



*Shirley Daventry French receives  
Distinguished Teacher Award  
at Victoria Yoga Conference,  
February 9, 2018.*



## IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS

### The Annual General Meeting of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria will be held April 15, 2018 at 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C.

1:00 Asana Practice, 2:00 Annual Meeting for all Members  
with tea and refreshments

As a non-profit society, we meet annually to appreciate our Board and volunteers for all the work that they do. All members have a voice and are welcome to attend. Business will include the election of board members and the review of annual reports. The past year's financial statement and reports will be available at the front desk prior to the meeting.



Attend our annual retreat on beautiful Salt Spring Island and participate in a weekend of Iyengar Yoga with **Leslie Hoga** and **Wendy Boyer**.

Leslie has been teaching in Victoria since the early 70s and has been active in the local centre since then. She has studied in Pune with the Iyengar family at the RIMYI many times since her first trip in 1985. Her most recent trip was in December 2015. Leslie trains teachers and has taught in the U.S., Thailand, Hong Kong, and Mexico.

Wendy began her Iyengar yoga journey with Shirley Daventry French in 1990, and began

### The 34<sup>th</sup> Annual *Retreat at the Salt Spring Centre* June 8-10, 2018



teaching in 1996. She attributes her knowledge of the Iyengar method to studying with Shirley and other inspiring local and international teachers. Asana and pranayama, and managing the Victoria Iyengar Centre are her daily practice. "Yoga practice and observing students and my peers has taught me so much about our mysterious bodies, and about life."

Wendy and Leslie's teaching is delivered with humour and clarity, inspiring students to explore a range of motion, balance and the energy of Iyengar yoga. Their safe, fun and supportive approach highlights yogic principles and encourages students to weave yoga philosophy into their daily lives.



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## THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE NEWSLETTER

Submission Deadline for next issue:  
MAY 15, 2018

EDITOR Roger Champagne

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purpose is "to encourage the physical, mental,  
and spiritual growth of its members and other  
interested persons of the society at large by the  
study and discipline of Yoga." The Society owes  
its inspiration to Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

The Newsletter, published regularly by the  
IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA  
SOCIETY, provides current information  
on events concerning Iyengar yoga in the  
Victoria area.

Send contributions, articles, photographs  
(high resolution), drawings, information or  
suggestions to: the Iyengar Yoga Centre of  
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### REGISTRATION

Please visit our website:  
[www.iyengaryogacentre.ca](http://www.iyengaryogacentre.ca) for full information  
on classes and workshops.  
Drop in: 202-919 Fort Street,  
Victoria, B.C. V8V 3K3  
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We regret we cannot accept past issues of the newsletter, yoga journal, etc.,  
due to space limitations.



## Reflections

By Shirley Daventry French

This is an auspicious year. Students of Iyengar Yoga throughout the world are celebrating the Centenary of Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar. The 14th of December 2018 will mark one hundred years since his birth. I always thought he would follow in the footsteps of his guru Kishnamacharya and live to be a hundred but that was not to be. He died on the 20th of August 2014 aged ninety-five.

I could not conceive that such a force of energy could be extinguished and, of course, it hasn't. Guruji's influence was worldwide and his light shines as strongly as ever!

In my life I have had many good yoga teachers and two great ones: Swami Sivananda Radha and B.K.S. Iyengar. Quite different from each other in approach but equally committed to this quest for truth. Both were innovative and concerned with making these ancient teachings available and accessible to people living in this day and age. They adapted yoga for contemporary life but never compromised its integrity or trivialised its purpose.

Yoga is a spiritual tradition which has its roots in the East but is equally applicable to Christian beliefs. Many eastern spiritual teachers have referred to Jesus Christ as a great yogi. And for anyone who still has doubts about yoga's suitability for devout Christians, I recommend reading *The Sermon on the Mount according to Vedanta* by Swami Prabhavananda a great little book which presents the essence of both Christ's teaching and Vedanta. In common with the teachings of Yoga, Jesus also said that the Kingdom of God is within you.<sup>1</sup>

By the time I started yoga I was pretty indifferent to Christianity other than as an ethical code of living. My first yoga teacher at the "Y" was a Roman Catholic convert who was a little awkward about some yogic concepts. Her classes consisted primarily of yoga *asana* but she did teach us some basic philosophy. One day she mentioned that yogis believe God is within, and followed up quickly by saying "of course, we think differently". The awkwardness of this moment encouraged me to find out for myself—a very yogic concept.

Throughout my yoga studies there was never any indoctrination on the part of Swami Radha or Guruji to convert me or my fellow pupils to Hinduism as many people feared, but rather to respect others' spiritual beliefs (or disbelief). Unlike Christianity, Hinduism does not seek converts. Yoga can be deeply practised by people of all faiths provided they adhere to its principles. I was encouraged to use the principles of yoga to become clearer about my own culture and religion, to learn from my own life, family, background, culture, education.

In many ways my yoga path has been one of unlearning to make space for insight. Having always thought of myself as a free-thinker, it was astonishing to discover how much I had been indoctrinated.

The writings of the great Master of Vedanta, Swami Vivekananda are among my favourites, and in his book *Raja Yoga*, he tells us that:  
*"Anything that is secret and mysterious in these systems of Yoga should be at once rejected. The best guide in life is strength."*

He follows this up by saying:

*"In religion, as in all other matters, discard everything that weakens you, have nothing to do with it."*

In his life and work, B.K.S. Iyengar exemplified this last premise, which has also become one of my mantras! It was reinforced in each and every class I took with him as well as each discussion—whether in the library of the Institute in Pune, on a train, airplane or ferry, on the beach near my home where he deeply inhaled the fresh Pacific air, around the dining table during a meal, and most forcefully in his teaching and observation of our teaching. He never stopped learning!

Guruji has observed my teaching about a dozen times, here in Victoria, in Edmonton and Toronto as well as at various conventions across the United States. Strangely, I was not nervous although I was certainly fully alert not wanting to miss anything. I knew if I were on the wrong track he would redirect me, building on whatever understanding he could see in me. He did not treat us all the same way: we are not all the same! My path is unique to me.

Similarly, in my first class with Guruji in 1979 in the main hall of the Institute in Pune I was in a state of heightened awareness. By this time I had been practising yoga for nine years and teaching for seven. My studies with Swami Radha had given me a foundation in eastern spiritual practices, so when I finally experienced his direct teaching there was something to build on. And build he did, relentlessly, until some light came.

Before making this 1979 trip, someone recommended that I study with a teacher called Ramanand Patel who was about to give a workshop in Vancouver. I was told his teaching was as close to Mr. Iyengar's as anyone in North America at that time and would be a good preparation for India. Indian by heritage, Ramanand was well versed in yogic teachings since his

<sup>1</sup> When the Pharisees asked Jesus when The Kingdom of God would come, he answered: The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! Or, lo there for, behold the Kingdom of God is within you. Luke 17.20 & 21.



childhood when he was tutored by his father. Ramanand had also worked closely with Mr. Iyengar.

It was a challenging class but I learned a lot and liked his clear direct teaching, but there was one incident which gave me pause. At the end of a strong sequence of *asana*, Ramanand invited questions. One woman asked him a convoluted question about *samyama*, a concept which is discussed in the third chapter of Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*. Ramanand had not specifically stated but implied that he meant questions about the morning's work, and he responded to her question by saying: "I'll address that question when you have learned to keep your kneecaps up."

I was not clear about his motive at the time but now understand that discipline in body, mind and life are essential elements to build the foundation of a spiritual practice. If you can't keep your kneecaps up for relatively short periods of time you are not ready for more advanced teaching. Patanjali introduces *samyama*<sup>2</sup> in the third chapter of the sutras and it requires integration of the sixth, seventh

and eighth limbs of *ashtanga yoga*. If you are still struggling with the lower levels, perhaps you are getting a little ahead of yourself to make that leap.

After classes with Guruji each and every student would leave stuffed full of information and ideals along with the means to deepen their yoga, provided they were open to seeing, hearing and learning what was missing in their practice. Control of the kneecaps is an important tool.

Iyengar Yoga is practice based. If you are a new student you go to classes to learn what to practise, and will be encouraged to practise at home. If you are an intermediate student hopefully you have already established a personal practice. Your purpose in going to classes will be to refine knowledge already acquired and learn new and more demanding aspects of this discipline under skilled supervision. In all instances you will be learning to practise safely. Many postures are very demanding, on both physical and psychological levels. A good teacher is a guide who hones your strength and skill for the journey that is yoga.

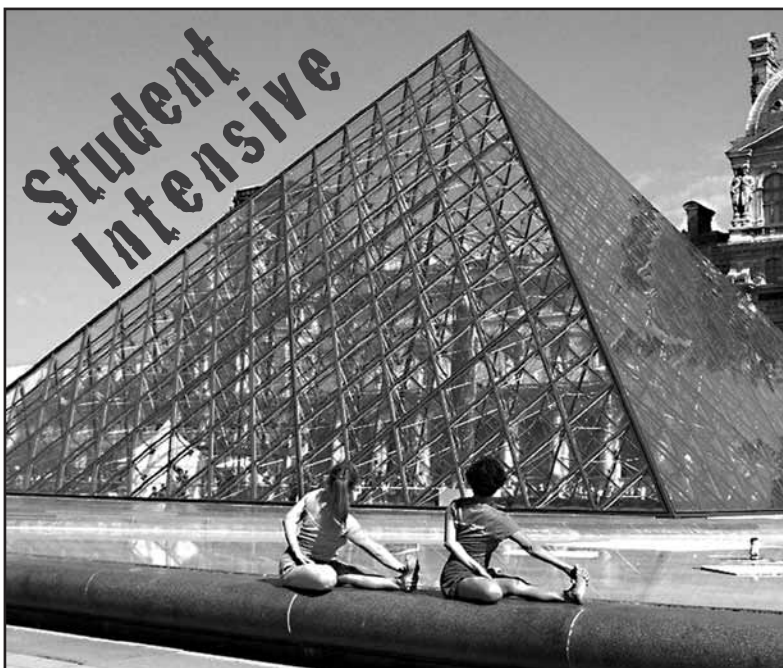
Yoga encompasses body, mind and breath and, if authentic, will initiate changes in all your senses and faculties. In Guruji's own words:

*"From freedom of the body comes freedom of the mind, and then Absolute Freedom!"*

My early life in London was disrupted by the Second World War. I was seven when it started and thirteen by the end, so I did not have to face the obstacles my parents did nor have their awareness of how dire the situation was at times. Later, having read extensively on this period of history, I understand how to sustain freedom they had to discard everything that weakened them again, and again, and again!

Thank God for their courage and steadfastness, and thank God for yoga and the opportunity to learn from B.K.S. Iyengar, an extraordinary teacher who exemplified strength and purpose, who was and still is my teacher! ॐ

2 *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, III.3 These three together—*dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi*—constitute integration or *samyama*.



## With Lauren Cox and Ty Chandler

August 27 - 31, 2018

9:30 am - 12:30 pm

Each day there will be an introduction to pranayama along with philosophical and spiritual discussions. Two hours of yoga asanas, including a timed practice, yoga kurunta work, restorative poses, and inversions follow.

Registration opens April 2, 2018.

Fees: \$250 CDN +GST IYCV Members

\$275 CDN +GST IYCV Non-Members

To register, drop in to or phone the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria: 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8V 3K3 (250) 386-YOGA (9642) [www.iyengaryogacentre.ca](http://www.iyengaryogacentre.ca)

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# Guruji's Keynote Address at the China India Yoga Summit

REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM YOGA RAHASYA, VOL. 18 NO.3; 2011

*The following is taken from an address that B.K.S. Iyengar gave at the opening of the China India Yoga Summit in Guang Zhou, China in June of 2011. Remarkably it was 50 years since Iyengar had taught his first public class outside India, in London. We are reprinting this to honour the occasion as an historic time for the spread in many countries of Mr Iyengar's teaching.*

...Keeping aside the geographical divisions for the time being, we as human beings face in similar ways, the physical as well as emotional problems. We may speak different languages, have different colours on the skin, but there are no differences in our physiological body and emotional imbalances as all of us live in the net of lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride and envy.

In order to re-weave our lives to live with joy, I feel that this yogic summit is the apt occasion to experience this overall health using the key words of yoga: friendship, compassion, gladness with each other, and cultivation of indifference to gossip and backbiting in creating misunderstandings and misjudgements, and soon correct them so that we remain as one human race through this yogic gathering.

Coming to the definition of yoga, it means to associate the body with the mind, mind with the Self, and then to unite this Self with the Universal Self.

In order to bring this union, one needs the control of the body, mind, intelligence and consciousness. Hence, Patanjali begins to practise yoga in a disciplined way so that one restrains the fluctuations, modifications or modulations of the consciousness.

As per as my study and understanding of yoga *sutras*, I find a hidden meaning of yoga where Patanjali explains the four biological hemispheres of the head as four intellectual facets as analysis, synthesis, joy, and the feel of the pureness of the Self, and the four chambers of the biological heart into four emotional facets of the intelligence as friendliness, compassion, gladness and indifference to pains and pleasures. For me, blending these intelligences of the head and heart is yoga.

*Coming to the definition of yoga, it means to associate the body with the mind, mind with the Self, and then to unite this Self with the Universal Self.*



This blending of the intellect of the head with the intelligence of the heart is nothing but the merging of the individual Self of the head with the Universal Self of the Divine Heart.

Lord Krishna says balance and evenness in action with words and wisdom is yoga. He also says that the skilful actions take one away from the pleasures of the world and lead towards emancipation or freedom from worldly desires.

Lord Krishna says balance and evenness in action with words and wisdom is yoga.

By today's standards, eradication of disease, sorrows and pains may be considered yoga. Yoga is a journey from the periphery of the Self to realise the distinction between the intelligence of the body, mind and consciousness and the ever illuminative wisdom of the Self. Here comes yoga where the latent physical and mental strength and energy are awakened and utilised to tackle the impediments or obstacles which create imbalances, disturbing the equilibrium of the body and mental upheavals that distract one from the search and realisation of the Self.

It is more than seventy five years that I embraced yoga and it has stuck to me like a leech. Hence my presentation is mostly dependent upon my own *sadhana*, churning my experiences with the yoga *sutras* and therefore my words and works are purely my own. Any error in me is of my own and not of this great art.

In Indian temples, priests rub oil on the idols as part of a religious ceremony. I applied this principle in my practices by rubbing the skeleto-muscular body with my senses of perception, mind and intelligence to soak them deeper and deeper into the body to feel the flow of energy and the feel of the presence of intuitive awareness flowing smoothly interweaving uninterrupted within the fortress of the Self.

Facing many shortcomings and intellectual drawbacks in my yogic journey, the invisible hands of destiny played a major role in keeping my mind open to receive whatever it revealed to me. Even now, my *sadhana* is without any motives or expectations but to feel the life force flowing precisely and evenly in each *asana* and breath.

As a student of yoga, I believe in practice and as a teacher, I like to share my experiences with you hoping that this subject may further inspire you to discover with an investigative intellect this mysterious body – the immeasurable finite body, the abode of the Seer so that each of you reach the final destination – the sight of the Infinite Seer.

I hope in this workshop you get polished in your efforts and get refined in body, senses, mind and intelligence in such a way that you move from the state of a Seeker to the State of a Seer.

As you go on practising, you realise soon how difficult it is to know this mysterious finite body. Now you can guess how much more difficult it is to know, understand and realise the Self with a benevolent disposition.

In order to understand and reach the Self, one has to commit to practice religiously observing boldness and caution with a balanced disposition of the mind with discriminative intelligence, avoiding mistakes or injuries to explore the inner body.

As I said before, my practises have spread across more than 75 years; I live in yoga without the sense of boredom or the feel of weariness or strain. Its practice not only educated me in understanding the physical resistance and psychological barriers that came in the way of the *sadhana* but also toned my mind, cultivated civility with clear intelligence to explore the seven caves of the Self from the body that conceals the Self.

Let me explain these seven caves of the Self. First is the skeletal-muscular body or the anatomical body, the second, covering the organs of action and senses of perception with respiratory circulatory, nervous, digestive, urinary and excretory systems along with ductless glands or the physiological body. The third, is the mental body, the fourth is the intellectual body, the fifth, the egoistic body, the sixth, the consciousness body, and the last is conscientious body. After one crosses the seven caves one reaches the core.

These seven caves have seven states of awareness in the form of physical, ethical, *pranic*, emotional, intellectual, egoistic, conscious and conscientious, which have to be penetrated to reach the abode of the Self.

These seven caves or the states of awareness are closely linked with the seven states of health.

These are 1) physical health, 2) ethical health, 3) emotional

*As I said before, my practises have spread across more than 75 years; I live in yoga without the sense of boredom or the feel of weariness or strain.*

health, 4) energy health, 5) intellectual health, 6) conscientious health and 7) the divine health.

Any imbalance in any one of these disturbs the other layers of health.

All these seven caves and seven states of awareness are present in the seven states of consciousness. These are 1) wandering consciousness, 2) restraining consciousness, 3) tranquil consciousness, 4) attentive consciousness, 5) egoistic consciousness, 6) split consciousness and 7) divine consciousness.

All these are interwoven and inter-related to the Self. Hence, these have to be attended to at the time of practice for the evolution of the consciousness towards the divine state.

We are caught in the wheel of cause and effect. Birth and death are nothing but the spokes of this wheel, upon which our states of intellectual and conscious development of the present life are dependent. This wheel of birth and death takes place on account of our accumulation of nescience. When this veil covering knowledge and wisdom is eradicated then one is liberated from the wheel of cause and effect.

In order to make you understand this cause and effect theory, let me tell you that I was not born in the house of intellectuals or yogis. I cannot recollect anyone in my family speaking of yoga or doing yoga. I never dreamt of embracing yoga. It is a chance and not a choice. When bouts of diseases persisted from birth, my brother-in-law (sister's husband) initiated me into a few *asanas* for gaining health and I started yoga for health sake and accepted him as my Guru. Persistent practice took me years to gain health and got me interested in the subject.

Often my Guru told me that I was not a fit student to know of yoga and he did not teach me the intricacies of yoga. Yet the effects of the past *karmas* might have caused me to stick to yoga, flashing me with knowledge and wisdom. This experiential knowledge and wisdom immersed me fully into yoga. I hope this uninterrupted practice of mine may act as a spring board for all of you to go ahead from where I am now. ॐ



# Celebrating B.K.S. Iyengar 100 years!

By Leslie Hogya

Bellur Krishnamachar Sundararaja Iyengar was born in 1918, so the world is celebrating his centenary year. I decided that this is a good opportunity to look at the treasures in my notebooks. It is a time for me to reflect on the amazing opportunities I had to see him, hear him, watch him, and listen to him speak both in public places, or the library. My last four or five trips took place in the month of December so that I would be in Pune for his birthday celebrations. One such trip was in 2006, and I have tried to decipher my handwritten notes to bring you some of his words of 12 years ago. (Any errors are all mine!)

Early in that December, we were told that Guruji would be speaking at the Yogananda Society. A few of us from the institute took this opportunity to hear Guruji in a different setting and made our way across Pune. The hall was crowded, and I am sure we stood out as westerners, wearing colourful Indian shawls. We were in for a treat, even though some of the first speakers spoke in Marathi (the language of Maharashtra State). We settled into the auditorium seats with patience to wait for Mr. Iyengar to be invited to the podium, occasionally catching a word in Sanskrit or once in a while a phrase in English. When introducing Guruji, one member of the society followed tradition by first offering felicitations to him by giving him a garland and fruit as a symbol of welcome. The host then gave a longer introduction citing Guruji's many awards and accomplishments.

The Yogananda<sup>\*1</sup> Society had invited Guruji to speak out of respect for his stature as a renowned leader of yoga, and he accepted the invitation out of respect for the tradition of renowned yogi, Paramahansa Yogananda. Guruji opened his remarks talking about how yoga is one.

From there he focused his talk on how his path is meditation, and began with *pranayama*. Guruji said that the inhalation is like Brahma, the creator in the Hindu trinity. The *kumbhaka*, holding the breath, is like Visnu, the preserver. The exhalation is like Siva, the destroyer of obstacles.



In Pune for Guruji's 88th birthday in 2006, left to right: Karen Major Leslie Hogya, Louie Ettling.

In the second chapter of the yoga sutras, the first verse introduces *Kriya yoga*, which Guruji says are the acts of yoga, and relate to the three paths (*margas*) of yoga. *Tapas*, or ardour in practice is the yoga of selfless service, or Karma Yoga. *Svadhya*, self study and study of sacred texts is the yoga of knowledge, or *Jnana Yoga*. Lastly, *Ishvara pranidhana* is the yoga of devotion to God, or *Bhakti yoga*.

*Tapas* is meant to purify the ingredients of the body so the body/ mind is transformed to a state of luminosity (*sattvic* state). During inhalation, the body is a vessel for the cosmic breath. During exhalation, space is created for the divine to enter. Using the tool of *svadhya*, or study of self, the practitioner goes inside to understand that the inner layer of the soul moves up to the surface of the skin.

*Yukti* (skillfulness) is the union of knowledge (*jnana*) and devotion, (*bhakti*).

Doing skillful action becomes true devotion.

All yoga is one; it takes you to the top of the soul. Guruji said that by respecting body consciousness, one can be taken to the highest of point of Mount Everest. One person might climb because of interest in the plants; another might climb because of interest in the rock formations. But their goal is the same – the summit, the peak. So too following the path of *karma*, *jnana* or *bhakti* will take us to the same ultimate goal of yoga, *samadhi*.

Practice is the key, as he explained by quoting Patanjali in Sutra 1.14: *sa tu dirghakala nairantarya satkara asevitaḥ drdhabhumih*, meaning "Uninterrupted, zealous practice for a long time is the foundation for restraining the fluctuations of the consciousness."

Guruji talked about Yogananda being a pioneer. He had asked Guruji to join him in the United States. Guruji knew how hard it would have been to be an Indian in the USA in the 1920s when Yogananda first arrived there. There was prejudice, which can cause mental stress. Sutra 1.30 lists doubt as one of the obstacles that can arise on the path. Yogananda, being a pioneer, had to face many obstacles. [See article on the *antarayas* in the previous newsletter, winter 2017.]

Guruji finished his discourse talking about types of meditation, making an analogy to the rising and setting sun. Guruji said his meditation is like the midday sun, when the rays reach the earth and spread everywhere evenly. This is if there are

1 Paramahansa Yogananda 1893-1952 was the first Indian master to live in the west, arriving in the USA about 1920. He wrote the classic *Autobiography of a Yogi*. His disciples carry on his teachings to this day around the world.



no clouds. But if there is a defect, the rays don't reach the container of the soul. The rays of Guruji's consciousness spread to every surface.

A few days later we gathered to honour him on his 88th birthday at the institute in Pune. He again used the metaphor of the sun penetrating to the very edge of the body. The rays of the sun need to be touching the entire perimeter. He said this is how we must practice.

"Each *asana* is like a garland of flowers wrapped around the soul."

### Kriya Yoga

#### Tapas

Intensive practice

#### Karma marga

Path of action

#### Svadhya

Self study

#### Jnana marga

Path of knowledge

#### Ishvara pranidhana

Devotion to God

#### Bhakti marga

Path of devotion

[See Table 6 in *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* by B.K.S. Iyengar.] ॐ

## JUMP INTO SUMMER

Come jump start and build your practice for five mornings with Lauren Cox. Focus on standing, twisting, inverting, back bends, and seated poses. All will be explored during this workshop

Monday to Friday, June 25-29, 2018, 7:00-8:00 am

Members \$55, Non-Members \$60

Registration opens April 1, 2018

Refunds offered only if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$15 cancellation fee.

## Shirley Daventry French Honoured with Distinguished Yoga Teacher Award



SDF being escorted to the stage by Elizabeth Peckam at the Opening ceremony of the Victoria Yoga Conference

PHOTOS: TRISTAN BRAND

### By Roger Champagne

This past February Shirley Daventry French was presented with The Distinguished Teacher award, at a lovely ceremony at Alix Goolden Hall, during the Victoria Conference. Roger Champagne had the honour of introducing Shirley.

He began with her words:

"My studies of yoga began in Victoria, as many in the West began looking to the East for solutions to their dissatisfaction with life." She goes on to say that she was not seeking fitness but merely to change her life and thus began

a lifelong search to change her life and know herself.

This embodies the principle that yoga is not only about DOING but increasingly about BEING.

In the early 70's Shirley took up the search in earnest with a series of trips to Yasodhara Ashram to study with Swami Radha.

By 1979 she was travelling to Pune to take the teachings of B.K.S. Iyengar at the Ramamani Institute. She continued to travel to countless countries attending conferences taught by Mr Iyengar until his passing in 2014.

Over the last 40 years Shirley has accomplished a great deal – she has continued to deepen her own practice and touched countless other students and teachers on her journey. She has founded a thriving Yoga Centre in Victoria; she has raised a family and been a guiding member of the Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada/Association canadienne de yoga Iyengar, as well as maintaining strong connections with senior teachers all over the world.



He goes on to say Shirley touched his life as well with her support and encouragement when he was planning a trip to Pune. She provided a letter of introduction to Mr. Iyengar that resulted in his meeting and being granted an interview with Mr. Iyengar. This was a high point in his life. Shirley has done it all...she is a mother, a wife, a writer, a teacher, a community leader, a friend and an inspiration to all who have the courage and willingness to follow the yogic path.

She says of Iyengar... "his practice is to go as close to the light as possible in this lifetime. A great deal of light has been ignited by this master."

Shirley has caught that light and dedicated her life to spreading it. She is a teacher of uncompromising standards, clear vision and compelling humour.

We are grateful for her devotion to yoga and her tireless dedication to our community. ॐ

## Practice Enrichment Series

March 23, 2018, 2:00-5:00 pm

Commit to this series to advance your personal practice of *asana* and *pranayama*. The series is designed for serious intermediate and advanced students in the Iyengar Yoga tradition. Students will be guided in a strong practice over each three hour session. Each month will build upon the previous month's work to unlock individual challenges.

**With Ann Kilbertus and Ty Chandler**

Note: Instructor permission is required to attend.

\$35 + GST each session

## In Gratitude

THIS LETTER WAS READ AT THE IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION HELD DEC 2017.

Dear Ann and fellow yoga students,  
First of all, thank you Ann for contacting so many of our fellow yoga students and getting out the word about this award, and at such short notice! I believe it came out of the blue for most of us.

It made it so much more special to see so many friends and colleagues who, like me, value Guruji and his work as well as the work we do at the Iyengar centre in support of this work. Many times in my life I have thought to myself: "to hell with it" or "to hell with them", I am just going to go on alone. Who needs all this work and the difficulties which always present themselves in working with others?

However, as I said on Friday evening, this work in community is an elemental part of yoga which Guruji always emphasised. Of course, first we have to take time for our own *sadhana* so that the work we do is well founded in the teachings of yoga.

In one way or another, all of you who came on Friday evening know all this. However, if you are at all like me,

you may need reminders from time to time. I was truly honoured to have you all there. It is a cliché to say: "this award is for all of you"; but the thing about clichés is that they are there because in most cases they are true!

Guruji always said "God bless you" to those who followed his example and devoted time and energy to making the teachings available (as he would put it) "to one and all". Everyone has talent and these talents vary which makes the work in community so valuable—and sometimes so challenging.

Finally, I am a native English woman who has lived much of her life in Canada so I am a bit mixed up anyway in language, grammar and spelling, but I do mean it sincerely when I say how much I appreciate the opportunity to do this work in yoga. So many of us at the centre have "come from away", and in this Pacific outpost found the opportunity to fulfil ourselves.

So although the word "God" does not come as easily to my lips as to Guruji's, on this beautiful North Pacific morning, in all sincerity I can say, Many thanks and many blessings, With love and light, Shirley ॐ

**An All-Levels Workshop with Lucie Guindon**

**May 5, 2018**  
**10:45 am-1:15 pm**

*Improve Your Poses by  
Understanding the Basics*

**Beginners  
and Teacher  
Trainees**  
– this workshop  
is for you, too!

**\$40 Members | \$45 non-members**

# Heart of Yoga 2018

By Leslie Hogle

For many years, Shirley Daventry French taught this workshop helping us explore some of the deeper significance of Iyengar yoga practice.

A few years ago, she invited Ann Kilbertus to do some of the teaching along side her. Then last year, Shirley turned the event completely over to Ann, who graciously picked up the ball.

This year, Ann taught this workshop on her own, beginning on Saturday morning January 27th, 2018 by asking us what the Heart of Yoga meant to us. Ann gave a personal example of how quickly an event can spark a negative reaction, for example, when a pedestrian almost walked into her car, in the dark, wearing dark clothes, looking at his cell phone. How to deal with this spark of anger, fear, frustration that is a lifelong journey.

Ann remarked that Guruji's words for her this year were, "Can you see now?"

He wanted us to penetrate deeper into the very cells of our being. He said, "with my eyes I see, with my mind I conceive."

Several people brought up how yoga has enriched their lives, and some said they were there for the physical help it gives them.

As we explored the *asanas*, standing poses and inversions, the first section of the day, thoughts on the meaning of what is the heart of yoga percolated. By the Sunday morning, the last session, there was more discussion of this topic.

For me, it is the compassion to look at each person I encounter, especially those in my family. It is usually easier to stay with a friendly tone of voice to our acquaintances, than those with whom we live. I am forever striving to keep my interactions full of loving kindness.

Below are some of the sparks of wisdom that Ann shared with us:

- When you realize you are ignorant then discipline begins. (Guruji)
- On Ashtanga Yoga: If the heart is to be cleansed and purified, a beginning has to be made by culturing the mind and culturing the consciousness. (Guruji)
- Yoga is elevating nature to come to the intelligence of the Soul. (Guruji)
- It is in one's soul that one must find the true landscape. (Maurice Denis, artist)
- Yoga is self culture. (Guruji)
- If one does a lot much can happen and by the same token doing little much can happen.
- Explore the movements and also the moments between movements into which something new can occur. ॐ



Shirley Daventry French and Ann Kilbertus



Dwipada viparita dandasana in the ropes



Dwipada viparita dandasana in the ropes



Parsva yoga mudra in swastikasana





## The Banyan Tree

By Ann Kilbertus

A banyan tree has not only roots below the surface, but aerial roots which form many trunks. Its branches spread and yet there is a solid core from where it grows both vertically and horizontally. It has dimension, height and stability. Many internal, unseen activities take place to sustain the life of the tree. The tree is and always has been a useful metaphor for me to integrate and understand the workings of yoga. A banyan tree with its unique growing pattern provides a beautiful visual analogy.

### TREE

**‘We need to be like a banyan tree: It grows and spreads and then sends roots back down into the earth to continue further stabilization and support. Find the balance between growth and connection to the origin.’**

As the banyan tree gets older, it seems to me that one has to search to find its original trunk. It has the ability to survive and grow for centuries and though its shape changes, the original trunk is always there.

Gurujī has used the metaphor of a tree as one way to guide our exploration of the eight limbs of Patanjali’s *ashtanga*<sup>1</sup> yoga. It is also an apt metaphor to describe how we associate in Yoga. Prashant Iyengar wrote a series of articles entitled “Our

System”<sup>2</sup> where he articulated many aspects of our system as well as aspects of *asana*. Recently in Pune at the international meetings held in 2015, Prashant in his unique philosophical way deconstructed this idea and said: **‘Rather than the Iyengar system we have the Iyengar ethos.’**

Definitions of ethos:

1. Gr., ethos, disposition, character: (see ETHICAL) the characteristic and distinguishing attitudes, habits, beliefs, etc. of an individual or of a group.<sup>3</sup>
2. The distinctive character, spirit, and attitudes of a people, culture, era etc.: the revolutionary ethos.<sup>4</sup>

As an Iyengar practitioner, as I attempt to clarify just what this ethos is, I realize we work with our words, with our actions, behaviours, and with metaphor to articulate what is distinct about our beliefs and attitudes based on Patanjali’s yoga.

Yoga in the Iyengar tradition does indeed have its own ethos which has the potential to be revolutionary for the evolution of any human being. It offers any human being the tools for transformation through practice. Not only does the image of the banyan tree apply to our practice of yoga, but it also is a metaphor for our association with each other under the canopy

<sup>1</sup> Iyengar, B.K.S., *Tree of Yoga*, Fine line books Ltd., 1988

<sup>2</sup> Iyengar, Prashant, *Yoga – Our System*, *Yoga Rahasya* v.6, # 2

<sup>3</sup> *Webster’s New World Dictionary*, second edition, 1978

<sup>4</sup> *Collins Concise Dictionary*, fourth edition, 1999



of this vast subject. There are many components of Iyengar ethos, and this paper will discuss only a few of the elements which are distinctive in our methodology.

## ROOTS

The roots of Iyengar Yoga ethos are very old and its evolution flows from Patanjali's yoga. Its ethos has been formed through the evolution of consciousness and the connection from guru to pupil. For those of us living in this time, that has been through the life, work, and Light of B.K.S. Iyengar.

One of the first aspects of its ethos that drew me into the subject was the use of *asana* to study the mind. Geeta Iyengar said in her class of July 24, 2013: "Each *asana* is a vehicle for the soul. ... at the same time, there is a procedure to begin the journey."

For me, the journey started at the YMCA in Victoria in the early eighties where Carole Miller planted the seeds of Iyengar yoga in me as my first teacher in this tradition. Though she wouldn't see herself as a gardener at all, her teaching showed me that there was much more depth to this subject than at first was apparent. Innately I knew that my body was the vehicle for this journey and her classes opened the door for me to use my body as a tool for inner exploration.

Using words and putting my thoughts down for this essay in a coherent fashion has been quite a challenge over the last few months.

We all come to Yoga for different reasons, and then realize there is so much more than the physical to this system. There will come a day when the full scope of the physical practices aren't available to my body in the same way, but the system

gives me the tools and the philosophy with which to live an examined life of depth and breadth...using matter to connect with spirit.

Guruji's ethos is not stagnant. When the calibre of students improved, he was able to give more. I have heard many a story where initially his teaching was so subtle, he realized the average student could not follow. So he had to train the bodies and minds of students to spread their energy and balance in many directions at which point he could offer more.

As my own roots go down and deepen, I can then reach out with more stability to be involved in my local and national community. It has been a natural slow evolution and required much patience and tolerance, not only for myself, but for others as well. I have had to search the balance of how to spread and conserve my own energy through practice and to be able to then share this without ego attachments with other human beings.

## TRUNK

### 'Informal interaction with Guruji in the library is where you get the fabric of yoga'

Informal interaction with Guruji in the lobby or the library showed me his living example. He has gone beyond the printed words on a page or verbal instructions and one could see how he was able to illustrate the constantly changing and evolving nature of this subject filtered through his own practice. It is not a stagnant set of rules. He was within and without, he was ordinary and extraordinary...and this was so clearly obvious in informal interactions at the institute.

Mentorship and linking with other practitioners and teachers is another part of Iyengar ethos. We have to be able to stand beside one another and at the same time know we each have a different place in this work.

Guruji said... "I am not a god...find out for yourself."<sup>5</sup>

In my own evolution I have had to discover my own way and words and manner to convey this work. I don't see myself as a scholar, but I am a reflective person. To convey this work authentically, it has to come naturally. My gifts are in the practical, to be able to act and adjust on my feet. I am not Guruji, or Geetaji, or Shirley, and I have learned to articulate without a big script, but through an integrated understanding through practice.

Younger teachers also need to find their own voice. At lower levels one has to stay with a more systematic approach to develop safety and understanding of sequencing, precision and timing. Just as in the practice of an instrument one has to learn the notes and the scales. They are coming with a small tea cup, so one cannot pour a large amount of knowledge into a smaller

### Professional Development Series for Iyengar Yoga Teachers and Trainees

This series will advance your personal practice of asana and pranayama, refine your skills as a teacher, and deepen your understanding of Iyengar yoga with some of the country's most experienced and respected teachers.

Each 3-hour session will include teaching enrichment opportunities as well as a wide variety of current and relevant Professional Development topics.

March 24, 2018, April 6, 2018

April 7, 2018, April 28, 2018

Fridays 2:00 -5:00 pm or Saturdays 10:30 am-1:45 pm



<sup>5</sup> Ettling, Louie; Kilbertus, Ann; Shevloff, Linda. Transcription of a meeting with Guruji, *Iyengar Yoga Centre Newsletter*, Spring, 2014 edition

vessel. But, as the vessel expands and broadens, there is more room to understand the broader ramifications and subtleties of the subject. First the learning has to take place, then with practice, sensitivity and intelligence begin to develop.

## BARK and BRANCHES

Bark protects the tree and allows its internal and external activity to go on. Daily practice of *asana* and *pranayama* become this protection for me.

As a senior teacher, I need to stay wide and broad within and without...like the banyan: To be responsive to the elements and people around me and to reach my own branches out. As Geeta has said the certificate opens the door to further knowledge, but the learning must continue.



## INTRODUCTORY INTENSIVE FOR TEACHERS IN TRAINING

**NEW!** Three-day Dynamic Intensive  
for Teachers in Training

Asana. Pranayama. Philosophy. Peer Teaching.

Celebrate Gurujī's centenary year!

**Wednesday, July 4 to Friday, July 6, 2018**

**With Leslie Hogg, Ann Kilbertus  
and Ty Chandler**

Only 12 spaces available!

9:30 to 5:30 Daily

\$375.00 members, \$410.00 non-members

REGISTRATION required by May 1  
(for administrative/scheduling purposes)

A deposit of \$150 will reserve a place. Payment in full is due June 1.

Before June 1, refunds are subject to a \$50 administration fee.

After June 1, refunds offered only if your space can be filled.

It is my belief that steady sustained local teaching is how to spread this work in an honest manner. Workshops can be helpful as an adjunct, but it's the regular "garden" work that tills the soil in the practitioner.

For a tree or an association of human beings to be viable and healthy, the work has to be spread out. There has to be trust and communication among the various aspects which form the whole.

These days with our many forms of communication, it often strikes me how little we communicate. The evolution over the last 10 years has come with shifting cultural norms regarding how we connect with each other. We have to be aware of the context we are in now and learn new ways so



## INTENSIVE FOR CERTIFIED TEACHERS

**August 13-17, 2018**

Take the opportunity to work with two senior Canadian teachers, **Ann Kilbertus and Louie Ettling.**

This course is designed for teachers seeking to refine their skills at junior and senior intermediate levels.

Ann's studies began in 1984; Louie's began in 1987. Both hold Intermediate Senior certificates and have studied regularly with B.K.S. Iyengar and his family in Pune.

Daily schedule runs 9:30 am to 5:30 pm  
with a two-hour lunch.

IYCV Members \$660, Non-members \$705

A deposit of \$150 will reserve a place.

that rigidity doesn't set in given our varied ways and means of communication.

Yoga in all its aspects is an ever growing and expanding subject as conversations with Guruji in the library have shown. In my conversations with others, this understanding allows me to work to stay open to a variety of viewpoints.

As a practitioner and a person, I have to realize my own strengths and weaknesses which have changed over time. I know that when my practice is on track my ability to convey this integration surfaces in its own time. Good leadership can't be mapped out. In my view it is an ability to be responsive, reflective and to know how and when to act. Regular practice develops this discrimination in everyday mind and the space for reflection is important so new ideas can be given room to surface.

In my own *sadhana* I have slowly persevered. Part of my work is to do what needs to be done and at the same time not to lose myself and my own sense of balance in the process.

In OT [Occupational Therapy] school when I attended, there was theory of practice founded on the therapeutic use of self. As a teacher, it becomes a matter of expressing experience rooted in practice.

I practice to be present, completely and with full responsibility so that right action can become internally known.

## SAP

Energy and elemental management are additional aspects of the Iyengar ethos. I do believe that one day physical energy can be transformed into something else....perhaps divine energy. An esoteric thought, but first my kneecaps have to learn to lift! Asana is taught rigorously at first to wake up the body and mind. Then the inner being has to get lifted up somehow. Gradually more subtle dimensions and experiences begin to reveal themselves. And these are the gifts that surface when one is looking but not looking.

The concept of inner alignment is another aspect of Iyengar ethos. This inner alignment is achieved through energy balance. The frame of the body has to be stable so its contents can spread for transformation to occur.

Geeta described this well in one of her classes at the institute on November 24, 2011. Her classes are often filled with wise

philosophical reflection. She described the subtle elements at play to create the conditions for this inner alignment to occur in *asana*:

*Prithvi tattva* (earth element) – firmness has to be applied wherever it is needed

*Ap tattva* (water element) – the body expresses, at the same time there is softness

*Akasa tattva* (space) – everywhere

*Tejas tattva* (fire element) – uprightness like fire

*Vayu tattva* (air) – through skin absorb feeling of touch, skin fibres calm and quiet everywhere

From this way of working, more questions surface: How to remove this congestion in my body or mind so energy can flow more freely? Is there an even flow of energy? How do I act in this moment? The roots of ethical practice surface in my questions while practicing *asana*. These questions later flow into my daily life as I reflect upon my actions and reactions in living every day.

## LEAVES, FLOWERS and FRUIT

These aspects of the tree surface because of all the support given. Balancing, re-balancing and vigilance are required to stay clear on this path. It is a solitary path, and one has to learn to support oneself from within. But the company of others provide the aerial roots and trunks as shown in the banyan tree to allow healthy leaves and flowers to form fruit. In this, Guruji's commentary on Patanjali's sutra 4.3 articulates a most subtle aspect of the Iyengar ethos:

"Nature's energy flows abundantly in the *sadhaka*. This energy is built up and concentrated through practice of *asana*, *pranayama* and *bandha*, which can be thought of as 'dykes' in the system to regulate and channel energy, so that mind and intelligence may diffuse evenly through one's being. Judicious use of energy builds courage, strength, wisdom and freedom."<sup>6</sup>

And, after all is said and done, I remember, a picture is worth a thousand words. (Or maybe 2000...)

This is it. ॐ

6 Iyengar, B.K.S., *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, The Aquarian Press, 1993



### IYAC/ACYI ASSESSMENT DATES

March 16-18, Introductory II, Kelowna, BC

September 14-16, Introductory II, Calgary, AB

September 28-30, Intermediate Junior I, Winnipeg, MB

THIS ARTICLE WAS WRITTEN BY ANN KILBERTUS AS A SUBMISSION FOR AN INTERMEDIATE SENIOR ASSESSMENT WHICH TOOK PLACE IN VICTORIA, BC, CANADA IN JANUARY, 2017. APPLICANTS WERE ASKED TO WRITE A PAPER REFLECTING UPON SOME OF THE COMMENTS MADE BY GEETAJI AND PRASHANTJI AT THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING WHICH THEY CONVENED IN NOV, 2015. ABOUT 100 PARTICIPANTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD CAME TOGETHER TO MEET WITH GEETA AND PRASHANT OVER A NUMBER OF DAYS WHERE DISCUSSIONS TOOK PLACE ON THE TOPICS OF TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT OF TEACHERS IN THE TRADITION OF IYENGAR YOGA.

# The Obstacle is the Path

By Jessica Lowry

I trip on doubt – daily.	the sometimes this's and sometimes that's	The obstacle is the path Why doubt? The time spent doubting Is time I have not been practising. But why– Why this doubt? Why not go into the centre of this- know this – <i>samshaya.</i>	equanimity balance no need for the this's and that's to happen  only choices and learning and new choices based on learning  hey doubt! <i>samshaya...</i> want to be my friend?
<i>samshaya</i> <i>samshaya</i> <i>samshaya</i>	<i>samshaya</i>  except when I do –		
Doubt I said it right.	understand when I do		
What is the point of understanding all of this with my Norwegian soul?	And when I do penetrate doubt with practise there I am no one belong to no one But aim to know one'sness And in it targeting lightness stability ease unwavering concentration and any fragment of doubt <i>samshaya</i> disrupts these Norwegian legs working in a sanskrit <i>parivrtta parsva kona</i>	Are the unruly questions truly embedded in my genes– Or do they lie dormant in my heart? fear fear of choosing and making the wrong choice fear of doing and failing	I am going to hear you- take a little time to listen discern and then make some choices And practise, practise, practise  <i>samshaya</i> thank you for reminding me the importance of action in the face of you
Pickled herring, cold land, hearty bones, skin, tissue are my cellular make up and likely brought me here as I am for a reason			
I'm not made of hot days or born between Indian Legs!		re-frame this doubt dualities and limitations what if no success or no failure can harm me	The obstacle is the path. ॐ
<i>samshaya</i>			
Where do I fit in to this? That I don't understand at times with my head	<i>Samshaya</i> – you show me I cannot doubt and do.		

## B.K.S. Birthday

The Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria is the heart of Iyengar Yoga in our city. After many years of existence as the Victoria Yoga Centre, we added the name Iyengar in recognition of Gururji's brilliant approach to the teachings of Yoga and the inspiration it has brought to our personal practice and our lives.

Every day I am grateful to have been his pupil.

Knowing I would not be at the centre today, I did my own personal practice this morning and included a ritual of my own in my yoga room. At the front of this room is a large photograph of Gururji which sits between statues of Patanjali and Nataraj (the dancing Siva). To me, these represent two different aspects of Gururji: the

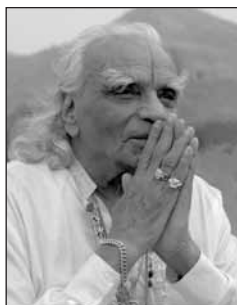


PHOTO: JAKE CLENNELL

philosophical contemplative approach and the vigorous activism. From his teens to his nineties, these were at the heart of Gururji's daily life and work.

He liked nothing better than an opportunity to practise and he taught us how to bring all aspects of yoga into our lives. Moreover he taught us how to follow these practices in good times and bad, from youth to old age.

I have celebrated many of his birthdays in his presence in Pune. Today, and again on his actual birthday December 14th, I will metaphorically touch his feet as I give thanks for his exemplary life and brilliant teaching.

In gratitude, Shirley ॐ



# Invocations: What do they mean and why do we recite them?

By Geeta S. Iyengar

REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM YOGA RAHASYA, VOL.10, NO.4; 2003

It is part of our Indian tradition to seek the blessings of the Lord before starting any auspicious work. We recite various invocations for the different Gods. It is a common practice even at the Institute to recite these invocations during the many functions and celebrations. Why do we recite these invocations and what do they mean?

When we are starting some auspicious work such as the very practice of yoga, the yoga *sadhana*, then we have to offer our prayers to the Lord who is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. Although we know that the Lord is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient, and that He is everywhere and also within us; yet it is not possible to realise or see God since He is formless. He does not appear in any form in front of us. Thus, the human mind begins to give Him some shape. As we begin to worship the Lord, giving Him a form or shape according to our mental creation with devotion, He can appear for our sake in the form given by us.

Any auspicious task is always started by invoking the blessings of Lord Ganesha by reciting the Ganesha Vandanam

*Vakratunda mahakaya Suryakoti samaprabha  
Nirvighnam Kurume deva subhakaryesu sarvada*

Oh elephant-faced Ganesha, Mighty One,  
Thy effulgence is equal to a billion suns,  
Forever remove, I pray thee, all impediments  
In the path of my auspicious deeds.

You may feel that Lord Ganesha is a Hindu God. Therefore, many of us belonging to different religions may hesitate to pray to Hindu Gods. Let us be clear that God does not belong to any religion. God is one, but man-made religions are multiple. God is beyond the explanations but we explore Him according to our intelligence, mental concept and calibre. Therefore, I will not say that Lord Ganesha is a Hindu God.

He is a creation from the human brain for us to think how a Lord could be. Lord Ganesha is the one who has an elephant head with a big skull encasing a huge brain. The huge

(continued next page)

## Thank you

- Theron Morgan for his karma work as bookkeeper for the past decade! Theron arrived at 6 am, squeezing in before classes, or after dark, when the Centre was quiet. Recording and keeping accounts requires scrupulous attention to detail and is an arduous and essential function in a registered charity. We are so grateful to your long time commitment and contribution, Theron.
- Roger Champagne for the donation of his beautiful, hand-made pottery mugs as a fundraiser for the Centre.
- Laine Canivet for her beautiful photos and for producing the 2017 and 2018 calendars, which were also year-end fundraisers.
- SooYoun Ham for promoting the Centre by teaching 3 classes at the University of Victoria as part of their Health Challenge to students.
- Leslie Hogya for the donation of her time and experience in teaching the How to Practice workshop.
- Denys Beames for investigating and drafting the changes we need to make to our constitution and bylaws in order to conform to the latest version of the BC Societies Act.
- Bev Kallstrom for hosting the Board's seasonal potluck in her beautiful home.
- Jeannette Merryfield and Boni Hoy for setting up for the Winter Solstice workshop.

For a successful celebration of Guruji's birthday, thank you to:

- Joy Illington for pulling together a most wonderful party, starting

months before hand. The great food, the tea steeped to perfection, the beautiful flowers, and the impeccable organization were appreciated by all!

- Laine Canivet for her vegan scratch cooking, cookies, organizing, recruiting, communicating, and precision set-up and clean-up.
- Jim Bratvold for wrestling those tables back and forth and vacuuming the library, office, change rooms and who, despite his better judgement, did his best to make sure that cakes were properly consumed.
- Bev Kallstrom for setting up the mats.
- Annie Kitchen for baking 2 gluten free cakes.
- Britta Poisson for making the poster and co-ordinating the communications details.
- Leslie Hogya for leading the asana session of over 30 people.
- Shirley Daventry French for writing (and Ann Kilbertus for reading) her lyrical letter that had all of us metaphorically touching Guruji's feet that day.
- Adia Kapoor for graciously introducing and thanking Leslie for her teaching.
- All of the teachers who attended and assisted and inspired the session with the way they have responded to Guruji's teachings.
- The Board for supporting the celebration - baking, set up and cleaning. We appreciate your commitment to our Centre.

head indicates a completely evolved brain. Human beings also have an evolved brain. We consider that the human brain is well developed and is our intellectual centre. Lord Ganesha is considered to be the one who has the hugest brain. Gana means people. Ganesha means God of the people. He is also known as Vinayaka—the supreme leader. So Ganesha leads us, guides us.



He is the God, chosen by every one (Gana) in a democratic way.

He is also huge as far as his body is concerned. This indicates that though our physical body is, let us say six feet high, two feet broad, Lord Ganesha's huge body is equal to that of the Universal Body. Many a time when we are practising, we feel a state where we are going beyond this body. In that sense, we experience *Mahakaya*. *Maha* means big, great and *kaya* means body. Ganapati with his huge head and huge body indicates the depth of largeness and intricacies of the human body and brain.

His teeth are indicated as *Vakratunda*. *Vakra* means turned or crooked and *tunda* means tusk. This is to indicate that Ganesha, though elephant headed, does not have the tusks of an elephant. According to legend, it is said that Lord Ganesha lost one of his tusks when he opposed Parashurama from entering the regime of Lord Shiva, Ganesha's father.

Lord Ganesha is considered to be the One who helps us in all our auspicious work by helping us overcome all the obstacles and hindrances which come our way. So we offer our prayers to Lord Ganesha. We ask the Lord to remove all those obstacles which come in the way on the auspicious path of yoga. Having studied the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali, you know that there are nine obstacles in the path of yoga along with four distractive and destructive mental obstructions. We invoke the blessings of

Lord Ganesha so that we can courageously face and remove the obstacles that come in the way of our yogic *sadhana*.

Basically, Lord Ganesha is the God of Wisdom and remover of obstacles. Hence, he is invoked and worshipped at the commencement of every important progressive and auspicious undertaking. It is said that Ganesha wrote the *Mahabharata* at the dictation of Vyasa. It was on the condition that Vyasa should not pause or break the flow of narration even for a fraction of a second, otherwise he will stop writing further. Vyasa accepted the challenge and did not pause.

Although these invocations are in the Sanskrit language, it does not mean that God belongs to that particular community which speaks or follows that particular language. Man thought of having a language so that he can relate what he understands, to others. Language is meant for communication. Therefore, if the prayers are said in Sanskrit, it does not mean that God belongs only to the people who speak Sanskrit.

*Nothing is achieved by a mind that doubts.*

– B.K.S. Iyengar ॐ

## Building Confidence in Inversions

**April 14, 2018,  
Noon to 2:30 pm**

Inversions are the cornerstone of Iyengar yoga practice. Join Adia Kapoor to explore the important actions and principles that prepare the body for approaching and working with inverted poses. Learn preparations and modifications towards a safe and stable practice of headstand, shoulder stand and arm balancing.

Whether a beginning student in Level 1 classes thinking about moving up to Level 2, or an experienced student who is nervous about inverting, or any level of practitioner who just wants to dive deeper into being upside down, come and explore with us!

Fees: \$40 Members / \$45 Non-members





*The practice hall at RIMYI*

## Scholarships and Bursaries

### **Salt Spring Retreat**

June 8-10,  
deadline May 17

### **Jump into Summer**

June 25-29,  
deadline June 1

### **Intensive for Teachers in Training,**

July 4-6,  
deadline May 21

### **Certified Teacher Intensive,**

August 13-17,  
deadline June 29

### **Student Intensive,**

August 27-31,  
deadline August 3

Bursaries are available to all students presently enrolled in classes. To subsidize your term fees, please apply three weeks prior to term.

Applications for both are available at the reception desk.

Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria  
202-919 Fort Street,  
Victoria, B.C. V8V 3K3  
250-386-YOGA (9642)

## IT ALL HELPS

Our Centre is a nonprofit and as such can benefit from a partnership with Thrifty Foods. Thrifty Foods will donate an amount equal to 5% of the dollars you load to your pre-assigned Smile Card. We are eligible to earn up to \$2500 this term (which ends April 28, 2018) to be put towards designing and building props.

Please check with the Front Desk to obtain a card or start using or keep using the Smile Card you have.

## Congratulations!

The following candidates achieved Introductory II certification at the January 19-21 assessment in Nanaimo:

Lara Cubitt, North Vancouver, BC

Sean O'Leary, White Rock, BC

Deanne Orrell, Nanaimo, BC

Karen Gibson, Courtenay, BC

Jennifer Van De Pol, Victoria, BC

Ghislaine Atkins, Toronto, ON

Julia MacLean, Dartmouth, NS

Crystal McMillan, Parksville, BC

## IYCV Calendar

### **MARCH**

- 22 High Tea Fundraiser
- 23 Practice Enrichment
- 24 Professional Development

### **APRIL**

- 6 Professional Development
- 7 Professional Development
- 14 Building Confidence in Inversions
- 15 Annual General Meeting
- 28 Professional Development

### **MAY**

- 5 Improve Your Poses by Understanding the Basics

### **JUNE**

- 8-10 Salt Spring Retreat
- 21 International Day of Yoga
- 25-29 Jump into Summer

### **JULY**

- 4-6 Intro Teacher Training Intensive

### **AUGUST**

- 13-17 Certified Teacher Intensive
- 27-31 Student Intensive

## Members' Practice

All current members of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria who attend a regular class or have received permission from the practice monitor are welcome to participate in an open practice every Sunday afternoon from 12:30 - 3:30 pm.

There is no instruction given in this self-directed practice session. Props, books and other resources are available for the use of anyone who attends. Come for 20 minutes or stay for three hours!





## Eleventh Annual High Tea Fundraiser

\$20 per person  
Free for children

Hosted by Students from the Special Needs Class  
Thursday, March 22, 2018, 2:15 pm- 4:45 pm

*Please note: Payment of the ticket price does not qualify as a donation. Tax receipts will be issued for donations of \$20 or more.*

Enjoy a variety of delectable teas, scrumptious, homemade sweets and savories. Win something amazing at our silent auction and draw. Feel free to wear your favorite hat!

Proceeds will assist the purchase of new props, the replacement of old props, and fund bursaries for Special Needs classes.



*All memberships expired December 31st. IT'S TIME TO RENEW!*

## Become a Member - Enjoy the Benefits!

Become a member of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria and enjoy:

- Discounts on classes and workshops.
- Early registration for classes and workshops.
- Scholarship eligibility for various workshops.
- Library borrowing privileges.
- Free practice space on Sunday afternoons.
- Opportunities for members to contribute insights and apply to sit on the board of directors.

**One-year membership fee: \$42 CDN (\$40 + GST), renewable each January.**

### Membership PLUS

The Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria is offering a new membership option, Membership PLUS.

Receive all the benefits of an annual membership, PLUS six copies of the newsletter mailed to you. Ideal for teachers with their own studio!

**This membership is available within Canada for \$57.75 (\$55 + GST)**

Please complete this form and mail or drop it off at our office with your cheque or money order to:

c/o Hilary McPhail  
202-919 Fort Street,  
Victoria BC V8V 3K3 Canada

Iyengar Yoga Centre  
of Victoria Society

☐ One-year: \$42 ☐ Membership Plus \$57.75

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

PROV/ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTRY: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please mail my newsletter.

☐ Please email me the link to the web newsletter.

☐ Sign me up for monthly yog-e email news.

☐ Receipt required.