but the body is bad. In reality, both the spiritual and the material, in their highest state, are meant to be a reflection of the divine.

*Matter* comes from the Latin word *mater*, meaning “mother.” The physical world is the

mother because matter is the womb or chalice into which Spirit descends. Matter is the instrument of Spirit. It allows Spirit to express itself. Matter is like the flute and Spirit like the breath. Without our flute—our physical instrument—Spirit cannot play its song through us. And each of us contains a unique song waiting to be heard.

Another misconception we may have is that in order to be spiritual we need to escape from the world around us. But real spirituality isn't leaving the physical world behind; *it's imbuing the physical world with Spirit*. It's being part of the world, but not identifying so much with the material that we forget who we are (spiritual beings) and why we are on earth (to express our spirituality in a practical way as we fulfill our unique reason for being and help others). In other words, being grounded and practical is part and parcel of spirituality.

At the level of the base chakra, we learn to relate to the world in the most meaningful way possible. The initiation at this level asks us to tenderly care for those we are responsible for and not to neglect our duties to others because we are "pursuing spirituality."

In fact, our spirituality demands that we enter

the physical arena. It demands that we integrate the spiritual and the material. Ramana Maharshi, one of the great spiritual teachers of modern India, once chided a student who wanted to give up his job and family to serve God. He said, "Renunciation doesn't mean giving away your money or abandoning your home. . . . No: a true renunciate actually merges in the world and expands his love to embrace the whole world."<sup>1</sup>

It's like Aesop's fable of the astronomer who would wander around the town each night studying the skies. One night while he was staring up at the heavens, he fell into a deep well. The neighbor who finally heard his cries said, "Why probe the skies when you can't even see what's here on the earth?"

Another lesson we learn at the level of the base chakra is to have a positive view of our body and to build a working relationship with our body. When we have a healthy regard for the physical world and for our own physical bodies, we become a much better partner with Spirit. If we are to fulfill our unique mission in life, we need to be strong at the mental, emotional, spiritual *and* physical levels.

God wants us to take care of our body—to

listen to what our body is telling us and to understand what it needs. Each of us has different needs. Your best friend may be able to eat a wonderfully rich dessert after lunch, but the same dessert might floor you for the rest of the day. She may be able



—*Strengthen your  
body before you  
strengthen your soul.*

—RABBI NACHMAN  
OF BRATSLAV

to stay up half the night but you just can't do it.

Caring for yourself by cultivating a positive attitude about your body, taking time to get the nourishment, exercise and rest you need, and getting

good advice from health-care professionals when needed can help you get fit spiritually.

At energetic levels, the reason it's important to pay attention to the physical is that the condition of our body determines in part how much energy we are able to hold on to. If you could plug a 120-volt desk lamp into a 240-volt outlet, the light bulb would burn out. Likewise, God won't let a 240-volt flash of light pour through you if the charge of your body is only able to receive a 120-volt charge of light.

Our care for the physical includes not only

our body but our physical base. Our home and our work environment are extensions and expressions of our soul—the crucibles in which we forge our life's work. "Care for our actual houses," says psychotherapist and author Thomas Moore, "is also care of the soul. No matter how little money we have, we can be mindful of the importance of beauty in our homes."<sup>2</sup> The more uplifted we are by our environment, the more creative and fulfilled we will be.

- *Is my spirituality practical?*
- *Can I perform effectively at the physical level of existence? Or do I tend to ignore physical demands and keep my head in the clouds—or in the sand?*
- *When my body shows signs that it is out of balance, do I take the necessary action to get back into balance?*
- *How can I enhance my home and work space to encourage and inspire my creativity?*



*I strive to be nonattached  
to my belongings*

Most of the lessons associated with our seven energy centers have to do with balance. While we value the material world as a way to concretely express our spirituality, overattachment to the physical can tempt us into materialism. The challenge can be subtler than we realize. Even the poorest person can become a materialist if he is overly concerned about his possessions (or lack of them) and resents those who have more than he does. Lao Tzu taught, “To know when you have enough is to be rich.” And that “enough” is different for each of us.

A famous rabbi in Poland revealed this truth to a tourist, who was surprised to see that the rabbi lived in only one room. It contained many books but just a bench and a table. “Where is your furniture?” the visitor asked.

“Where is yours?” the rabbi retorted.

The tourist shrugged his shoulders and explained that he, of course, didn’t have any furniture with him because he was just visiting.

“Well,” replied the rabbi, “I am too.”

The rabbi knew that we are all just visitors on planet earth. This isn’t our final destination, so why should we be attached to its accoutrements?

At the other end of the spectrum, some feel that spirituality and prosperity don’t mix. It all depends on our definition of prosperity and our attitude toward our belongings. Do we see our belongings and our resources as extensions, as instruments, of our spirituality?

The twentieth-century Indian spiritual leader Sri Aurobindo saw money as a resource that should be used to reconnect us with our Divine Source. He taught that it is not necessary to completely renounce all money, just as it is unhealthy to be attached to it.

“All wealth belongs to the Divine and those who hold it are trustees, not possessors,” he said. “It is with them today; tomorrow it may be elsewhere. . . . In your personal use of money, look on all you have or get or bring as the [Divine] Mother’s. . . . Always consider that it is her possessions and not your own that you are handling. . . . Do not look up to men because of their riches or allow yourself to be impressed by the show, the power, or the influence.”<sup>3</sup>

- ☉ *What do I need to sustain the physical platform of my life and support my family's needs?*
- ☉ *Do I deny myself the things I need? Or do I indulge in things I don't need?*
- ☉ *When does my focus on the material become an obstruction to my spiritual goals?*



*I look beyond outer appearances to the inner essence*

As we master the energies of the base chakra, we move from attachment to the outer form to an appreciation of the inner essence. Another name for attachment to the outer is idolatry. Idolatry is placing one's trust in the vessel that houses the Spirit instead of placing one's trust in the spiritual flame that abides in the vessel. When we meet someone, do we take a reading based on what they look like and what they are wearing—or do we take a moment to tune into the inner qualities they are expressing?

Barry and Joyce Vissell offer a poignant example

of this in their book *The Shared Heart*:

“Moses Mendelssohn, the grandfather of the well-known German composer, was far from being a handsome man. Along with a rather short stature, he also possessed a grotesque humpback.

“Once, he visited a Hamburg merchant [who had] a lovely daughter named Frumtje. Moses fell hopelessly in love with this young woman. But alas, Frumtje was repulsed by his misshapen appearance.

“Finally, the time came for farewells. Moses gathered his courage and climbed the stairs to her room. She was a vision of heavenly beauty, but caused him deep sadness by her refusal to even look up at him. After several attempts at conversation, Moses shyly questioned, ‘Do you believe marriages are made in heaven?’

“‘Yes,’ she answered, still looking at the floor. ‘And do you?’

“‘Yes, I do,’ he replied. ‘You see, in heaven at the birth of each boy, the Lord announces, “This boy will marry that particular girl.” And when I was born, my future bride was pointed out to me, and then the Lord added, “But your wife will be humpbacked.”’

“‘Right then and there I called out, “Oh Lord,

a humpbacked woman would be a tragedy. Please, Lord, give me the hump and let her be beautiful.”

“Then Frumtje looked up into his eyes, and was stirred by some deep memory. She reached out and gave Mendelssohn her hand, and later became his devoted wife.”<sup>4</sup> At that moment, the young girl was able to see beyond outer appearances to the inner essence.

Idolatry and its sidekicks—overdependence and codependence—are especially challenging in relationships. In a healthy relationship, each partner can stand on a firm foundation of his own. It has to be that way so the partners can take turns bolstering each other. If one of them hasn’t developed his own strong roots, the relationship isn’t really a partnership at all.

Kahlil Gibran eloquently captured this truth when he wrote of marriage: “Let there be spaces in your togetherness. . . . Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone, even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same music. . . . Stand together yet not too near together: for the pillars of the temple stand apart, and the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other’s shadow.”<sup>5</sup>

We are called to love, respect and honor the spirit that expresses itself through others. But if we create an idol out of our partner, then we short-change our own spiritual path, which requires us to forge our special one-on-one relationship with God. That is one relationship that no one can replace and no one can fill. If you try to put someone else in place of God, at some level you will always be disappointed. There is a certain place in your being where only you and God can go.

When we idolize anything—whether it’s a person or outer accoutrements—to the exclusion of the spiritual side of life, God may give us a wake-up call. That person or that thing may be taken away from us for a season so that we can focus our energies on what is most important to our spiritual growth right now. Once we have reestablished our balance, we are often able to reincorporate what was taken away into our life again.

☉ *How can I remind myself to look beyond outer trappings to the inner essence?*

☉ *Have I allowed someone or something to take the place of my relationship with God?*



*I honor the sacred in nature  
and apply its lessons to my life*

Another way we enhance our connection with Spirit at the level of the base chakra is to strengthen our connection with Mother Nature. Our Native American brethren have much to teach us in this regard. Chief Luther Standing Bear said the Native Americans sat or reclined on the ground with a feeling of being close to “a mothering power.” He said, “The old Indian still sits upon the earth instead of propping himself up and away from its life-giving forces” because he is “able to think more deeply and to feel more keenly.”

Working with the earth, with plants and with animals increases our sensitivity to life. We learn to tune into what that plant needs in order to flourish. Does it have enough sunlight and the right amount of water? Does its soil have the proper nutrients? We can apply the same sensitivity to the way we care for others. People also need care and attention. They too need optimum conditions in order to flourish.

Many of us had special experiences with nature when we were growing up. As adults we

sometimes lose that sense of oneness with Mother Nature or forget that she has anything more to teach us. Take Susanna.\* At forty-one, things just didn't seem to be working out the way she expected in her marriage or in her career. She blamed herself. She had convinced herself that there must be something wrong with her at a very fundamental level.



*Nearness to nature. . .  
keeps the spirit sensitive  
to impressions not  
commonly felt, and  
in touch with the  
unseen powers.*

—OHIIYESA  
(DR. CHARLES A. EASTMAN)

After work one evening she took a walk nearby her home, wondering why she didn't do it more often. It was summer's end and the air was crisp and fresh. The tree-tops sang their special song as they moved in the wind. The brook alongside the path playfully embraced the rocks. Everything was magical—from the tiniest caterpillar to the sprawling oak trees.

*How beautiful is everything God makes!* she thought. Then, with a sudden, gentle burst of illumination, that truth echoed within her: *God made*

\*The names in the stories throughout this book have been changed.

*me. Therefore I must be beautiful in my own special way. The magic is inside of me too.*

At that moment, she gained a new perspective of herself. She had to keep reinforcing that vision, but nature had brought her an invaluable lesson that helped her grow in the months and years to come.

- *Do I honor and respect nature and the environment?*
- *Do I allow myself time to connect with nature?*
- *Have my experiences with nature taught me any gentle or thunderous lessons that I need to remind myself of today?*



*I honor, respect and nurture the feminine in myself and others*

The energy of the base chakra is also referred to as the “Mother light.” In a spiritually symbolic sense, the physical universe, which is associated with the base chakra, represents the feminine (or Mother)

principle of God. The spiritual universe represents the masculine (or Father) principle.

Most of us grew up with only a partial understanding of God. We learned a lot about the masculine side of the divine world—God the Father, God the Son—the side that protects and disciplines, sets standards and enforces limits. But as the inner traditions of the world’s religions show us, there is another side of the divine: the feminine side, or God the Mother. This side nurtures, teaches and supports. She is the sacred energy that comforts and heals. The base chakra corresponds to this feminine aspect of life.

The concept of a divine Mother embraces and yet transcends all religions. In Jewish tradition, the feminine aspect of God is called Shekhinah, literally “Divine Presence.” In Hinduism she appears as Shakti, in Buddhism as Prajnaparamita, and in Egyptian tradition as Isis. In some texts of the Old Testament and Apocrypha, the feminine aspect of the divine is called Wisdom, just as the Christian gnostics called her Sophia or Pistis Sophia (meaning “Faith-Wisdom”).

These personifications of the feminine are not, at their core, goddesses to be worshiped. They are

embodiments of the feminine attributes of God who teach us by example how we can realize our *own* feminine potential. We all have a feminine side. It is sensitive, intuitive, creative. It is the side of us that develops and maintains relationships. It is nourishing, patient and joyful. The healthy feminine side is not distant or abandoning. Neither is it possessive or smothering.

When we maintain a vital and balanced flow of energy through the base chakra, we are able to express the caring qualities of the divine feminine. We too become sensitive to the needs of others.

Again taking an analogy from nature, a plant that needs water doesn't speak to us and tell us it's thirsty. Its soil becomes parched and its leaves droop and finally drop off. In the same way, people who need our care often don't tell us what their problems are. We have to look for the signs and figure out what they really mean. A sullen face doesn't always mean that someone dislikes us. It may mean they need us to notice that something's wrong. When we "mother" life, we look behind outer appearances to what's really happening on the inside.

I had a profound realization of this years ago

when I was in Rome standing before the *Pietà*. As I meditated upon the sublime form of Mary holding her crucified son, I realized that the "mother" within each of us is called to succor those who are helpless, those who need our unconditional love and support. We are all in this circumstance at one time or another, and we are all called to fill the role of mother at one time or another.

At the level of the base chakra, we are also compelled to examine our relationship with women, with the feminine aspect of ourselves and with our soul. Do we honor and respect women? Even though we have to be on the front lines in the business world, do we express our feminine side—whether we are a man or woman—and appreciate others who do? Do we take time to nurture ourselves?

If as a child you were separated from your mother or you did not bond to her, you may find it hard to nurture yourself and come to grips with your real soul needs. Just remember: the proper food for the soul is as important as the proper nourishment for the body.

What makes you happy? What soothes you when you are troubled? Is it music? poetry? a good novel? Is it using your hands to make pottery or

sew? Is it meditating? Is it a jog or a workout at the gym? What is it that creates magical moments for you?

It can be as simple as buying fresh flowers to put on your desk once a week, or periodically framing a new picture to hang on your wall. Maybe it's taking time to play with a child or to hike along a forest path.

☉ *What can I do this week to express my feminine side—the intuitive, sensitive, nurturing side of my nature?*

☉ *What soul food am I missing, and how can I set aside adequate time and space to meet my soul's needs?*



*I conserve my energy*

Those who conserve the energy they receive from their Source are the most creative, joyous and effective people in all fields of endeavor—because they are overflowing with that spiritual energy

and they want to share it with others.

What does it mean to “conserve” energy? Every day we receive from our Source an allotment of spiritual energy. This is the energy that empowers us to think, feel, speak and act. As I said earlier, we have free will to decide what to do with that energy. We can—through loving deeds and our spiritual practices—raise that sacred fire to endow all our interactions with that vitality of spirit.

On the other hand, we can dissipate that energy in any one of our chakras through a number of unbalanced activities that don't add value to our spiritual path. These could include anything from outbursts of anger to excessive chattering, egoism, criticism, gossip, resentment, nonforgiveness, perverted or excessive sexual activity, jealousy, obsession with material objects, feeling sorry for ourselves, revolving the past, constantly worrying about the future, and so on.

The bottom line is this: We waste God's precious energy by diverting it into activities that are not helping us grow spiritually—activities that tie up our energy rather than letting it flow. The best measuring rod is to ask yourself: *Is what I'm about to do helping me realize more of my spiritual*

*nature? Is it helping me integrate my spirituality into everyday life? Is it allowing me to help others in a meaningful way?*

When we conserve the energy (the Kundalini) that resides at the base-of-the-spine chakra, it naturally rises to nourish our other centers, activating new levels of spiritual awareness within us. If we



*If you do not care about your vitality and waste it arbitrarily, that is like putting water into a leaking cup.*

—ANCESTOR LÜ

dissipate or block it from rising, two things can happen. First, we reduce the amount of energy available to rise through the other chakras, and thus the latent power of those chakras remains untapped.

Second, if our focus remains merely on the physical and goes no higher, energy can build up at the level of the base chakra. When too much energy collects at the base, it demands an outlet. In some individuals this has resulted in rampages of anger, physical abuse or the misuse of sexual energy.

Both the base chakra and the seat-of-the-soul chakra are associated with sexuality. We can create

an imbalance in our base chakra if we have an inordinate focus on sexual activity or an inordinate fear of sexuality. Many spiritual traditions teach that sexual activity in balance and in the right context is healthy. Sex is a sacred energy exchange (*s-e-x*). Sacred sexuality can be an intimate experience with God and with the divine energy residing within us and within our partner. For that very reason, it is important to treat our relationships as sacred and be careful about getting into a relationship just to mark time.

When we are in any relationship, we are investing our precious energy in it, and we are allowing another to be in a position of polarity with us for the exchange of energy. We want to be sure we're investing that energy wisely. This goes for all kinds of relationships and partnerships. Sometimes people want to hang on to a friendship or a partnership or a relationship that isn't healthy "until something better comes along." Yet they haven't created the vacuum or amplified the magnet of light within to attract the partner who is right for them. When we attend to our own spiritual wholeness, we automatically attract the right partners.

It comes down to the fact that the more we conserve our life-force, the more energy we have available for physical, emotional and spiritual vitality. If we don't conserve that energy, we may not have the inner resources to cope with the details of life, much less attend to the deeper issues of our spiritual growth.

- ☉ *Am I diverting my energy into activities or relationships that are not helping me grow?*
- ☉ *Are there ways I can better conserve my energy?*

### *Working with the Base Chakra*

A word of caution about working with the base chakra. As we work with each of the life lessons of the base chakra and use our energy wisely, the energy of our base chakra will naturally and gradually rise. As it does, we will not necessarily feel it in a physical sense because it is taking place at inner levels of our being.

There are several techniques that claim to accelerate the raising of the Kundalini. However,

unless the base chakra is first balanced and cleared, these practices can be dangerous. For as the energy rises, it can activate the negatives that we are carrying around with us. For this reason, I have found it best to meditate on the upper chakras, from the heart to the crown. When we intensify the light of our upper chakras, they become magnets of light that naturally and safely draw up the energy from the base chakra.

An effective way to purify and accelerate all our chakras is to access the high-frequency spiritual energy known as the violet flame through prayer and meditation (see pages 89–95). The meditation and affirmation on the following pages can also help balance and clear the base chakra.

## SPIRITUAL TECHNIQUES



### *Mantra for the Resurrection of the Inner Light*

#### *Visualization:*

As you say the following affirmation, see and feel the light within you as a mother-of-pearl softness bathing your body in a gentle, suffusing glow. See the light surround every cell and atom of your body, becoming whiter and whiter. As the cells and atoms accelerate, they begin to spin—releasing the white light to clear and energize your body, mind and emotions.

As you recite this affirmation, stand with your arms raised over your head. Imagine that you are directing the energy that is rising up the network of your chakras back to God.

*I AM the resurrection and the life  
of every cell and atom of my being  
now made manifest!*

Note: You can say this affirmation whenever you feel that the energy flow in some area of your life is blocked, replacing the words “every cell and atom of my being” with the specific area of your life you want to rejuvenate.



# Notes

## *Integrating Body, Mind and Spirit*

1. In Jewish mystical tradition, the Tree of Life is composed of ten *sefirot*, or divine emanations, arranged in seven different levels.
2. These are the positions of the seven major energy centers. There are actually a total of 144 energy centers in the body.
3. Lao Tsu, *Tao Te Ching*, trans. Gia-fu Feng and Jane English (New York: Random House, Vintage Books, 1972), chap. 25.

## *First Energy Center: Base of the Spine*

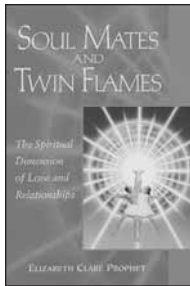
Opening quotation: Brian Walker, *Hua Hu Ching: The Unknown Teachings of Lao Tzu* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1992), no. 50, p. 62.

1. Ramana Maharshi, quoted in Stephen Mitchell, *The Gospel According to Jesus: A New Translation and Guide to His Essential Teachings for Believers and Unbelievers* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, HarperPerennial, 1991), p. 47.

2. Thomas Moore, *Care of the Soul: A Guide for Cultivating Depth and Sacredness in Everyday Life* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992), p. 271.
3. Sri Aurobindo, "The Role of Money," *Parabola: The Magazine of Myth and Tradition*, Spring 1991, pp. 10–11.
4. Barry Vissell and Joyce Vissell, *The Shared Heart: Relationship Initiations and Celebrations* (Aptos, Calif.: Ramira Publishing, 1984), pp. 30–31.
5. Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1923), pp. 15, 16.

## *Second Energy Center: Seat of the Soul*

1. Daniel C. Matt, *The Essential Kabbalah: The Heart of Jewish Mysticism* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1996), p. 127.
2. Gospel of Thomas, logion 2, in James M. Robinson, ed., *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, 3d ed. (HarperSanFrancisco, 1988), p. 126.
3. See "Removing the Mask," in Mark L. Prophet and Elizabeth Clare Prophet, *The Lost Teachings of Jesus I* (Corwin Springs, Mont.: Summit University Press, 1994), chap. 1.
4. Edward F. Edinger, *Ego and Archetype: Individuation and the Religious Function of the Psyche* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1972), p. 103.

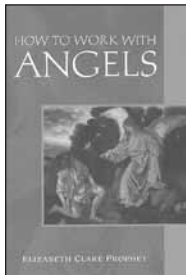


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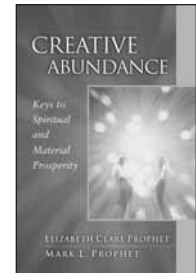
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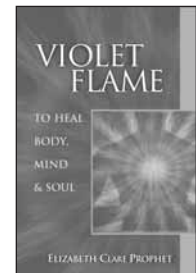


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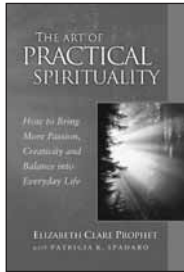
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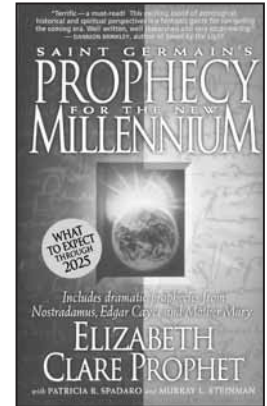
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