

*TLC Inspiration: by Julia Forster*

## **Quick-Fire Chakra Sessions**

**Over the next seven days, use these Quick-Fire Chakra Sessions to spark your inner energy centres and further connect with the artistic impulse which has led to you becoming a writer. These prompts are best done in the earlier parts of the day, and ideally in a quiet corner of your home, with a candle lit if you have one safely available. Enjoy!**

### **Root Chakra**

**Intention:** Sit in silence for a couple of minutes with one intention: to allow your mind to drift back to a happy time from birth up to the age of five which you connect with as having been instrumental in your development as a writer.

**Activity:** Spend some time reconnecting with that memory. Bring to mind the sounds, sights, tastes, smells and feelings that reveal themselves to you. Spend five minutes writing down the memory and capture it in the words that arise. You might find that your vocabulary is somewhat restricted, as you are writing from an infant's point of view.

**Insight:** Your root chakra is activated at birth and stays in focus up to about the age of five. This energy centre is related to our feelings of self-esteem and rootedness in this world. It is a time when we first felt our connection to the earth, to our birth mothers and to our family of origin. Strong roots in our day-to-day life mean we have a better ability to bend and be flexible to the vicissitudes of life and all that reveals itself to us, even in times of crisis.

In periods of uncertainty, our ability as writers to adapt and stay strong in our convictions is going to be more crucial than ever. Culture-at-large will need, in the months and years ahead, writers to synthesise complex situations, to think critically, to consider opinions before coming to their own novel appraisals of the state of affairs. The more we can feed our roots in times of turbulence, the more sustained we will be when the opportunity to be in company - and in print – rekindles again.

**Closing meditation:** Feed your roots! Decide on one thing you are going to do today which will make you feel more secure in your day-to-day life. This could be as straight forward as spending just a few more minutes making yourself a delicious cup of coffee, barista-style, to caffeinate your morning. Or it might be more complex, such as setting up a four-way video call with old friends. Or perhaps it will be to hold the intention to go to bed thirty minutes earlier to finish that brilliant book that has been languishing on your TBR pile. Whatever will nourish you, make a promise to do that one act of self-care for yourself today.

## Sacral Chakra

**Intention:** Sit in silence for a couple of minutes with one intention: to let all the tension dissolve. Loosen around your jaw, around your eyes, your ears; allow all your facial muscles to relax. Let go of your expectations for the day ahead.

**Activity:** Today's invitation is to create a small altar on a surface in your home – it could be on your bookshelf, mantelpiece or on a small coffee table. It doesn't need to be a big display – just a few found objects will suffice: a feather, a tangle of lichen, a locket. Perhaps you could include a keepsake an elderly relative entrusted to you, or a single flower from a bouquet you picked from your garden?

**Insight:** I believe that even the smallest acts of creating a space for the sacred can allow new energy to flow through. These altars become a focal point for meditation and our writing practice, but also allow us to pick up and put down objects from our altars at will, when we feel the need to 'call in' the object's energy for our well-being or our current writing project.

The sacral chakra is connected with our feelings of flexibility and flow, and also with a sense of pleasure. By setting up a little altar, we can create small pockets of joy in our households no matter how disorganised, cramped or busy our homes may otherwise be! You might decide to tidy this away immediately, but maybe you will keep your altar and add to it over the weeks ahead by adding new items. Perhaps you could include objects which call in the elements of fire, water, air and earth, or maybe you could root through your collection of jewellery or gemstones to see if you have any precious stones to add to your alternative altar!

**Closing meditation:** Take one small item from your shrine and either put it on your desk if you're writing, or in your pocket if you are going to be moving a lot in the course of the day. If you encounter a feeling during the day of being stuck – perhaps suffering from writer's block or maybe just a ruptured discussion online or IRL – remember to touch, look or connect with the energy you imbued in that object. Reconnect with the feeling of the dissolution of tension and welcome the invitation to be flexible again.

## Solar Plexus Chakra

**Intention:** Sit in silence for a couple of minutes with one intention: to connect to this powerful energy centre, the solar plexus, which gives you the motivation to commit to your writing practice, to show up at the page, to keep creating. Take six deep and slow breaths to allow inspiration and energy in to fuel you for the activity ahead.

**Activity:** Using a pen and notebook or just a plain sheet of A4, jot down a thought shower around the title of your work-in-progress. It doesn't matter if your writing project is simply a letter to your Mum, a haiku or a full-length novel, whatever writing project you are currently working on, the activity will still be the same. Now populate the blank page with a sentence or single words to describe what it will look like when you have completed that work-in-progress. For example, you might write

down 'publication' or 'book launch party' or they might be something as simple as 'posting the letter to my Mum at the end of the day' or 'typing up my haiku and posting it onto my blog'.

**Insight:** When we connect with the bigger picture it can magnetise us towards our goal. Tapping into our inner motivation and drive can give us the fuel we need for the long haul, whether that is the day ahead, the month ahead or the year ahead. Chancing our hand by putting down our commitment in ink to write our next work in this way can make it feel more tangible, more real to us in our internal landscape.

**Closing meditation:** It actually doesn't matter if we decide to frame, shred or burn the piece of paper on which we've committed to that writing goal; the act was in articulating the commitment in that moment! In beginning to visualise the goal, we begin to motivate and apply ourselves to the task at hand.

### Heart Chakra

**Intention:** Sit in silence for a couple of minutes with one intention: to collect to your inner resilience, found at your heart centre, which is going to see you through the best and worst of times with equal measures of acceptance, and without grasping. Place a palm on your chest bone and feel the pulsing beat of your heart which energises your body, night and day.

**Activity:** Make yourself a drink mindfully – whatever your favourite drink is – a glass of water, a mug of hot chocolate, perhaps a herbal or caffeinated tea... You can even add a little splash of ceremony if you fancy, perhaps dusting down your favourite teapot or bone china mug you never use for fear of breaking it, or adding ice cubes and lemon if you've chosen a cold drink. Return to your quiet space with your drink and consume it mindfully. Feel the fluid restore your inner balance and hydrate your digestive system. Before you finish, fill up a large glass or even better - a large bottle - with water and set it by your desk or put it in your bag to carry with you and sip from throughout the day ahead.

**Insight:** Like the inevitable tick of a clock, the heart keeps on beating; the organ doesn't judge us. Our hearts are stoic and dependable for as long as we are alive. By giving ourselves the simple nourishment we need, we will have, in turn, deeper resources to tap into in order to write, in order to care for others and in order to care for ourselves over the long haul. Something as simple as drinking without interruption, judgement or questioning can reconnect us with that heart centre, radical as it is in its simplicity.

**Closing meditation:** By bringing this practice of mindfully hydrating ourselves throughout the day, we will recall the invitation to replenish our heart centre; this is the powerhouse in our energy system from which we love and respect ourselves and others as well as connect with feelings compassion, empathy, acceptance, grief and forgiveness. Sometimes the writing project might not go in the way we'd intended, or maybe we find we receive a rejection. The heart beats on regardless; we keep going and wake up to begin another day afresh.

## Throat Chakra

**Intention:** Sit in silence for a couple of minutes with one intention: to tune into your voice whatever that notion of ‘voice’ means for you as an individual writer.

**Activity:** For me, voice is about resonance and vibration. When I am writing “well”, I am in sync with the energy surrounding me and the throat chakra is a great place to have fun and experience this feeling of vibrational frequency first-hand. Take three deep in- and out-breaths – in through your nose, out through your mouth; sigh the breath out if you like. On the next in-breath, hold for a second and then allow the breath out very slowly and find a pitch to hum with, on a long and sustained outbreath, using little breath, just a small amount. There is no right or wrong here – your pitch might go up and down, it might quiver or waver, or your hum might be strong and resonant. Go on and improvise for as long as you like.

**Insight:** The throat chakra is an important chakra for writers as it here that we find our ability to express ourselves. Take courage in vocalising your own truth and articulating your unique gifts on the page. Remember that, just as a musician or a singer warms up before a performance by practising scales and harmonies, so can we, as writers, conduct our own ‘warm up’ voice work both on and off the page. Morning pages or automatic writing might be one way that you have already accessed this improvisation technique on the page, but allow yourself the gift of improvising with your vocal chords as you’re washing up, pegging out the washing or having a shower.

**Closing meditation:** Our voice, as writers, needn’t be restricted to the manuscript or work-in-progress, we can use our voice in a myriad different ways to express our unique truths – from posting a supportive post on Twitter to calling up a writer friend in need and offering to hear them out. Practice doesn’t always make perfect, but it certainly brings us closer.

## Brow Chakra

**Intention:** Sit in silence for a couple of minutes with one intention: to tap into with the energy of inspiration that surrounds us, picturing a web or energy grid that surrounds you.

**Activity:** Dip into your photo album on your phone and find a photo or selfie of you which reminds you of a time when you were manifesting joy and purpose in the world. Perhaps you’re with your friends or family members, or perhaps you’re alone. Set it as your wallpaper on your phone. If you don’t have a smart phone, you might put find an analogue photography and put it by your writing desk. If you feel you want an even more ambitious task or activity, you could even read Shakti Gawain’s fantastic book *Creative Visualisation* and create a ‘Treasure Map’.

**Insight:** I have used creative visualisation at times of junctures, when I’ve departed old paradigms, or faced big decision in my life. Treasure maps help me to visualise the path ahead as I took steps into the unknown, especially when I was beginning big book projects or becoming a Mum for the first time... These treasure maps can

become talismanic in their power to give us forward momentum and vision for both the chapters and verses of our books but also our lives ahead.

**Closing meditation:** Whatever our religious persuasion, we can connect to the universal and divine energy at will. In channelling our abilities to visualise the future in a positive way we can tap into our natural powers of intuition and our ability to manifest the future, in line with the divine. These are gifts we've had since birth, but they so often become overlaid by logic and rational thought that we lose them as we age. Having these images of happy and joyful times by our sides can help us to connect to a positive vision of the future.

### Crown Chakra

**Intention:** Sit in silence for a couple of minutes with one intention: to become aligned.

**Activity:** Meditate in silence alone visualising the energy centres you have been working with over the past seven days. Allow the energy to be in flux and flow, like sand pouring from an egg timer and being revolved at the completion of the course – the energy goes in the energy goes out, we are the very network connections which will manifest new written work for the world. Let's feel it flow!

**Insight:** When we're responding to our deepest artistic impulse, we are not writing to prescription nor are we writing what the market demands of us. We write at our best when our chakras are aligned and the universal energy or *chi* as it is sometimes known, is flowing abundantly through us. It is our job to get our ego out of the way and our pen on the page so that we can be working at our best pitch, timbre or vibration – whatever metaphor feels best for you.

**Closing meditation:** Take heart! There is change ahead, yes, but if we stay aligned, empowered and energised, we can face deep uncertainty, vulnerability and change. Go write with conviction, creativity and courage!

Julia Forster is an award-winning author and TLC Mentor and Reader who is based in mid-Wales. She has published two books: *What a Way to Go* (Atlantic Books, 2016) and *Muses: Revealing the Nature of Inspiration* (Pocket Essentials, 2007). Julia works in publishing and writer development and she is also studying for a Diploma at the UK School of Spiritual Development with Dr Brenda Davies, who teaches using chakra exercises and meditations for unlocking the body's energy centres. [www.julia-forster.com](http://www.julia-forster.com) @WriterForster