

November / December 2004



VICTORIA

yoga centre

NEWSLETTER



Respects
to Guruji

on his 86th birthday,
December 14, 2004



In the Light of Yoga

a special benefit workshop in celebration of
the 86th birthday of Yogacharya B. K. S. Iyengar

Sunday, December 12, 2004

1:00 – 2:30pm All Levels asana practice led by Ann Kilbertus

2:30 – 3:30pm Restorative practice led by Leslie Hogya

3:30 – 4:00pm Refreshments

Teachers The teachers: Ann and Leslie are accomplished teachers in the Iyengar Yoga tradition. They have both travelled to India to study at the source of this practice many times: Ann recently returned from a month's study this September and Leslie was also there this past summer for 6 weeks. Both are presently teachers in the Victoria Yoga Centre's Teacher Training Program.

Fees: \$45 + GST members
\$55 + GST non members

To register, drop in or phone Victoria Yoga Centre
#202 - 919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC
(250) 386-yoga (9642)
www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca

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

All proceeds from this workshop go to the B.K.S. Iyengar
Scholarship Fund which assists teachers, training teachers and
committed students to attend classes at the institute in Pune.

Dear Yoga Centre members,
In this season of Light, we celebrate our teacher B.K.S. Iyengar's
birthday. If you cannot attend the workshop, please consider making
a donation to the scholarship fund in his name. The Yoga Centre
helps send our teachers or qualified students to study from the source
of the teachings at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute in
Pune, India. This involves a great deal of expense on the traveller's
part.

Please come to the workshop or, if you cannot come, please donate to
this fund and we will issue a tax receipt.

Namaste, Leslie Hogya

Birthday wishes from the VYC



Dear Guruji,

December 2004 marks your 86th birthday. We are pleased to
send you our warmest greetings from Victoria in Canada on
this auspicious day.

Around our yoga centre there is evidence of your work.
Photos of you in your practice grace our walls and inspire us on
the path of yoga. Your books, which line the library shelves and
sit in each studio for quick reference, provide us with clarity
and guidance. In our lobby we have hung a framed copy of the
letter you sent when we opened our centre which contains your
beautiful words of encouragement.

Our teachers work together to learn your method. Teachers
attend classes with each other specifically those of our senior
teacher, Shirley Daventry French. We come together at our
teachers' meetings once a month to explore the practice of yoga
and study together as we prepare for certification.

The centre will mark your birthday with a special workshop
in your name. Proceeds from this workshop contribute to a
special scholarship fund that allows us to provide assistance to
anyone from our community who is able to study at the
Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute.

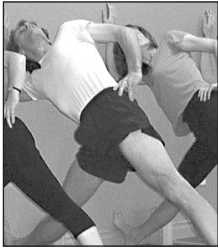
On occasional Friday evenings we hold Video Night at
which the centre shows one of the many videos we hold in our
library. This is another way in which we spread your work.
Students can only be inspired when watching you teach and
practise.

The sounds of AUM and chanting to Patanjali fill the
centre at the start of our classes as we honour the tradition of
yoga as taught by the sutras. Our teachers and students read
and study your translation of the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali and
Shirley is offering a special sutra workshop this fall.

Your dedication and hard work in the promotion of yoga
inspires us to learn, to grow and to teach.

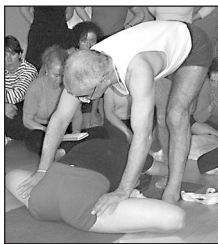
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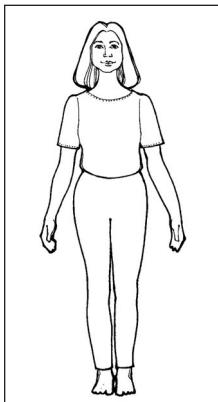
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Newsletter Advertising Policy (Adopted February 20, 2004)

In keeping with the mandate of the Victoria Yoga Centre 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 VYCS.
2. Advertisements must be only for Iyengar Yoga
3. Priority given to advertisements regarding:
 - VYC events
 - VYC sponsored events
 - CIYTA events
 - Radha House/ Yasodhara Ashram



VICTORIA yoga centre NEWSLETTER

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November 15, 2004

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE 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 VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY, provides current information on events concerning yoga in the Victoria area and the Yasodhara Ashram.

Send contributions, articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions to the Victoria Yoga Centre Newsletter: 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3. For information on activities and events, call 386-YOGA(9642) or visit our website: www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca.

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



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

*The end of discipline is the beginning of freedom
Only a disciplined person is a free person.
So-called 'freedom' is only a licence to act
and do as we like.*

B.K.S. Iyengar

Last summer, in London, I attended a performance of Swan Lake by the Bolshoi Ballet in the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. This was one of the highlights of a leisurely and nostalgic journey through France and the UK to celebrate Derek's and my fiftieth wedding anniversary. For both of us theatre going was a part of our youth. As a child living in London I went to West End theatres several times a year with my parents, sitting in good seats: stalls or lower circle. My school would take us to performances of classic plays like Shakespeare and Shaw, generally in the cheaper seats of the upper circle. Later as a young adult I queued up to get a seat in "the Gods" the highest balcony from which one peered down at a distant stage through binoculars if you had the money to free them from their restraint in front of your seat. There were many protocols attached to getting seats in the Gods which were in high demand by the impoverished youth of postwar London. One of them was to rent a folding stool early in the day which had a number on it and which spent the day in this queue in lieu of you. A certain time before the performance you had to claim your stool or forfeit your place.

I saw some great plays and musical shows in this manner, and through my acquaintance with Derek occasionally got to sit in the best seats in the house. He spent the clinical years of medical school at Charing Cross Hospital just off Trafalgar Square, and at the last minute nearby theatres would often send unsold tickets to the hospital for the use of

the staff. From time to time Derek would phone me to say he had two tickets and was I free; in which case we would find ourselves casually dressed sitting among very smart people, some in evening dress (people dressed up for the theatre in those days!)

Nowadays, one of the first things we do when we arrive in London is to check the theatre listings and decide which shows we would like to see. This year, discovering that the Bolshoi's visit coincided with ours, we grasped at the opportunity to see one of the world's premier ballet companies. "You won't be able to get tickets at this late date!" was the discouraging comment I heard from several people, despite which I tried and succeeded.

The concierge in the apartment building where we were staying managed to get us two good seats albeit one behind the other, which was not a great inconvenience as we are not in the habit of holding a conversation in the midst of a performance. This ballet was outstanding. I would have sat anywhere to see such discipline, elegance and beauty - not to mention the grandeur of a great opera house and the music of Tchaikovsky!

One notable moment for me was when the prima ballerina playing Odette/Odile pirouetted on the point of one foot so many times I was almost out of breath. Such strength and stamina! Such grace and dignity! Such authority and artistry! And possibly I was the only person in the audience whose eyes were glued on the kneecap of the supporting leg which did not waver one iota. Her mind, firmly maintaining its awareness in that

knee, did not fluctuate for a second, and next morning in my yoga practice there was an increased awareness of my own legs as I went through a series of balancing postures.

Discipline! This was my foremost impression of the Bolshoi. It formed the basis for all the artistic expression and creativity which was so much in evidence there on that stage. At the same time you know that from the most accomplished soloist to the junior members of the corps de ballet (which was outstanding), they will all be practising at the barre the next day. There is no time in a renowned ballet company to rest on your laurels; just as there is no time for such complacency on the yogic path. Only discipline will sustain a level of excellence.

Recently I taught at an educational retreat centre which among its many courses offers yoga taught by a variety of teachers some of whom, like myself, follow a particular tradition, and others who draw from a variety of methods. They have some licence that those of us with a guru or master have forfeited. With no-one to answer to, no formal structure to adhere to, these teachers can pick and choose from various teachers and teachings as they see fit. *Mix and match!*

Is there a problem with this? Don't you get the best of all worlds? Or is there the possibility that this sum of parts adds up to little of value?

One problem which arises from time to time is that having no disciplined tradition of their own to adhere to some teachers dismiss Iyengar Yoga as rigid and militaristic. I learned of just such an incident recently. It was the disciplined, dare I say 'militaristic', precision of the Bolshoi corps de ballet which made it so effective.

Non-specific yoga classes are frequently described as *Hatha Yoga*, often as traditional Hatha Yoga. Do they know that Hatha Yoga is a complex and very specific discipline including practices rarely taught in North American yoga classes such as *dhauti* (internal cleansing including swallowing a wet cloth, and rectal cleansing)? It also includes *neti* which involves putting a fine thread into one nostril and pulling it out through the mouth. Sometimes Iyengar Yoga students describe their work as Hatha Yoga in the tradition of

B.K.S. Iyengar. Mr. Iyengar himself does not encourage this although some of the practices do overlap. Similarly with *Raja Yoga*, this includes various practices we follow in Iyengar Yoga: such as *kriya yoga*, the yoga of action and the eight fold path of *astanga yoga*: *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi*.

For years, Gururji resisted the tendency of his students to use the term Iyengar Yoga, but as his work grew worldwide he finally surrendered, allowing us to make this distinction, and enabling those who sought this path to find a trained teacher.

Iyengar Yoga is by no means the only disciplined path in Yoga. All Yoga systems involve discipline on the part of teachers and students.

The purpose of an Iyengar class is not to entertain but to enlighten, and the light often illuminates that which we do not wish to see.

Iyengar Yoga is a progressive discipline. An authentic Iyengar Yoga teacher cannot teach anything which comes into their mind. If you are teaching an introductory class and find that most of the students have good strong flexible bodies you do not suddenly jump to intermediate or advanced poses. If you are teaching an introductory class and an experienced student comes because this time fits into their schedule, you do not suddenly abandon your introductory students. A truly experienced student can learn even from the most basic work, and an advanced pose without advanced awareness is nothing!

There will always be some students, displaying a singular lack of awareness, who dismiss the work as too easy, become bored and go off to somewhere else which entertains them better. And such students are better off elsewhere. Others complain it's too hard or are uncomfortable to have attention drawn to their physical, mental and emotional limitations and unwilling to take any personal responsibility for this. The purpose of an Iyengar class is not to entertain but to

To anyone who has had the good fortune to be taught directly by B.K.S. Iyengar or his foremost disciples: his daughter Geeta and son Prashant, it is inconceivable that you would not be challenged to the utmost on all levels.

enlighten, and the light often illuminates that which we do not wish to see.

This imposes a discipline on a yoga centre such as ours because we cannot nor do we want to teach solely to please and retain students, although certainly we do not wish to drive them away. All of us who teach at the Victoria Yoga Centre are focused on presenting the teachings of yoga according to the Iyengar tradition as systematically, cleanly and clearly as possible. This principle cannot be compromised. At the same time our classes are varied because of the different personalities of the teachers. A sense of humour is an essential ingredient on the spiritual path and our classes are full of laughter as well as effort.

Because of their training and the flexibility of this method, skilled Iyengar teachers can teach introductory asanas in a variety of ways to maintain interest and challenge the stronger students while adapting for those who are less able. Ideally, and B.K.S. Iyengar expects no less of us, demands will be made of all students to work to the maximum. A foundation is laid down for the challenging work which inevitably lies ahead.

To anyone who has had the good fortune to be taught directly by B.K.S. Iyengar or his foremost disciples: his daughter Geeta and son Prashant, it is inconceivable that you would not be challenged to the utmost on all levels. The only way to avoid this is to miss classes or close off completely. Gururji does not waste his energy with those who come with attitude and remain

unwilling to surrender. I have seen him try to penetrate many a student's protective armour, pride or arrogance, and I have seen tremendous transformations in students who initially had nothing good to say about him. Gururji does not give up easily, but there has to be a chink for the light to enter.

One student who was in a group I took to Pune some years ago, stopped attending the *pranayama* classes, held daily at that time, because she said they were not advanced enough for her. Instead she did her own practice in her hotel room. How sad to cut yourself off from so much wisdom, experience and learning.

In another Canadian intensive, where Geeta was the teacher, one man missed many of the classes - both *asana* and *pranayama* preferring to spend his time having other ayurvedic treatments and massages. When he was in class he stood alone in a back corner making the statement that he was not really one of the group. On the last day, as Geeta was taking students with health problems and showing us how to work with these problems, she threw out a question. This man answered, the first time his voice had been heard in class. Geeta paused, looked at him and said, "Now he speaks!", then

ignoring his comment went on with her teaching. It saddened me because there had been a waiting list for this course and he had taken up a place which someone else would have valued.

This man's lack of attendance in class did not prevent him from returning to Canada and quickly appending to his bio. the statement that he had studied with the Iyengars in Pune. Be very wary of the biographical claims which appear on many yoga websites and brochures. In the yoga world there is a lot of cachet to the Iyengar name, but a statement such as "has studied Iyengar Yoga" could mean a class or a term and not necessarily with a trained Iyengar Yoga teacher.

It is for this reason that B.K.S. Iyengar brought in assessment and certification, and latterly a certification mark denoting those whose certification is in good standing. There are many people around with medical or law degrees who are not licensed to practice; similarly there are those who hold certificates in Iyengar Yoga because at one time they adhered to its principles and precepts, but who have gone off on their own track. They will not hold the Iyengar Yoga Certification Mark which is required of all teachers one year after they have been certified. To continue with the analogy of law and medicine, the first year is like articling or interning. From here on to maintain your good standing you have to do a minimum number of hours of postgraduate study each year which, for higher levels of certification, includes study in Pune.

Critics of certification say that it is taking the creativity and spontaneity out of the teaching, but in our experience at

Talented teachers abound, but B.K.S. Iyengar is a genius. There is a saying that "Talent does what it can: Genius does what it must!" Such souls are rare.

the Victoria Yoga Centre the exact opposite is true. Like the Bolshoi, systematic thorough ongoing training built on a disciplined regular practice forms a foundation from which true artistry can flower, and even those who are destined to remain journeymen teachers will teach a good and even excellent class if they follow the structure set down by those who have ventured further along the yogic path.

Talented teachers abound, but B.K.S. Iyengar is a genius. There is a saying that "*Talent does what it can: Genius does what it must!*" Such souls are rare. Recognising this, Swami Radha, herself a spiritual teacher of great stature, had this to say about Mr. Iyengar after her first meeting with him which, incidentally, took place in Victoria.

"On a personal level I have not met anybody of a combination that is so unique – generosity, kindness, and also the very fierce and demanding teacher that I have seen when watching him in class; who knows precisely what he is

doing, and (how) to penetrate most of the things that we here pass by." And she ended her speech by addressing those privileged to study with him directly: "All of you here, who have much more and much longer contact with Mr. Iyengar: don't listen only with your ears - listen with your intuition. You might never hear this much wisdom with so much concern and so much compassion again!"

And in Pune in 1997, Geeta Iyengar (one of the world's outstanding contemporary spiritual teachers) exhorted a group of Canadian students to pay careful attention to all Gururji said and did because "*you will not see his like again for hundreds of years!*"

Despite this there are those who proclaim their affiliation to Gururji even though they have not been near him or his close disciples for decades. It is easier to have a spiritual master whom you never actually face in person. This leaves you free to interpret their teaching in any way you like. But this is not the

freedom which Patanjali speaks of in his yoga-sutras, which is summed up succinctly by B.K.S. Iyengar in the following aphorism and the one quoted at the beginning of this article:

Extension means creation of space.

Space leads to freedom.

Freedom brings precision.

Precision leads to perfection.

Perfection is truth.

Truth is God. ॐ

TIME TO *Renew*

This is a reminder that the
VYC membership
expires on
December 31, 2004.

The membership subscription fee is
\$32 and renewable each January.

Membership benefits include:

- 5% discount on all classes
- free practice times at the VYC
- 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 on the back page of this newsletter.

Sadhana

with Corrine Lowen

December 20 - 24, 2004

6:30 - 8 am daily

Fees: \$75 + GST members,
\$85 + GST non members

Registration: October 18 for members,
October 25 for non members

To register: Drop in or phone Victoria Yoga
Centre, 202 - 919 Fort Street,
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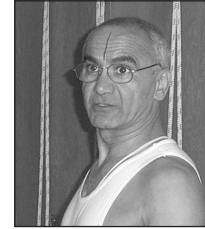
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An interview with Faeq Biria:

Part III (final)

Faeq Biria, director of the Centre de Yoga Iyengar de Paris, in conversation with Shirley Daventry French, Khairoon Quadir, Ann Kilbertus and Louie Ettling after a delicious Indian dinner at Khairoon's home in Vancouver, on May 9, 2003. It was Faeq's first visit to British Columbia where he gave workshops in Victoria and Vancouver.



What are your ideas about how to train teachers? A philosophy of teacher training?

Well, the basis of the training in Iyengar yoga – at least at the beginning level, is that teachers they are not allowed to do therapy and special classes. They are trained to teach basic *asanas* and basic *pranayama*. So the first thing that is required from the teacher trainee is to learn and to understand and to practise those things himself. Originally, the training is a type of – I don't know the word in English, in French I call it artisanal. *[At the craft level—ED]*

An apprenticeship!

Yes. In the works of art, there is not any training really. Though they try to make courses of jeweller training, training of this, training of that, but the real training is when people begin in the shop of the jeweller by sweeping first, by cleaning later, by bringing the things out, by spending hours and days watching the master, by scratching slowly, slowly, slowly in this way. Gradually they learn and eventually they become a teacher. But in our day, it is not possible. Originally, students would stay twelve years or more with a guru to learn something. In our day it is impossible. Gurujī's method is so well systematized and so well condensed. He settled that we go regularly [to study] with him, we learn, we come home, we practise, and we go back. And this, a little

bit balances that lack of being for long time with the master.

The philosophy of teacher training, when I train teachers, is more than formation of a teacher: I think of it as transformation. [The French word 'formation' translates into not only 'formation' but also 'education, training.'—ED] If the student who is in teacher training gets that transformation, then he can bring something very special to others; but if he doesn't and remains in the state of formation, then he will transmit only the techniques. 'Till the moment that you get a flash of light yourself, you cannot lighten others. Something must come to you first before you can give that fragrance to others. So, in the teacher training, we teach them *asanas* and *pranayamas* like everywhere you are doing according to the pattern, and we make them practises. We do a lot on self-study. Of course, it is not in the field of our Gurujī's method to call the student everyday and ask, what they did, what they didn't do. Gurujī never did that with us, and we are not allowed to do that with our students. But I give out papers, and they write about their

evolution - how much they practised, learned, read, taught, even how much time and energy they wasted; a regular *svadhyaya* (self-study) every month. They have to calculate their practice and write this down. And, we watch, but not as critics; we watch as trainers to see whether they are really feeling it or not. And we question, how much do you feel that you are resolving your own problems? How much are you progressing in *asana*? How much are you progressing in *pranayama*? How much do you feel that your health is improved? All these questions we put and it is for them to be able to see the transformation in themselves. And, I humbly think that since we introduced these things – of course all of them were with Gurujī's approval – it gives much better results. Now, it goes more with the idea of the transformation than formation.

One of the things that is frequently debated is the whole concept of certification. What is the best way of really testing the student? You've already given some answers like seeing the progress of the person. But what about

'Till the moment that you get a flash of light yourself, you cannot lighten others. Something must come to you first before you can give that fragrance to others.'

the actual certification examination?

Gurujii didn't use the word "examination", and this is very meaningful. He uses the word "assessment". And I am sure that Shirley heard many times from Gurujii, "In the first assessments be generous". So, his idea of assessment is more than examination or blocking or putting a wall in front of the people. It is to help them to become aware of their weak points. Our work as assessors is to help them get rid of those weak points, to show them how to strengthen those weak points, and help them have a better vision, better progression. This is not an exam. This is a type of evaluation with the help of four or five pairs of mature eyes. This is what I understand to be the true idea of Gurujii about assessment.

That doesn't mean that we call the people and offer the certificate on a silver tray. No, an Iyengar certificate is tremendously respected all over the world, and it is up to us to preserve that respect. But the way that we work towards a certificate is not like an examination in school. It is more to help that person in his evolution.

And how does that change when the teacher is more senior?

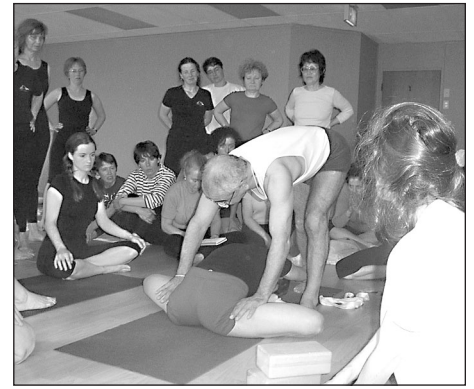
Well, lots of things are expected in the higher levels, but I trust tremendously Gurujii's teaching. Gurujii is a very ethical person and he talks often about ethics, but he hasn't that inquisitive way of coming to see who is doing what – who is practising, who is not practising. However, he has the eye to see who is practising and how that person is practising. And a hundred percent I believe that the practice of this Iyengar system is done in a way that the evolution and the transformation of the person also goes along with that. At the beginning for me, this was a type of theory that I was guessing. But Gurujii wrote in his *Light on Patanjali's Yoga Sutras*, and later on in one of the articles he added himself while editing *Astadala*

Yogamala, that the principle of the *yamas* and *niyamas* settles in the yogi twice. At the beginning, we have to respect the ethical things – like when we are children, we don't know what is lying what is not lying but are told "you must not lie". And if you lie, there is a punishment. So, we know that we must resist the temptation to lie. Later on, what happens – some people they continue to lie and some people they don't lie anymore. In the practice of yoga at the beginning what happens, the principles of the *yama* and *niyama*, we have them or don't have them, but we try to respect them. When the practice progresses, when we are settled in the practice of *pranayama* and we reach the experience of *pratyahara* – then *yama* and *niyama* flow from inside. No longer are they something that we instill from outside. They flow from within, from the source by themselves. This is the evolution which happens as the practice advances, and which must happen for a more mature level of practice.

And that's more complex to assess. Not for Gurujii, of course. Gurujii can assess that maturity easily.

At this level it is more complex to assess. But I believe that when we assess we can see if a person is mature in their practice. He may not be getting this asana because he has a stiff body or that asana because he has an especially flexible body, but what he is able to get is coming through with maturity. By repetition, by conscious repetition, by aware repetition the philosophical principles of yoga have developed in that person.

Let me tell you very honestly, I think that whomever doesn't correspond philosophically to that level, there is something wrong in their practice. Either they are not practising, or they are practising in the wrong way, or there are the components of the practice which are lacking. Because my own experience is that when you practice regularly as Gurujii



advocates and formulates, it is difficult but somehow it is the easiest way. Lots of things in the mental, ethical, moral levels that we struggle to settle within ourselves – with the practice of the Gurujii's method they just settle by themselves!

The other day you spoke of the teachers at your Institute in Paris who have established a special teachers' class. Would you say a little more about that?

Yes, at the centre in Paris, all teachers are coming out of the same teacher training and, at the basic levels, follow the same program; so when the student is going from one class to other class, he is not lost. For example, in the beginners' levels the new asana which must be introduced in one class, is the same in all classes in that week. The same asana is introduced and explained by different teachers; so if a student goes from one class to other, he can just continue his evolution without any problem.

Once teachers move beyond basic teacher training and become more advanced, they slowly develop their own

methods, which is very good. But development of one's own methods of explanation and analysis means that sometimes one also develops wrong notions and nobody is there to correct this. This is why, now Pune insists that from junior on the teachers must visit Pune regularly, in order to go back to the source. When we go to the source, we think, "Ah! This thing, I didn't understand before! Oh, this was wrong," or, "No. They are explaining now this point in this way." And we have to explain it this way, you follow? That is, what we call recycling of the teachers or a mis-à-jour – bringing them up to date.

So, every month [in Paris] there is an intermediate class, which is taught by one teacher and all other teachers, they come and watch that class. Then, after that, they sit comfortably and all of them discuss the class of that teacher. What points they found that were good and interesting. What he explained well. What was very good to learn and what points they don't agree [with] and, according to them could be explained in another way. Or maybe, according to them, it was wrong. The senior teacher coordinates the discussion. For example, just recently there was a very good teacher who taught. They watched, they came out and told, "Congratulations. Technically the class was excellent. Explanations were wonderful. But you were not seeing your students at all." This teacher was unable to see more than two students at the same time. So, the discussion was about how we must develop the observation skill to control the entire class. And I think this is very helpful.

Do they teach in a regular class, a class of students that would be there all the time? Or do they teach each other?

Yes, that is a regular class which is going on, and one teacher comes and teaches the program of that class. We have created the same thing in the teacher training, but that is a false class which

we make just for that purpose. Yes, they come to the real class; and Gururji advises that. He says always that the senior teachers must go to the class and observe and help the junior teachers. Whenever I am there, I go, for example, at the bottom of the class and practice and listen to the class. After that, if there is something, I call the teacher and discuss it with him. It is not to my understanding to catch the teacher and criticise in front of the students - unless you see that the student teacher is giving something that the students are going to injure themselves. But this will not happen with the training of the teachers if they are teaching in their own level. Outside the class, in a friendly way, it is better and I think it works better.

It's getting late, but maybe before we close... This has been, not your first trip to Canada, but your first trip to western Canada. Have you anything you would like to say to us before you go? And, most of all, what we'd like to say to you is – When are you coming back?

Well, you know, talking about this part of Canada is difficult because one of my best friends is training here and it may look like I am offering flowers to my friend. But, the first thing is the mentality of the people, that innocence and inner purity and will to learn touched me tremendously. Really, it was a very great pleasure to come here and to work with you. I felt at the heart of the Iyengar family. This was my feeling concerning *maitri, karuna* - friendship, compassion.

What I really admired was seeing the long work which has been done here. I felt from the very beginning that senior teachers here, they did a very long work with compassion, with love, and it is now bringing its fruits. It was very good to see. The touch is there – the very deep touch is there; and I am feeling that now even the senior-most teacher, if she retires or if she remains, there is no going back.

My feeling was that Gururji planted the first tree. The senior teachers, who first went to Pune took branches off that tree, brought them back and planted them. In this part of Canada, I feel that tree is so well planted and well-cared for, and the branches, and the leaves, and the fruits they are so healthy that it is going to become a gigantesque tree. This is my impression, with all honesty. And I really congratulate all of you for this work.

We have been very moved by the work you have given us.

Well, whether it is coming from you or from me, we know – all of us – that it comes from the source. It is Gururji's work. We are nothing but we are trying to be the channels of his teaching. This is what you did, and what I am trying to do, and what all of us in turn, are wanting to do.

Once I told Gururji, "It is not difficult to be a teacher in the Iyengar method". In other fields we have to think how to be a teacher; but in the Iyengar method he gave such a great example. If we are humble enough to follow his example, then automatically everything will go well.

We are blessed, indeed. Thank you.

Thank you – for the love, affection, and hospitality of the community here. It was an unforgettable stay for me. It was really a joy to share this time with all of you. Please don't forget to put this in your newsletter. Each and every one, according to their temperament, offered a flower of love and affection to me in each moment. It was really very much touching. ॐ

END OF PART III

Many thanks to Byron Smith of Victoria, BC, who transcribed the tape, and Shirley Daventry French, who edited the interview.



VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE PRESENTS

The Heart of Yoga

**An Intermediate Workshop
with Shirley Daventry French**

January 28-30, 2005

**For Levels 3 and 4 students or Level 2 students
who have completed at least 2 terms**

**Friday, January 28, 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Saturday, January 29, 11 am - 2 pm, 3:30 - 5:30 pm
Sunday, January 30, noon - 3 pm**

Fees:

\$185 + GST members

\$205 + GST non members

Registration opens:

Dec. 8, '04 - members,

Dec.13, '04 - non members

To register,
drop in or phone
Victoria Yoga Centre
202, 919 Fort Street
Victoria, BC

(250) 386-YOGA (9642)
www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca

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

Shirley Daventry French is a longtime student of B. K. S. Iyengar and has travelled to India many times to study with the Iyengars, most recently January 2003. Shirley's significant understanding of the teaching comes through in her direct approach.

Giving workshops at both the national and international levels, her dedication to the art and science of yoga is apparent. With a unique personal perspective, Shirley brings traditional yoga philosophy and psychology to the forefront of her teaching.



Friday Night Gatherings

Everybody is welcome to join us.
Bring a friend, your partner
or a family member.

NOVEMBER 19

**Asana practice 6:30pm
Potluck dinner 7:30pm**

**By donation
Free to members**

Bring food to share

AGM

**Saturday,
February 5, 2005**

Yoga Practice: 4 – 5pm

Meeting: 5 – 6 pm

followed by potluck

All members are welcome!

REQUEST FOR VOLUNTEERS

**Promote Iyengar Yoga
in your neighbourhood!**

The Victoria Yoga Centre
seeks Karma Yogis to distribute
class schedules and flyers
in Greater Victoria,
on a regular basis.

For more information,
please contact
the front desk
(386-9642).



A Birthday Tribute to Geetaji

nayamatma balahinena labhyah
the Self is not realised by a weakling

– Mundakopanishad III, 2.4



Geeta S. Iyengar is the distinguished daughter of an illustrious man. Her relationship with her father is unique not only because she is the firstborn child of B.K.S. Iyengar and his late wife, Ramamani, but because her father is also her Guru. Under his tutelage, Geeta has become an outstanding spiritual teacher in her own right.

Graced with such an auspicious birth, Geeta has grasped her opportunities in the spirit of the above quotation of which she is the embodiment. Despite health problems from childhood, Geeta has persevered and continues to persevere to overcome the obstacles she faces on her personal spiritual path. Living, as she herself puts it, in the light of her father, she is realising her own potential as she serves as a mentor to thousands of pupils of Iyengar Yoga worldwide. Without question, Geetaji is no weakling.

Like her father, Geeta's compassion and generosity know no bounds. Like him, she is a direct, honest and demanding teacher. Like him, she is strong, focused and has dedicated her life to Yoga. Living this life in the light of Yoga, she has become a beacon of light

herself for thousands of pupils who have not had the opportunity to study with Gururaj. For those of us who have been privileged to be his direct students, Geetaji has helped us build on the foundation he gave us and which shaped our lives. Always she is clear, and makes sure that we also are clear, that he is the Master and she is his disciple. Her loyalty and devotion are constant.

Each year as Gururaj's December 14th birthday approaches, we plan a special celebration to honour him and show our appreciation of his life and work. Geetaji's birthday falls a few days before Gururaj's on December 6th and, in accordance with her wishes, is usually marked quietly without ceremony. However, this year Geeta has agreed to teach a special course in honour of the occasion which will be preceded by her birthday and ended with Gururaj's. Hundreds of international students will be travelling to Pune for the occasion to honour Gururaj as he attains eighty six years of age, along with his foremost disciple as she marks her sixtieth birthday.

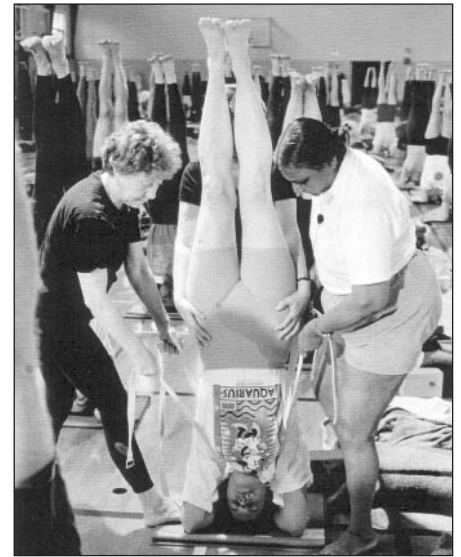
We have been blessed in Victoria by the physical presence of Gururaj in 1984 and Geetaji in 2001. We continue to be blessed and inspired on a daily basis by their spirit, their distinguished and exemplary lives, and the light from Pune which illuminates our path.

Gururaj and Geetaji, on behalf of all your students in Victoria, please accept congratulations with deepest love, gratitude and respect

Shirley Daventry French

Gururaj and Geetaji, on behalf of all your students in Victoria, please accept congratulations with deepest love, gratitude and respect.

Like her father, Geeta's compassion and generosity know no bounds. Like him, she is a direct, honest and demanding teacher. Like him, she is strong, focused and has dedicated her life to Yoga.



When I think of Geeta, I think of the word devotion; devotion to the art of yoga, to her father, who is Guru to thousands around the world, to her family, to the work of the Institute, and to her writing.

She daily teaches large demanding classes with 50 or more people, always with such fine linking and sequencing of the asanas. She orchestrates these classes with seeming ease. Three times weekly medical classes are also under her supervision. Again 50 or so people are following their own unique list of poses and many helpers are scurrying to move props, or help stretch a back with scoliosis. On top of the problems presented, she must also supervise the helpers, telling us what to do, and how to do it. Her *pranayama* classes are truly inspiring.

People from around the world consider her their teacher, and write to her with medical or personal questions. She responds to this correspondence often with hand written letters. I am awed by her tireless efforts for the cause of yoga. In her own right, she is a master teacher.

Leslie Hoggia



I have been blessed to have studied with Geetaji on two occasions, most recently at RIMYI. She has helped me work on specific medical problems with compassion and generosity. She has been a steady and knowing guide, providing clarity and encouragement to know myself within and without - this is yoga. Much love and gratitude to Geetaji on her 60th birthday!

Melissa Worth

Whenever one of us has had the opportunity to study at the Institute or elsewhere with Geeta Iyengar our roots in yoga have grown deeper. For many years Geetaji has been putting her enrichments of clear instruction, organized practices and specific ways with asanas for women into our system of Yoga. In taking the time to appreciate her in writing, I wish to mention the sage understandings that Geetaji has given us around the stiffness and difficulties of menopause. That these challenges for the practitioner can be met with the mobilizations of repetitions and with certain specific practices help many now and will be available for generations to come. I have much gratitude for you, Geetaji at this time of your "marking 60." I appreciate the depth and refinement of your teachings.

Sheri Berkowitz

It is a great honor and privilege to be expressing gratitude to Dr. Geeta S. Iyengar on the occasion of her 60th birthday.

Geetaji has tirelessly dedicated her life so that all who touch the path of yoga with her build in integrity as human beings. Geetaji demonstrates the Yamas and Niyamas clearly to us in her daily life and in this has helped all her students live in their most noble virtues.

Congratulations Geetaji, and thank you,

Namaste, Ty Chandler



"The depth and clarity of Geetaji's teaching comes from her own journey within. She has the amazing ability to convey this richness, which allows an individual to gain glimpses into their own unrealized potential for spiritual depth."

Whenever I experience a pranayama class with Geetaji I think to myself, this is why I have travelled all these miles to be here in Pune. As I write this I have been back in Canada less than 48 hours, and there is so much to assimilate and digest after four weeks at the Institute.

The depth and clarity of Geetaji's teaching comes from her own journey within. She has the amazing ability to convey this richness, which allows an individual to gain glimpses into their own unrealized potential for spiritual depth.

When doing the invocation to Patanjali I hear Geetaji's words, "...humble the brain and keep the lift of the chest to open the heart." The invocation has to come from here. She guides the class this way at the beginning of most of her sessions and firmly takes us towards an inner intelligence that does not have to do with the thinking brain. It is clear that this is not easy process. Geetaji is obviously well traveled in her own depths. Through her own work and under Guruji's Light, she has given me tools to make my own way and to watch the subtle changes that occur.

Her sequences and linking are masterful and I am most grateful for the opportunities I have had to experience the gifts of her teaching.

Many blessings to Geetaji on the occasion of her 60th birthday.

Ann Kilbertus



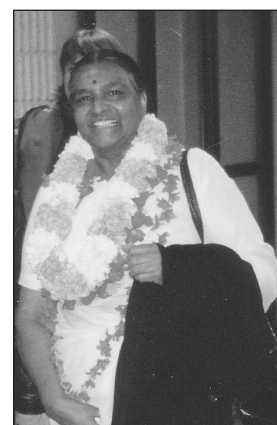
Commitment and dedication are the first words that come to mind; and then, visually, the picture of Geetaji on my wall taken at the Vancouver Conference. Geetaji, your keen observation followed by putting into practice and place what you see has brought, and continues to bring, clarity and depth to my yoga practice and into my teaching. When I have had the fortune to study under your guidance in both India and Canada, the wisdom in your teaching has always left me inspired and enthused to continue on this yogic path. It is with much gratitude that I thank you for the most wonderful touch you have had on me and in my life. It is a joy to celebrate your 60th year, Happy Birthday.

Marlene Linda Miller

Geeta was to be arriving in a few days; everyone was talking about her visit while waiting to go into class. I had decided to go to the airport to meet her with a group of people from the Yoga Centre. It had been mentioned that in India it was the custom to give people a flower garland on their arrival. This appealed to me so the next morning I looked around my garden to see if I had any suitable flowers. It was spring and the Azaleas were in full bloom. I got a needle and thread and sat in the warm spring sunshine and threaded purple azalea flowers into a garland **for a woman I had never met but whose teachings had influenced my life in a very positive way.**

Thank you Geeta, and Happy Birthday

Rosemary Barritt



Geetaji arrives in Victoria in May 2001

I am grateful to Geeta for making the practice of yoga asana accessible to women in all stages of life. The restorative poses bring wholeness to any practice.

Namaste, Karyn

Dearest Geeta...

I have studied some of the transcripts of your classes and lectures on women's issues. Up until my 2 month course in Pune this past summer, I was reliant on these recordings for my studies in this field. **Your devotion to the health of women touches my life almost every day, both as a practitioner and as a teacher of women.** I look forward to reading more of your words and to seeing you again in class. May your birthday be a joyous occasion.

Sincerely, Gwynneth Powell

Dear Geeta,

My teacher, Shirley Daventry French, is always reminding her students that we have a duty to ourselves to make the maximum effort to understand and carry out the directions of our spiritual teachers. They are given in our best interest - for the sake of our self, our Higher Self.

Whenever I am met with challenges, whether in my practice, teaching, or life, I always hear your voice: "Is it not your duty? Then whose duty is it?"

Geeta, your devotion and service to Guruji and the teachings of yoga is an inspiration. Because of your passion, many have benefited from yoga, including myself. Thank you for keeping the light of yoga alight!

Thank you for helping us along the spiritual path!

Happy Birthday Geeta!

With gratitude, Lauren Cox

I recall vividly the anatomical and philosophical depths that Geetaji took a gymnasium full of yoga aspirants to, seeing all and working compassionately, constructively, with our individual and collective shortcomings. It was astounding. How is it possible that I saw the extension of my *trikonasana* front leg as a direct embodiment and reflection of my unencumbered self?

As my teacher training continues I need only think of the crystal clarity of her self-knowledge for inspiration.

With great respect, admiration, and affection, Happy Birthday Geetaji!

Greg Sly



**Illumination
- Aphorisms of B.K.S. Iyengar**
(Victoria Yoga Centre, 2003)

This beautiful book was produced by the VYC for Mr. Iyengar's 85th birthday celebration. Get yours today.

Available from the Victoria Yoga Centre



Geeta, your devotion and service to Guruji and the teachings of yoga is an inspiration. Thank you for helping us along the spiritual path.

Short WORKSHOPS

Coincidences from India With Chris Lea

Saturday, November 20, 1:30-4:30pm

Fees: \$45 + GST members, \$50 + GST non members

Chris has recently returned from having spent a year in Pune studying at the Institute with the Iyengar family.

Come join him as he shares with us some of the insight from his studies and work during his time abroad.

Fifty Plus With Leslie Hogya and Wendy Boyer

Saturday, November 27, 3 - 5:30pm

Fees: \$30 + GST members, \$35 + GST non members

Fifty Plus With Leslie Hogya and Wendy Boyer

Saturday, February 27, 2005, 1 - 3:30pm

Fees: \$30 + GST members, \$35 + GST non members

To register, drop in or phone

**Victoria Yoga Centre, 202 - 919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC
(250) 386-YOGA (9642) www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca**

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

In and around the Ramanai Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute

Pune, 2004

LESLIE HOGYA

The monsoons were late this past summer in Pune and the rest of Maharashtra State, but the day I arrived the rains decided to come along with me. I watched out the train window from Mumbai (formerly known as Bombay) as we climbed into the western Ghats, the rain pouring down into the waiting fields. Men and women were working under brightly coloured tarps, water sluicing off the individual little tent shapes hanging from their backs into the rice paddies.

Various food-stuffs were being hawked up and down the isles, and the first class steward took orders for baked beans on toast and other tasty morsels which would then be cooked up in the little kitchen at the front of the car.

A propitious meeting with Motus, who works at the Institute and was sitting a few seats ahead of me in the train, was a good omen. We had a nice chat and he helped me get to my hotel for the first night in Pune.

Early the next afternoon, I went to the Yoga Institute and Motus was there so I could sign in for classes for the month of August and part of September. I went down to the library to greet Mr. Iyengar and there he was at his desk. He



received my greetings from Victoria with a nod and smile, "Yes, yes, I know."

He never calls me by name, so I am never sure if he remembers me from one visit to the next, but obviously he does. A while later he spoke about his project in Bellur, his home village. He knew the Victoria Yoga Centre had made a donation to this project (the money order would have to be returned with me because the trust was still waiting for permission to accept foreign currency). So he not only knew who I was, but that I had quite a lot to do with the Victoria Yoga Centre.

One of his dreams has been to bring the benefits of yoga to rural areas, so it

was a natural fit that he began to fulfill this dream in Bellur, in Karnataka State where he spent his first years. A temple he commissioned to Patanjali is being finished on land adjacent to the village, and he will attend the ceremony to sanctify the temple in October, 2004. He is very pleased about this, and spoke at length about the ceremony to take place, and kinds of food that would be served. All in the village will be fed that day!

Mr. Iyengar is awe inspiring at 86 as he still maintains a long and busy schedule each day. He usually arrives at 9 a.m. in the studio for practice and puts himself into many variations of *viparita dandasana* (a back bend) and holds each for long minutes, up to 15 to 20 minutes from my observation. I often arrived about the time he did and when I finished around noon, he would usually be deep into *savasana* with up to 100 pounds of weights positioned on his legs, or still in the midst of *kapotasana* on a stool. After a short break for lunch, he holds court down in the library where he attends to correspondence, holds meetings with visitors, or works on future manuscripts. I spent many afternoons in the library where anything might happen – or nothing happens except we all sit quietly while he reads and works at his desk.

One day Pandu, the secretary, came down with a portable phone, and soon it was evident that Mr. Iyengar was being interviewed. An *Outlook Magazine* reporter was calling from Delhi. They were putting together a special issue for Independence Day, August 15, about how the country might have been if certain things had or had not happened

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with up to 100 pounds of weights
positioned on his legs, or still in the midst
of kapotasana on a stool.*

in the fifty plus years India since independence from the British. At one point he said into the phone, "If they had followed my plan, they wouldn't have needed a Health Ministry." He also expounded on the fact that the health benefits are just on the gross level and the real benefits of yoga are at the emotional and intellectual levels; this is where yoga is really important.

Stephanie Quirk, a long time student of Guruji's and now resident of Pune, is usually at work at her computer station in the library and I inquired if she needed a hand with anything. Soon, I was pouring over three immense photo albums, which contained all 602 photos from *Light on Yoga*. The photos had been reprinted at Guruji's request in 8 1/2 by 11 inch format so they would be available in the library for study. In *Light on Yoga* some of these photos are quite small and some details are difficult to see.

Stephanie had typed out labels for each photo, and it was necessary to cut the labels out and tape them below the appropriate pictures. Corrine from France was going through the albums with *Light on Yoga* at her side to make sure the labels were accurately depicting the exact photo. As she was soon returning to Paris, I continued on with this task. This allowed me an incredible opportunity to study the photographs and descriptions in *Light on Yoga* of each pose in a way I had never done before. Like all Iyengar teachers, I refer to *Light on Yoga* constantly to verify I am doing the pose as described in the book. A new appreciation for the immensity of the task filled me. I wondered who would have the patience to do this today without modern day technology.

One day, as Emelia from Italy, Judi Mirus from Edmonton and I were at work on this project and exclaiming over these pictures, we began asking Guruji some questions. It took three years to complete the entire 602 photographs because he had to first become just as knowledgeable as a professional photographer, to understand

On my last morning in Pune, I came to say goodbye to him. I found him in his practice at the trestler, and approached him, telling him I was leaving. "God Bless you" he said, "And all those in Canada." With those words echoing in my ears, I prepared to fly out of India and across the world to my home.



Melissa, Ann and Leslie in Pune, India

how to get the best angle, light values and clarity of expression.

Take some time and open your copy of *Light on Yoga*, and take a closer look at the artistry conveyed in the pictures. We also discussed with him the variation in quality in different editions. The original 1965 edition has the clearest photographs with sharpest contrast. The new 2001 Edition is also interesting because of the way the photos are grouped. Go to the library, compare editions, notice the consistency, quality and clarity of the photographs for yourself!

Another day in the library, Rajvi from Mumbai was at work on her lap top, and

gave Guruji a manuscript to peruse. It is a new book he is writing on yoga for cricket players! When a pro cricket player showed up at his desk, a long discussion ensued on how to use the arm correctly to throw the ball from a yogic point of view. I know nothing about cricket, so am not even sure of the proper word for the ball! One chapter, however, will be of interest to all traveling yogis on how to cope with jet lag and still be able to perform on arrival.

On another occasion in the library with Rajvi, Guruji started talking about the difference between *hanumanasana* and *upavista konasana* (seated wide leg pose).

He had Rajvi performing these poses in the space beside his desk in her jeans. He was saying it is more likely to injure the hamstring in upavista konasana than hanumanasana (in which one leg goes forward and one goes back, something like the splits). I decided I must not be challenging myself sufficiently in upavista konasana and sure enough in his practice a few days later, I watched him work his legs wide and wider, and decided I had much more to learn about this pose (as is the case in any pose where

I see him practicing!).

As the library time ends and evening classes begin, many days Guruji returns to the studio and practices for a few more hours on the side of the room while the class is in session. From that vantage point, his eagle eyes scan the class and he makes corrections of our poses.

Some days these corrections were given to us with the help of his granddaughter Abby. He would tell her how we must improve our pose, and she would come to the platform and show us.

On my last morning in Pune, I came to say goodbye to him. I found him in his practice at the trestler and approached him, telling him I was leaving. "God Bless you," he said, "and all those in Canada." With those words echoing in my ears, I prepared to fly out of India and across the world to my home.

I arrived home with deep gratitude to Guruji and his family for the blessing of his and their teaching. Life is a balance. ॐ

April 15-17, 2005

Ingelise Nherlan

FRIDAY, APRIL 15, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 11:00 am – 1:30 pm, 3:00 – 5:00 pm

SUNDAY, APRIL 17, Noon – 3:00 pm

Fees: \$190 +GST for members | \$210 +GST for non-members

Ingelise's teaching and practice progresses from the point of view that all learning is deepening our present knowledge, and exploring that which still remains to be discovered. Her teaching is a blend of careful asana work, thoughtful yoga philosophy and a generous dash of humour.

Yoga Bliss – Wedding in our community

Three couples were united over the summer.



Melissa and Byron



Doug and Anna



Robin and Jim

"Allowing The Little To Expand"

Walk behind Glenda Gain—along Meares Street, heading for the Victoria Yoga Centre—and what you'll see is a slender, upright woman wearing stylish jeans. It won't occur to you that her steady gait is a remarkable accomplishment, though you may notice she holds a cane in one hand.

In 1981, a car crash fractured and dislocated Glenda's cervical 4-5 vertebrae, resulting in spinal cord injury and paralysis from her shoulders down. She spent nine weeks in flat traction and then it was a ten-month process to get back on her feet. Her right side remains paralyzed and that leg has to be supported by a bracing system; her left side is compromised; and she suffers from an energy deficit.

Before the crash, Glenda taught math, movement and special education. Then, she moved with her husband and two young daughters to a spectacular acreage near West Kootenay Lake where they ran a horse-boarding ranch. Glenda sees that time—of bringing up kids, managing the business, being active in the community and supportive of people who were riders there, as "the world of the big."

Now, she says she lives "in the world of the little." She made a decision to not mourn the passing of her big world, but to use its loss "to expand the small"—to increase her appreciation of what's within her present scope. While she misses the snowy mountains and her friends in the Kootenays, she delights in the gardens now outside her window. "Looking at raindrops on holly gives me a surge of joy."

She'd always been active—undergoing rigorous training in ballet, racing dinghies, hiking, and cross-country skiing—and so understood the need for physical discipline and repetitive practice. She values having a teacher able to steer her endeavors into productive paths. Ballet taught her to focus in on her body. With these experiences to guide her, Glenda deliberately began a process after her accident of working very hard at physical recovery.

When she left her marriage and moved to Victoria four years ago, she started yoga. She sensed it would provide a more integrated approach to healing than physiotherapy could, and enjoyed the permission it gave to turn her focus inward. Coming to Special Needs classes, and eventually also the Back

Care classes, she was met with "an exceptional sense of loving openness and acceptance" from the teachers and volunteers. "I was encouraged to work on *my* path without it being *the* path."

She says she can't leave her "debt of gratitude to the volunteers" as an abstract statement. "When you don't feel your foot

The challenge is not just moving freely across a room. "My work is to stay in the present." Yoga has helped her with that focus.

or leg, you have to trust it's there. My fabulous volunteers had to hold me and support me for everything. Then, all of a sudden, I started to realize I'd learned. They helped me through the early patterning, weaned me off total support to medium support, and recognized when I needed to do the struggle on my own."

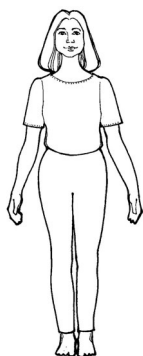
The challenge is not just moving freely across a room. "My work is to stay in the present." Yoga has helped her with that focus. Although painful, it leaves her feeling happier and stronger. She says, "it's not just yoga, it's those teachers—the tradition of yoga that's come down through the teachers—their embodiment of the personal struggle—seeing it practiced in front of my eyes."

Glenda says, if she didn't have pain or discomfort, she wouldn't know her feet or legs or arms are there. But, she refuses to see her situation as tragic, or herself as heroic. She insists that she's just done what anyone would do. Linda Benn speaks of Glenda as an intelligent and inspiring student who—with patience, observation, and skillful adaptations—works within her limitations and gradually expands and consolidates her capabilities.

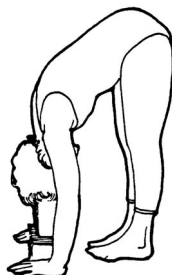
Glenda asks, "Did you overcome that barrier because you figured out a different strategy, or because your body let you do it?" Can we always say which it is? Maybe both happen together—if we're present and focused and allow the little to expand. ॐ

Asanas Before Pranayama

In our May/June issue we printed an interview of Geeta S. Iyengar in which she answered questions about pranayama. Here is a series of quick reference drawings to help practitioners prepare for doing pranayama.



1. Tadasana



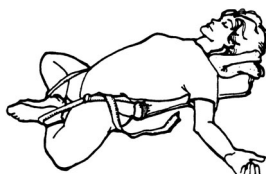
2. Uttanasana



3. Supta virasana

Asanas conducive for conditioning and regularising pranayama include *tadasana*, *uttanasana*, *supta virasana*, *supta baddhakonasana*, *matsyasana*, *viparita dandasana* on the chair, *sirsasana* (independent or rope), *sarvangasana* (independent or on a chair) *setu bandha sarvangasana*, *ardha halasana*, sometimes *janusirsasana* for head rest and heart rest, and *viparita karani*. Teachers can choose among these as time and circumstances permit. These asanas bring the freedom in the respiratory organs, sooth and quieten the nerves and brain, make one passively alert. One keeps the past behind and restrains from the future, remains in the present. One gets sattvic placidity more than tamasic dull silence. The body and mind are freshened and the scope of the breath increased.

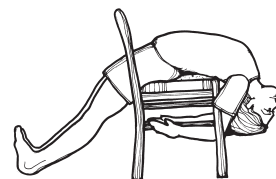
Drawings by Lauren Cox



4. Supta baddhakonasana



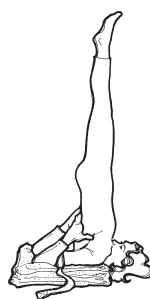
5. Matsyasana



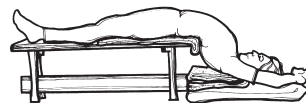
6. Viparita dandasana on the chair



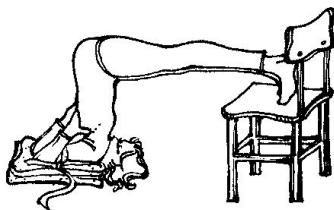
7. Sirsasana (or using ropes)



8. Sarvangasana (or on a chair)



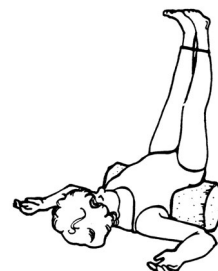
9. Setu bandha sarvangasana



10. Ardha halasana



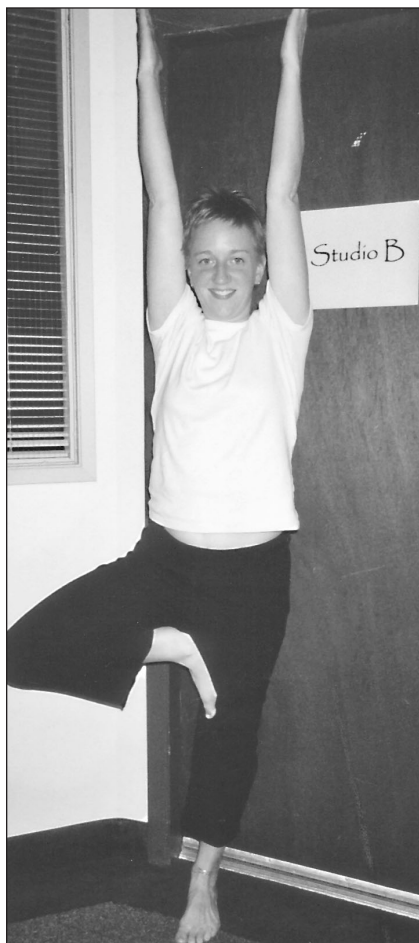
11. Janusirsasana



12. Viparita karani



In our mailbox



Heather growing in vrksasana.

June 12 2004

**Dear Victoria Yoga Centre Board,
Staff and Teachers,**

I first came to the Yoga Centre just under two years ago. At that time, I was still reeling from the adjustment of returning home after having spent a year in extremely remote regions of Guyana, South America. I was feeling very disillusioned with our society's drive to consume and felt awash in confusion as to where I could fit in. Feeling drained, confused and very sad, I found myself in James' restorative class at the Y. Only a month or two later, I discovered the Victoria Yoga Centre and applied for the position at the front desk. I remember being in search for a sense of community, and I found one.

I am grateful to have found this community and to have met so many of its members through my participation as front desk staff. It is a friendly, warm and inviting place to be and my interactions with people at the front desk have, for the most part, been pleasant, interesting and infused with laughter. It's not often that one is able to find a working environment in which the atmosphere is so positive.

Though I may not have had the opportunity to work with you directly, or participate in an asana class with you, each of you has contributed to building this Yoga Centre community and to imparting the teachings of Yoga to students like me. For this, I am grateful to all of you.

In such a short time, Yoga has played an integral role in my life and particularly in challenging me to study myself. As I delve deeper into my new role as a social worker, Yoga has also become part of my professional practice and a vital tool in maintaining my own holistic wellness in a stressful field of work.

It amazes me how my recent social work practice has been connected to Yoga. I have been privileged to observe a transformation in one of my clients who, only a few months ago was extremely agitated, angry and unwell. Having recently spent time at Swami Radha's Yasodhara Ashram, this same individual is embarking on a spiritual path that has given them the tools to quit smoking, quit using all other drugs, develop a strong sense of self-worth and commit to a daily asana practice and reading of Yogic texts. It has been inspiring to engage this individual in conversation about his healing journey.

I want to thank you all for the support and encouragement I have received in my weekly interactions with you. I want to thank you for the compassion you all show by passing on what you have learned along this Yogic path. I look forward to continuing to be a member of this community and I wish you all the best.

*In gratitude,
Heather*

Mark your calendar!

Salt Spring Retreat

with
Shirley Daventry French

June 3, 4 and 5, 2005

Watch for details in the
January February 2005 issue



SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

for TERM 2 Fall 2004

For up to date information on the class schedule check www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca

Term 2 November 1 – December 19

Some classes will be adjusted due to special workshops or holidays.

INTRODUCTION TO IYENGAR YOGA – 4 Weeks

Tues 7:00 – 8:30pm Karin Holtkamp

LEVEL 1

Mon 12:00 – 1:30pm Lauren Cox
 Mon 7:30 – 9:00pm Ann Kilbertus
 Tues 10:00 – 11:30am Leslie Hogya
 Tues 5:00 – 6:30pm Melissa Worth
 Tues 7:00 – 8:30pm Wies Pukesh
 Wed 6:00 – 7:30pm Gwynneth Powell
 Wed 6:30 – 8:00pm Britta Poisson
 Thur 8:30 – 10:00am Linda Benn
 Thur 5:30 – 7:00pm Wendy Boyer
 Thur 6:30 – 8:00pm Jeannette Merryfield
 Fri 10:30 – 12:00pm Linda Benn
 Fri 5:00 – 6:30pm Gwynneth Powell
 Sat 9:30 – 11:00am Corrine Lowen
 Sun 10:30 – 12:00pm Ty Chandler

LEVEL 1 / 2

Mon 6:30 – 8:00am Chris Lea
 Wed 9:00 – 10:30am Ty Chandler
 Wed 7:30 – 9:00pm Melissa Worth
 Thur 7:00 – 8:30pm Greg Sly

LEVEL 2

Mon 4:00 – 5:30pm Jo Anna Hope
 Mon 7:30 – 9:00pm Greg Sly
 Tues 10:00 – 11:30am Robin Cantor
 Tues 5:15 – 6:45pm Leslie Hogya
 Tues 6:30 – 8:00pm Melissa Worth
 Wed 7:45 – 9:15pm Gwynneth Powell
 Thur 4:30 – 6:00pm Ann Kilbertus
 Fri 9:00 – 10:30am Linda Benn
 Fri 5:00 – 6:30pm Wendy Boyer
 Sat 8:00 – 9:30am Corrine Lowen
 Sun 9:00 – 10:30am Ty Chandler

NEW in term II

- All levels drop in at 5:00pm Wednesdays with Britta – use your flex pass
- Family yoga with Wendy Boyer on Thursdays at 4:30pm
- Yoga for kids ages 7:00 - 11:00am on Saturdays with Chris Lea
- Learn the ropes with Greg Sly Thursdays 5:30 - 6:30pm
- Special rate for members who take both of the early morning classes, 6:30 - 8:00pm on Mondays and Wednesdays

LEVEL 2/3

Mon 10:00 – 12:00pm Lauren Cox
 Wed 6:00 – 7:30pm Ty Chandler
 Wed 6:30 – 8:00 am Chris Lea

LEVEL 3

Thur 10:00 – 12:00pm Linda Benn
 Thur 6:00 – 8:00pm Ann Kilbertus, Leslie Hogya
 Sat 9:00 – 11:00am Marlene Miller

LEVEL 4

Mon 5:30 – 7:30pm Shirley D. French & Senior teachers

ALL LEVELS

Sat 11:00am - 1:00pm Chris Lea

DROP IN

Tues 12:00 – 1:00pm Jeannette Merryfield
 Wed 12:00 – 1:00pm Wendy Boyer
 Wed 5:00 – 6:00 pm Britta Poisson
 Thur 12:00 – 1:00pm Lauren Cox
 Fri 12:00 – 1:00pm Ty Chandler

TIMED PRACTICE

Tues 5:30 – 7:00pm Ty Chandler

LEARN THE ROPES

November 4, 18, 25, December 2
 Thur 5:30 – 6:30pm Greg Sly

INTRODUCTION TO YOGA PHILOSOPHY

Term 2 November 4, 18, 25, Dec. 2
 Thur 5:00 – 6pm Leslie Hogya

WOMEN'S CLASS

Tues 11:30 – 1:00pm Robin Cantor

PRE NATAL YOGA

Mon 7:30 – 9:00pm Robin Cantor

PRE & POST NATAL YOGA

Sat 3:00 – 4:00pm Lauren Cox

55 & BETTER

Wed 10:30 – 12:00pm
 Continuing Leslie Hogya
 Fri 10:30 – 12:00pm
 Level 1 Wendy Boyer
 Fri 4:30 – 6pm
 Level 1 Wies Pukesh

SPECIAL NEEDS

Wed 4:30 – 6:00pm Ann Kilbertus, Leslie Hogya, Lauren Cox
 Thur 1:15 – 2:45pm Linda Benn, Ann Kilbertus

BACK CARE

Mon 4:00 – 5:15pm Linda Benn
 Wed 5:15 – 6:30pm James Currie Johnson

YOGA KIDS (Ages 10 – 14)

Fri 4:00 – 5:00pm Ty Chandler
 Sat 1:00 – 2:00pm Chris Lea

HIGH SCHOOL YOGA (Age 14 +)

Tues 4:15 – 5:15pm Gwynneth Powell

FAMILY YOGA

Thurs 4:30 – 5:30pm Wendy Boyer

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Krysia Strawczynski regularly prepares the newsletters for mail-out single handedly.

Coral Grant, Karin Holtkamp, Vicki Robichaud, Rosemary Barritt and Jeannette Merryfield assisted at the front desk the first week of Term I.

Mike McLellan picked up blankets at Scrubbies.

Constance Barker washed head bandages.

Rosemary washed straps and bolster covers and brought all the mats and blankets to Scrubbies and picked up quite a few.

Linda Benn prepared the class schedule.

Melissa Worth, Karin Holtkamp, Monica Dimofski, Charles Campbell, Wendy Boyer and Rosalyn Grey put their best yoga poses forward to promote the centre in ads for the VYC.

Bruce Cox, who is always constructing beautiful and functional items that improve the work and practice spaces in the centre. ॐ



Radha Yoga Centre

Free introductory classes at the Radha Centre

Swami Radha's style of yoga is gentle, practical and devotional. Come for a free class to try it for yourself. On **Saturday January 8** we will be offering free classes in Hatha Yoga, the Hidden Language of Hatha Yoga, Kundalini and Dreams. Please call 595-0177 or email radha@uniserve.com for more information.

**ascent magazine is offering
an amazing deal for first time subscribers
– just \$10.80 for a year's subscription!**

This is offered through a group rate at the Radha Centre. Please call to sign up for this introductory offer.

Dreaming Mind, Reflective Body

The body is the bridge between the world and the unconscious mind, reflecting the inner reality outwards. Working with a dream, we explore how it is brought to consciousness using the body as a reflective tool. Dreams are asking us to listen to our inner wisdom, to make a change. This workshop provides the tools to understand your dream, and apply what you have learned in a practical way.

**Saturday & Sunday
November 6 & 7, 1-4pm \$50
sliding scale available**

VICTORIA *yoga centre* Calendar 04-05

NOVEMBER

- 5-7** Yoga for Health – Be Healthy, Stay Healthy
- 19** Friday Night Gathering 6:30pm
- 19-21** Junior Intermediate I Assessment, Vancouver
- 20** Short Workshop: Coincidences from India with Chris Lea
- 27** Teachers' Meeting
- 27** Short Workshop: Fifty Plus with Leslie Hogya and Wendy Boyer

DECEMBER

- 12** In the Light of Yoga Workshop
- 20-24** Sadhana with Corrine Lowen

JANUARY 2005

- 22** Teachers' Meeting
- 28-30** Heart of Yoga with Shirley Daventry French

FEBRUARY

- 5** AGM 4 pm
- 26** Teachers' Meeting
- 27** Short Workshop: Fifty Plus with Leslie Hogya and Wendy Boyer

MARCH

- 19** Teachers' Meeting

APRIL

- 15-17** Weekend Workshop with Ingelise Nherlan
- 23** Teachers' Meeting



VICTORIA
yoga centre
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:

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

Membership/subscription fee is \$32 (incl. 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

Membership benefits include 5% discount on classes, free practice times at the VYC, timed practices, early registration and discount on workshops, borrowing privileges in our library, eligibility to become a board member and eligibility for scholarships for workshops.