

March/April 2006



# IYENGAR yoga centre OF VICTORIA



Knowledge grows when action  
and analysis synchronize.

– B.K.S. Iyengar



IYENGAR YOGA

## Teacher Training Intensives

**Fees for each course:**

\$560.00 CDN + GST IYCV members

\$600.00 CDN + GST non-members

**Registration now open.**

To register, drop in to or phone  
the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria  
202-919 Fort Street  
Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3  
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)  
[www.iyengaryogacentre.ca](http://www.iyengaryogacentre.ca)

**July 10-15, 2006**

**With Leslie Hogya, Ann Kilbertus**

Introductory I & II Syllabi for uncertified Iyengar Yoga teachers

This six-day course will build your understanding of teaching Iyengar Yoga based on the foundation of a good practice. Peer teaching, pranayama, philosophy and anatomy will be included. Leslie and Ann are experienced teachers in Junior Intermediate III through the Iyengar Yoga association of Canada and are qualified I.Y.A.C assessors. They are involved in teacher training in Victoria as well as outlying British Columbia and Yukon communities.

Preference will be given to members of I.Y.A.C. and those planning to do their assessment in the near future.

**August 7-11, 2006**

**With Shirley Daventry French**

Intermediate Junior and Senior syllabi for certified Iyengar Yoga teachers

This in-depth course offers the opportunity for certified Iyengar Yoga teachers to work with a master teacher and prepare for assessment at the Junior Intermediate I, II & III, and Senior Intermediate I levels.

Shirley is a direct student of B. K. S. Iyengar who awarded her a senior teaching credential. She has been teaching Iyengar Yoga for thirty-five years and is one of North America's most experienced teachers in the Iyengar tradition. Shirley has been training teachers in Victoria and throughout Canada for many years.

As in previous years, Iyengar Yoga teachers from other countries are also invited to apply. I.Y.A.C. members will get priority.

*A deposit of \$150.00 CDN will reserve a place. Full payment is due June 2, 2006. If you cancel by June 2, 2006 your deposit minus 10% will be refunded. After June 2, 2006 refunds will be given only if your space can be filled.*

### Junior Intermediate Workshop For levels 3 & 4 students *with Manouso Manos*

**April 14-16, 2006**

Friday, April 14, 6:00 - 9:00 pm

Saturday, April 15, 10:00 am - 1:00 pm, 3:00 - 6:00 pm

Sunday, April 16, 10:30 am - 1:00 pm

**THIS WORKSHOP IS FULL**

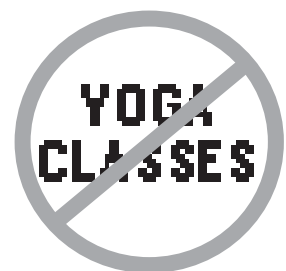
To add you name to the wait list, drop in to or phone

Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria, 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3

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[www.iyengaryogacentre.ca](http://www.iyengaryogacentre.ca)

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10.00 cancellation fee.

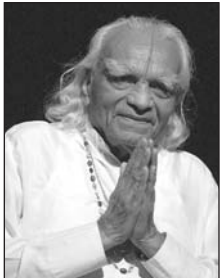


**No Classes  
Easter Long Weekend**

**Friday, April 14 -  
Monday, April 17, 2006**

**Manouso Manos  
workshop only**

# contents



## 2 Best Wishes from Gururajji

## 3 Reflections

by Shirley Daventry French

## 8 Gururajji on his first Public Classes in the West

## 15 Namaste

John Schumacher

## 17 Have Mat Will Travel

Amaresh Bill Wilson

## 19 The Process of Yoga

David Gelzinis

## 21 Practising Yoga

Jane Munro

## 22 Preparing for Pune

## 24 Palm to Palm, We Thank You

## 25 Calendar



### Omission:

In the January/February 2005 issue, photo credit for "Estes Park, Colorado" (p.11) (at right) belongs to Jaki Nett.



PHOTO: JAKI NETT

### Newsletter Advertising Policy (Adopted February 20, 2004)

In keeping with the mandate of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Society Directors, 2004, to update, review and document policies and procedures, the newsletter committee submitted a policy which is a revision of the 1996 policy and has been adopted by the Board of Directors as follows:

1. Advertisements must not conflict with the aims of the newsletter of the IYCV.
2. Advertisements must be only for Iyengar Yoga
3. Priority given to advertisements regarding:
  - IYCV events
  - IYCV sponsored events
  - IYAC events

### COURSE REGISTRATION:

#### Drop in:

202-919 Fort Street,  
Victoria, B.C. V8V 3K3

#### Phone:

(250) 386-YOGA (9642)

#### Refund policy:

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.



## IYENGAR yoga centre OF VICTORIA NEWSLETTER

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### DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

March 15, 2006

### IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA

**SOCIETY** is a non-profit society incorporated under the Societies' Act of the Province of B.C., whose 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 Swami Sivananda Radha and 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, drawings, information or suggestions to the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Newsletter: 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3. For information on activities and events, call (250) 386-YOGA (9642) or visit our website: [www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca](http://www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca).

Permission is hereby granted to reprint any of our material, except that copyrighted by the author or artists. When reprinting, please credit this Newsletter and send us two copies of the publication containing our material. Copyright material is only available with written permission.

The editor/newsletter committee hold the right to publish or edit all articles at their discretion.

## Best wishes from Guruji

December 16, 2005

**My Dear Leslie,**

Thanks a lot for sending me the forms for Bellur trust donation and also happy to note that all of you enjoyed my latest book and May God bless you all to reach that level sooner or later.

I am also happy when Shirley requested to lend my name for the Centre at Victoria, I was happy.

I am sure that the Centre will grow from strength to strength with so many teachers on hand.

I wish you all the best wishes and may the Centre grow from leaps and bounds.

Convey my good wishes to one all.

*B.K.S. Iyengar*

*Editor's note: The Bellur Krishnamachar Seshamma Smaraka Niddhi Trust was established by Guruji to improve the quality of life for the local villagers of Bellur, Guruji's birth village. Donations to this trust have resulted in providing clean drinking water, opening a high school and the erection of the first temple dedicated to Patanjali. The next task is to build a first-aid and public health centre.*

The IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA PRESENTS

### Workshop with Stephanie Quirk

for students with six months or more  
Iyengar Yoga experience.

This is fabulous opportunity to study with someone who has a wealth of direct experience studying with the Iyengar family.

This is a general workshop designed for students.

**Sunday, May 21, 2006, 12:00 – 3:00 pm**

**Monday, May 22, 2006 (Victoria Day), 10:00 am – 2:00 pm**

Fees: \$160.00 + GST IYCV members, \$180.00 + GST non-members

Registration opens:

February 4, 2006 for IYCV members, February 14, 2006 for non-members

To register, drop in to or phone the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria  
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(250) 386-YOGA (9642)

[www.iyengaryogacentre.ca](http://www.iyengaryogacentre.ca)

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled  
and are subject to a \$10.00 cancellation fee.

### Can you help?

If you have a spare digital camera  
or portable CD/tape player,  
the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria  
would like to give it a good home.

Please contact the front desk  
at (250) 386-YOGA (9642).

### Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada

#### ASSESSMENT DATES

**June 16-19, 2006, Calgary**  
Introductory Level I/II

**June 16-19, 2006, Saskatoon**  
Introductory Level I/II

**October 13-15, 2006, Toronto**  
Sr. Intermediate I

**November 17-19, 2006, Victoria**  
Jr. Junior II



SHIRLEY DAVENTRY FRENCH WAS AWARDED SENIOR CERTIFICATION FROM B.K.S. IYENGAR. SHE HAS BEEN TEACHING SINCE 1972 AND FOUNDED THE IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA IN 1976. SHIRLEY LIVES IN VICTORIA AND TEACHES WORLDWIDE.

There were two yoga teachers in Victoria when I started yoga. One was a woman who taught at the Y which is where I began. The other was a man who taught in a community college. Both were middle aged. Both had lived in India. The woman had grown up there with her British parents under the Raj. The man had been an officer in the British army in India and certainly had a military bearing. In those days yoga was a growing interest among the community of hippies who had converged on the west coast of Canada; but the demeanour of these two teachers was far more conservative reflecting their background. Using yoga *asana* as a primary spiritual tool, their classes were disciplined, structured, and linked to the philosophy behind these practices.

Unpretentious but self-possessed, these teachers awakened in me a thirst to know more about yogic teachings. I was impressed with their non-attachment to their students. In fact they each encouraged us to take classes with the other, and even made an effort to throw us out from time to time emphasizing the importance of establishing a personal practice rather than becoming dependent on a classes.

As far as I could see, neither of them had a yoga master or a particular tradition; but clearly both of them were eadeavouring to put what they taught into practice in their own lives. They exuded integrity.

As interest in yoga and demand for classes grew, both of these teachers trained a few people to teach. My teacher, Jessica Tucker, started a modest teacher training program at

the Y. I do not know how the man, Gordon Limbrick, trained his students, but two or three of them began to teach. Jessica believed that teaching yoga was an offering and one should not seek to be paid, so in the beginning everyone who taught at the Y was a volunteer. On the other hand, the teachers trained by Gordon were not volunteers.

Jessica's teacher training took place once a week in the afternoon for two hours and, as I recall, it lasted ten weeks. She did not advertise; participation was by invitation only. When Jessica approached me to see if I was interested in taking this course, I told her I had never thought about teaching yoga, but would give it some thought. In my youth I had begun to train as a school teacher but had decided it was not for me. I did, however, have experience of teaching fitness and swimming. When I had thought it over, I decided to take the teacher training course, more to deepen my knowledge of yoga than to teach.

One day, soon after the course ended, Jessica was seeking a teacher for an extra class at the Y. She looked at me and said that she didn't think I was ready, and I readily concurred. I was in no hurry. Two weeks later, seeking a teacher for another class she asked me if I could teach it. Apparently I had made a lot of progress in those two weeks!

Then, as now, yoga had exploded on to the scene; but there were significant differences. It was the height of the Vietnam War and in North America there was widespread repudiation of Western values and culture. People were "tuning in and dropping out".

Before I actually stepped through the door into a formal yoga class, I had been involved for several years with self-study in groups variously called encounter or sensitivity groups; although there was little sensitive about them some of the time as freedom gave way to licence. Derek and I sent our children to a free school based on the ideas of A.S. Neill and the Summerhill school he founded in

*Jessica believed that teaching yoga was an offering and one should not seek to be paid, so in the beginning everyone who taught at the Y was a volunteer.*



England. To the consternation of my mother, I rejected my proper British upbringing. Worried about me, in one letter she enquired if I were having a nervous breakdown! *You have such a nice husband, nice children, nice house in a beautiful place. Why do you want to disturb things?*

In those early days, although many people were digging into yoga and other Eastern teachings, few wanted to teach and the supply of teachers dragged behind the demand for classes. Today, many a yoga teacher with a few (sometimes very few) years teaching behind them offers teacher training. This is often followed in a short time by advanced teacher training. One teacher I know makes no bones about the fact that teacher training is a way of making money and keeping a studio afloat.

At the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria, we field questions regularly from people who are interested in our teacher training who have never taken a class in Iyengar Yoga; sometimes they have never taken a class in any form of yoga! When told they would be expected to study with us or other certified teachers for three years and then apply, this is the last we see of them. Reasons for wanting to teach yoga have been as varied as “I am unhappy teaching school and thought I might take up yoga teaching instead” to “I’m getting older and don’t know how much longer I can teach aerobics”.

For those wishing to get certified

quickly there are weekend teacher training workshops like one I saw advertised by something called YogaFit. In fact it was not even a full weekend, only Saturday and Sunday. In those two days, along with how to choose various angles from which to market yourself, they also found time to teach the History of Yoga. In the words of the infamous advertising by the Liberals in our recent Federal election: *I am not making this up.*

When I started to teach, the popular image of a yoga teacher was someone with flowing hair and flowing robes; and I must confess I grew my hair, stopped wearing makeup and put away my smart European clothes. Nowadays, advertisements and magazines are full of youthful, slender, beautiful women and handsome, muscular men, all of them extremely flexible. I don’t know how many times someone has said to me: “I couldn’t do yoga. I’m not at all flexible”. Depending on how categorically this statement is made, I might venture to suggest that perhaps taking a yoga class could make you a little more flexible. What a novel idea?

It is sad that yoga is so tied up with body image these days, but committed students have to begin somewhere and their reasons will be as varied as the individuals involved. Mine was that I emigrated, had three children in four years, a very busy husband, and no extended family support in this strange country. I did not have to worry about physical survival like Catherine Parr Trail

and Susanna Moodie, the two English sisters featured in the wonderful biography *Sisters in the Wilderness* by Charlotte Gray. Compared to their ordeal, I was pampered. However, while my physical needs were well taken care of, my spiritual needs were not and I did not know what to do about this. The very first yoga lecture I heard from Swami Radha gave me not only hope of making sense of and coping with my predicament, but tools to use for this purpose. It was like a breath of fresh air coming into my life.

I was already teaching when this meeting occurred, and could see how vast a gap there was between what I had learned about yoga and the wisdom of Swami Radha, wisdom tinged with a good dose of common sense. I wanted to learn more and in the winter of 1976 went to Yasodhara Ashram to take their three month residential Teacher Training Course. To say that this course changed my life is not an exaggeration. Unlike some people I knew, for me this did not result in changing husbands or jobs or where I lived but rather required a substantial change within me and one which I struggle to this day to sustain. It is a question of first growing up and accepting full responsibility for oneself and one’s life; then learning to discriminate between that which strengthens us and that which weakens us, that which takes us closer to the Light and that which takes us to the darker side of our nature.

Perhaps this course made me a better teacher, and certainly I learned much about teaching yoga; but its significance was in learning how to delve into the vast body of spiritual knowledge and practice which lie at the heart of yoga, and how to use these teachings in all aspects of my life. Physical discipline has never been difficult for me but to modify my behaviour and see the Divine Light in others - now that was and frequently still is a challenge.

Shortly after I had taken this course, Swami Radha changed its name. Of the

*It is a question of first growing up and accepting full responsibility for oneself and one’s life; then learning to discriminate between that which strengthens us and that which weakens us, that which takes us closer to the Light and that which takes us to the darker side of our nature.*

fourteen participants, many had little or no prior knowledge of yoga. The course gave them a broad introduction but not deep knowledge, which could not be acquired in such a short time. It was sufficient to build on but not to go out and teach. This would be premature. So the name of this course was changed to Yoga Development Course, and those who completed the work of this course and were interested in teaching could go on to take teacher training in various aspects of yoga.

The demands of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria's teacher training program reflect the demands of our Guru, B.K.S. Iyengar. True, he has a large worldwide following, but he is not interested in quantity but rather in quality. In Toronto in 1993 when he told us that we had to begin the process of certification and assessment, he was aware of opposition to this idea from some of his senior students, and he emphasized that he did not care if only two or three people went along with this: we had to make a beginning.

Opposition to certification certainly delayed the process for several years, but eventually Gururji's wishes prevailed. The first certificates were issued to a few of his senior students at a Canadian intensive in Pune in 1997. The first assessment took place the following year. More than two or three people did stay with the national association, and now we have approximately 145 Canadian certified teachers and waiting lists for many of our assessments.

Sometimes these teachers are discouraged at how meaningless the term "certified yoga teacher" has become. To be certified in Iyengar Yoga is an undertaking which requires a long term commitment, and those who persevere and are awarded a certificate with the signature of B.K.S. Iyengar treasure this piece of paper which is recognized and respected worldwide.

These reflections were prompted by



*Teacher training is ongoing. Teacher Greg Sly is challenged to find clarity in Virabhadrasana III.*

our most recent teachers' meeting in January 2006. The teachers' group affiliated with our centre comprises 48 teachers. The majority are from Greater Victoria but others come from up-Island (meaning mid or northern Vancouver Island), from various Gulf Islands and mainland British Columbia communities. Our most distant member is from Whitehorse in the Yukon. While few of the out-of-towners can attend our monthly meetings regularly, they come here from time to time. At present, in addition to eight local apprentices we have six from out of town. When they come to Victoria it is often for a week or more of study where they attend some classes, observe others, participate in discussions with their primary mentor and take part in whatever events are happening at the centre during that time.

The way we organize our teacher training at the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria is through a teacher training committee of six teachers: Linda Benn, Lauren Cox, Leslie Hogya, Ann Kilbertus, Marlene Miller and myself. In addition to our monthly meetings the six of us meet regularly to review the progress of trainees plus any problems which have arisen

regarding teachers and teaching. What is working well; what is not? Where do we need to focus our energy? Where do we need to make changes?

Who are the members of our teachers' group? If you are a certified Iyengar Yoga teacher interested in our centre and the teacher training which goes on here, you can be affiliated with us. The core group consists of certified Iyengar Yoga teachers who teach or take classes and workshops at our centre. They must first become a member of the non-profit Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Society; then pay an extra small fee to join the teachers' group. They will receive notices of meetings at which all of them will be welcome, and any other pertinent information regarding teaching and training which we have gathered in Victoria. All who teach at our centre and all of our trainees are required to join the group. For other interested teachers it is an option which they may take up if it interests them.

Our teacher training program is affiliated with the Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada and follows criteria which came directly from B.K.S. Iyengar. Most of the training for Introductory certifica-

*From a colleague who was in Pune in January, I was told that Geeta repeatedly asked, often in frustration, why so many people want to become yoga teachers. Prashant cautions us against seeing it as a vocation rather than an avocation.*

tion is done by my five colleagues on the committee, and I am involved primarily with postgraduate training for higher levels of certification. Before taking on anyone new, we must make sure we have the time and energy, because it is a great responsibility to train teachers to the exacting standards of a Master such as B.K.S. Iyengar.

When applications are received they are read and discussed, and we do not accept everyone. Often an applicant is asked to focus on his or her practice for six months or longer and then reapply. They will receive guidance in how to establish a personal practice, because this is the foundation for becoming a good teacher. They do not have to be adept but willing to look honestly at their limitations - physical and emotional - and apply the techniques and teachings of yoga to overcoming them as best they can. As Guruji has said: *Some can do and cannot teach; and some can teach and cannot do.* Ideally one can both teach and do! Certification involves assessment in teaching and practice, as well as a written examination on practical aspects of yoga, anatomy and physiology, and philosophy.

From a colleague who was in Pune in January, I was told that Geeta repeatedly asked, often in frustration, why so many people want to become yoga teachers. Prashant cautions us against seeing it as a vocation rather than an avocation. In fact, the very first question on the application for our teacher training program is: "Why do you want to become an Iyengar Yoga teacher? What are your

expectations? Please take time to answer this question with full consideration." This theme will be revisited often during their training.

Our monthly teacher training meetings give teachers of different levels of expertise and varied experience, the opportunity to explore both practical and philosophical questions related to yoga with each other. They are usually well attended. Twenty eight teachers and trainees came to the meeting I mentioned earlier in this article. I had sent them out a letter asking them to reflect on some questions beforehand, and the whole group provided many responses to the following questions:

*What makes the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria a non-profit organization?*

*How do you profit personally?*

After this discussion we divided into four groups; each took one of these questions and brought their ideas back to the whole group:

*How can we keep the yoga centre healthy?*

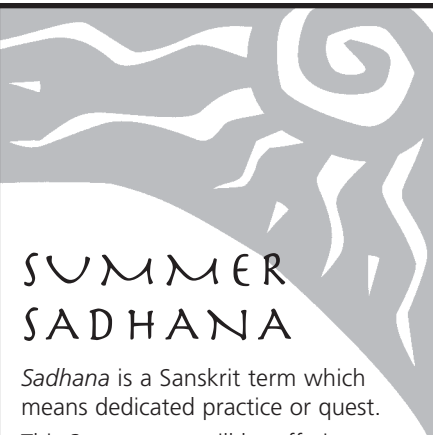
*How can we nurture the spiritual?*

*Is it fair how we pay teachers?*

*Are expectations too high?*

In my letter I had raised the question: *Have we become an anachronism?* The consensus of our meeting seemed to be saying: NO - even in the competitive environment of yoga today, there is a place for us.

I say Amen to that. ॐ



## SUMMER SADHANA

*Sadhana* is a Sanskrit term which means dedicated practice or quest. This Summer we will be offering a Sadhana.

**July 26-30, 2006**  
**6:30 – 8:00 am**  
**With Robin Cantor**

See next issue for more details.



## Come to the Friday Night Gathering

**Friday, March 31, 2006**  
**6:30 pm**

We are pleased to announce that our guests for the evening will be visiting from The Salt Spring Centre

Let's all join together for a musical evening of Kirtan (chanting)

Please bring a vegetarian dish to share at the Potluck Dinner to follow the Kirtan

Admission: Minimum \$5.00 donation to go to The Salt Spring Centre & their Orphanage Project



# *Take a Walk in the footsteps of Patanjali*

## **B.K.S Iyengar Yoga Retreat**

**August 20 - 25, 2006**

**With Shirley Daventry French  
and Leslie Hoga**



***Let Shirley & Leslie be your guides at this  
spiritual retreat centre on beautiful  
Salt Spring Island off Canada's west coast.***

Immerse yourself in daily  
Pranayama & Asana practice.  
Be involved in lively discussion  
through group participation into  
the ancient teachings of the  
Yoga Sutras of Patanjali.

### **SHIRLEY DAVENTRY FRENCH**

is a senior student of B.K.S. Iyengar. She  
has studied at the Ramamani Memorial  
Institute in Puna many times, most recently  
in October 2005. She is the founder of the  
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria, B.C.

**LESLIE HOGYA** has been studying Iyengar  
Yoga since 1972. She has travelled to India  
six times. She most recently studied with  
B.K.S. Iyengar in Colorado in September,  
2005. She holds a Junior Intermediate III  
level of certification and is part of the  
assessors team for Canada.

### **FEES:**

**\$994.00 + GST IYCV members**  
– shared accommodation

**\$1050.00 + GST non-members**  
– shared accommodation

**\$894.00 + GST IYCV members**  
– camping – must supply own  
equipment

**\$950.00 + GST non-members**  
– camping – must supply own  
equipment

A \$200 deposit required to hold  
your space and the full payment  
is due June 1, 2006

To register, drop in to or phone  
the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria  
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After June 1 the \$200.00 deposit  
is non-refundable.

# Guruji

## on his First Public Classes in the West

*Fifty-one years ago, Guruji first visited Europe to teach Lord Menuhin, his family and friends. He continued teaching the elite of the Western world for several years before embarking on teaching the commoners.*

***Yoga Rahasya*** interviews Guruji on his experiences on his first public classes in the West and the difficulties he faced adapting to a culture so different from his own.

**G**uruji, you started going to Europe in the 1950's to teach Lord Menuhin and his family. When did the idea of conducting public classes first come to your mind?

No doubt, I was teaching only the elites in my first few visits to Europe. When Menuhin invited me, he himself being an elite person, all his contacts were the elites of western civilisation. All the elites of the western world, Aldous Huxley, Julius Huxley, used to come to Gstaad for a month. Since that was the time, I too was invited to be in Gstaad, it was only natural that I started getting contact with such people.

It so happened that in 1958, when I returned to India after I had talked at the House of Lords, a correspondent of the *Times of India* interviewed me. He contacted me directly at the airport and asked me to come to his office. He interviewed me for an hour. He talked about many things. I told him that I was teaching the Queen Mother of Belgium at the age of 84 as this was the first time that I had taught somebody so old. The next day he wrote in the paper "The king of all exercises is yoga and Mr. Iyengar only teaches Kings and Queens." That report made me feel really sorry. It had an imprint on my mind.

So when I went back to Europe in 1960, after a gap of two years, I requested Mr. Menuhin that I be allowed to teach common people also that the next time I would be interviewed, I could say that I not only taught Queens and Kings but taught scavengers and sweepers too! That is what I had in mind and I think I succeeded.

When I started public classes in 1960, I had only 3-4 people in my class. It was not a success. The charges were 10 shillings per class and people were not ready to pay even that. They would laugh at me. Then when I returned in 1961, I had pre-planned what to do. I had written letters to the Asian Music Circle and to Menuhin to organise lectures and demonstrations in various places in London. The lecture demonstrations, especially the practical demonstrations

attracted more people to come to my class. So, in my next trip, I had 21 to 25 students in my public classes. I taught in a garden behind Menuhin's house and slowly, very slowly more people started coming which today as you can see is uncontrollable.

**How did you inform people that you are going to start public classes?**

There was no publicity at all. The Asian Music Circle had a monthly newsletter and they had mentioned in that Mr. Iyengar is going to take public classes. Nothing beyond that was mentioned and people were asked to phone Angela Marris or myself for the details.

**What was the immediate response from the few students who came? Were they attracted or were they hesitant?**

Those who came to me in the beginning were all yoga practitioners. There were only 4 or 5 people. They were not raw students without any basic knowledge. They would jump from one position to another doing nonsensical things. So, naturally I thought, "let me tap those who have done yoga, are doing yoga." I started giving them a systematic method of practice and a sequence of how to follow one *asana* after the other as per the anatomical structure of the body. That is how I started and built up.

They were practicing very enthusiastically. They were already teachers so I told them that if you want to teach then teach in this way. They did not want to accept this new method because it was strenuous, strong and powerful. They used all the words that you use today. This method is very strong, very demanding, very powerful. You need the will power to do it and all that.

There were dropouts but there were others who stuck to this method saying that when there is a right method then why go back to the old method. You teach those who come to you and those who don't come we don't teach. That is how it went on. I also gave a lot of performances for the public.

**When they used to comment that it is very demanding, tiring, exhausting, did it ever tempt you to change and dilute your method?**

No. I had Mr. Menuhin as an example. I told them, "Do you think that Mr. Menuhin would have become a top class violinist if he had not strained?" Curzon, Aldous Huxley all

strained. For what purpose were they straining? Were they straining for worthless things? Art demands something and you have to accept it and do it.

**What was the interest in the elites that you were teaching? Some like Menuhin and Curzon may have been genuinely interested but there may have been some who came to you because Menuhin has asked them to?**

Many came because Menuhin told them. They were casually interested not genuinely interested.

**Did that dishearten you?**

No, it did not dishearten me. I thought that they were at least saying that yoga has done them good. So, they had respect for the teaching. They had a casual interest but because they were known in society as musicians their words carried weight on others who genuinely came to learn. So casual practitioners had a great deal of power to state that they were influenced by yoga to some extent and the others genuinely started doing.

**How was life in London in those days? It was not an easy city to live in and life in 1960's UK and in India would have been dramatically different? How was it with you?**

It was physically tiring on me. My time was completely utilised by each and every one. There was no free time. I used to be working from morning 7.00 to 1.00 and then again in the evening 3.00 to 7.30 or 8.00 pm. There were no outsiders, only Menuhin's friends.

**When you were alone in London was there any problem with reference to food?**

In those days, there was no vegetarian food available. When I used to say I am a vegetarian, they used to call me a "grass eater." Cows only eat vegetarian food and I was called a "grass eater!"

**How did you manage food for one whole month?**

*I started giving them a systematic method of practice and a sequence of how to follow one asana after the other as per the anatomical structure of the body. That is how I started and built up.*

Well, today I will be honest. In hotels, I was told I will be given vegetarian food but not one knew what vegetarian food was. They gave me boiled potatoes, fried potatoes, fried bean. These were the two-three dishes that I got and that had an effect on my liver. It would give me pain and I would live on coffee and fruits. I had to control my temptation from asking for anything. They also used to have biscuits so I had to live on bread, honey, biscuits and coffee.

**How did the things gradually change?**

My mind was solely on how to make yoga popular in the western countries. That was in my head so I did not pay much attention to rest of the things. But I was handicapped because of lack of nourishment. I was becoming weak. I do not blame anybody because nobody knew what vegetarian food was.

**Geetaji has mentioned in one of her interviews that whenever Guruji would return from his foreign trips he would be very thin.**

Yes, That is true.

**What about transport and travelling and life in general?**

Nothing, absolutely nothing! See, if I had to give money out of the hundred dollars, which I earned how could I maintain my family? So, when I was in England to teach Menuhin I used to walk 6 miles from Hampstead to Heidelberg. I was walking early morning. Buses were not running at that early hour. So I used to walk from Hampstead and then walk back.

An old couple helped me with my accommodation. Once I was staying at a

lady's who had 33 rooms. Menuhin had arranged for that. After 15 days, she refused to even give me food. I could not tell Menuhin that she is not treating me well. She said, "He had asked me to accommodate you for 15 days. You can stay but you will not get anything." I waited for two days and then told Mr. Menuhin all that happened.

Fortunately at that time I knew Sylvia Mehta. She used to bring something for me to eat from the shops. There was an old couple that was staying in a small house in Hampstead. They had one sitting room, one bed and a kitchen. They said that I could use their kitchen for my practices if I had no objection. They said that we have to act as ambassadors. "If a foreigner is in trouble, it is our duty to oblige!" and obliged me they did without charging me. They gave me a place free of cost. So, 3-4 years I used to go and stay with them only.

**UK is not very famous for its weather. Was your practice different?**

No, I did not change my practice at all because I was afraid, that the quality of my practice would suffer. So whether it was cold or hot, I retained my practice. I never changed it. I was keen to give performances after performance to attract people. I could attract more if they saw directly than talking on the subject. So, that's why I had to be fit as a fiddle. I had to keep my body fit so that I could give a demonstration whenever I was asked to do so. That's why I was practising vigorously.

**Certain old students of yours who I met said that they first saw you on television and that attracted them towards yoga.**

I went whenever they called me. That's why I had to be ready to give a demonstration and naturally I had to keep my body trained. All of a sudden they used to ask me, "could you show the most difficult pose that you like?" So, had to start with *Vrshchikasana* as that is the most difficult pose.

How can one bend suddenly? So, I used to keep myself ready so if anytime they asked me to do an *asana*. I should do that also. So, I attracted people only by showing complicated poses because they were not happy with *Trikonasana* or *Paschimottanasana* or standing on the head.

They wanted me to do most difficult poses like *Kandasana*, *Padangustha*, *Dhanurasana* and all that. My mind wanted to show what the human body could do beyond science – what medicine felt was not possible.

**The 50's and 60's were a few years after independence. Did you find any kind of discrimination?**

Racial discrimination was definitely there. It was actually humiliating in the early days. When I got down in England, the first thing they said was, "Oh! Here is a slave, he has come from India." Indians, for them, meant slaves.

For example, I stayed in a hotel in Kensington as Mr. Menuhin had said, "You stay in this hotel as I always stay here when I am in London." It was in 1954. It was my first trip to London and I had no friends in London. The manager came to my room and said "Sir, you are an Indian and you cannot have breakfast or lunch with the rest of our guests. You can order whatever you want in your room. It is embarrassing for us to keep you here but we have to host you because Yehudi Menuhin is our customer. If we say no to you then he may not stay in our hotel. So, we are allowing you to stay but you can stay only in this one room. You have to walk the stairway and go out and come in and you cannot mix with all people." So that was then.



**How did you feel then?**

It was very humiliating! But my mind was made up! "Whatever happens, I have come to do yoga." My object was how to make people to learn yoga? It took me six years to make yoga popular in London. It took years for them to accept that we were also independent people.

Also, in America when I landed in 1956, I was told, "you are a coloured man and you cannot go out first." I used to walk fast. When I went to the gate they said, "you cannot go!" I asked, "Why?" and they said, "because you are a coloured man. The white man goes out first then the coloured men are supposed to go."

**How was it with students? Did they accept it easily?**

Students accepted me well. The students who came to learn were genuine students. I created interest to some extent. They loved my way of teaching. They appreciated my teaching. They were all asking me, "Can we do like you?" and this ignited interest. So they were all genuine. No students had any inferiority complex.

**How does it feel today if you consider how you struggled?**

The broad mindedness has come from petty mindedness. A tremendous broad mindedness has come both in America and the Western countries.

**In 1960, you were struggling to get few students. Today, the students are struggling to get a glimpse of you. How do you feel about the change over?**

(Laughs) That is a mystery. I really cannot tell. In the early days I used to make people see my demonstrations. But when I gave demonstrations in The Barbican and Westminster Hall, the houses were full! Three to four thousand people that watched, were attracted and I had to build up that interest in yoga for them to appreciate it.

**When you see it as a gradual transformation, it feels very possible but when you see it as point A and point B it just doesn't seem possible? What do you think about it?**

It happened. It is a mystery. Probably my way of living also had an added interest in them. First of all, I was a vegetarian and the amount of work that I was



doing surprised them. How can a “grass eater” have so much strength and endurance? This was the turning point and my life became an ideal for them.

We were all moving together after the classes. We would go to the garden, talk and exchange views about their culture, our culture etc. That is when they realised that how this man who eats so little had that endurance. We cannot jump along with him; we cannot walk to keep pace with him. That also may be one of the reasons that made them respect the subject.

**When I was talking to all those students in Manchester, they said there were more women who took yoga initially.**

In the early days, when I started teaching, there were more ladies classes. The mentality then was that man had a physical power. Man considered himself to be very powerful and a woman just his embodiment. I could see that mentality there much more than in India.

Secondly, there was freedom of divorce there. If a woman became fat, if there was no glamour then the man could divorce. So, there were more emotional disturbances in the women. Even today, in the Western countries, they are intellectually powerful but emotionally weak. They cannot withstand even a small bite! This fear complex in women made them come to yoga. Yoga helped them maintain their figure and emotional balance.

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The Western men thought they were strong when I did something interesting. I used to take jumpings, like what they call “power yoga” now, in the ladies class and made them feel strong. It made women develop that feeling that they were not weak. So, when the men gradually also started coming to class – though there were not very many, when I started taking jumpings, the women were doing more than the men.

**It was the ego?**

The ego. It was the turning point. “We cannot stand with these women who practice for hours together with Mr. Iyengar.” Later on, the numbers of men and women increased. So, I made women feel that they are as strong as men.

**Were you doing this intentionally?**

Yes. I was doing it intentionally. When I started, even my question was also “why more women were coming to my class.” I had to question myself “why men were not attending?”

I started asking, “Why is it that they are not coming to class?” They said, “We have got strength, we have got power, we have got this, and we have got that.” The pride of men came out in their talks. Then I thought I should make women feel the power and that is why I started taking balancings, jumpings, and built in that character. Men started thinking, “What is this?” I said, “You come and see.” So, with a dose of humour, I started pulling them towards my side and then I made them do exhaustively like women.

**Many men actually said that they followed their wives to class. One of them also said that when his wife wanted to come to India, he was worried because in those days, many women followed “Gurus” to India and left their families. One of them actually came and visited you in India before letting his wife come to Pune.**

Yes, it did happen. For example, there was a lot of opposition when I was to teach the orthodox Jewish women in England from 1964-65. I gave a demonstration first where both men and women were invited to watch me. I told them that yoga was nothing to interfere in their way of thinking. What they were doing was for health and happiness. Then they had no objection.

I told them that they could also join and I had no objection teaching both of them. I conducted a class in the presence of their husbands. I had to adjust and touch them while teaching but at the end of the class they said that they had no objection to me teaching their women. So now you know that Orthodoxy existed in 1960’s and 70’s in London! Later, when I started regular classes, men would sit in a corner and come in after the class was over. I did not know that they were there and they would tell me that they were watching from the windows! Then yoga became popular in their community. They respected me and said that this is a different man altogether. They were very happy.

**Today there is a lot of reservation with reference to religion. At that time, was there any religion coming in the way?**

It was. As I said, in the early days I never spoke of philosophy. If I spoke on philosophy they would say I am speaking on Hinduism. So, I was not able to speak on the philosophy of yoga. I used to speak on how to keep physically healthy and mentally happy. If you read the early magazines on Yoga for Health they would say in their editorials that he is ruining the name of yoga. It is a philosophical subject

and he has got it down to physical health and happiness. There were all those attacks on my teaching. So I had to face this as well as that. If I did not speak on philosophy, then the magazines were attacking me and if I spoke on philosophy then they would say I am speaking on Hindu religion. So you can understand the state when I was to make yoga popular. I had to come down to the basics and I stuck to the basics. "Basics" means physical body and harmony of the mind.

#### **When did the change start occurring then?**

It took me nearly 15-20 years to even recite the invocation to Patanjali. It was gradual and I could not jump. I had to be gradual so I could adapt myself to their culture. I had to adapt to their culture. And, according to their culture I had to decide on what words should I use which would be liked by them.

#### **When the Westerners first come here for the first time they say about the culture shock. What happened to you when you went there for the first time?**

I had the same shock. Being an Indian, leading a vegetarian life, it was difficult for me. I had to give demonstrations in bars. I had to give a demonstration there if people gathered or showed interest. It was very difficult for me. I said, "I will just give a demonstration and come out." So once Mr. Menuhin told me, "Mr. Iyengar you have to learn to be with them. You cannot restrict yourself. Take a glass with you, as long as they give you something you just take a little and just walk, don't drink. Who asks you to drink?" It is your choice whether you drink or don't drink. Hold the glass and go around and round."

I had to transform myself to fit into their style of living. I am happy that he guided me. I used to feel nausea when they ate meat. I told him, "I can't eat I feel like vomiting." He guided me again "don't look at the meat at all, don't look at their plates. Look at their faces, look at your dish." That is why I say he is a

great friend of mine. He guided me how to live as per the western culture. He educated me.

#### **You never commented on their lifestyle?**

No. People used to smoke and drink in my presence, I could not force them not to so I told them, "I cannot bear the smoke so I'll go and sit on the other table. Those of you who do not smoke can come and sit with me on the other table. I cannot sit when you are smoking, if you are drinking it does not affect me but the smoke definitely affects me. So you drink wine and I'll drink water. It does not make much difference to me."

Then I went on changing them. I told them, "Is it fair for you people to smoke just after you finish yoga and then you speak about pollution? Switzerland is such a health resort and you people come here, smoke and pollute it. Why do you smoke at this beautiful airy place? You come here for health and what do you do? You come here and lead the life of a city." So that's how I started guiding them. I started changing them in this friendly manner.

Then when they came to know that Iyengar never touches alcohol then they used to ask my permission if they could drink. First they used to drink without asking. Later they started asking me. Then, slowly I said do you think it is worth drinking in my presence? It was not a sudden transformation. I was tolerant. If I were not tolerant then yoga would not have become a popular subject. My inner voice was guiding me. "Don't comment on their way! You have to propagate and popularise yoga."

#### **So, you earned respect. You did not demand respect.**

It took me a long time. Later they were afraid to drink and smoke even in my presence. Even if they were smoking they would see me and immediately drop the cigarette down. I said why do you do that. If you have guts then continue smoking, otherwise don't smoke. So I

started in that way. It took me time. It took me 15 years to win them. Now anyone can go and talk on philosophy but then at that time it was not easy for any yoga man to be with local people.

Another thing you must know that lots of yogis from the different ashrams were there in the West at that time. Indians would attend their sessions. There were no Indians coming to my class for the simple reason that "he is a hard taskmaster." Indians were not ready for hard taskmasters. So all my students were foreigners while there were mainly Indians in the different conferences.

#### **Why did the Indians not come? They did not want to spend money?**

No. They felt that they knew yoga. At least they are coming now. They had pride that they can do *Padmasana* and therefore they knew yoga. I had to start from that mentality. I had to build up and it really was a Herculean task.

That is what I have built up in yoga. I got that respect for the subject. I told you long ago when I went for the first time to London the first question was at the customs. "Have you got notes in your stomach? You swallow so many things according to yoga so you must swallow notes!" They were interrogating me to such an extent.

In 1954 in Switzerland, I was invited to give a yoga demonstration but at the time of demonstration they said we would not allow you unless we search you. You cannot carry a matchbox, you cannot carry a blade, you cannot carry a cloth because that was their impression about yoga. I was only in my trunks. I lost my temper and said, "You want me to take off my trunks? Is it not humiliating?" I did not speak of philosophy then but could you philosophise at that moment? So from that time what I built up today, the growth is mysterious.

**Today Gururji they are advertising yoga business plan and they make money telling you how to run a business in yoga.**

There was an article in the *Economic Times* about the Government of India wanting to patent 1500 *asanas*. They asked me my opinion and reply was that all the monies should go to the rishis who are not alive today. As they are dead on whose name would you patent it? The knowledge belongs to them and we are only copying from there. I said, "Out of 1500 *asanas* which one are you going to patent? Which do you prescribe?"

Suppose a man in *Hanumanasana* keeps both legs straight, the other one tilts his knee, then what do you call it? It is a patent? The pose has changed. The person will say it is not a patented *asana*.

They also ask me about the props. Iyengar made the props but the Americans and the Westerners are earning from it. Does that mean that I should not give? It is going to the public so I am happy. In that sense I can call myself a rishi because I have not taken any money from anyone.

Is it not an achievement that a hospital is asking for all the props? They used to call me a furniture yogi but what I did by introducing these innovations is become like a leech to yoga. Those who do yoga on props cannot leave yoga.

Yoga became popular because of the props because extension and relaxation goes together. They say sit for meditation. I say do *Viparita Dandasana* on the bench and the brain relaxes.

Independently you cannot relax but with the props you can relax. You will not feel exhausted if you are doing *Trikonasana* by holding the tressler. This is what I had given. I made people get attracted to yoga.

But nobody knows my way of teaching. My idea was, "how can you make them stick to yoga?" In the beginning I told you, I was called a hard taskmaster. He is powerful. Iyengar yoga is so powerful that it needs tireless determination to do so it is not worth it. So naturally I thought how to make them to experience the extension and relaxation

## *Biological relaxation gives neurological strength.*

together. So props help. You do *Sirsasana* on the rope, are you relaxed or no? Does anybody know what it makes you? They say he is doing with support.

**When I asked a few of the doctors in Mumbai on what is the difference between doing *Sirsasana* on the rope and *Sirsasana* on the floor? They did not know. Biological relaxation takes place in *Sirsasana* on the rope but there is psychological demand when you do *Sirsasana* on the floor. Biological relaxation gives neurological strength.**

Nerves are a medium between biology and psychology. Neurology is between psychology and physiology and supports each other. *Teja* (fire) is the fulcrum between the five *tattvas* (*prthvi, ap, teja, vayu, akasa*). It can play with *prthvi* and *akasa*. So props are like a hub for one to get full benefit. I have given biological relaxation.

What happens when you do *Viparita Dandasana* on a chair? Do you use the brain to work or does your biological body extend? You do not know these things. You feel that the *asana* is done with comfort. What happens when you do *Sarvangasana* independently and when you do it on a chair? You see the temples hitting out when you do it independently. But the moment you do it on a chair then the temples do not hit out. What does that mean?

All the props are meant for neurological control, which is the hub for higher and lower actions. It is a balancer but nobody understands. Have I to go on? I kept it as a mystery.

Neurological body is the medium between psychology and organic body. That is why you have to work on neurology. Yoga is completely a neuro-

logical science. It is hundred percent a neurological science.

People say do meditation. Close your eyes and relax. What is the meaning of that? Don't function psychologically. Don't drop your spine. Keep your spine erect. Have you ever thought of all these things? They don't explain because they themselves do not know.

Neurology is the hub of the life force. And that is why we have to study each *asana*. Are you working on the muscles? Are you working on the bones? We have to understand the *sapta dhatus*. It starts from *rasa*. *Rasa* means fluid. Joints are fluid. So *rasa* begins from the joints. Then if you move the *rasa* then *rakta* flows. Have you got this connection? Without lubrication of the joints there is arthritis. And that is why the blood does not circulate. So because of *rakta* circulation, *mamsa* develops. Now what does the *mamsa* do? It fans. So, the muscles should tone the outer body as the muscles should tone the inner body. What is that inner body? *Majja* (marrows) so if the muscles do not send the blood to the marrows, then how can bone generate blood? What is the reason for osteoporosis? Ask any doctor and he can explain. Old age is what they would say. The muscles are not used to move towards the bone so when the muscles stop moving towards the bone, the blood supply diminishes.

This is the mystery of yoga for which you need to know the depth of the *asana*. ॐ

*This article was first published in Yoga Rahasya Vol. 12 No. 3; 2005. Many thanks to Rajvi Mehta, Yoga Rahasya editor, for giving us permission to re-print this article and for kindly providing us with the accompanying photographs.*

## Congratulations

The following candidates achieved certification during the IntroductoryII/ Junior Intermediate I assessment in Montreal, QC in December 2005.

### Junior Intermediate I

Ginette Dion, Montreal, QC  
Sylvie Lapointe, Mascouche, QC

### Introductory II

Marie-Claude Gervais, Montreal, QC  
Baya Hammoudi, Montreal, QC  
Christine Michaud, Montreal, QC  
Ginette Tremblay, St. Bruno, QC  
Susanne McAdam, Montreal, QC

### Timed Practices For IYCV Members

FREE OF CHARGE

**Saturday, March 18 & Saturday, April 22, 2006**  
**12:00 noon – 2:00 pm**

Prerequisite: Completion of 3 terms of Level II

Please note: During a timed practice, no instruction is provided. Familiarity with Sanskrit names of the asanas in the Level I & Level II syllabus is recommended.

The Arbutus Studio will be open at 11:30 am for warm up and set up.

## scholarships & bursaries

**Members' Scholarships  
are available for  
all long workshops  
and intensives.**

Please apply in writing at least one month prior to the workshop you are interested in. See Calendar for dates.

Scholarship applications for Weekend Workshops are due one month prior to the workshop. Scholarships for Special Events and Intensives are due two months before the event.

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

Applications and details for both are available at the reception desk.

**Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria**  
**202-919 Fort Street**  
**Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3**  
**(250) 386-YOGA (9642)**

## The 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Retreat at the Saltspring Centre

**June 2-4, 2006**

**With Shirley Daventry French**



This is your opportunity to attend the annual retreat on beautiful Saltspring Island and participate in a weekend of Iyengar Yoga with Shirley Daventry French.

Shirley is a direct student of the yoga Master B.K.S. Iyengar and one of North America's most experienced teachers of his method of yoga. She has taught in Victoria since 1972 and gives workshops both nationally and abroad. She has been travelling regularly to Pune, India to study with B.K.S. Iyengar for nearly 30 years, most recently in October 2005.

### Fees:

\$325.00 + GST IYCV members – shared accommodation in the house  
\$280.00 + GST IYCV members – camping  
\$250.00 + GST IYCV members – commuting  
Add \$35.00 + GST to the above prices for non-members

### Registration opens:

March 17, 2006 for IYCV members  
March 24, 2006 for 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)

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.



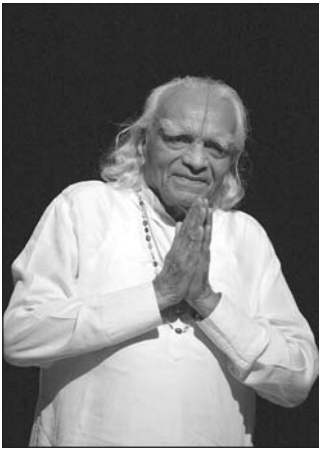


PHOTO: 2005 MICHAEL JP OAKES

# Namaste

*It is with John Schumacher's kind permission that we reprint an excerpt of his article originally published in the winter 2006 issue of the Unity Woods Newsletter, Washington, DC.*

Inspired, awed, grateful, loving; these words come to me as I write, still awash in the afterglow of B.K.S. Iyengar's visit. For me personally, it was a wonderful opportunity to be with a man who has changed my life in ways profound and all encompassing and for whom I have such love and respect. How I spend my time, how I ply my craft and earn my livelihood, how I view my life, its purpose, its direction - all these things that constitute so much of what my life is have been deeply influenced by Mr. Iyengar.

As a yoga practitioner, I revere him as my teacher. When I am with him either in India or here in America, he continues to open doors in my practice that not only do I not know how to open, I don't even know they exist. Every morning that I practice, which is most mornings of my life, he is with me. I hear his words guiding me more deeply into the poses or refining the quality of my awareness of my breath. I look at *Light on Yoga* and study his sequences or examine his poses. I feel the touch of his hands awakening and adjusting my body to guide the movement of intelligence and energy.

At age 87, his own practice continues to be amazing and inspiring. It's not just that he still does things I can only dream about doing. It's that, after 70 years of practice, he still maintains an astonishing fascination with and intensity in his practice. His enthusiasm

is full of innocence, and like the delightful exuberance of a child, infectious. I always enjoy my practice, but after being around Mr. Iyengar, I find myself approaching it with heightened fervor and increased curiosity.

As a yoga teacher, I honor him as a role model: knowledgeable, creative, perceptive, indefatigable, inspiring. When I am inclined to be casual in my teaching, to be satisfied with just a good job, my observation and recollection of his relentless pursuit of excellence in presenting the subject and in getting the best from his students goads me to try harder, to give more, to ask for more. His unending exploration of ways to make yoga accessible to his pupils triggers my own desire to find ways to educate and assist my students. And seeing the incredible skill he has developed through persistent practice urges me to study more deeply so that I might become a better teacher.

As a human being, I cherish his example of joyfulness, generosity, and compassion. In an interview that appeared during his visit here, *The Washington Post* called him "the happy yogi". And he is. He laughed a lot and enchanted everyone with an impish sense of humor and a quick wit. What's more, his laughter and joy come not at anyone's expense, but simply from his love of life. That love is contagious. The Iyengar Intensive during the Yoga Journal Conference in Estes Park was a love fest. It started with everyone thrilled to be there, eager to see again or for the first time this man who had touched us all, directly or indirectly. And when he arrived at the hall that first morning, the cheer that went up, the sustained applause, the inescapable love directed toward him, took even him, I think, a little by surprise. Our love reinforced the love he felt for us, gave to

*When I am inclined to be casual in my teaching, to be satisfied with just a good job, my observation and recollection of his relentless pursuit of excellence in presenting the subject and in getting the best from his students goads me to try harder, to give more, to ask for more.*

us, and has given to us for years, and so the spiral of love soared upward. After class, it was still there in the way people greeted each other on the paths between classes and spoke to each other in the dining hall.

In the classes, he gave unstintingly of his knowledge to the students and teachers. He was not scheduled to teach during the conference; at 86, he is formally retired from teaching. But for each of those three days, he taught a large portion of the three-hour morning class, guiding the teachers to better ways of teaching and sharing a wealth of information with the students. It would have been tiring for a person half his age. Even so, he had the energy to give the opening keynote address to the General Conference, participate in a two hour question and answer session, engage in a nearly two hour public conversation with Annette Bening, and still leave most of his entourage in the dust.

Beyond that, in and between the classes, he worked therapeutically with a number of people to alleviate their suffering and show them how to use yoga to improve their health. And during his visits to the various cities, including here in Washington, he often gave up his own practice time to help the senior teachers who were practicing with him. He instructed us how to work with our own problems and then how to use what he had shared with us to help others with similar issues.

Now those who know me know that I'm not one to gush or float off into lala reveries, but I say what I am about to

*In the classes, he gave unstintingly of his knowledge to the students and teachers.*

say because I feel that it is true. It seems to me that B.K.S. Iyengar has reached a place (I'm sure he would say as a result of practice) where he can take the love that is directed toward him and not get caught in it. He is able to allow the light of love in and shine that light back out with such power and radiance that to be around it is to be in love - not romantic, dreamy love; not the "you are so much greater than I am" up-on-a-pedestal kind of love, but the love that comes from the joy of being in the presence of a clear mind and an open heart.

For me, more than his innovations, his incredible insights, even more than his remarkable compassion and healing skills, the example B.K.S. Iyengar gives of the power of yoga to elevate oneself to a state of loving grace is his greatest gift. He has said it himself: All the other yogas — *Karma Yoga* (the yoga of action), *Jnana Yoga* (the yoga of the mind), *Raja Yoga* (the yoga of meditation) — all culminate in *Bhakti Yoga*, the yoga of love and devotion, the yoga of the heart, and he is its shining example. His visit was short, but its light will be with us for a long time to come. ॐ

## Update your bookmarks!!!!

The Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria has a new website

[www.iyengaryogacentre.ca](http://www.iyengaryogacentre.ca)



*Thank you!!!*

- All the volunteers who helped make the In the Light of Yoga, B. K. S. Iyengar 87th birthday celebrations a big success.



- Especially to Ty Chandler as the main organizer, her kids and teens and their inspiring performance.
- The musicians at the birthday celebration.
- Melissa Worth for leading the practice.
- Sue Riddell for the cake.
- The IYCV board for bringing extra food.
- Everyone who came.
- All to those who helped wash dishes or helped in any way!!!
- To the following for their contribution of resources, dollars, time, muscles, energy!  
Audrey Finch  
Bruce Co  
Nathan Co  
Patricia Irwin  
Lisa Tang  
Brian Abbott
- To all who have donated to the annual fundraising campaign for the Iyengar Yoga Centre.

**REMEMBER -  
IT'S NEVER TOO  
LATE TO DONATE!**

# Have Mat Will Travel

Amaresh Bill Wilson

It was time to end my self-imposed ban on air travel (in efforts to not harm the atmosphere). That, in combination with a U.S. boycott, had made me a virtual prisoner in Canada for the last three years. The \$449 return airfare to Amsterdam was the kicker, and on an airline that still allows you to take a bike for free! (As I write this, unfortunately Paris burns and return airfare there is only \$298).

With my classic 70's Peugeot touring bike safely stowed in the belly of the Airbus and my yoga mat carried on, I was prepared to endure the agony of a cramped 9 hour flight. But what luck, the seat beside me remained unoccupied and I gratefully filled the space. Being able to sit in *Sukasana*, breathing with an unrestrained width, straightening limbs at will – is that what First Class is all about? I was too modest to roll out my mat in the aisle but, rolled or folded, a mat provides much better support than those overly soft, compressible airline pillows and blankets.

My forty-day trip had only two fixed events, I had registered to run the Amsterdam marathon, and I planned to spend my last week at the B.K.S Iyengar Yoga Institute and Centre of Amsterdam (IYCA) on Victoria teacher, Ty Chandler's recommendation and high regard for its founder, Cle Souren.

I spent my first four weeks cycle camping and in almost constant motion. It is an amazing country for a cyclist with

an incredible infrastructure of cycle paths and no hassling for not wearing a helmet. I intended to drop in on any yoga studio I encountered, but the availability of yoga classes is very sparse by Victoria standards and I only ran into one yoga studio outside of Amsterdam.

My *asana* practice slipped as it became colder. It was too cool, dark or wet in the mornings or late afternoon. Sitting practices were not a problem; my tent was my cave. Wouldn't it be wonderful if parks could offer just a roof to practise under, similar to Victoria's now closed Checker's Pavilion?

As the weeks rolled by, it felt good to finally be heading back to Amsterdam. Mind you, I wasn't looking forward to the marathon. My marathon training had fallen by the wayside and my long run to date was the Land's End half marathon just before I left Victoria. I was looking forward to yoga classes at the Institute though, and my first class was to be the very next morning after the marathon. I would simply take it easy in the run and be in fine shape for class. I ran a slow but very enjoyable marathon through a spectacular route of cheering spectators with perfect running weather. A very well organized event – there were even hot showers and a free sports massage waiting at the end of the run, somewhat mitigating the effects on my body of just running double the distance.

As I was cycling to class the next morning from the campground the rain

started, my hands were freezing, the cold was creeping into sore muscles and I considered turning back. Why would I want to return to a familiar place (a cold wet tent) rather than the unfamiliar, the new place? Fortunately, I pushed on.

I arrived at the IYCA cold, wet, tired and sore. On entering, I immediately felt the warmth of the studio and the people. I realized an Iyengar student is not a stranger at any Iyengar studio and there is a home away from home throughout the world.

Here was bright, spacious studio with high ceilings, tall windows, solid wood floors (with an uncanny resemblance to British Columbia fir), shelves and shelves of familiar props (and some not so familiar), a most solid masonry rope wall, curved glass block dividing wall, halogen lighting – very nicely done! And quiet, the first quiet I had experienced since arriving in Holland, free of the perpetual traffic noise one hears outside in this small, flat, densely populated country.

I introduced myself to Cle who struck me as having a remarkable mix of qualities – approachable yet penetrating, possessing a succinct sharpness without being blunt. Amsterdam students and teacher trainees are fortunate to have this senior teacher. I also obtained the distinct impression that knowing who my teacher was and knowing Ty, that Cle would expect just as much effort from one of Ty's students.

Perhaps it was because I had been in perpetual motion for the past month, perhaps it was IYCA's yoga mats – the heaviest, most solid mats on the face of this earth, but I've never felt so grounded even before the class began. My fellow students were a mix of nationalities, and though most were multilingual, instruc-

*It seems to me that B.K.S. Iyengar has reached a place (I'm sure he would say as a result of practice) where he can take the love that is directed toward him and not get caught in it.*

tion was in English for my unilingual benefit.

Cle did not demonstrate any *asanas*; you must listen to and follow his words. It makes a great deal of sense as, it seems, does everything Dutch. Just consider: you don't have to be able to see the teacher or, worse, turn in a pose to see; there are teacher trainee-spotters in the lower levels to demonstrate or adjust if need be; the teacher is able to watch both students and teacher trainees at all times; and last but not least, one becomes more internally focused and entirely in the present neither knowing what is coming nor the end.

It was not long before Cle had my weaknesses pegged and was calling out specific instructions to me by name – hiding in the back corner was not even safe from his eyes. In one class I had unknowingly positioned myself beside a star pupil and set myself up for an extremely long holding of *Parsvottanasana* while a comparative anatomy class

ensued. In the hallway outside the studio there are large pictures of Mr. Iyengar in classic form, which allowed further comparisons to be made during class.

One day after class, I was asked how Victoria differs. "It's essentially the same", I answered. "That's the great thing about Iyengar yoga" – something to consider in your travels.

P.S. As an exercise in non-attachment, and for the use of newsletter readers, I left my orange Peugeot in the bike rack by the canal in front of the Institute. The combination is 0108. ॐ



## Short WORKSHOP

### Sun Salutation Workshop

With Ty Chandler

Saturday June 17, 2006  
1:00 – 3:00 pm

Fees:

\$45 + GST members,  
\$50 + GST non-members

Refunds only offered if your  
space can be filled and are  
subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.



Presents

# Stephanie Quirk

May 25-28, 2006

at the University of Victoria,  
Victoria, British Columbia.  
in conjunction with the IYAC AGM.

All Iyengar Yoga students and teachers  
are welcome!

<b>Thursday, May 25</b>	10:00 am – 2:30 pm 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Registration Asana Class with Stephanie Quirk
<b>Friday, May 26</b>	9:00 am – 5:00 pm	Teacher Training/Asana class with Stephanie Quirk
<b>Saturday, May 27</b>	9:00 am – 5:00 pm	Teacher Training/Asana class with Stephanie Quirk
	Saturday Evening	A Celebration Dinner
<b>Sunday, May 28</b>	8:30 am – 11:30 am	IYAC Annual General Meeting

#### Fees

Total cost for the weekend:  
\$400 + GST before April 10, 2006  
(includes classes, single room in UVic dorms, and breakfasts, lunches and dinners)  
\$440 + tax after April 10, 2006

Commuters/ Conference only: \$265 + tax  
(includes classes plus most meals)

Extra accommodation: \$45 + tax per night  
(includes bed & breakfast in a private room). \*Call the University of Victoria Housing office at (250) 721-8395 to book extra nights.\*

#### To Register

Cheques made payable to the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria and sent to: 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC V8V 3K3

\*Please mark "IYAC Conference" on the envelope.\*

For payment by VISA over the phone, or for MORE INFORMATION and/or a BROCHURE, please call the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria: (250) 386-YOGA (9642) between 10:00 am – 1:00 pm PST.



# The Process of Yoga

David Gelzinis

It was just over two years ago that I was having some problems with my back. Initially, I didn't think too much of it; I had been a fairly rough and tumble kid growing up and was still involved in a number of sports as well as training with weights at the gym several times a week. It was sore, but I just figured I'd tweaked something and it would sort itself out. Well, it didn't! In fact it kept getting worse until I was living with a continuous burning sensation in my lower back.

At this point I accepted there was something more serious going on and it was time to stop playing the tough guy and go get checked out. After trips to the chiropractor and physiotherapist the verdict was delivered; my back was a mess (no kidding!). As mentioned though, I've always been very engaged in staying active and staying in shape to avoid these sorts of problems so I grilled the physiotherapist as to why it was happening to me and how to make it stop. He said start going to yoga.

...I beg your pardon?!

The long and the short of it is that, despite all the training and sports, which I thought were keeping me healthy, I wasn't doing all that great a job of stretching or with my flexibility and it was having negative results. My body had been able to compensate when I was younger but wasn't having any of it now that I was in my mid 30's.

My girlfriend though, who had been practising yoga for several years, was thrilled to hear the recommendation. On numerous occasions she had tried to sell me on the idea it would be fun to go to classes together – unsuccessfully I might add. I mean give me a break, real men don't do yoga. I had always viewed it as some flaky 'let's all get together and hang

*I mean give me a break, real men don't do yoga. I had always viewed it as some flaky 'let's all get together and hang out on mats on the floor' sort of thing. I had never perceived yoga as a real form of exercise or anything else substantial for that matter, but here I was being forced to seriously consider what yoga actually was and what it could do for me.*

out on mats on the floor' sort of thing. I had never perceived yoga as a real form of exercise or anything else substantial for that matter, but here I was being forced to seriously consider what yoga actually was and what it could do for me.

It's curious how your willingness to change opinion or revisit preconception is largely influenced by whom you are talking to. I was hurt and someone in the medical world had just told me yoga could help me get better. So real man or not, a couple of weeks later I found myself sitting on a mat on the floor at the Victoria (now Iyengar) Yoga Centre.

As I've already indicated, my initial motivation in taking up yoga was health. Work on my flexibility and it would eliminate the back problems *and* increase my athletic ability. That wasn't tough to justify to myself or explain to anyone else who asked and it's how I approached this new addition to my weekly schedule (which, by the way, is a major personality trait of mine; I live by my routines).

I'm also a very goal oriented individual so I found B.K.S Iyengar's technique of teaching the yoga *asanas* perfectly tailored for me; particular attention is paid to form and progressive stages of movement into a final position. Working toward outcomes also tends to

be a typical 'guy' way of approaching most aspects of life. We're problem solvers; don't come to us with an issue unless you are looking for a solution! Don't ask us to do something just for the sake of doing it; there has to be a tangible outcome and for me it was no different with yoga – at least in the beginning.

Ok, I don't want to be a hypocrite. I will admit that I am still largely driven by outcomes as opposed to the process and tend to judge my progression in yoga by how much deeper I can get into poses over time, whether I can touch my toes on a given week (darn those forward bends!), but I realize now that subconsciously things have slowly been changing for me over the past two years and I'm slowly finding out there's more to yoga than improving my *asanas* from week to week. And I still might not be aware of the change if it hadn't been for the occurrence of two events, this past fall, which allowed me to reflect on how I perceive and approach my practice of yoga.

First, I went to India for a month. Not because I had started practising yoga and wanted to visit its birthplace. I didn't go to Pune or the Iyengar Yoga Institute. In fact, I didn't practise yoga at all the entire time I was there. So why did I go to India, you ask? I guess the main

reason was I wanted to see and experience a completely different culture and well, India sure fits into that category. The point I'm trying to make though is that it wasn't the trip itself or the one-month absence from my training that affected my views on yoga. These were merely precursors to my return to Victoria and what came after.

The second event and the experience that made me rethink what yoga is all about and what it means to me came when I attended the *Going Deeper* workshop in early December. As many of you know Shirley Daventry French leads this workshop once a year. It's an opportunity for junior students to work with not only the senior-most instructor in Victoria, but also one of the most senior instructors in all of Canada. I saw this as an opportunity to participate in a longer session and hopefully do just what the title suggested, 'go deeper', to make some physical breakthroughs and move to a new level of practice (there's that focus on goals again).

However, arriving back in Victoria a week before the workshop and easing again into my training routine I was horrified to find how significantly my body had regressed. I was so stiff that it was difficult, not to mention quite painful, to move into many of the most basic poses. More importantly, I felt this was definitely going to blow any opportunity of 'going deeper' at the workshop. Realistically, I was more concerned about simply making it through the weekend in one piece.

What happened at the workshop though, was something quite unexpected and it occurred as I was laying in *Savasana* at the end of the Saturday morning session. Believe it or not I almost started laughing – an embarrassing situation if it had actually happened, given that *Savasana* is intended as a state of alert but 'silent' relaxation. The reason I wanted to chuckle though was because I felt so

*Believe it or not I almost started laughing – an embarrassing situation if it had actually happened, given that Savasana is intended as a state of alert but 'silent' relaxation.*

happy. I keep trying to find a better, more descriptive word for the feeling but I haven't had any success. It's weird, but it hit me at that moment how good it was to be back practising yoga.

As I continued to lie there reflecting on the feeling, I realized I had given up trying to make gains that morning, instead just participating in the event, observing and accepting where my body would let me go on that particular day and as a result I had really enjoyed the session. It also got me thinking about my last few classes before leaving for India and how different those had been. I remembered the feeling of being in a rut, distracted by preparations for my trip and frustrated that instead of continuing to improve I was sliding backward.

I believe most of you, like me, have a reason(s) for beginning and continuing to practise yoga: maybe to get over an injury or as a general form of exercise; maybe as a chance to get out and meet new people or maybe just the opposite, an opportunity to spend some time focusing on yourself. Eventually though, most of us question why we do things, whether we've achieved what we wanted and our purpose for continuing. I've heard more than one of my yoga teachers comment on this as experiencing a plateau, that the reasons differ from individual to individual and we must find our own way to bring meaning to our practice again.

Specifically, I was looking forward to Shirley's workshop as a means to move past a perceived, physical plateau in my training. In a curious twist of events though, by letting go of my goals and expectations, I realized it wasn't a physical plateau I needed to overcome at all,

but rather a mental one. I have to admit that I'm still trying to figure out where to go from here but I do know that letting go of some of my need to continually strive for measurable goals has allowed me to just participate and enjoy the process of yoga.

This may not be an earth shattering revelation to any of you but I did want to share it because I do believe most of us fall into the trap of focussing on goals and outcomes (especially we men). What I found is that if you are willing to put aside the reasons you practise yoga, even just for a short time, it might allow you to experience something completely new about yoga. It might even move you off a plateau you didn't even realize you were on.

Give it a try. ॐ



*Junior Intermediate III teacher and teacher trainer, Marlene Miller working toward Vrschikasana I*

# Practising Yoga

Jane Munro

New Year's Day: I started sneezing as soon as I got up—went through several tissues while feeding the cats, and more while assembling breakfast. I stuffed tissues in my pockets and blew my nose vigorously before undertaking pranayama. The breath bubbled in my nostrils and hot flushes prickled my chest. A coughing fit overtook my first attempt at retention after exhalation. By the time I joined my husband for our first meal of 2006, it was undeniable: I had a cold.

The weird thing was, the same thing had happened last January 1st. Perhaps my immune system takes a beating during the festive season, or maybe catching a “minor virus” is the consequence of cuddling up with charming but infectious grandchildren. Anyway, I did learn something last year that made my experience with this year's cold much easier.

Here's what happened. Last year, I could not afford to be sick. I had work to do and needed a clear head. The previous morning, I'd embarked on the “short three-day course” that B.K.S. Iyengar describes in Appendix I of *Light on Yoga*. He says “whenever followed” it will “benefit the body and bring harmony to the mind.” So, even though my nose was running and my throat felt like I'd rubbed it on the cheese grater, I went to the mat planning to follow what I could of the second day's practice.

It began with inversions: a ten-minute *Salamba Sirsasana* followed by several of the headstand variations, then a ten-minute *Sarvangasana* followed by a variety of shoulderstand variations, and five-minutes in *Halasana*. At first, in *Salamba Sirsasana*, I was so congested that I could hardly breathe. I

remembered the instruction to breathe through your nose, no matter what, and persisted, though to begin with I had to inhale through my mouth part of the time. But, after about thirty slow breaths, my nasal passages felt clear. By eighty breaths, my sinuses also felt clear. It was amazing!

At that point, I looked up the prescribed practice for colds in Appendix II of *Light on Yoga* and saw that the second day's practice was sufficiently similar that I could add a few *asanas* to it and do both. Two hours later when I'd finished, I felt terrific. Clear head and chest, alert body, calm but intense energy: I was dazzled by the fact that the yoga practice had scrubbed the symptoms of that cold right out of me.

They remained in abeyance all day, though by evening I was tired and eager to go to bed. I could feel my cold returning like a slowly rising tide. In the morning, I woke with a runny nose. Once again, I went to the mat, this time combining the third day's practice with the cold practice.

One of the *asanas* in the cold practice that is not in the short course is *Kurmasana* (and *Supta Kurmasana*)—the Tortoise. It's a pose sacred to yogis which encourages you to turn your senses and energy inward—to withdraw into your shell rather than take on every battle. It felt very good to do *Supta Kurmasana* while battling a cold.

But then there's *Yogidrasana*, which I didn't even attempt. I read the instructions (it's like *Supta Kurmasana* flipped over, with the ankles crossed behind the neck and the hands gripped behind the buttocks), and looked at the photos of B.K.S. Iyengar in this position, and shook my head. There's no way (so far) that I can cross my ankles behind my



*Salamba Sirsasana*

neck. Not last year, and not this year. I found it interesting that skipping things I couldn't do didn't seem to diminish the value of the overall practice.

After finishing the “short course,” I continued to follow what I could of the cold practice, as needed. I did the same thing this year. And, once again, my “New Year's cold” has been a non-cold. I'd blow my nose while feeding the cats, do inversions when I got to the mat, and allow myself more sleep, but it's great to discover I can reduce the impact of a cold by practising yoga. ॐ



## Student Intensive

**August 28 - September 1  
9:00 am - 12:00 noon daily**

Learn how to establish and deepen your practice.

Level 2 experience required.

See next issue for more details.



# Preparing for Pune

A veritable mountain of information was accumulated in the course of putting together this article! Realizing that the definitive *Guide to Pune* was beyond the scope of this newsletter article (or at least this writer), we provide instead a local perspective on Pune, featuring comments from Victoria Iyengar teachers who have studied at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute. (If you are planning a trip, you will find much additional information in the *Preparing for Pune* binder now in the library!)

## What is the best way to prepare for classes at RIMYI?

Veteran Pune visitor Leslie Hogya recommends study with senior teachers who go there often. In Victoria we are lucky to have Shirley Daventry French who has been there many times. Take out the many videos we have in our library with Guruji and Geetaji teaching,” and, adds Leslie, “Practice!”

“Practise humility, curiosity, patience, presence,” suggests Ty Chandler.

“Practice!” is the succinct suggestion of Marlene Miller, another veteran visitor to Pune.

“Practice, practice, practice,” reiterates Joanna Hope. “Have no expectations and be prepared to accept methods of discipline and encouragement which may be quite different from what you’re accustomed to.”

“The classes are large—but you can’t hide from Geeta’s sharp eyes!” warns Robin Cantor.

“Practice!” confirms Nancy



*A quiet morning in a popular Pune shopping area.*

*Be humble. Leave your ego behind.  
Be prepared for anything to happen.*

Searing. “Have an attitude of being grateful for the opportunity to be there studying with the Iyengars.” Nancy also thinks it would be helpful to “listen to someone speaking ‘Indian English’ before you get there, for example, Prashant’s Lyrical Yoga Sutras.”

Just in case you didn’t get the message, one last time... “Practice harder, deeper, and more thoughtfully than you ever have before,” says Maggi Feehan. “Work on your most dreaded poses, because you will likely have to hold these very same poses for unimaginable periods of time.”



What is the best way to prepare for the cultural experience of India?

"Many people are frightened about going to India," acknowledges Robin. "They're worried about getting sick, the culture shock, smog, and the high demands of the daily practice." However, says Robin, "people settle in" after a few days, adding, "I recommend going with a positive attitude and taking a handkerchief!"

Leslie recommends prior study of "Indian classical texts, such as the *Yoga Sutras* and the *Bhagavad Gita*. Read up on the history of India, and current events," she advises. "Look at books on Indian art." And, "Let patience be your guide."

Karin Holtkamp also advises patience. "Be prepared that things won't always happen within the expected time-frame...Developing a sense of detachment and keeping an open mind will be helpful when navigating India."

Just as practice was the favoured method of preparing for classes at RIMYI, detachment is a recurring theme when it comes to experiencing the culture of India.

"Go with an open mind," says Nancy. "Don't be attached to our North American cultural standards, and be prepared to practise detachment. You will see extreme poverty, possibly death and be constantly asked for money."

Marlene suggests, "Allow a few days before and after the journey to let the cultural changes settle and to become acclimatized."

Tongue firmly in cheek, Maggi describes an exercise which may be useful in preparing for Pune: "Lock yourself in a small, overheated closet with twenty other people and have horns blast in your ears, people shout at you in Marathi, and cars zoom around you for a couple of hours."

"Simply surrender to the moment," suggests Melissa Worth. "All sorts of things that Westerners may find difficult or alarming, things that are often hidden in the West, happen in India before our

## ***Studying at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute (RIMYI)***

Before applying to take courses at the Institute, a student is expected to have studied Iyengar Yoga for a minimum of eight years. Apply two years in advance of your intended visit. The *Preparing for Pune* binder in the library contains an application form to request enrolment in classes at the Institute. See also the Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada Teacher Training document.

### **What is the cost?**

Cost depends largely on air fare, but you can budget \$2,000 for the flight, and an additional \$350 for internal travel. The Institute requires a deposit of \$150, and the remaining \$200 (US funds) when you arrive.

Accommodations cost anywhere from \$350 per month for apartments to \$1200 for a hotel room. Food is cheap—\$10 a day if you dine out; less if you have an apartment with cooking facilities. Total cost will likely be \$4,500-\$5,000.

### **Immunizations and Health Concerns**

Check with your local health practitioner or a travel clinic. Usually recommended are vaccinations against polio, tetanus, hepatitis, and typhoid.

Dukurool is suggested for intestinal upsets and/or cholera. *For more information, see the binder, Preparing for Pune, in the Library.*

### **Recommended Reading**

- RIMYI - BKS Iyengar website  
[www.bksiyengar.com/modules/Institut/RIMYI/rimyi.htm](http://www.bksiyengar.com/modules/Institut/RIMYI/rimyi.htm)
- Photos of RIMYI  
[www.yogaterry.com/about\\_terry\\_petersen1.htm](http://www.yogaterry.com/about_terry_petersen1.htm)
- "Light on Life at RIMYI" International Association of Yoga Therapist  
[www.iayt.org/publications/articles/hails.htm](http://www.iayt.org/publications/articles/hails.htm)

eyes. Just go with the flow and smile. Be respectful of the culture and dress modestly. It's really very freeing."

Ty found that nothing could prepare her for arriving in Calcutta for the first time in 1990. She says. "India doesn't work like that—your whole life is the preparation."

### **If you could offer one piece of advice to another student going to Pune for the first time, what would it be?**

*Leslie:* "Go a few days early to get acclimatized. Plan to stay near the institute. It's good to be able to walk or take only short rickshaw rides. Don't try and do too much. This cannot be over-

emphasized. The experience of classes and practice times fill the day, and is enough. The rest of the time will be taken up with meals, making notes, etc. Be humble. Leave your ego behind. Be prepared for anything to happen. Attend practice times every day you are allowed. Guruji is usually there. What a great opportunity to practice in the same room with him."

*Ty:* "Stay alert. Rest when you need to. Listen to your intuition. Soak it up! Have fun!"

*Nancy:* "Take advantage of all opportunities to practise, use the library – Mr. Iyengar is generally there daily and often

breaks into wonderful discourses – and participate in special events at the Institute. If you have time, see some of the rest of India, especially the caves at Ellora (and Ajanta), UNESCO World Heritage Sites.”

*Joanna:* “Ensure that the place you are staying is of sufficient quality and comfort – that it can be your haven as you are bound to encounter things, people, situations which may seem an assault upon your sensibilities. You will have experiences and responses on an internal level which will require you to take care of yourself. Ensure you have a place where that is possible. I stayed at the Span Hotel which cost \$20US per night. I chose to not have a roommate, knowing my great need for alone time. It was money well spent.”

*Marlene:* “Practise patience. Have a sense of humour. Use common sense.”

*Robin:* “Hiring a cook was the best thing we did. She was used to Westerners and all the washing precautions necessary

to keep us well. It was nice to come home to a home cooked meal. In a month, we had 30 different types of curry. We ate out occasionally.”

*Maggi:* “Go to India with a healthy body, an open heart, and a suitcase full of herbal supplements. In particular, take a combination of acidophilus, garlic pills and some form of citricidal like NutriBiotic for the stomach heebie-geebies. Also, take charcoal pills for when all hell breaks loose and your first chakra is on fire. More importantly, let India be your teacher. She is aggressive, demanding, and unrelenting, but she will lull your spirit and inspire your mind.” ॐ

COMPILED BY KARYN WOODLAND, WITH THANKS TO: ROBIN CANTOR, TY CHANDLER, MAGGI FEEHAN, LESLIE HOGYA, KARIN HOLTkamp, JOANNA HOPE, MARLENE MILLER, NANCY SEARING, GWYNNETH SOBEJKO, AND MELISSA WORTH. THANKS ALSO TO LINDA BENN, LAUREN COX, NORMA JANES, MELISSA PERUDHOFF AND JEANNETTE MERRYFIELD FOR QUESTIONS, COMMENTS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

## *For more information on Pune*

Kirsten Agar Ward has written a very comprehensive guide, entitled *Going to Pune*, published in the Spring 2005 edition of *Iyengar Yoga News*. A copy of this article—plus a wealth of additional information, has been assembled into a binder labeled *Preparing for Pune*, which is now in the Iyengar Yoga Centre Library. Anyone anticipating a trip to the RIMYI in Pune is advised to peruse this binder as it contains a great deal of detail on everything from best airlines and accommodation to rickshaw drivers, Vedic Astrology, and etiquette in addressing Gururji.

## Palm to Palm, we thank you!

When our Victoria Yoga Centre group of teachers and students began planning to move our classes from the YM-YWCA to our own studio, I really did not consider that suddenly we would be running a small business.

Drew Yallop volunteered to help us launch the centre, and in September 2001 we began working in the front lobby, which fortunately included some office space, while the studio space was being renovated. People in hard hats carrying ladders, wielding brushes and dry wall tape bustled about as we answered the phone.

Drew established a class registration system, managed the accounts and banking needs and monitored everything associated with the business of running a yoga centre.

The first phone calls we received in our little office were thrilling, especially when they were from someone not already known to us. We were offering classes. People were coming to take them.

The money came in and Drew kept track of it and made sure teachers and the rent, heat, insurance, and other bills

were paid. This was a monumental task and he did this as a volunteer for the first two years we were in business.

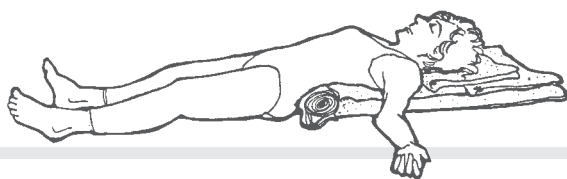
As our operations became more complicated, we began to advertise, printing flyers and hosting a more sophisticated web site.

Many days and nights would find him sitting cross-legged, typing and humming away as he entered data, made tables, and kept everything running. We weathered floods and fire.

The yoga centre is a busy place. There are countless details which need attention: the computer screen is flickering; the phone is not working properly; class information requires updating. What to do? Call Drew!

As time went by, we were able to offer Drew a contract so he could earn some money from all the effort he was making.

He never sought to have public recognition for all that he has contributed but now, Drew has resigned from the staff of the Iyengar Yoga Centre and I cannot let this event pass by unnoticed. Thank you! *Namaste!* ॐ



IYENGAR

yoga centre

calendar

## MARCH 2006

- 18 Free Members' Timed Practice
- 25 Teachers' Meeting
- 31 Friday Night Gathering

## APRIL 2006

- 14-16 Workshop with Manouso Manos
- 24 Free Members' Timed Practice
- 29 Teachers' Meeting

## MAY 2006

- 21-22 Workshop with Stephanie Quirk
- 25-28 Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada Conference and AGM at the University of Victoria (Guest teacher Stephanie Quirk)

## JUNE 2006

- 2-4 Saltspring Retreat with Shirley Daventry French
- 10 Teachers' Meeting
- 17 Sun Salutations Workshop with Ty Chandler
- 16-19 Introductory Level I/II Assessment in Calgary, AB
- 16-19 Introductory Level I/II Assessment in Saskatoon, SK
- 26-30 Sadhana with RobinCantor

## JULY 2006

- 10-15 Teacher Training Intensive - Introductory Levels with Leslie Hogya & Ann Kilbertus

## AUGUST 2006

- 7 -11 Teacher Training Intensive - Junior Intermediate Levels with Shirley Daventry French

- 20-25 Footsteps of Patanjali Retreat at Saltspring Centre with Shirley Daventry French & Leslie Hogya

- 23 Teachers' Meeting

- 28-Sept 1 Student Intensive with Lauren Cox & Ty Chandler

## SEPTEMBER 2006

- 23 Teachers' Meeting
- 29 Sutra Workshop with Shirley Daventry French

- 30-Oct 1 Going Deeper with Shirley Daventry French

## OCTOBER 2006

- 13-15 Senior Intermediate I Assessment in Toronto, ON
- 28 Teachers' Meeting

## NOVEMBER 2006

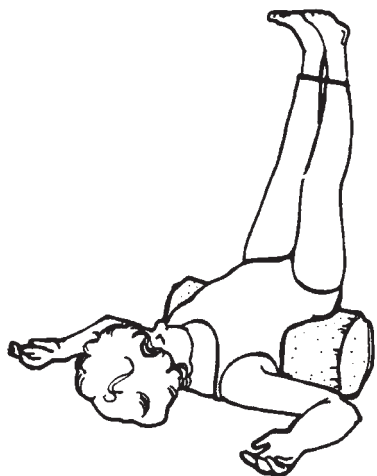
- 3-5 Chris Saudek Workshop
- 17-19 Junior Intermediate II Assessment in Victoria, BC
- 18 Teachers' Meeting

## DECEMBER 2006

- 10 In the Light of Yoga workshop - Mr. Iyengar's birthday celebration
- 18-23 Sadhana with Corrine Lowen
- 21-22 Winter Solstice Workshop with Ty Chandler

## JANUARY 2007

- 19-21 Heart of Yoga with Shirley Daventry French



# *time to Renew!*

This is a reminder that the  
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria  
membership expired  
on December 31, 2005.

The membership subscription fee is  
\$40 + GST (Canadian residents add  
7% GST) and is renewable each January.

## Membership benefits include:

- 5% discount on all classes
- free practice times at the IYCV
- timed practices
- having the option of getting  
the newsletter mailed to you
- early registration and discount  
for workshops
- borrowing privileges in our library
- eligibility to become a board member
- eligibility for scholarships for workshops  
and intensives.

*To renew your membership, please fill  
in the membership subscription form  
(at right), and send to the Iyengar Yoga  
Centre of Victoria.*



## IYENGAR *yoga centre* OF VICTORIA SOCIETY

### Membership and Newsletter Subscription

For a one year membership and newsletter  
subscription, please complete this form and  
send it with your cheque or money order to:

**Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Society,  
c/o Karin Holtkamp, 202-919 Fort Street,  
Victoria BC V8V 3K3**

Membership/subscription fee is \$40 plus GST,  
renewable each January.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Do not mail me my newsletter during sessions,  
I'll pick one up at my class

☐ Receipt required