

Mudra

'Mudra is an ancient healing hand gesture, a yoga hand pose, a symbolic gesture or hand position, a basic for dance ritual, and an integral part of religious ceremony.'
Sabrina Mesko, 2004, *Yoga for the Hands*, Andrews McMeel Publishing, Kansas City, p 11.

'In some of the old texts these (mudras) are listed as being the same as Bandhas, but they serve a slightly different function as they close or complete circuits of energy without having a direct effect on the spine, or control of the pressure in the bodily cavities. They are said to bring stability.'
Mary Stewart, 1992, *Yoga*, Hodder and Stoughton, UK, p 79

'We react to hand gestures extremely quickly because certain nerve cells in the lower temporal lobe of our brains are dedicated exclusively to responding to hand positions and shapes...Many of our hand gestures are actually activated from the primitive speech areas of the right brain. This neurological cluster plays a much less important role once our language functions shift to the left hemisphere in early childhood...In other words the impulses for gestures form in your brain before those for words do.'
Fernando Pages Ruiz, 'Symbolic Gestures', pp 116 - 123, in *Yoga Journal (USA)*, Issue 17, December 2002

'Mudras are a combination of subtle physical movements which alter mood, attitude and perception, and which deepen awareness and concentration. A mudra may involve the whole body in a combination of asana, pranayama, bandha and visualisation techniques or it may be a simple hand position.'
Swami Satyananda Saraswati, 2002, *Asana Pranayama Mudra Bandha*, Yoga Publications Trust, Bihar, India p 423

'In Sanskrit, *mudra* means 'gesture'... They complete circuits of energy by bringing attention to a certain point in or on the body. The quiet placing of the hands on the back in Shoulderstand is an example of a mudra, and as with all mudras, it should be a profoundly calming and centring gesture'
Kathy Phillips, 2002, *The Spirit of Yoga*, Cassell Illustrated, UK, p 127

'Mudra is a term with many meanings. It is used to signify a gesture, a mystic position of the hands, a seal, or even a symbol. However, there are eye positions, body postures, and breathing techniques that are called mudras. These symbolic finger, eye and body postures can vividly depict certain states or processes of consciousness. Conversely, specific positions can also lead to the states of consciousness that they symbolise.'
Gerturd Hirschi, 2002, *Mudras: yoga in your hands*, Samuel Weiser Inc, USA, p 2