



The Magic of Skin Healing Mantras

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"The words you speak become the house you live in."
- Hafiz

Introduction

When I was making my transition from “normal person” to hippie yoga geek, there were two things that took the longest time for me to swallow. One of them was the concept of, and even the word: energy. The other was mantra – the healing power of sacred words and phrases.

I came to Ayurveda through yoga, which as some of you may know, and I may as well reveal to the rest of you, was instrumental in healing an eating disorder I suffered from.

Yoga was the gateway to Ayurveda and Eastern philosophies for me, and as I tentatively began to explore these philosophies and techniques, the results were undeniable. My life, my skin and my health transformed and with every little bit of success I saw, I was able to suspend disbelief a little further and take on the ideas I had previously labeled “woo-woo” and too crazy.

What I shunned the most initially (mantra) has become one of my most powerful tools. I want to tell you a little bit more about how to use mantra personally to help heal my skin, but also more importantly, my relationship with my skin.

Ayurveda believes that our skin health is tied to our emotional health. Negative emotions, especially self-loathing and anger can show up on the skin as acne. Holding onto past sadnesses, injustices or grudges can show up as deep, stubborn cystic acne.

We can use mantra to begin to shift our emotions and thus, to shift our skin.

We can also use mantra to heal our relationship with the skin, since in our society, it is very hard to love and accept the skin we are given, due to the fact that the media has us chasing an unattainable ideal of perfection.

What are mantras?

Mantras are the repetition of words and phrases of special significance, and can be said either out loud or internally.

Mantras utilize the energy of sound and vibration.

Many of the spiritual traditions say that the universe began with a word, or sound from God, indicating that sound is a very primal and powerful energy.

Words are how we tell stories. And from stories comes reality. Words are how we interpret reality and feelings.

Now, here's the scary part. We all have a bunch of stories and "mantras" that we ALREADY use, only completely unconsciously. You might have even heard these things referred to as "limiting beliefs."

Mantras are a way of introducing and focusing this vibration, or sound, in ourselves. Here are some examples of the power of sound/expression that we use in everyday life:

Imagine having a really, good loud bawl, really weeping, and then the calm and peace that occurs after. This is energy moving through you through sound.

Imagine those songs that instantly lift your mood and make you want to sing along and dance so bad, that no matter what you are doing, your booty starts to shake.

Imagine screaming with frustration.

Imagine joining in chant or song or prayer with others, where you all know the words and the melody, and how you feel chills down your spine. Even collectively singing "Happy Birthday" to someone.

Imagine sitting by the ocean and being lulled by the sound of the waves.

A mantra is a slightly more sophisticated use of sound. A lot of times, weeping or screaming isn't exactly intentional, and with singing or prayer, we are maybe half attuned to the power and half distracted or desensitized.

Yet with a mantra, we repeat it precisely because we wish to become more sensitized and focused to the meaning and intention of the mantra. By repeating a mantra we introduce the vibrational frequency of that mantra into ourselves, so that we begin to resonate with the words and vibration of the mantra.

By saying or thinking a mantra you are literally tuning yourself to resonate at the same vibrational frequency as the deity, quality, or outcome associated with that mantra, or the healing power or intention of that mantra.

Eventually, as you come to resonate at the same frequency as the mantra, the mantra gains its own momentum. At that point, goes a beautiful Sufi saying, "you stop doing the mantra, and the mantra starts doing you."

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They say if a mantra practitioner is deeply at one with their mantra, if they cut themselves their spilled blood would spell the words of their mantra. This may or may not be true, but illustrates that mantras really do become a part of us and have the potential to affect us on a very deep and transformational level.

One theory is that mantras allow us to connect to archetypal energies which have been strengthened over thousands of years by the continual repetitions of practitioners. By saying a mantra you are connecting to the energy field of all those that have also used that mantra before you. I think it is true that the more a mantra has been repeated, the stronger it gets. But I think it is equally true that you will only resonate with mantras that feel right to you, and if you repeat a mantra in an ancient language, it may feel more remote than a mantra you create from your own tongue and your own need.

How do mantras work?

Mantras are used for healing. By connecting to the mantra on an energetic level it may be possible to reprogram the affected or sick part of the body and allow healing to occur.

Mantra is especially useful for stress, anxiety, self-hatred, low self-esteem, feeling stuck, or any other pervasive negative mental state that is strengthened through negative thought patterns. The influence of mantra on the mind-body connection creates a biofeedback loop that replaces unpleasant sensation with love, positivity, and the inclination for new behaviors and beliefs. The subsequent reduction in the negative emotion/state, as those mental pathways are literally allowed to overgrow while mantra carves a new way, can have innumerable physical, emotional and mental benefits.

Most of us have experienced being caught up in a repetitive pattern of thoughts. When these thoughts are negative, angry or otherwise do not serve our highest self, this can be damaging, paralyzing and destructive to both ourselves and others.

By replacing these type of thoughts with a mantra we not only break the habitual negative flow, we also create and reinforce a new flow that is both beneficial and positive.

Recent scientific studies into the neuroplasticity of the brain support this. These studies show that neural pathways are either strengthened by repetition, or weakened by lack of use. By replacing negative thoughts with a mantra you are literally rewiring your brain whilst simultaneously weakening habitual thinking.

Similarly, when stuck in a downward emotional spiral a mantra can not only break the habitual emotional pattern, but also replace it with the positive emotion that you normally associate with the mantra.

Here's the cool part: it's not necessary to investigate the old thoughts, simply replace them with a mantra.

So say good-bye to your therapist and hello to a simple, powerful phrase of your choosing.

Mantras are also very meditative and purifying. They replace the chaos and worry and imagination and swirling mess going on inside your head with just one simple, positive loving string of sound. It's like going from a raucous cacophony to a beautiful simple lullaby. In fact, mantras are very often used as an aid for meditation. Because it is quite hard to empty the mind completely of thought, so the next best thing is to fill it with minimal, healing and pure thought.

Mantras may also tap into universal energetic healing archetypes. When saying a healing mantra you are accessing energy fields far greater than yourself, with huge potential for healing.

Hinduism has a concept called Sanskara, an impression retained from past experiences, which influences our responses and behavior to our present experiences. Or in other words, our deep, unconscious conditioned responses and tendencies. These can be altered and erased by continual contact with a mantra's energy.

I find mantra very healing, because being a Vata-Kapha, I have a tendency to worry and get very anxious and think very negatively. Mantra is truly the easiest and quickest way to turn that around. It makes perfect sense really. If your mind is telling itself a narrative about self-doubt, self-disgust or anything else that is shifting you into paralysis or panic, you must simply replace the story.

A bit of clarification. Mantras are not affirmations. Affirmations work on the psychological and emotional level. Mantras work at a deeper vibrational and spiritual level, and this differentiates them from affirmations.

Finding a Mantra

To use a mantra, first you must discover the mantra you want to use. You can create your own too. An easy way to do it is to first write the negative fearful thoughts you want to erase. Then rewrite them in the most powerful, yet true-to-you opposite way. So for example:

I hate my skin. It will never heal. I don't deserve this.

The exact opposite is:

I love my skin. It will heal. I deserve this.

But "I deserve this"? Sounds a little harsh. And maybe you can't say "I love my skin" really truly and honestly...right now. So how about this?

I am willing to love my skin. It is already healing. I believe this experience is for my greatest good.

Use modifying phrases like "I am willing" or "I try" until the mantra is something you can say without it sounding completely false and out of reach. But also, don't "water it down" too much either – it should still feel powerful and potent and positive.

Here are some other mantras to try on for size:

I am bountiful, blissful and beautiful; bountiful, blissful and beautiful I am.

This is a kundalini yoga mantra. "I am" is one of, if not, the most powerful mantras you can repeat.

SAT NAM

The Seed Mantra or Bij Mantra; used in the practice of Kundalini Yoga. Sat means the Truth; Nam means to call upon, name or identify with. Sat Nam means Truth is my identity and I call upon the eternal Truth that resides in all of us. Chanting this mantra awakens the Soul. It is pronounced to rhyme with "But Mom!"

Using a mantra

First ask what you are trying to accomplish or heal with the mantra. Make sure your mantra is a good fit for this intention.

Next deepen and slow the breath consciously.

When the body has accepted the deepening and slowing of the breath, begin repeating the mantra, out loud or internally. Out loud is more powerful. Internally is more private (if you are in a place where repeating a mantra out loud would not be ideal).

Many people find it useful to coordinate the mantra with the breath. Experiment with this to see what works for you.

Notice if the mantra feels wooden or stale or untrue. When you start a mantra, it is like starting to exercise. The muscles feel sore and stiff. Through the workout, they soften and strengthen.

To help the mantra become more alive and a part of you, connect to the meaning. Say it with feeling. This is a very personal thing, and over time you may find that how you experience your mantra changes, as it becomes part of you, and you become part of it.

Maybe the mantra brings a visual. Maybe if you are trying to heal a specific area, you bring the mind's eye to focus on this body part while you say the mantra.

Say the mantra as many times as you need to to begin to soften into it. You should begin to resonate with the words and become convinced of (or at least open towards) their power and truth.

I love to softly speak my skin healing mantra as I apply my skincare or when I am in the shower. I love to shout my mantras with wild abandon when I am in the car and/or alone in the house.

A Suggested Mantra

(Use parts or the whole)
10

I love what is now.

I accept what is now.

I soften into life as it is now.

All is taken care of, all is ok.

I can live and love fully now.

Complete beauty is already mine.

True bliss is already mine.

I let go of my fears and frustrations.

I believe in the good things coming.

All is as it should be.

I belong.

I am taken care of.

I am beautiful.

I am loved.

I am.

More skin healing:

mosskincare.com/blog