

The colour of energy

According to Ayurvedic philosophy, colours have healing or harmful properties that can affect our bodies as well as our moods. Each shade contains different wavelengths of light energy, and generates different vibrations that subtly affect our own energies. The body's seven important energy centres, the chakras, are depicted in the form of many-petalled lotuses or whirling wheels of colour. These centres draw in energy from the universe and supply it to our physical and non-physical bodies. The energy channel that connects all the chakras follows the course of the spine.

using colour

The effect of colour is recognized by many people who don't care about the theories but just do what works: they paint fast-food eateries bright red – to make us eat up and leave quickly – and hospitals in healing blues and greens. We are acknowledging the power of colour when we see red, feel blue, lapse into a brown study or walk around under our own personal grey cloud.

Like everything else, shades of colour have *gunas*, or inner qualities. You can train your eye to pick out those that are sattvic: their clear tones promote harmony and

▷ Green is an ideal colour to use for a workplace, as it balances *tejas* – the mental fire that fuels intellectual efforts – and promotes a feeling of calm alertness.



enlightenment. Harsh, over-bright rajasic hues put your nerves on edge, and muddy tamasic shades dull the senses.

Though we can't always control the colours that surround us, we can choose what to wear and how to decorate our

▽ If you're run down or lethargic, surround yourself with energizing colours and feel them gently raise your spirits.

homes. An insomniac whose bedroom is red or orange, for example, would be well advised to redecorate in a gentle shade of blue. If you sometimes feel out of touch with reality, repaint any white walls with warm pastels. Sombre colours (including certain cold shades of blue) can deepen depression. A clear violet will help you to pray or meditate, and green will keep your judgement unclouded while you work.



COLOURS FOR BALANCE

When your dominant dosha is aggravated, you can choose colours that help bring it back into balance.

Vata needs warming and grounding with colours such as red, orange or yellow. Avoid violet or purple, which can make vata types light-headed. Pastel shades such as pink are often helpful.

Pitta needs cooling colours such as blue, violet or white. Avoid red, orange, yellow, black, and rajasic shades of any colour.

Kapha needs warm, bright, energizing colours such as red, orange, yellow or violet. Avoid brown or grey.