

CHAPTER SIX - THE SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA

QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA

Find a quiet place where you can sit undisturbed. Ask yourself the following questions. Do not think about the answer. Go with your immediate response to the question, write it down and go on to the next question.

Only review your answers to the questions when you have finished reading this chapter.

CAN I TRUST MY INSTINCTS?

DO I AVOID TAKING DECISIONS FOR MYSELF?

DO I RELY HEAVILY ON OTHERS FOR ADVICE?

DO I AVOID STRONG/DOMINANT PEOPLE?

DO I TAKE ON RESPONSIBILITY THEN RESENT IT?

DO I HOLD BACK FROM CHALLENGING OTHERS?

DO I FEEL LIMITED OR INVALIDATED BY OTHERS?

AM I JUDGMENTAL OF OTHERS?

DO I CONSTANTLY GIVE WHILE IGNORING MY OWN NEEDS?

AM I FRIGHTENED OF CRITICISM?

DO I CONSTANTLY CRITICISE MYSELF?

AM I LIMITED BY OTHERS' BELIEFS ABOUT ME?

DO I FEAR FAILURE?

DO I CONSTANTLY ATTACK MYSELF?

DO I TRY TO HIDE MISTAKES OR ERRORS I HAVE MADE?

AM I ALWAYS LOOKING FOR APPROVAL FROM OTHER PEOPLE?

DO I LACK SELF-CONFIDENCE?

LOCATION OF THE SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA Navel /Waist area.

SANSKRIT NAME OF THE SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA

Manipura - which means, "filled with jewels."

GLAND ASSOCIATED WITH THE SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA Pancreas.

PARTS OF THE BODY GOVERNED BY THE SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA

Lower Thoracic Vertebrae, Diaphragm, Nervous System, Stomach, Spleen, Gall Bladder, Liver.

ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA

Shaping of personality.

Unfolding of personality.

Growing from experience.

Sense of self.

Judgement of self.

Personal power.

Fear of rejection.

Self-esteem.

Nourishment of self.

DESIRE ASSOCIATED WITH THE SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA

Desire to be liked.

POSITIVE QUALITIES OF THE SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA

Taking full responsibility for our actions.

Self-esteem.

Self-respect.

Integrity.

Living by an honour code.
Keeping our word.

SHADOW SIDE OF THE SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA

Shame.
Feelings of inadequacy.
Self-consciousness.
Lying/Dishonesty/Irresponsibility.
Criticism of self.

ILLNESSES CONNECTED WITH THE SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA

ARTHRITIS
STOMACH PROBLEMS/STOMACH ULCERS
CANCER OF STOMACH/COLON/SPLEEN
DIVERTICULITIS/IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME
DIABETES
LIVER PROBLEMS/HEPATITIS
GALL BLADDER PROBLEMS
INDIGESTION/NAUSEA
ANOREXIA/BULIMIA

MAIN ISSUE

The Solar Plexus Chakra is primarily concerned with our sense of self-esteem and personal power. In terms of the development of the child in its first years the child is attempting to gain control over its body and connect to the earth (First Chakra).

Once the child has developed its control over its body, it begins to explore the external world to find out who it is in relation to the world outside. (Second Chakra).

The Solar Plexus chakra is where we absorb and assimilate the experiences of the world. It is here that we digest things, physically, emotionally and mentally. Hence the link between this chakra and the digestive system. The solar plexus chakra is where we begin to develop our concept of self, where we become self-conscious.

CASE HISTORY

Ray came to me for emotional healing. He told me that he had an older invalid brother. As soon as Ray was old enough to walk, his mother stopped paying him any attention. She needed to look after his invalid brother. As a consequence he did not receive love and attention from his mother. The only way Ray felt he could gain his mother's love was to injure himself.

In his healing session Ray remembered hitting his head against a wall to get his mother's attention and love. He developed a great deal of anger towards his mother, which came out later in his relationships with women. His father was equally unsupportive.

When an older boy at school bullied Ray, his father said, "if you do not hit him back I'll beat you". As a result, he developed low self-esteem, coupled with held-in anger. This was due to his belief that his parents did not love or care about him.

As a child we do not know who we are. We know that we are no longer part of our mother. We explore the external world to find out who we are. We attempt to get our needs met. We digest our experiences in the solar plexus chakra. It is here that we build up our sense of identity, and find out what sort of person we are. This is often called the ego self.

As we attempt to get our needs met, we develop a sense of how successful we are in the world. If we consistently do not get what we want, we may begin to believe feel that there must be something wrong with us.

JUDGEMENT

The solar plexus chakra is the chakra where we judge ourselves and compare ourselves to others. It is the chakra of shame, addiction and self-abuse. If the external world, our parents, teachers and friends all give us little appreciation, care or respect, we begin to feel that there must be something wrong with us. We begin to feel shame.

If we are wearing "low self-esteem glasses", everything that happens to us can further compound our feeling of shame. We feel, "I am being punished by a cruel world". Abusive parents often produce abusive children. Alcoholic parents often pass on their sense of shame and hopelessness on to their children. As the children grow older they will seek any escape from this awful gnawing feeling of shame through drugs, drink, anorexia or suicide attempts.

Shame based behaviour takes two forms: -

<u>INWARD</u>	- Self-criticism	- Self-abuse - drugs/drink
	- Self-punishment - anorexia	- Introverted behaviour
<u>OUTWARD</u>	- Criticism of others	-Violence towards others
	- Vandalism	-Extroverted behaviour

Shame leads a child to become ashamed of its needs and feelings. When the young child is growing and learning, it needs a lot of positive encouragement from its parents and teachers. Any criticism can rapidly erode the child's delicate sense of self-worth. The child is like beautiful delicate plant growing towards the sun. It needs constant nurture and care in its early years to build a positive self-image.

When my son was young whenever he did anything he would look to me for my approval. If I smiled, he would be happy but if I frowned or seemed cross, he would feel he was doing the wrong thing. This process of seeking approval is how we develop a sense of right or wrong. Parents can teach us what is right and wrong without destroying our self-worth.

If we feel loved, we can see that although our actions may not acceptable, we are still loved. Children with a strong self-image usually go on to become well-balanced adults.

SEEKING APPROVAL

Unfortunately, the habit of seeking approval from parents, teachers and authority figures becomes deeply seated. I realised when I was thirty years of age that I was still looking for my mother's approval. I wanted her to tell me that I was a success that I was doing well in her eyes.

I quickly realised that unless I approved of myself, no one would ever value or approve of me. I had to start on the inside to get what I wanted outside. Once I really started to value myself, I no longer needed the approval of other people! I no longer needed to criticise other people in response to feeling empty inside.

When we seek the approval of others, we are giving our power away to them. Our self-esteem is totally dependent on their smile or frown! Our whole sense of self-worth is wrapped up in worrying about what other people think about us. Most of us are still looking for approval from parents, teachers, employers, partners, even late on in life.

THIS IS THE GREATEST SOURCE OF POWER LOSS OF ALL THE CHAKRAS.

SAGE

An old Chinese sage was once asked why he was so happy. He replied: - "I used to worry about what people thought of me. My life was a constant strain. Then I realised that most people were too preoccupied with their own problems to care about me, so I stopped worrying. Then I became happy."

There is saying in India: "If you feel small, you want to cut everyone's heads off"

When we seek approval from other people, we send a cord of energy from our solar plexus chakra to their solar plexus. WE LITERALLY GIVE THEM OUR POWER. The less self-esteem we have, the more we do this. We are paralysed by the fear of other people's disapproval.

We may be still seeking our father's approval even after he has died. We will then find a father figure to play the role of our dad. We then give our power to him, wanting him to approve of our action. It is hardly surprising that we get illnesses in this part of the body (see list).

LIES

Most of our school days are spent dodging criticism. We blame our brothers, sisters; schoolmates, even the dog or cat if things go wrong! We lie to avoid being told off. We so desperately need external approval to feel worthy that we can never own up to doing anything wrong. We become terrified of making mistakes. Schools stigmatising children who make "mistakes" worsen this tendency.

When I began my acupuncture training, we had to locate the acupuncture points on the body, using felt tip pens on each other. The "teacher" would come round and mark our points right or wrong. I felt good if I got it right and a failure if I got it "wrong". I began to realise that I would often mark a point in the right place without really understanding why I did it. When I made a mistake, the teacher came and explained how to find the point. I learnt more by making "mistakes" than by always getting it right.

Life is for learning. We need to make "mistakes" to learn. They are not really mistakes, rather "learning opportunities".

GRANDDAUGHTER

A colleague told me the story of his granddaughter. He went to the swimming pool to see how well she could swim. She only swam half a length and gave up. Getting out of the pool in tears she said, "I've failed". He said "No you have not failed, you have evaluated your performance. Do it again and re-evaluate your performance".

She liked the idea, dried her eyes and went back to the pool. She sat at the side of the pool for a moment with her eyes closed, then dived in and swam the length. When she got out this time she was smiling. Her grandfather said to her "How did you evaluate your performance this time?"

"I was more in control and felt more positive" she replied. "What were you doing just before you dived in, when you had your eyes closed?" he asked. "I was seeing myself swimming through the water, like a fish, to the other end," she said.

If you feel powerless when you are around certain people, ask yourself "Why am I seeking their approval?" Imagine you are taking your power back into your solar plexus. Imagine that you are cutting that cord of energy. Ask yourself, "Do I want to be controlled by this person for the rest of my life?"

Be aware of your language. Do you ask for someone's permission to do things? Do you ask people if you have done the right thing after each action? Do you constantly want other people to tell you are doing a good job or that you are a good person?

CRITICISM

If we constantly criticise others, if we are judgmental towards others, we are sending energy out of our solar plexus to this person. We criticise because we feel weak and powerless.

Daskalos, the renowned Greek healer said he could "see" this judgmental energy coming out of the mouth of a particularly vindictive person. This energy took the form of snakes and attacked the person being criticised. The attacked person's energy field was quite strong and the snakes bounced back to return to the critical man. The snakes entered his heart, causing constrictions around his heart and eventually he had a heart attack! ["The Magus of Strovolos by Markides"].

This may be an extreme example, but it indicates that our thoughts and emotions have great power. Many illnesses like arthritis can be caused by an over critical personality. If we constantly attack, criticise or judge ourselves, we may develop a tumour, or other illnesses. This internal attack will suppress our immune system allowing cancerous cells to multiply unhindered. Burning joints or rigidity can often be caused by held-in anger over long periods of time.

GUT FEELINGS

The solar plexus is connected with our gut level intuition. We may have a feeling about someone that we meet. Our rational mind gets in the way and says, "don't be so stupid, he is a nice person, everyone says so". However, the feeling in the pit of our stomach says, "do not trust him".

How do we know if gut feelings are genuine intuition or just our fears projected onto the world? I suggest that you trust your initial feeling and go with it. You may be proved wrong. If experience contradicts your initial impression, then you know it was your fear speaking to you. Generally first impressions are very accurate.

HEALING THE WOUNDS

Suffering is created because we identify with our ego self. The ego self sees everything through separation, me-you, me-bird, me-rock, me-plant. The ego sees every experience as outside of itself. When something happens to us we say, "this is happening to me". Then we respond in one of three ways: -

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Attraction | - we find the experience pleasant. |
| Aversion | - we find the experience unpleasant. |
| Indifference/boredom | - we have no strong feelings. |

For instance, we are happily driving along in our car, when suddenly someone pulls out in front of us, causing us to brake sharply. How do we react, fear, anger, rage, indifference? We may feel shaken up, but what is shaken up? It is our pleasant emotional state. If we get angry with the person in the other car, we send a stream of energy from our solar plexus to this person.

As long as we continue to feel violated by their action, we will lose energy. However, if we shrug our shoulders and say "no harm done, that's life, the unexpected happens just when you least expect it"; we immediately detach from the experience. Unless we detach our emotions immediately, we can spend the rest of the day fuming.

If they hit your car with their car, how would you respond? We need to detach from our emotions and act in an appropriate way. If we get angry, the other person will become angry or defensive and this may create a worse incident. This is often the cause of road rage.

SKILFUL ACTION

Skilful action is detached action. Unskilful action is when we react according to our past programming. We react instead of responding appropriately. To respond appropriately we need to detach ourselves from taking everything so personally.

We must be aware of our feelings, which are usually based on past experiences. We notice our anger or our fear, but we do not allow it to propel us into unskilful actions. When something happens to you ask yourself the question, "what would love do in this situation?"

LYING/SECRETS/GOSSIP/SLANDER

When we feel weak, powerless, guilty or shameful, we cover up by lying. We will lie for many reasons: -

- We have something to hide
- We want to impress others
- We fear disapproval
- We are ashamed of our needs

When people lie, they often cover up their solar plexus. People also protect their solar plexus with their hands when they feel powerless.

The solar plexus is the chakra of secrets and intrigue. How often do you hear people say, "do not tell anyone I said this, this is between you and me". Secrets are an attempt to manipulate others.

Gossiping is similar; it is a form of criticism. Most of us like to hear gossip, we feel better if someone else is dragged through the mud. The media is full of gossip and slander. Why do we enjoy seeing the rich and famous humiliated in public? It makes us feel better. "How the mighty are fallen". We feel relieved that they are no better than we are.

The solar plexus is the seat of the emotional body and is connected with raw emotional energy. The emotional body is like a drug addict, which feeds off negative emotions. Most of us need to get our hit of negative emotions each day from the media to make us feel alive. We all seem to have a macabre interest in disaster, crime and personal tragedy.

Why is the media full of such doom and gloom? Surely there must be some positive things happening in the world! We need to get a balance in our lives, we need to spend time focusing on things which uplift and inspire us. We need to read newspapers like 'Positive News' to get a more balanced view of life.

For most of us, our lives are rather dull and mundane; therefore we turn to the media, to books, films, TV or newspapers to make life more exciting. We need a constant diet of violence, sex and scandal to distract us from our own fears or to make our life less humdrum.

WHY ARE WE SUFFERING? We feel inadequate We feel unworthy
We feel guilty We fear failure

If we feel like a victim, we can stay powerless and blame everyone else for our problems. If we take back our power, we can begin to change our life by taking responsibility for ourselves. We need to be honest with ourselves and attend to our needs. If we only focus on our suffering, we will never heal.

HIGHER SELF

We can only heal when we move away from focusing on our suffering. The higher self is the part of us that does not perceive that we are separate. When we focus on the higher self we see what unites us with others.

When we are in touch with higher self we see each person as a part of the whole. If we hurt someone else, we are hurting ourselves. When we move away from just focusing on the three lower chakras, the personality chakras, we can begin to see the bigger picture. While our awareness is focused entirely in the lower three chakras we will never heal.

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN YOU ARE GIVING YOUR POWER AWAY?

Observe when you are with someone, what happens to your solar plexus area. Observe if it becomes tight or uncomfortable; observe the feelings that appear when you are with a certain person. These feelings may be feelings of irritation, resentment, feeling that you feel like a child or feeling that you are terrified of this person. Feelings of powerlessness are all related to this chakra, the chakra of self-esteem.

WHY DO WE HAVE THESE FEELINGS?

The reason why we have these feelings is because when this person moves into our energy field, they stimulate our unresolved issues, our lack of self-worth. We have too much of their energy in our energy field and this produces a feeling of irritation. The natural response is to want to move away, not to see this person, because they are bringing up our unresolved feelings.

The way to resolve these emotions is to use each interaction we have with other people to diagnose where our feelings originate. We need to diagnose why we have given our power away in the past and why certain people can re-stimulate this feeling of powerlessness.

With most of us this feeling can be traced back to childhood when we constantly sought the approval of our parents. If this approval was not given at this early age, we will be continually seeking it later on in life. As we grow older seeking approval from others will become so well established that we will be doing it automatically.

Ironically, other people sense our lack of self-worth and are reluctant to give us the approval that we are looking for. Until we change, we will continue to repeat this pattern time and time again.

HOW CAN WE CHANGE THESE PATTERNS?

When you are in a power situation, you need to diagnose yourself and see how you are interacting with other people. Begin to notice how you respond and look at the language that you use.

You need to emphasise to yourself that you do not need this person's approval and that you can be happy whatever they say about you. If they do not give you any attention, you can say, "well that is fine". If they are judgmental or critical, you can say, "well that is their problem".

BOUNDARIES

When you are with an authority figure, you must redefine your boundary and not allow them to dominate you. Visualise an energy field around you and say, "you cannot encroach on my space without my permission". This is the beginning of recognising that you are just as important as the other person is, and that your opinions, your feelings, your beliefs, are just as valuable as theirs are.

Eventually you will come to a point where you can say to the other person, "I acknowledge what you are saying, I do not agree with you, but that is fine, we can happily disagree" and it is not necessary to have an argument.

An argument usually takes place when one person wants to convince another person that their viewpoint is right. When we have good self-esteem we can happily express our opinions and not necessarily want the other person to agree with us.

There is no need for either person to agree. All they need to do is state their opinions clearly and both people can continue to discuss their opinions, rather than one person having to agree to do what the other person wants.

We no longer have to agree with the other person's point of view or try to convince them of our own point of view. We can allow a dialogue to take place, and eventually there will be a coming together of ideas, or a separation. It is not always possible to reach an agreement with another person.

HOW TO STRENGTHEN THE SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA

The main way to strengthen this chakra is to nourish ourselves. This nourishment can be on a physical, emotional or mental level.

FOOD

We need to cook nourishing food and eat it in a relaxed atmosphere. The main issue with this chakra is the ability to nourish ourselves rather than expecting other people to do this for us. As long as we look outside of ourselves for nourishment or approval, we are effectively giving our power away.

Generally, people with low self-esteem have a tendency to eat badly and do not care for their bodies. The issue here is different from the base chakra where we are eating just to stay alive, with the solar plexus chakra we are eating to nourish ourselves.

We need to make sure that we get a balanced and nutritious diet. We need to listen to our body, to find out what foods and drinks are best for us. When we eat we should not eat in a rush or in an agitated state. Sit down to eat with an attitude of reverence and appreciation for the goodness that has been given to us by the earth.

When we eat we must avoid taking in negative images or negative thoughts. It is very important not to watch television, or to listen to the radio while eating, particularly if it is a news programme. If we discuss work or business or argue when we are eating we will take this tension into our body. This will mean that our food is not properly digested or assimilated.

CARING FOR THE BODY

Apart from eating good food, we also need to nourish our bodies through therapies like massage. We need to look after our body and make sure that we spend time acknowledging its needs, taking proper exercise and time to rest.

All these activities are ways of giving to ourselves. If we do not care for our body then this will affect all aspects of our life. This is not the same as being obsessed with our body or our appearance. This is saying, "My body is just perfect for me and I am going to love it and nourish it".

We need to keep our body in a good state, whether it is through nutrition, herbs, acupuncture, massage or other holistic therapies. Drugs may be needed at times to make sure the body stays healthy; whatever is appropriate. We need to trust our gut feelings about what food we need to eat, what medicines we need to take and what therapies we need to receive.

DEALING WITH ANGER

On an emotional level, we need to start to redraw our boundaries and to look at ourselves in relationship to others, to look at our own needs. Many people have found that assertiveness courses are useful in helping them to redraw their boundaries. We need to start to learn how to express ourselves to other people. These skills are something that we may not have developed in our early years.

We can either feel completely helpless and powerless or have excessive anger and rage. If you are stuck in one of these two extremes, it generally means that you have an issue to do with the solar plexus chakra. Assertiveness is not the same as being aggressive; being assertive is the ability to state clearly your needs and your feelings to other people.

When we get angry it is usually because we feel that we are not being listened to, or we are not being respected. The anger is usually a reaction, which is due to a feeling of powerless. The more we feel that people are not listening to us the angrier we get. All these reactions are generally due to not getting approval, not feeling that we were worthy of the attention of others at a young age

As a result we either develop a feeling of complete submissiveness, because we feel that our needs are not important or we develop a feeling that we have to push to get what we want all the time. Neither of these patterns of behaviour will lead us to happiness and peace, we have to find a balance by speaking clearly and expressing our needs.

SAYING "NO"

Saying "No" is a way of drawing a boundary. If we say "No", it tells people that they have reached our boundary. There is a saying: - "What good is your Yes if you can't say No?"

If we constantly say "Yes" because we are seeking the approval of others then we overload ourselves with things that we need to do for others. We either become exhausted or we become resentful because we are meeting everybody else's needs and not our own.

When we say, "No" it enables us to clearly say, "I am not going to be able to fulfil your needs". Other people will not reject us if we say clearly why we can not do what they want us to do. We need to express ourselves without feeling guilty. If we take on something we do not really want to do, generally we either do it grudgingly or we will end up trying to find an excuse for not doing it.

It is very common for people to agree to do things; they will say "I will come and help you out" and then at the last minute they phone up and say they cannot come. The reason for this is that they did not want to do it in the first place, but they did not want to lose your friendship. They want to say the right thing.

We actually end up creating more problems for ourselves because we actually do not do what we say we are going to do, and this leaves the other person high and dry. If somebody asks you to do something feel in your gut, "Do you really want to do it?" Do you really want to say "yes"?

If you do not feel that you want to do what they ask then you have two choices. You can either say, "well I'll think about it and let you know" or you can say "I am sorry, but I just do not have the time" or "I do not have the energy, maybe I can help you another time".

If you are clear and honest about whether you can do something, then people will respect you. If you constantly agree to do things and you constantly say "yes" to people and then let them down, then people will gradually get fed up with you. Likewise if you ask somebody to do something for you and they let you down, you will not bother to ask them in the future and your friendship will start to decline.

The solar plexus is to do with giving to ourselves, and the first step of giving to ourselves is saying "No".

HOW CAN WE BREAK THROUGH PATTERNS OF LOW SELF-ESTEEM?

- STEP ONE - Notice whose approval you are seeking.
STEP TWO - Ask yourself "Why?"
STEP THREE - Acknowledge that you have a right to express who you are.
STEP FOUR - Remember an incident/experience when you felt good about yourself.
- Remember how this felt in your body.
- Remember your sense of achievement.

To change a pattern of low self-esteem, we need to stop constantly dwelling on our fear of disapproval or rejection. We need to approve of ourselves. We need to connect with memories/experiences when we were proud to be ourselves. Some people find it hard to remember any positive experiences.

JEAN

Jean had had a terrible childhood, her father beat her and her mother had little time for her. She could not remember any positive memory from her childhood. In her adult life all she could remember was a positive memory of walking outside in nature with her husband. The other positive memory she had was a memory of passing her driving test. I asked her to remember these two memories every time she felt unworthy, unloved or uncared for.

I also asked her to write a letter to her father and mother, expressing all her: -

- 1) Anger
- 2) Fear
- 3) Sadness
- 4) Appreciation of both parents.

Although she did not actually send the letter, writing the letter helped her to release some of her past feelings. Her relationship with her parents started to improve as did her self-esteem.

HEALING LETTER

The letter allows us to express all our contradictory feelings. Deep down we all want to be loved by others. When we do not perceive that we are getting this love we feel: -

Hurt/Angry

Fearful

Sad.

These letters can be written to anyone - our boss, partner, parents, children, brother or sister (it is not necessary to send the letter). It is necessary for us to express these feelings before we can express more positive feelings. We may need to write a letter each day until we can release long held emotions.

It is useful to enlist the help of a good friend to do this process. Read the letter out aloud to this person, they are your witness. We all need a caring, non-judgemental witness, to see how hurt we were.

Generally most people feel great resistance to writing these letters, so we need someone to help us. Part of us does not want to let go of feeling hurt, hard done by, powerless.

This is because our wound has been our reference point; it is how we relate to the world. If we feel that we are a victim, we can blame someone else for our problems. We can believe that the other person has ruined our life. We want them to suffer as much as we have, so we will not let go.

IT DOES NOT MEAN WE CONDONE THE OTHER PERSON'S BEHAVIOUR.

We need to detach our energy, to stop responding in the same way to a certain stimulus. We need to stop looking for approval from other people. They will generally not appreciate us until we let go of wanting approval. When we let go of seeking validation from others for what we do, generally people will start to appreciate us. It is ironic that as soon as we stop looking for praise, everyone starts giving us it! By that time we no longer need it.

If you still need approval from others, do not feel that you are a failure. Just be honest and say to them: -

"I need your approval"

"Tell me you care"

"I need to feel appreciated/wanted/loved"

If you cook a nice meal for someone, be honest with that person. Say to them, "I would like your appreciation" if that is what you want. Do not sit there getting angry because they eat your meal and do not say how good it is. Be honest about your needs; let people know how you feel.

AFFIRMATIONS TO STRENGTHEN THE SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA

I TRUST MY INSTINCTS

I TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MYSELF

EVERYONE IS MY TEACHER

I TRUST MY FEELINGS

I AM APPRECIATED BY OTHERS

I CAN ACHIEVE WHATEVER I WANT

PEOPLE RESPECT ME

I CAN NOURISH MYSELF

I CAN GIVE TO MYSELF

I AM A POWERFUL PERSON

I NO LONGER NEED TO LOOK FOR THE APPROVAL OF OTHERS

I DESERVE THE BEST

WHEN THE SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA IS IN BALANCE, HOW WILL WE FEEL?

When this chakra is in balance, we are happy with ourselves as we are. We do not constantly criticise ourselves or compare ourselves with others. We will have no need to judge others

We have confidence in our ability to rise to any challenge; we do not allow other people's negative attitudes to deflect us. We trust our instincts and our gut-level intuition.

When this chakra is in balance we are able to give to ourselves, without feeling guilty. We can cook ourselves beautiful meals and enjoy nurturing therapies like massage, reflexology and shiatsu. We can say, "No" to others without feeling guilty.

REVIEW

Now review the answers you gave to the questions at the beginning of the chapter. Do you have weaknesses in this chakra? Consider how you may be able to strengthen these weaknesses. Write down some suggestions.