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## Spatial Alchemy: Reimagining community centres through the chakra system in AAINA

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### Abstract

“AAINA – A Creative Escape” is a spatial design project that reimagines interior design through the lens of India’s ancient chakra system. In a world where mental health, emotional well-being, and mindfulness are increasingly valued, AAINA offers a contemporary interpretation of these spiritual concepts through immersive, sensorial zones. Each of the seven chakras-Root, Sacral, Solar Plexus, Heart, Throat, Third Eye, and Crown-is represented through a thoughtfully crafted spatial zone. These zones are designed to correspond to the chakra's associated element (earth, water, fire, air, sound, light, and thought), its psychological function, and its sensory impact. AAINA serves as a refuge from external chaos and an inward journey toward emotional expression, healing, and inner clarity. Using a blend of traditional philosophies, environmental psychology, and interactive design principles, the project creates a therapeutic environment where guests can reflect, reconnect, and reenergize. From tactile garden experiences to dynamic dance studios and introspective meditation pods, each area aims to stimulate specific emotional responses through light, materiality, acoustics, and spatial choreography. This research paper explores the theoretical framework, design methodology, spatial zoning, material selection, innovation strategies, and projected user experience of the AAINA project, ultimately positioning it as a holistic blueprint for future wellness-centered interiors.

**Keywords:** Community center, 7 chakras in interiors, fusion of themes, self-improvement, emotional connection with spaces, elements of 7 chakras

### 1. Introduction

Interior spaces influence emotional, psychological, and spiritual well-being. With the rise of experiential and therapeutic design practices, environments are now being created not only for function but also for healing and transformation. AAINA (meaning “mirror” in Hindi) is a space designed as a metaphorical mirror of the self. By guiding users through seven thoughtfully curated zones—each inspired by a chakra—the project offers an escape from the external chaos into the internal calm. The design harmonizes ancient Indian philosophy with contemporary spatial aesthetics, making it a unique convergence of tradition, innovation, and introspection.

#### 1.1 Aim

The primary aim of “AAINA – A Creative Escape” is to design an immersive interior environment where emotional healing and creative expression are facilitated through spatial narratives and sensory stimuli. The project seeks to bridge spiritual philosophy and modern design in a way that is inclusive, intuitive, and healing. By interpreting the chakra system as a spatial framework, AAINA transforms abstract emotional energies into tangible, interactive environments. Each zone within the space is created not just to be visually engaging but to evoke a specific emotional or psychological response.

## 1.2 Re-Defining a Retreat

Another key aim of the project is to provide a platform for self-expression through art, music, movement, and dialogue. These creative activities are not merely recreational but are viewed as vital tools for emotional release, healing, and identity exploration. By aligning these activities with their corresponding chakras, AAINA helps users intuitively engage with their inner energies and navigate personal growth. AAINA thus becomes not only a personal sanctuary but a social ecosystem that encourages inclusive engagement. Ultimately, the aim of the Project is to catalyze transformation-within the individual and within the collective. It envisions a world where spaces are not just lived in, but felt deeply; where design is not just seen, but experienced as a tool of personal awakening.

The project seeks to go beyond conventional design by integrating ancient Indian philosophies with modern spatial practices, allowing users to experience a deep connection to themselves and the environment through intentional design.

## 2. Design strategy

The guiding principle of AAINA is the belief that design can catalyze emotional healing and creative empowerment. The project approaches space not just as a physical entity but as a transformative experience-each zone acts as a chapter in the user's personal narrative.

The chakra system provides the framework, while user-centric and sensory-inclusive design methods bring it to life. Elements such as interactive installations, tactile surfaces, responsive lighting, and organic forms promote introspection and engagement. AAINA is designed with inclusivity, accessibility, and cultural authenticity in mind, combining spiritual symbolism with modern spatial language to ensure that each user finds resonance in the journey. (AAINA-A Creative Escape)

Every corner, texture, and sound within the project is intentionally crafted to evoke, reflect, or release emotion. The chakra system serves as the conceptual skeleton, but it is the user's experience that breathes life into the space. The design avoids rigidity and uniformity; instead, it embraces organic flow, sensory contrast, and interactive elements that invite participation. AAINA is a space of liberation-from societal norms, mental blocks, and emotional stagnation. The design encourages users to move intuitively, to feel without judgment, and to create without restraint. Elements such as participatory walls, fluid spatial layouts, responsive lighting, and immersive soundscapes turn passive interiors into active emotional canvases. The project's spatial storytelling begins with grounding and builds upward-mirroring the Kundalini flow-from the earthy textures of the Root Chakra garden to the limitless creative release of the Crown Chakra zone. The focus is on *empathy-driven design*, where users are not just visitors but participants in their own emotional evolution. Material choices, lighting design, color palettes, and acoustics are all aligned to this vision. The space doesn't dictate how users should feel-it provides the right environment for them to discover that for themselves. In this way, AAINA challenges the conventional boundaries of interior design, offering a vision where design is deeply human, spiritual, and transformational.

## 3. Research

### 3.1 Spatial approach

AAINA is deeply rooted in both ancient wisdom and contemporary research. The foundational concept derives from the Indian chakra system-a belief originating in early Hindu and Buddhist texts that outlines seven energy centers within the human body. Each chakra is associated with a different emotion, body part, developmental stage, and element. Modern psychology and neuroscience further affirm that sensory environments can influence mood, behavior, and even neural pathways. This alignment between traditional knowledge and scientific evidence forms the foundation of AAINA's spatial approach.

#### Zone 1 – Root Chakra (Muladhara)

- Element: Earth
- Design Elements: Earthen materials, low lighting, robust textures
- Mood: Stability and calm

#### Zone 2 – Sacral Chakra (Svadhithana)

- Element: Water
- Design Elements: Fluid forms, warm lighting, playful patterns
- Mood: Pleasure and emotional connection

#### Zone 3 – Solar Plexus Chakra (Manipura)

- Element: Fire
- Design Elements: Sharp geometries, bright illumination, reflective materials
- Mood: Motivation and self-belief

#### Zone 4 – Heart Chakra (Anahata)

- Element: Air
- Design Elements: Natural textures, greenery, open layouts
- Mood: Empathy and openness

#### Zone 5 – Throat Chakra (Vishuddha)

- Element: Sound
- Design Elements: Acoustic design, interactive sound installations, clean lines
- Mood: Clarity and self-expression

#### Zone 6 – Third Eye Chakra (Ajna)

- Element: Light
- Design Elements: Dimmed light, abstract visuals, meditative zones
- Mood: Inner vision and perception

#### Zone 7 – Crown Chakra (Sahasrara)

- Element: Thought
- Design Elements: Minimalism, skylights, ethereal textures
- Mood: Spiritual connection and calm

### 3.2 Physiological Impact

Modern psychology and neuroscience further affirm that sensory environments can influence mood, behavior, and even neural pathways. This alignment between traditional knowledge and scientific evidence forms the foundation of

AAINA's spatial approach. Research in color psychology shows that hues like red can stimulate alertness, blue encourages calm, and yellow boosts creativity—paralleling the color designations of the root, throat, and solar plexus chakras respectively. Similarly, sound therapy has proven effects on heart rate, focus, and stress reduction, reinforcing the design of the sound-based Throat Chakra zone. Theories from environmental psychology support the use of biophilic design, multisensory engagement, and material tactility to improve mental well-being, suggesting that meaningful interaction with space leads to higher satisfaction and healing. Furthermore, case studies on art therapy, music therapy, and meditative design—particularly in healthcare and wellness architecture—demonstrate how creative environments contribute to emotional processing and release. AAINA builds on these interdisciplinary insights to create zones that are scientifically sound and spiritually resonant. This layered research approach ensures the project's holistic integrity, blending ancient philosophies with modern, evidence-based design practices.

### 3.3 Zoning and concept development

Each zone in AAINA corresponds to one of the seven chakras, articulated through the lens of its governing element:

#### 3.3.1 Thought Element – Crown Chakra (Sahasrara)

At the heart of Sahasrara lies the idea of spiritual consciousness and universal connection. This zone begins the user's journey inward, with a soft, minimal, and ethereal environment.

- **Wall of Thoughts:** A writable, interactive wall invites users to express inner reflections, goals, and emotional releases through sketches and notes, embodying mental clarity.
- **Art Splash Room:** A liberating, color-filled chamber where users can spontaneously splash paint across white walls, metaphorically releasing suppressed thoughts and feelings.
- **Pottery Section:** Quiet and meditative, this clay-based space emphasizes tactile grounding and creative solitude, helping users connect thoughts to form through hands-on creation.

#### 3.3.2 Fire Element – Solar Plexus Chakra (Manipura)

This zone is characterized by dynamism, bold colors, and geometric forms. It reflects willpower, identity, and motivation.

- **Functional Zone:** Designed for action and productivity, the space includes collaborative desks, writable idea walls, and tools for creative output. The use of yellow hues and natural light fosters energy and empowerment.

#### 3.3.3 Air Element – Heart Chakra (Anahata)

Representing love and empathy, the Heart Chakra zone is open, breezy, and bathed in natural elements.

- **Group Meetup Space:** Furnished with circular seating, light fabrics, and plants, this communal space encourages bonding, compassion, and heartfelt dialogue. Cross ventilation, greenery, and visual transparency symbolize emotional openness.

#### 3.3.4 Water Element – Sacral Chakra (Svadhithana)

Fluid and sensual, this space simulates the flowing nature of water and emotions.

- **Healing/Meditation Space:** Organic curves and blue-green palettes dominate this sanctuary, offering spaces for stillness and release.
- **Signature Clam Chamber:** A seashell-inspired cocoon seating pod provides solitude and reflection, fostering inward emotional exploration. The chamber's form and materiality evoke womb-like safety and flow.

#### 3.3.5 Sound Element – Throat Chakra (Vishuddha)

This zone celebrates expression and communication, using acoustics and vibration as primary design tools.

- **Music Studio:** A soundproof, instrument-filled room invites guests to create, sing, record, or simply listen to music. High-fidelity sound systems, textured acoustic panels, and intuitive controls empower users to resonate with their own voices.

#### 3.3.6 Light Element – Third Eye Chakra (Ajna)

Perception and intuition come alive in the Dance Studio, where light responds to the body.

- **Dance Studio:** Motion sensors trigger changing lights as users move, creating immersive, intuitive environments that amplify self-awareness and spatial harmony. Indigo lighting and reflective surfaces elevate the mystique and insight of this space.

#### 3.3.7 Earth Element – Root Chakra (Muladhara)

Symbolizing stability and grounding, this is where the journey begins or ends, reconnecting users to the physical world.

- **Community Garden:** Integrated with hydroponic farming and soil beds, users are encouraged to participate in planting or harvesting activities.
- **Material Use:** Traditional terracotta tiles, natural stone pathways, and earthen roofing lend authenticity and texture, reinforcing rootedness and ecological harmony.

### 3.4 Materials and Innovation

Materials in AAINA are not chosen merely for durability or aesthetics—they are selected for their symbolic resonance, sensory texture, and emotional memory. Earthy zones use rough, warm materials such as clay, terracotta, and wood. Water-based spaces incorporate smooth surfaces, flowing fabrics, and mosaics in cool tones. Fire-oriented areas include polished metal, reflective surfaces, and warm LED lighting. Air spaces rely on light, breathable textiles, bamboo, and greenery. Sound-based zones are rich in acoustically absorbent materials like felt, cork, and perforated wood panels. Light-responsive areas integrate smart LEDs, kinetic panels, and glass surfaces that play with color and reflection. Thought zones are kept minimal, often white or pale with writable surfaces, clay, or textured plaster. Innovation is embedded through interactive installations—walls that change color with touch, floors that react to pressure, and lighting that syncs with user movement or sound. Sustainability is also key: hydroponic systems reduce water use, recycled materials are prioritized, and modular furniture adapts to changing functions. Through these material choices and technological

integrations, AAINA becomes a living, responsive environment—one that evolves with its users' emotions and intentions.

The project collaborates with local artisans and material innovators (e.g., glass dealers, textile designers) to reinforce each chakra's theme through textures, transparency, reflectivity, and tactility. Sustainable and locally sourced materials were prioritized to align with the holistic ethos.

### 3.5 User Experience

The user experience in AAINA is intentionally diverse and customizable. Guests can explore each zone at their own pace, driven by emotion rather than direction. Some may spend hours in quiet reflection within the meditation chamber; others may find release through dancing, music, or collaborative creation. The journey is holistic-engaging touch, sight, sound, and movement. The environment responds to their presence, enabling deep immersion and authentic self-connection.

### 4. Conclusion

“AAINA – A Creative Escape” is a pioneering design project that bridges ancient Indian wisdom with modern therapeutic interiors. Through its chakra-based zoning and multisensory engagement, it transforms interiors into emotional landscapes. AAINA is more than a design—it is an invitation to reflect, create, and reconnect. In a world dominated by noise, speed, and stress, it stands as a sanctuary for the soul, reminding us that space has the power to heal.

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