

## { Guest Column }

# How open is your heart?

Only when we unlock our Heart Chakra can an abundance of love flow freely, says this month's guest columnist **Sarah Bladen**

For many, life is a bittersweet journey – a blend of joyful, carefree moments sprinkled with sadness, pain and loss. Some of us experience one too many disappointments, which can lead to a bruised heart and a broken spirit. As a result, we might then choose to keep our heart half closed, as a form of self-protection. I know, I've been there. Although if you choose to remain in this space, the only person you continue to hurt is yourself. As Deepak Chopra once said, "The less you open your heart to others, the more you suffer."

At the root of our being is the vibrational energy of love, and when this flows freely, life is beautiful. Aware of this, I finally dared to expand my heart and this small action helped me to connect to myself and others in a different light.

It also guided me to Chakradance – a free-flowing dance for the soul that draws upon the ancient wisdom of the chakra system and Jung psychology to unlock our emotions, thoughts and intuitions.

The Sanskrit name for the Heart Chakra is Anahata, which literally means 'unhurt or unstuck'. When our fourth chakra is blocked, emotions such as anger, fear and sadness surface from there. When this energy centre is in complete harmony – then only pure unconditional love emanates. And it becomes what the Buddhists call Mahakaruna – a channel for universal compassion. This is also sometimes referred to as our true self.

In Chakradance, we learn that our Heart Chakra's true purpose is to help us experience the joy of giving and receiving love. The idea is to turn inwards, to surrender to the sea of our emotions, to trust and connect to our soul. In doing so, we release any past relationship wounds or attachments that might be keeping us from evolving. Once we allow infinite love to flow through us, it has an incredibly healing effect.



One of the key components to unblocking our Anahata is finding forgiveness and compassion for ourselves and others.

In a state of peaceful meditation, let your heart reveal the answers to the following questions: Are you able to love yourself as you are or do you put up certain conditions? Are you holding on to any resentment or anger?

Once we start believing we are truly worthy of experiencing a pure form of love, it arises naturally from within. Spiritual masters say that the sign of an aligned, harmonious Heart Chakra is the ability to feel great compassion for all living creatures.

One of the biggest lessons I've learnt when it comes to the Heart Chakra is that the practice of non-judgmental awareness helps us to develop a purer form of love. Like the Dalai Lama says, "Love is the absence of judgement." If we are always judging others, this then leads to a sense of separation and exclusion, which in turn creates wars and genocide.

Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh is another proponent of non-judgement: "We are here to awaken from our illusion of separateness. Our own suffering comes from our own ignorance or lack of understanding, not from other people. When we understand this we can open our arms to embrace all people." That is the beauty of universal love... ❁

For information on Sarah's upcoming Chakradance workshops go to [www.oncloudzen.com](http://www.oncloudzen.com)