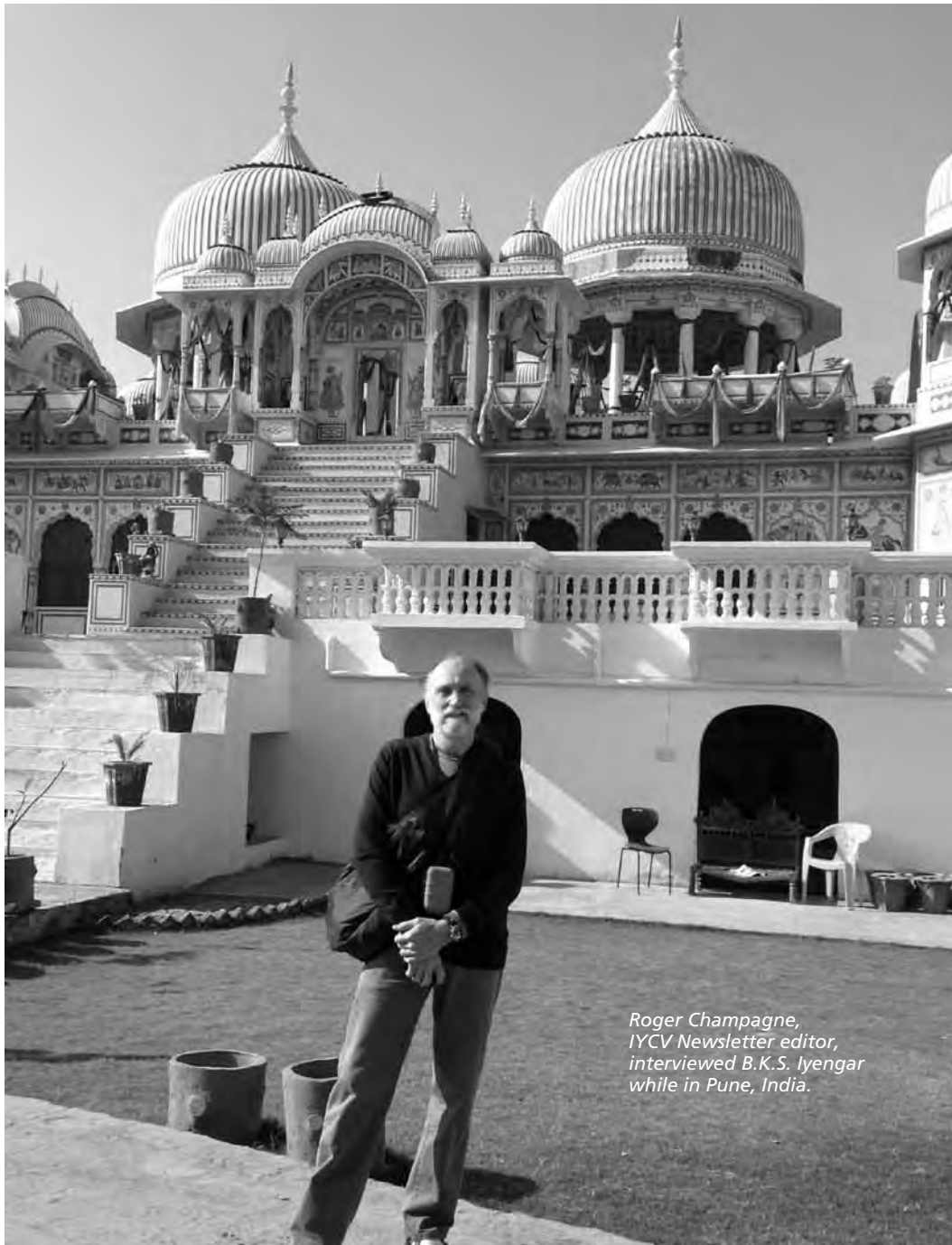




IYENGAR YOGA
CENTRE of VICTORIA

NEWSLETTER

S P R I N G 2 0 1 3



*Roger Champagne,
IYCV Newsletter editor,
interviewed B.K.S. Iyengar
while in Pune, India.*

Retreat from the demands of daily life to the
Salt Spring Centre of Yoga and join Shirley Daventry French
and Leslie Hoga for

FOOTSTEPS OF PATANJALI

August 21 to August 25, 2013



SHIRLEY DAVENTRY FRENCH is a direct student of B.K.S. Iyengar. Since her first visit to Pune in 1979, she has returned regularly for further study. She is the founder of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria. Students from across Canada and from around the world have studied with her at home and abroad.

Shirley has a quick wit and inspiring zest for life. Her skill with language brings an unforgettable clarity to the fine points of her teachings.

LESLIE HOGA has been studying yoga since 1972. She has been to India many times, most recently in December 2010. She holds a Senior Intermediate I certificate and is part of the Canadian assessors team.

Leslie is past president of the Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada. She has taught in many places in British Columbia as well as in the USA, Mexico, Thailand, and Hong Kong. Students are drawn to Leslie by her welcoming personality and warmheartedness.



Let Shirley and Leslie be your guides at the tranquil Salt Spring Centre located off Canada's west coast. Immerse yourself in daily *asana* (poses) and *pranayama* (breathing) practice. Explore the *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* through participation in group discussion.

WORKSHOP PREREQUISITE:

Minimum 6 months experience of Iyengar Yoga.

FEES: ADD HST TO FEES

\$885 IYCV members for shared accommodation

\$935 non-members for shared accommodation

\$815 IYCV members for camping
\$865 non-members for camping
(must supply own equipment)

\$775 IYCV members commuting
\$825 non-members commuting

Option: Pay monthly installments between January and June 2012.

- A non-refundable deposit of \$200 will reserve your space.
- Full payment is due June 1, 2012.

If you withdraw after June 1, the workshop fee is refundable only if your space is filled.

Plan to arrive by 2 pm on Wednesday, August 22

Retreat ends after lunch on Sunday, August 26

REGISTER:

The Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria, B.C. V8V 3K3
250-386-YOGA (9642)
email: iyoga@telus.net
www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

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IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA

SOCIETY is a non-profit society incorporated under the *Society 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 Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

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

Send contributions, articles, photographs (high resolution), drawings, information or suggestions to: the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Newsletter, 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3.

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

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 will be given to advertisements regarding IYCV events, IYCV sponsored events, and IYAC events.

REGISTRATION:

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

Phone: (250) 386-YOGA (9642)

Please visit our website:

www.iyengaryogacentre.ca for full information on classes and workshops.

SPRING 2013



In January there was a national assessment at the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria. This is not that unusual. We have hosted many of the assessments held in Canada since the first one in 1998. What was unique was that this was a senior level assessment involving two different levels. Intermediate Senior One assessment had been offered in Canada once previously in Toronto in 2006, but this was the first time we have held an assessment for Intermediate Senior Two.

B.K.S. Iyengar has set up a complex system of five courses of certification, each one of which has two or three levels of progressively challenging *asanas*. The *asanas* on each level have to be mastered as a student before you are qualified to teach them. Iyengar Yoga is a practice based tradition. There are thirteen levels in all. To pass any of these levels requires an evaluation of practice and teaching ability, as well as a written examination testing knowledge of pure and applied yoga philosophy as it relates to this level of teaching. On successfully passing all three components, a certificate is awarded from the Ramanani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute in Pune signed by B.K.S. Iyengar.

The first certificates were issued by Mr. Iyengar to teachers from South Africa and shortly after this to teachers in the United Kingdom. As interest in Iyengar Yoga grew throughout the world this became too unwieldy and Gururji established a series of national bodies to function under his jurisdiction. We all have similar constitutions based on his guidelines adapted to comply with the laws of the country in which they will operate. The Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada/Association canadienne de

yoga Iyengar is one of these national organisations.

Worldwide we have the same syllabi. Worldwide we evaluate our members in a similar manner. An Iyengar Yoga teaching certificate, provided it is maintained in good standing is recognised internationally.

A fully fledged Iyengar Yoga teacher will have passed two levels of Introductory assessment and been awarded an Introductory Level II certificate. To get to this level will take a minimum of six years as three years experience as a student of Iyengar Yoga are required before entering a teacher training program. To train teachers or teach therapeutic work requires significantly higher levels of certification plus several trips to Pune. In Iyengar Yoga, in accordance with the ancient tradition of passing on the teachings from Master to student, progress is scrutinised by B.K.S. Iyengar or those appointed by him.

While such discipline may be out of step with the climate of yoga today, it is entirely in the spirit and tradition of yoga. It offers assurance to students that their teachers are well trained and prepared. In addition it has fostered a collegial spirit in countries such as Canada, and throughout continents such as North America and Europe. Senior or junior, teacher or student, we are all students of Gururji; colleagues with a common purpose which forms a bond and often leads to worldwide friendships.

This collegial spirit of Iyengar Yoga was very much in evidence in Victoria that weekend in January. Knowing that there were teachers eligible to be assessed at this level, our national association sought three assessors qualified

to examine at this level, plus a host community with students experienced enough to work at this level. Obviously it is impossible to demonstrate teaching skills without having students to teach! Then we had to look for a date which suited assessors and the host community. January 2013 was the date selected. Victoria was to be the venue. The assessment panel would consist of Margot Kitchen from Calgary, Marlene Mawhinney from Toronto along with me. We were among the first small group of assessors appointed in Canada by Mr. Iyengar with an express mandate to implement this process of certification and assessment. Our certificates were issued directly by him, and we share a long history of ups and downs as we undertook this work on Gururji's behalf.

Every aspect of the work involved in any assessment is done by volunteers in accordance with Mr. Iyengar's wishes and in adherence to the tenets of yoga, providing an opportunity to practise karma yoga or selfless service.

There were six candidates: four for Intermediate Senior I and two for Intermediate Senior II. Over three days there would be two separate timed practices, and six different teaching segments. The written examinations would be completed and marked before the assessment began, and assessors would gather on Friday morning to review the applications and written exams and go over procedural details. The host community has to find housing for the assessors and provide meals. Assessors work very long hours during this weekend and there is no time to go to restaurants or in my case, even though I live locally, there was not time for me to go home.

We are like nuns secluded for the weekend. And in fact at one assessment we were put up in a convent where rooms resembled cells and their idea of vegetarian food was their meat and two vegetable diet minus the meat! The local community supplied us with extras including a large tin of chocolate biscuits which disappeared in no time at all. We have many tales to tell.

It is a service by the local community to host an assessment but it comes at some expense and inconvenience to them. We try to spread assessments throughout the country for the benefit of everyone involved. Local classes have to be cancelled for the duration of the assessment, and volunteers found for tasks from Assessment Co-ordinator to timing and calling the practice, timing the teaching, cooking, serving and clearing up assessors' meals, finding and co-ordinating the students and many more. Lucie Guindon, a faculty member at the Iyengar Centre of Victoria, did

a splendid job as co-ordinator and her team functioned seamlessly.

During the weekend and immediately afterwards we received many compliments for the stellar work and welcoming atmosphere provided by our community. This would please Guruji who has always encouraged us to work together in a collegial manner not only as a community but as a family, where no one member is more important than another and all have an important role in "the work." This requires that we sustain the light of yoga in ourselves and use our resources to send light out into the community and the world. No insignificant task!

This is after all the purpose of yoga; every one of its practices points us in this direction. But the brighter the light the darker the shadows, and Patanjali warns us about the temptations which await us after we have made some initial progress. The ego is always there at our side waiting for its chance to reassert

its authority. Working in a community helps keep self-importance at bay, in the same way as siblings in a family are so good at bringing each other down to earth. And it is down here on earth that the work has to be done!

Most of the credit for the success of this assessment goes to Guruji. I am sure that readers of this article not familiar at all with the process will think it complicated. It's true; it is, but progressing through the levels of syllabus strengthens us enormously. Few beginners understand the importance of some asanas on the introductory syllabus—they don't yet know enough. As a consequence, many students and teachers want to move on too quickly; but in Iyengar Yoga, in common with good teaching of any discipline, there is a system to the way it is introduced, and it has a purpose.

Many of us who were beginners in the early days before assessments were organised did not understand this

Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Presents

the Heart of Yoga

April 6-7, 2013

**With Shirley Daventry French
and Ann Kilbertus**

**General students and above
Pre-requisite: knowledge of how
to set up for shoulderstand**

Saturday 11:00 am - 2:00 pm
Saturday 4:00 - 6:00 pm
Sunday 12:00 - 3:00 pm

Shirley is a direct student of B.K.S. Iyengar. Since her first visit to Pune in 1979, she has returned regularly for further study. The founder of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria, Shirley has been the driving force in making the Victoria Iyengar Yoga community one of the strongest and most viable in Canada. Students from across Canada and around the world have studied with her.

Ann has been a student in the Iyengar tradition for over twenty years. She continues to study with Shirley Daventry French and has been teaching since 1988 locally and nationally. Ann began going to Pune, India in 1992 and returns every few years to study with the Iyengars. Her practice and training as an occupational therapist offer a valuable contribution to further understanding of this work.

Fees: \$168 + HST members
\$184 + HST non-members

Registration opens:
February 16, 2013 for IYCV members
February 23, 2013 for non-members

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

Refunds will be offered only if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$50.00 cancellation fee.



and, speaking for myself, I know that my practice has suffered because of too little attention at first to certain asanas which were not attractive to me—either too difficult and avoided, or seemingly too easy and ignored. I say “seemingly” because what is learned with experience is that each asana is full of complexities and subtleties which nurture the ability to penetrate and refine body and mind, and liberate the self!

In one sense beginning yoga is wasted on beginners! However, there is no choice but to begin at the beginning. With all yoga practices, difficult or not, the work has to progress from gross to fine! And we have to know ourselves: whether it is our nature to go straight to the most difficult, which will require us to practise restraint, or prefer to hold ourselves back and stay with that which is comfortable and easy, in which case more intense effort is essential. A yogi is neither too active nor too passive but able to discriminate between these two modes of action (action has an element of inaction, and vice versa). Yoga is a lifelong journey and we have to learn to pace ourselves.

Assessment requires a lot of judgment, which is not surprising because we are acting as judges (in fact the word “juge” is often used in French). A lot of effort goes into avoiding subjective judgment as much as possible, putting aside individual likes and dislikes. Guruji understood that this tendency would be there and set up the marking categories in a way that minimises this, demonstrating yet again his mastery of yoga. If we follow the wording of the marking sheets carefully, it takes away our subjective preferences and allows us to give good marks to a candidate whose style and manner does not appeal to us but who understands the asanas well and is able to get that across to the students.

The very first assessment I attended was in the United States just before we began our own in Canada. I went as an observer, and they were open and

generous to me and gave me the chance to mark the candidates and sit in on their discussions. Of course, my marks did not count but I was able to compare them with those of experienced assessors. One candidate had a manner and accent which I really did not like. I knew I would never want to be a regular student in her classes, but when I got that out of the way and stayed with criteria such as Accuracy and Knowledge of the Asana, Clarity of Instruction, Observation and Correction of Students, Demonstration Effectiveness, and Class Control, I could see she knew the work. She had the students with her and they did really well. She was an effective teacher.

For us as assessors, this gets better as we gain experience. During both practice and teaching sessions, we walk around with clipboard and paper so we can write down observations and comments. When it comes to tallying the marks we have given, we have to see that these marks correlate with our remarks. There may be a discrepancy in that we have written only negative remarks about some teaching but given a good mark. What made it good? We have to search our memories which are often prompted during our discussions by hearing what another saw and realising that we saw that too but did not make a note. There is no way we can note everything nor see everything. This is why we have a panel of assessors.

As you gain experience you see more and discriminate better about what is important. Your comments support your mark and there is congruity. This, of course, is to be hoped for and to be expected.

There is not always harmony, because some students don't pass. They will be disappointed and distressed when this happens. Some are very angry. Some dispute the result. That is their right. However, if they can process this result and learn from it, they often come back and do very well next time. This is the spirit of an aspirant. Today, in many

aspects of education, students approach their teachers with a sense of entitlement; yoga *sadhakas* have to prove themselves worthy.

This may have been the last time I serve as an assessor. I do very few these days, but have said that *God willing* I will help at a future assessment *if* there is a need for a senior assessor with knowledge of French. I will also consider helping at another senior level assessment if there is a need. However, with the newly qualified senior teachers, two of them at the Intermediate Senior Two level, my services may not be needed and I am content with that.

For my early visits to Pune, Guruji was the teacher. Then one year he decided it was time for Geeta to take over the intensives for foreign teachers. After all, she had been training since childhood. So the next time I went, Geeta was the official teacher with Guruji on the sidelines still training her as he is training his granddaughter today. He hasn't stopped teaching, but the manner of his teaching has changed. He has made sure that the learning continues. This is our duty.

I enjoyed assessing at this last assessment more than I have ever done in the past. My colleagues were great to work with and great fun to be with. Two teachers from our centre were pioneers as our first Intermediate Senior Level Two candidates and did very well indeed. Teachers and students, some of whom had come from other centres, appreciated the warmth and support of our west coast island community.

I am grateful to be part of the Iyengar community locally, nationally and internationally. Thank you Guruji for your brilliance, your guidance and for giving me this opportunity. ॐ

In Guruji's Words

An Interview with BKS Iyengar, January 2013

By Roger Champagne

While I was studying at the Ramamani Institute in Pune this January, Guruji agreed to answer a few questions. It took place in the library; his usual workplace. The questions had been looked over by Uma Dhavale, a few days before. She advised me to come in each afternoon, while Guruji was doing his correspondence, and the opportunity would arise when it would.

I sat and read, and watched out of the corner of my eye to see how others approached Guruji, wondering if he knew who I was. On the second day, I felt the pressure of being noticed and when I looked up, Guruji had his eye on me and was motioning me to his desk. The moment had arrived!

As soon as I sat in front of him I felt his engagement, his warmth and presence, and felt more at ease. The rest is below, in Guruji's words.

Note: Some words were not clear in the recording and they are bracketed with my best guess.

Ed: You have been practicing and teaching all your life. Could you speak about what continues to interest you on the subject of yoga?

Guruji: See, if I have ambition in my life, then I can explain. I've taken it as a mission, so I am doing it as missionary work. I'm a *bhakta* of yoga, I'm a devotee of yoga, so there is no, what you call, other influences to inspire me to do yoga.

That's all.

Because I am a devotee of yoga, being a devotee, the inspiration is automatically there. So now who said things are needed for me to get inspired to practice yoga?

Ed: Would you say there has ever been a change in what has interested you in yoga, or has it remained the same all these years?

Guruji: No, the subject is quite different. Naturally you know as I make progress, changes do come and I have to accept those

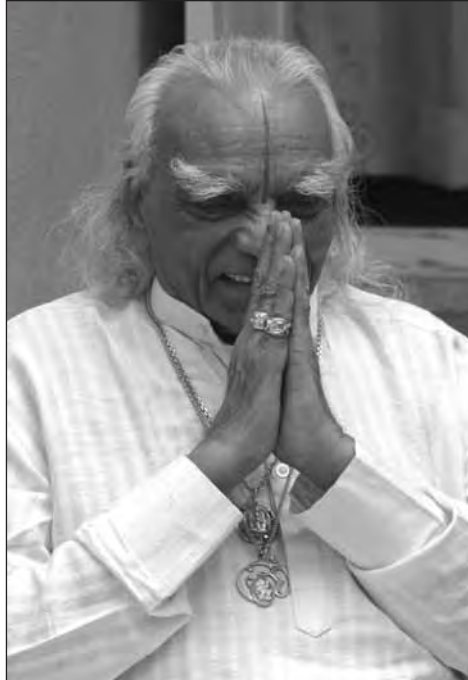


PHOTO: KEVIN MASON

changes, and find out whether they are genuinely good or bad. So if it genuinely helps I accept it, otherwise I reject it.

Ed: The changes are in the body?

Guruji: Well the body cannot change on its own, unless the mind, which is a mixture, which is a chemistry of the body, has to come in contact. So if there is a change in the body, there is a change in the mind, and if there is a change in the mind there is a change in the body. They go hand in hand, so you cannot [divide] it. So this is mind action, this is body action. They are a coordinated motion. So therefore, one cannot say, divide yoga...this is physical, this is mental. They are all going on and people's minds are still in division.

The body is a gross holder of the Self. If there is no body, there is no spirit and no soul.

So then why are we practicing yoga, is because the body is a holder of the Self, so it has to be sustained and supported so that the Self surfaces.

If it is neglected, there is no chance for anyone to know the Self. So that is *dharma*. (duty)

That's the reason.

So why I practice is that the upholder of the Self has to be maintained in a good state of equilibrium and harmony, then only there is concurrence of mind and Self. Otherwise there is no concurrence between the mind and Self. There will be division, not concurrence.

So we begin from the body, for the simple reason, body is the holder of the Self. You cannot neglect the holder. Can the water be held if there is no jar?

The same with the *atma*, so if there is no body, then the *atma* (Self) is called in various languages, like *purusha*. So that is why I pay respect to myself, I pay respect to my body.

Ed: You practice many hours a day.

Guruji: Naturally. In a simpler way, the body is a temple of the Soul. Why have I used that word?

The man speaks only from his head, the woman speaks from the heart. There is a vast difference, so that's why the marriage takes place, so that heart and head work together...that's called marriage.

If the temple is clean and looked after, people go and pray, otherwise it is a sightseeing area, any church, if I'm looking for it, it becomes a sightseeing area, it does not attract, but where there is religiosity, it attracts.

So that is why if you keep the temple clean, you're attracted religiously towards the practice of yoga, to have a sight of the soul, towards the realisation of the Self.

Ed: I have noticed in the public classes at the Institute that there are a number of Indian men practicing, more than we see in Canada in mixed classes.

Guruji: That shows that in Western countries women are far advanced intellectually than the men. It's a simple answer.

Ed: Is this the same in many countries?

Guruji: No, I don't think so, but naturally, because the house is maintained by the woman, so the woman has more responsibility than the man, and because they take to yoga, because they carry emotionally, they get stimulated.

The man speaks only from his head, the woman speaks from the heart. There is a vast difference, so that's why the marriage takes place, so that heart and head work together...that's called marriage.

Billet at a Yogi's House in Victoria

Did you know that the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria offers billeting to out of town participants in our workshops and intensives?

For \$40 a night you can stay at a yogi's house.

To make arrangements, just call the IYCV at 250-386-YOGA (9642).



Man is intellectually proud, woman does not show the pride of intellectuality, but emotionally they bring us together. Emotion is broadness, intellectuality is verticalness.

So your intellect grows vertically, whereas a woman's emotional intelligence spreads horizontally. That's why the responsibility is [lost word] they know that yoga is keeping them to face the upheavals of life and they practice. That's why I say they are more intellectual than the males of the west.

The males think they are healthy, but they are unhealthy. You ask any Westerner, he'll say "I am healthy."

Ed: How has the Indian male understood this somewhat more clearly?

Guruji: Because in India we go more on the emotions, because of religiosity behind us. The religions we follow, so there is an understanding between a husband and wife and that's why the family is far better. But now of course [things are changing] they are developing the culture too fast and you will also see a lot of problems in India now.

Ed: You have recently published a new work on the Sutras. It seems there is no end to your interests. Have you a new project planned?

Guruji: At present I have none. I have no plans. If something automatically comes, I may think of it, but I do not plan. I have not planned my life at all. I am 95, so how can I plan now? As far as I know, I don't think so.

Ed: You are acknowledged and honoured as yoga's foremost master, have met scores of famous people and world leaders, you are still writing and publishing important works, and continue to teach, yet you remain humble and your interest in life seems boundless. How do you maintain this level?

Guruji: It is God's gift, beyond that I cannot say. Grace of God, grace of yoga.

Ed: How have you remained so humble as well?

Guruji: Because new things come up...that's why it makes me humble. I have practiced for years to get there, then all of a sudden something strike me. Where is my intelligence, why did it not [show me this before]. So that makes me to be humble.

There is still plenty to learn.

Ed: Thank you.

Guruji: Thank you, God bless you.ॐ

A Birthday Celebration!

This year, Mr. Iyengar's 94th birthday celebration at our Centre was open to the public. It was a success – if you counted people or smiles. Mats were carefully laid. Shirley led an *asana* class to a packed house, including guests from outside the Centre. The potluck was superb – no effort was spared in preparing plentiful, healthy and delicious fare to honour the day. Shirley and the teachers recounted their experiences with Mr. Iyengar. The children's class, led by Gary and Ty, presented daring and delightful *asana* to music. Bhavantu Sound (Chris Simons, Ty Chandler, Tia Benn, and Josh Akeroyd) led devotional chants that carried everyone home.

As Wendy Boyer said, "What a great event! *Asana*, food, music... B.K.S. must have felt our birthday wishes on the other side of the world!!" Johanna Godliman, the event co-ordinator, would like to thank all the volunteers named and unnamed: Ann Kilbertus, Adia Kapoor, Avalon Crawford, bakers by the dozen, Boni Hoy, Brandy Baybutt, Britta Poisson, Chris Simons, Elly Crawford, Gary Wong, Jan Monete, Jane McFarlane, Janine Beckner, Jayne Jonas, Jeannette Merryfield, Krysia Strawczynski, Laine Canivet, Layla Medel, Leslie Hogya, Linda Benn, Lucie Guindon, Megan Wong, Maureen Doyle, Melissa Hadley, Nancy Searing, Patty Rivard, Robin Cantor, Shirley Daventry French, SooYoun Ham, Tia Benn, Ty Chandler, Victoria Pomerleau, Wendy Boyer, Zoe Jackson and all our guests that made it such a special occasion. ॐ

PHOTOS: JANINE BANDCROFT, LAINE CANIVET



Birthday prep: Mats were carefully laid for Mr. Iyengar's 94th birthday celebration.



*Gary and Ty led the children's class in a daring and delightful *asana* presentation to music.*



*Shirley led an *asana* class to a packed house, including guests from outside the Centre.*



This year's party was a potluck, and no effort was spared in preparing plentiful, healthy and delicious fare to honour the day.



Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Annual Report

Message from the President of IYCV for 2011/12

By Krysia Strawczynski

It is again my pleasure to deliver an annual bouquet of thanks in appreciation for all the contributions that make our centre a welcoming and healing place.

I want to start with Shirley Daventry French, who brought B.K.S. Iyengar's teachings to Victoria over 30 years ago. She, with her husband Derek and a small group who had been practicing yoga together, incorporated our society in 1978. Shirley continues to be an animating force in the centre as she shares her knowledge of yoga and how she has applied it to life's lessons.

At the back of the Winter 2012 newsletter, there is a photograph of local Iyengar yoga teachers. There are 28 people in the picture, all of whom studied and continue to study with Shirley and, whenever possible, with the Iyengars and master teachers from around the world. This accounts in large part for the high quality of our centre's teaching.

In addition to teaching classes, our teachers and student teachers also contribute through volunteering their time. Of

note: Lauren Cox and Leslie Hogya are organizing the national AGM this year along with a team of others; Ty Chandler keeps our Facebook page current; Robin Cantor organizes the Special Needs Tea each year. Every week, considerable volunteer effort goes into special needs classes. Teachers also volunteer to teach classes for no remuneration on occasions such as this AGM.

This spirit of volunteerism is also manifest in Wendy Boyer, our General Manager and her staff: Britta Poisson, Bruce Cox and Hilary MacPhail. Wendy and Britta spend many hours ensuring the success of our open houses, and both have also taught free classes to entice new students. Again this year, Wendy has ensured that the Centre ran smoothly and prudently, and the front desk staff have provided friendly and efficient service.

Theron Morgan continues to do our bookkeeping on a volunteer basis and Jane McFarlane continues to volunteer hours of her time each week to maintain cleanliness and order in the Centre. I want to make a special mention of appreciation this year of all the work that Roger Champagne and his team do to put out our newsletter. Space does not permit mention of all the people who have volunteered in so many different ways. Thank you all and every one of you.

Finally, I want to extend my appreciation to the

SUMMER SADHANA

July 15 - 20, 2013

*Sadhana is a Sanskrit term which means
dedicated practice or quest.*

6:30 am - 8:00 am with Robin Cantor

This 6-day Sadhana is the perfect opportunity to further develop and deepen your practice.

Members \$115 + HST Non Members \$125 + HST
Drop-in \$23 per day (General level students or higher)

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

Spring tonic

A new, complimentary
workshop for 2013
IYCV members

March 23, 2013
11:30 am - 1:30 pm

With Wendy Boyer

Register early!
Free for members
Non-members: \$40 + HST



board. They are a thoughtful, knowledgeable group who are a pleasure to work with. This is the last year on the board for Laine Canivet and Ann Nolan because they have served six years and must in accord with our by-laws step down. Laine has been our secretary and Ann our treasurer. We are also losing Maureen Nichols, our vice-president this year. Thank you for all you have done.

2012 AGM – Report from the General Manager

In 2012, the Centre celebrated 11 years at 919 Fort Street. On the fiscal front we registered a small deficit of just over a thousand dollars this year. Costs were pared down to the bone, but the Centre had a large unpredicted expense due to trouble with accounting software.

Passes for classes is the best marketing tool in this saturated competitive yoga market. The \$209 Unlimited is very popular. Students take any class at their level, anytime. The Om Pass for \$55 offers six hours of class time. In 2013 we are introducing the 6 month pass. As of the time of writing, we have sold 36.

The Centre hosted four open houses last year; delivered posters and flyers everywhere around town; sold two on-line coupons; sent monthly e-marketing updates; posted regularly to Facebook; made bolsters in-house, and offered first-class-free to any regular class.

The largest cost saving continues to be support from two very committed volunteers. Jane McFarlane does Centre maintenance and Theron Morgan, bookkeeping. Jane McFarlane puts in hundreds of hours maintaining the Centre – daily

cleaning, annual painting, and hauling the props to be laundered. Theron Morgan, as volunteer bookkeeper, contributes countless hours keeping the books in order. The Centre is so grateful to you both!

We have some great and generous bakers at the Centre!! Our Open Houses have many tasty treats to sample along with the chai that Jane McFarlane makes. Thanks to all of you for the delicious contributions.

Marketing continues to consume most of the staff time these days. Thanks to Britta Poisson who manages the office and whose posters and e-ads help us stand out; Bruce Cox who maintains the website and poster boards; and Hilary McPhail who handles membership registration. There are so many dedicated volunteers at the Centre – I am mentioning just a few here. Thanks to Ty Chandler who posts to facebook; Patty Rivard for managing the library, Johanna Godliman for her help with many events, and Jeanette Merryfield who distributes posters.

New this year was the successful silent auction fundraiser that was part of the annual Special Needs tea. It raised over two thousand dollars. Many people donated time and items. Thanks to all of you. And particular thanks to our board members, Krysia Strawczynski and Laine Canivet for their good idea!

As general manager, I spent my time in 2012 keeping costs within budget and increasing the Centre's profile in a very competitive yoga market. Costs such as hydro, telephone, shipping, and advertising are up this year. The exception is the rent which is stable – we are in the second year of a five year lease.

Thanks to the board for their work in 2012. Special thanks to Krysia Strawczynski, as president. This year two of our long time board members, Ann Nolan, treasurer, and Laine Canivet, secretary, are leaving the board. Thanks to both for their outstanding leadership and contribution! Thanks to Maureen Nicholls who is also leaving the board but will continue to advise on the Centre insurance policy. Two new board members joined us in 2012: Carole Miller and Amanda Mills are welcome additions. Finally, many thanks to Ann Kilbertus, Keiko Alkire and Bev Kallstrom, our new treasurer!, for their continued service.

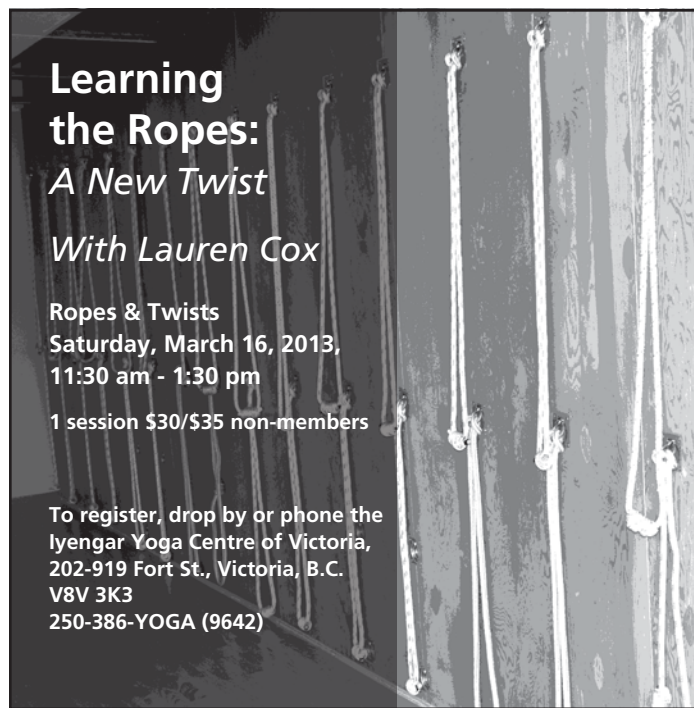
Iyengar Yoga Centre Treasurer's Report

Year Ending October 31, 2012

By Ann Nolan

Our year end financial statements have been prepared by the firm of Sterling Gascoigne with notice to reader signed off by the treasurer, Ann Nolan, on December 10/2012.

Our budget for the year was prepared based on actual revenue and expenditures of previous fiscal budget based on the reality of the past few years.



**Learning
the Ropes:
A New Twist**
With Lauren Cox

Ropes & Twists
Saturday, March 16, 2013,
11:30 am - 1:30 pm
1 session \$30/\$35 non-members

To register, drop by or phone the
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria,
202-919 Fort St., Victoria, B.C.
V8V 3K3
250-386-YOGA (9642)

Our goal was to contain expenses and grow our revenue through student enrolment in classes, workshops and donations. This year I am pleased to report that despite a continued drop in our overall revenue, a steady trend over the past five years, we have achieved several of our goals though we end the year with a small operating deficit.

Revenue

Total revenue for 2012 was \$402,491 as compared to \$412,601 in 2011 and \$434,296 in 2010.

Class enrolment was robust throughout the year and increased \$12,651 over fiscal 2011.

Lower workshop enrolment resulted in a drop of \$16,850 in revenue over 2011.

Donations were down from the previous year; we received \$17,725, down \$8,100 from fiscal 2011.

This year our donations from members were again supplemented by a corporate donation from CIBC in the amount of \$500 and \$1000 from Thrifty Foods through our participation in the Thrifty Foods Smile Card Program. Our board continues to pursue sources of donations from the community at large.

We were honoured to receive an extraordinary bequest of \$50,000 from the late David Rocklin a former member and student at our centre. As this bequest is a one time unique event, it has not been included in our donations tally but recorded under other revenue.

Expenses

Total expenses for 2012 were \$ 403,532 as compared to \$410,290 in 2011 and 447,778 in 2010. Our operating costs ran over-budget due to issues with our accounting software

encountered early in the year. Our staff and accountants put in many extra hours to deal with and fix the problem. In view of this additional expense early on in the year the board decided to defer the cost of website development to 2013. Our General Manager, Wendy Boyer and our staff have been diligent in managing expenses throughout the year as a result we have achieved a reduction of \$6,758 in our overall expenses year over year despite inflation and the additional unplanned expenditures.

We end the year with a small net deficit of \$1,041.

Balance sheet

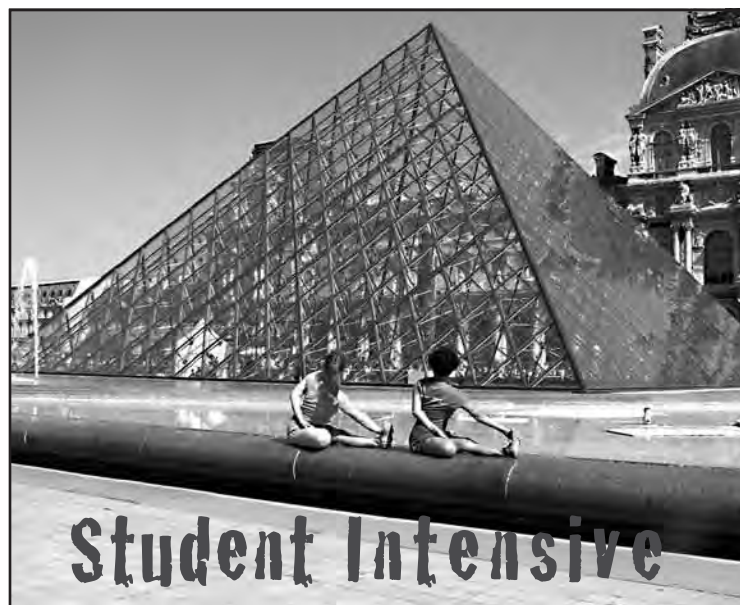
As of year end our contingency funds are invested as follow:
\$25,000 GIC 1 year term @ 1.10% maturing Oct 17, 2013,
\$25,800 GIC 2 year term @ 1.5% maturing April 22, 2014,
\$50,000 GIC @ 1.45% maturing December 17, 2012.

Mutual Fund, approximate balance of \$7,431 (to be cashed in and added to operating account within the next month).

These investments ensure the centre continues to operate efficiently and is prepared for unexpected and unplanned eventualities.

The Iyengar Yoga Centre is managed prudently and overall the financial health of our centre remains strong, our financial reserves permit us to carry on the Centre's objectives and activities.

Thank you to the members of the Board for their support, to our General Manager and staff as well as our accountant for their diligence and vigilance. Finally, thank you to our teachers for their work and inspiration and to our members and students who support our centre.



With Lauren Cox and Ty Chandler

August 26-30, 2013, 10 am – 1 pm

Learn how to establish and deepen your practice.

All levels

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

Fees: \$235.00 + HST for IYCV members
\$260.00 + HST 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) www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

Refunds will be offered only if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$50 cancellation fee.

NOTICE TO READER

On the basis of information provided by management, we have compiled the statement of financial position of Iyengar Yoga Centre Of Victoria Society as at October 31, 2012 and the statements of operations and changes in net assets for the year then ended.

We have not performed an audit or a review engagement in respect of these financial statements and, accordingly, we express no assurance thereon.

Readers are cautioned that these statements may not be appropriate for their purposes.

Victoria, British Columbia
December 6, 2012

Sterling & Gascoigne
Certified General Accountants



IYENGAR YOGA

Teacher Training Intensives

Fees for each course:

\$610 CAD + HST IYCV members

\$650 CAD + HST non-members

Refunds will be offered only if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$50 cancellation fee.

Registration now open.

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

July 8 – 13, 2013

With Leslie Hoggia, 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. They have Senior Intermediate I and Senior Intermediate II certification, respectively, and are qualified I.Y.A.C. assessors. They are involved in teacher training in Victoria as well as in other areas of British Columbia and in 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 12 – 16, 2013

With Shirley Daventry French, assisted by Ann Kilbertus

Intermediate Junior and Senior syllabi for certified Iyengar yoga teachers

This intensive offers the opportunity for certified teachers to refine teaching and practice at their current level of certification, and to prepare for assessment.

Shirley is a direct student of B.K.S. Iyengar who awarded her a senior teaching credential. She 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 invited to apply; however, I.Y.A.C. members will be given priority.

Statement of Financial Position
(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)

October 31, 2012

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	\$ 29,250	\$ 23,825
Short-term investments , at cost	108,231	81,718
Accounts receivable	-	1,784
Inventory	7,072	6,411
Prepaid expenses	<u>2,061</u>	<u>795</u>
	<u>146,614</u>	<u>114,533</u>
CAPITAL ASSETS, at cost		
Furniture and fixtures	16,024	16,024
Equipment	8,000	8,000
Computers	16,379	16,379
Library	3,868	3,868
Leasehold improvements	<u>28,124</u>	<u>28,124</u>
	72,395	72,395
Less accumulated amortization	<u>(60,167)</u>	<u>(59,737)</u>
	<u>12,228</u>	<u>12,658</u>
	<u>\$ 158,842</u>	<u>\$ 127,191</u>

Approved by the Directors:



Director

STERLING & GASCOIGNE

Statement of Financial Position
(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)

October 31, 2012

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable & accrued liabilities	\$ 6,117	\$ 4,210
Income and other taxes payable	3,904	6,370
Accrued payroll expenses	1,720	2,429
Bonus payable	-	3,240
Deferred revenue	19,755	31,700
Customer Deposits	<u>-</u>	<u>855</u>
	<u>31,496</u>	<u>48,804</u>
NET ASSETS		
APPROPRIATED	34,076	34,076
UNAPPROPRIATED	<u>93,270</u>	<u>44,311</u>
	<u>127,346</u>	<u>78,387</u>
	<u>\$ 158,842</u>	<u>\$ 127,191</u>

Statement of Changes in Net Assets
(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)

Year ended October 31, 2012

	<u>Unappropriated</u>	<u>Appropriated</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 44,311	\$ 34,076	\$ 78,387	\$ 76,076
Surplus (deficit)	<u>48,959</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>48,959</u>	<u>2,311</u>
Balance, end of year	<u>\$ 93,270</u>	<u>\$ 34,076</u>	<u>\$ 127,346</u>	<u>\$ 78,387</u>

Statement of Operations
(Unaudited - see Notice to Reader)

Year ended October 31, 2012

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>
REVENUE		
Classes	\$ 264,421	\$ 251,770
Discounts	(7,130)	(7,588)
Workshops	90,549	107,399
Memberships	14,118	13,818
Merchandise sales	19,916	20,114
Donations	5,941	4,240
Annual Appeal	11,784	21,585
Interest	1,739	726
Other income	<u>1,153</u>	<u>537</u>
	<u>402,491</u>	<u>412,601</u>
EXPENDITURES		
Advertising and promotion	8,410	8,947
Amortization	430	4,866
Board Expenses	54	35
Class Costs	139,621	126,121
IYAC	168	203
Insurance	2,293	2,369
Interest and bank charges	7,372	9,005
Licences, dues and fees	402	377
Merchandise	10,122	10,857
Newsletters	8,673	8,318
Office	7,369	7,303
Professional fees	8,184	9,902
Rent	62,702	64,398
Repairs and maintenance	2,173	1,890
Scholarships and bursaries	5,821	5,410
Security	410	300
Subcontract	9,000	6,645
Supplies	544	471
Utilities	5,177	5,145
Vehicle	210	208
Wages and benefits	75,768	76,617
Workshops	<u>48,629</u>	<u>60,903</u>
	<u>403,532</u>	<u>410,290</u>
OPERATING (DEFICIT) SURPLUS	(1,041)	2,311
OTHER REVENUE		
Bequest	<u>50,000</u>	<u>-</u>
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	<u>\$ 48,959</u>	<u>\$ 2,311</u>

The Art of Surrendering

Britta Poisson's Restorative 2013

By Janine Bandcroft

Sometimes you want to go where everybody knows your name, the theme from the old “Cheers” TV show goes. Doesn’t it kind of feel that way at the Iyengar Yoga Centre? It may not be everybody who knows your name but you can bet that, before you know it, Britta will. She’s consistently friendly, even when she’s multi-tasking as the classes are changing and the phone is ringing and she’s registering new students. She has an incredible ability to make you feel like you’re the most special person she’s spoken to all day.

After attending her Restorative Workshop in late January, I can also attest to her ability to transfer all those wonderful traits from behind the front desk, to inside the yoga studio.

We started with a sitting meditation and prayer to Patanjali. We gave our thanks, as we always do, to Mr. Iyengar and the teachings of Yoga. Then Britta thanked us for being there, for being members at this Karma Yoga Centre which depends so much on volunteers, and we were instructed to set up for *supta baddha konasana*. “Dessert first,” she laughed. If you know Britta, you can hear her laugh even now.

We were instructed on the proper way to set up our props to get the most from the pose, creating breadth across the sacral band and wrapping that breadth around to our navels (an instruction we were reminded of throughout



Above: *savasana II*

Right: *chair adho mukha svanasana*

the two-hour workshop). As our minds began to quieten, our bodies surrendering to the bolster and supported by the floor and the belt, we heard instructions about finding any stress or tension in the body and allowing it to drain into the bolster, or into the floor. Let it go. Release and relax. I could have stayed in that pose for the entire two hours!

But of course there was much more in store for us. Britta had organized a gentle procession of *asana* postures that required us to focus, in that unique and familiar Iyengar way, on careful precision. Although a restorative class, we were instructed in strong muscular accuracy when it was necessary, always with Britta’s methodical guidance and unfailing sense of humour. When preparing to enter *adho mukha svanasana*, for example, we were to imagine that the hamstrings



really like to be with the sit bones and want to move towards them, but the sit bones don’t like the hamstrings so much, and they want to move away.

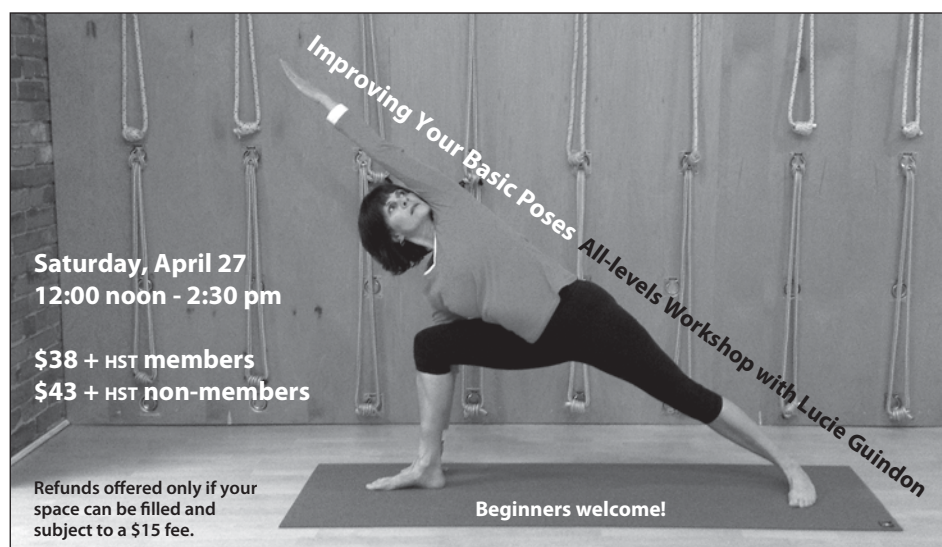
I’ve been studying in the Iyengar school for over a decade, with many teachers at both the Y and the Fort Street Centre. What amazes me more than anything else is that I learn something new during every single *asana* practice! Whether it’s a new way to use a particular prop, or a different way of thinking about achieving the alignment we all learn to strive for; there’s always something new. This workshop was no different. In addition to realizing a new relationship between what’s going on between the back of my legs and my buttocks, Britta shared a realization that she’d recently learned from Shirley. Apparently, exploring the intricacies of what makes for good balance,

As our minds began to quieten, our bodies surrendering to the bolster and supported by the floor and the belt, we heard instructions about finding any stress or tension in the body and allowing it to drain into the bolster, or into the floor.

PHOTOS JANINE BANDCROFT

Shirley had discovered that the secret lies with the mid-buttock region. In *utthita marichyasana*, we were instructed again to create breadth across the sacral band, wrap it around to our navel, and maintain this as we pressed the middle buttocks forward. At the same time, the thigh of the standing leg pressed strongly from front to back. I guess realizing and learning newness in the *asanas* is a common marvel, even for the most senior teachers and their students!

At the end of the class, as we settled into *savasana*, Britta reminded us the influence that rest and relaxation has on good health. We had focused, two hours prior, on draining the stress, tension, and toxins out of our bodies. Then we had moved through a sequence of *asanas* that balanced and restored our energy, and now we were invited to consider the vitality we had brought to every cell of our body. Afterwards I felt calm and self confident, ready to proceed into the weekend with a new confidence – not necessarily in my ability to tackle any obstacles, but with a sense that the tranquility I'd achieved would render them manageable. ॐ




Improving Your Basic Poses All-levels Workshop with Lucie Guindon

**Saturday, April 27
12:00 noon - 2:30 pm**

**\$38 + HST members
\$43 + HST non-members**

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

Beginners welcome!



Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada
Sri B.K.S. Iyengar, Honourary President

IYAC/ACYI ASSESSMENT DATES

March 8-10, 2013 Introductory II, Edmonton, AB	April 26-28, 2013 Introductory II, Vancouver, BC
April 26-28, 2013 Intermediate Junior III, Toronto, ON	June 21-23, 2013 Introductory II, Ottawa, ON

Check results and upcoming assessments at iyengaryogacanada.com



To register, drop by or phone
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202-919 Fort Street,
Victoria BC, V8V 3K3
250-386-YOGA (9642)

Working Wisely

With Ann Kilbertus

Saturday May 4, 2013, 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

In this short workshop participants will learn to study the use of their arms and legs in different categories of *asanas* to create space in the abdomen and chest.

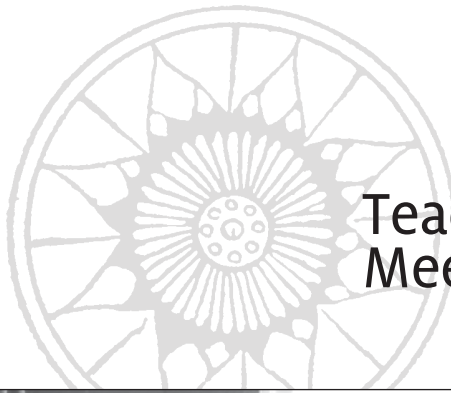
The pains that are yet to come can be, and are to be, avoided.

The cause of pain is the association or identification of the seer with the seen and the remedy lies in their dissociation.

– B.K.S. Iyengar translating the *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* II.16 and II.17

Fees: \$50 + HST for members, \$55 + HST non-members

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



Teachers' Meeting

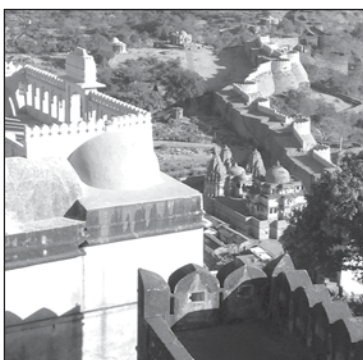


Eka hasta bhujaasana and preparation with chair



Scenes of India

Photos by Roger Champagne (clockwise from top): handprints of widows on their last walk out to the pyre of their deceased husbands; local potter throwing Chai cups; Kumbhalgarh, a Mewar fortress in Western India; creature peering in our car window on a mountain road.



Scholarships and Bursaries

Members' scholarships are available for Heart of Yoga with Shirley Daventry French, April 6-7, 2013.

Scholarship applications for these workshops are due ten weeks prior to the workshop start date.

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

Applications for both are available at the reception desk.

Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria

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

250-386-YOGA (9642)

The 29th Annual Retreat at the Salt Spring Centre

June 7-9, 2013

With Shirley Daventry French

This is your opportunity to attend the annual retreat on beautiful Salt Spring Island and participate in a weekend of Iyengar Yoga with Shirley Daventry French. Renew your Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria membership so you can be in the front of the line for an opportunity to participate in this wonderful event.

Registration is open now. Refunds will be offered only if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$50.00 cancellation fee.



Fees: IYCV Members
 \$365 + HST – shared accommodation
 \$335 + HST – camping
 \$299 + HST – commuting

Fees: Non-members
 \$400 + HST – shared accommodation
 \$370 + HST – camping
 \$335 + HST – commuting

Opening To the Light – Winter Solstice Workshop 2012

By Suzanne Tremblay

The gift we received from Ty during the Winter Solstice workshop is the gift of being shepherded into the light, when we lay, alone, surrounded by the enveloping darkness that threatened to engulf time on this longest night. The yoga room, as always a sacred sanctuary for souls seeking unity of Being, is invitingly decorated. Just as we naturally feel drawn to the glowing heart, inside, on these cold winter nights, so are we drawn to our mats on this Thursday evening. The centre of the room verged on the brink of total darkness while the periphery glowed with tea candles, ushering the promise of light to come. Light to come and most importantly light to be uncovered in our souls by Ty's delicate touch. Ty guides us to the light, escorting us, helping us overcome fears and difficulties the practice puts along our path, difficulties unique to each of us, yet some challenges common to many of us.

Darkness can instill fear, a profound anxiety, that new light can erase. As Antoine de Saint-Exupery said in *Le Petit Prince*: "We only fear the unknown. Once we look at what causes us fear, we no longer fear it." To look squarely at darkness in the eyes, we welcome Ty's kind, gentle, helping hand. The two evenings of the Winter Solstice Workshop crowning the year, are for me the culmination of the year that is ending in my yoga practice. This was only my second year attending, and I feel that in those evenings like at no other times, the spirit of yoga is revealed to me. The first evening is dedicated to facing darkness and overcoming it. The second evening is a process during which we welcome the new light and its promises in our lives.

Observing the parallel vertical lines in the room, the window sides, the ropes, the sides of the frames, we were



PHOTO JANINE BANDCROFT

invited to find corresponding vertical parallel lines in our bodies and to open them up, to make space for the breath to reach, and bring life. Ty told us that horizontal lines in asanas are for healing, while vertical lines bring about *shakti*, energy. For space to manifest, we first needed to relax. "Like a glacier melting on the top of our skulls to the tip of our fingers," Ty invited us to let go of everything we were bringing into the room that evening: letting go of tensions, frustrations, fears, anxieties, hopes, joys, letting go of all attachments and then, tasting the space thus created. Reminding us that whatever we bring to a yoga practice will be reinforced through the practice, Ty advised us to let go, so that the divine could manifest in the space we created by this letting go. And so, I did let go, entirely trusting that Ty would get me safely to a safe harbor.

During the workshop, Ty instructed us to perform *asanas* with firmness and dedication, reminding us that letting go of tensions is not the same thing as letting go of firmness. We need firmness to move forward. To chase away darkness, the 35 students roared like 35 lions during *simasana*, almost lifting off the roof with our terrifying noise, and then, truly reveling in the liberating feeling of victory. Ty brought out attention to deeper breathing to relieve tension in the diaphragm, which we practiced in *supta swastikasana* and many other *asanas*. Showing empathy for those of

us struggling with some more demanding *asanas*, Ty told us that we all like to avoid *asanas* which are difficult, which bring discomfort, but that avoidance is self-defeating: yoga doesn't heal this way. So, with a deliberate use of props, using the triple cluster of breath, we progressively breathed out tensions in that night of darkness, so that we could move into the light the following evening.

Ty limits her explanations to the minimum number of words she needs to assist us in the performance of *asanas* so that *asanas* effect their liberating actions. Ty supported us in the practice with a carefully assembled and varied musical background, the rhythm enhancing our ability by providing a secondary support to her words. This was particularly evident when, during the second evening, we joined Ty in starting a new winter solstice tradition of doing *surya namaskars* to the sound of a dynamic beat, as fast and as many repetitions as we could to enthusiastically welcome the light on the first night of shortening darkness. Throughout the second evening, I felt an undercurrent of joy pervading the room. It was as if a weight had been lifted from our collective shoulders. I looked around the room, and I saw that we were all smiling, not to anyone in particular, but our lips were relaxed, and that happiness of the soul was manifesting itself: having conquered our own internal darkness by surviving the longest night, we were into the light, radiating it outwardly in our smiles. I felt blessed to be present that night, sharing that inner joy with other yogis and yoginis. Truly, Ty's Winter Solstice Workshop is a celebration of the victory of light over darkness. ॐ



Sixth Annual High Tea Fundraiser

Hosted by Students from the Special Needs Class
Thursday, March 28, 3:00 - 5:00 pm

\$20 per person

Free for children

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

Enjoy a variety of delectable teas, scrumptious homemade sweets and savories.

Videos and stories from Pune featuring B.K.S. Iyengar

Win something amazing at our silent auction and draw.

Feel free to wear your favorite hat!

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

Congratulations!

The following candidates achieved certification at the assessment in Victoria on January 18-20, 2013:

Intermediate Senior Level I

Teddy Hyndman, Edmonton, Alberta

Judith Mirus, Edmonton, Alberta

Louie Ettling, Vancouver, British Columbia

Intermediate Senior Level II

Ann Kilbertus, Victoria, British Columbia

Marlene Miller, Sidney, British Columbia

The following candidates achieved Intermediate Junior Level I certification at the assessment in Montreal on November 16-17, 2012.

Brigitta Ortner, Toronto ON

Cindy Campbell, Toronto ON

Shabnam Ghazi, Toronto ON

Susan Brimner, Toronto ON



Senior Level I/II Assessment

The assessors for the Senior Level I/II assessment held at our Centre this January, Shirley Daventry French, Margot Kitchen and Marlene Mawhinney, worked long, assiduous hours over the weekend, and devoted decades of service to make this assessment possible.

Wendy Boyer said “I felt like we were on the wings of history...hosting the first senior assessment of this level in Canada! Many thanks to all who continue to work and have worked to make the Canadian Iyengar community grow and thrive!”

The event was coordinated by Lucie Guindon, who enlisted organizers, who enlisted crews of willing and able volunteers. She said, “I really want to thank you all for making this event possible and successful. You all did a fantastic job in the task you have so generously accepted to volunteer to, and you all made it easier for the assessors and the candidates. It’s a great example of a

community coming together, put the necessary efforts, and make something happen, this time for posterity. Assessments are important to ensure the future of Iyengar Yoga and pass on the torch, and you were all part of it.

Let’s salute Louie Ettling, Teddy Hyndman and Judith Mirus; Intermediate Senior Level I; and Ann Kilbertus and Marlene Miller; Intermediate Senior II; for the kind of courage it takes from candidates to step up to an assessment at this level!

So to all who organized others, cooked food, served food, cleaned up, washed the floor, did the poses, called the poses, did the timings, made the copies, gathered the materials, hosted, drove people, ran for coffee and more, as well as being available and on standby as computer technician, mille fois merci!”



Thank you to Michelle Anderson, Wendy Boyer, Charles Campbell, Laine Canivet, Robin Cantor, Vicky Cathpole, Lauren Cox, Ty Chandler, Karin Dayton, Arno de Boer, Billy Essa, Johanna Godliman, Leslie Hogya, Laura Johnston, Jayne Jonas, Adia Kapoor, Linda Larson, Jane McFarlane, Carole Miller, Elizabeth Peckham, Chris Peterson, Britta Poisson, Patty Rivard, Nancy Searing, Marilyn Shepherd, Tracy Silberer, Val Speidel, Natasha Tousaw, Suzanne Tremblay, Jenny Trost, Christine Williams, Lydia Wiet, Jill Williams, Karyn Woodland, Gary Wong, and Melissa Worth.

Marlene Miller: “I am most appreciative to have the good fortune to be part of this Iyengar Yoga community. Since arriving in Victoria in 1979 it has been an honour and privilege to be a member and student of the Centre. My heartfelt thanks to Shirley for being my teacher and mentor throughout the years. Thank you everyone for your support and encouragement during the process of preparing for this assessment (and all the ones before!). It was most wonderful to have the Senior levels occur in our community with such kind and giving support from many generous members, students and teachers.”

Ann Kilbertus: “It does take a village to help us develop as teachers and years and years of steady work. For many reasons, some known and others unknown to me, I did actually enjoy the whole event. It did feel that at one level I could let go, so the work could shine through. This doesn’t happen overnight!” ॐ



Membership

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2013 CALENDAR

MARCH

- 2 Open House
- 8-10 Introductory II Assessment,
Edmonton, AB
- 9 Teachers' Meeting
- 16 Learning the Ropes 3

APRIL

- 6-7 Heart of Yoga
- 13 Teachers' Meeting
- 26-28 Intermediate Junior III
Assessment, Toronto, ON
- 26-28 Introductory II Assessment,
Vancouver, BC

MAY

- 4 Working Wisely
- 23-26 IYAC Conference
in Victoria

JUNE

- 7-9 Salt Spring Retreat
- 15 Teachers' Meeting
- 21-23 Introductory II Assessment,
Ottawa, ON

JULY

- 8-13 Introductory Teacher Training
Intensive
- 15-20 Summer Sadhana

AUGUST

- 12-16 Intermediate Teacher Training
Intensive
- 21-25 Footsteps of Patanjali
- 26-30 Student Intensive

SEPTEMBER

- 7 IYCV Open House
- 21 Teachers' Meeting
- 27 Chris Saudek (tentative)

OCTOBER

- 19 Teachers' Meeting
- 24 Stephanie Quirk in Sidney BC

NOVEMBER

- 1-2 Going Deeper
- 23 Teachers' Meeting

Field workers in Rajasthan, almost always women.



PHOTO: ROGER CHAMPAGNE



IYENGAR YOGA
CENTRE of VICTORIA

NEWSLETTER

S U M M E R 2 0 1 3



*Chair eka pada
viparita dandasana*

Interweaving the Threads of Practice

IYAC/IYCA Conference and AGM
May 23-26, 2013 Victoria

*Lauren Cox, Co-ordinator of Threads of Practice,
Speaking on the purpose of a national Conference:*



Our national organization, the Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada, is a not-for-profit organization. As a non-profit, we are expected to have annual general meetings, and have been doing so for the last 25 years! Somewhere along the way, the yogis/ yoginis decided that our common passion – yoga – needed to be incorporated into the

AGM, so meetings began to include yoga classes and workshops as an incentive to our Canadian membership. Members also came from Bermuda, Hong Kong and the USA!

Our teachers and students are always keen on the professional development aspect of working in a group, inviting our teachers from India as well as studying with our many senior teachers in Canada. Our teacher, Mr. Iyengar is going to be 95 and he has come to teach at three of our AGMs. His daughter, Geeta Iyengar, has also come to teach during our AGM.

Canada is a vast country, so our AGMs usually go west one year followed by east the following year to make it available for the communities all across Canada! Last year our AGM was in Toronto, with two very senior teachers from India; this year it is in Victoria; next year it will be in Halifax! I used to joke: “have mat will travel!” Our Professional Development Committee has decided that every three years we will invite teachers from the Iyengar Yoga Institute in Pune, India to come and share. ॐ



Our senior teachers during question and answer period



Urdhva hastasana



Parsvakonasana



Ardha navasana



Parsvakonasana

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SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: AUGUST 15, 2013

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SOCIETY is a non-profit society incorporated under the *Society 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 Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

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

Send contributions, articles, photographs (high resolution), drawings, information or suggestions to: the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Newsletter, 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3.

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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 will be given to advertisements regarding IYCV events, IYCV sponsored events, and IYAC events.

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REFLECTIONS

SUMMER 2013



By Shirley Daventry French

In pranayama, your intellect should be as firm as a burning candle in a windless place. – B.K.S. Iyengar

The practice of *pranayama* is central to the practice of yoga just as the diaphragm is central to healthy respiration, which, in its turn, is central to health and well being. Awareness of breath, of how you breathe plus the fact that a lot of the time you breathe poorly and some of the time you hardly breathe at all, will be awakened as soon as you take your first steps on the yogic path. Similarly just as the diaphragm occupies a central place in the physical body, *pranayama* occupies a central place in Kriya yoga (Path of Action) and Astanga Yoga (the Eightfold Path). They are two of the basic disciplines of Patanjali's yoga sutras on which B.K.S. Iyengar has developed his extraordinary practice and knowledge of yoga.

However, students of Iyengar Yoga are not directed to a formal practice of *pranayama* right away but are encouraged to build a firm foundation in *yama*, *niyama* and *yogasana* and then begin to practise *pranayama*. When a Master like Gururji cautions restraint, if you have any common sense you listen and practise restraint!

Prana is not breath; it is vital energy or life force, and *pranayama* is the expansion of this vital energy through restraint of the breath. Together with *pratyahara* or withdrawal of the senses into the mind, *pranayama* forms a threshold or stepping stone to the contemplative practices of *dharana* and *dhyana* (concentration and meditation).

Before I met Mr. Iyengar, I attended a yoga retreat at YMCA Camp

Elphinstone on the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia, and during that retreat had my first taste of *pranayama*. I was a very inexperienced yoga student, totally ignorant of *pranayama*, but with a growing curiosity about Eastern philosophy and spiritual practices. My husband and I were two of a hundred enthusiasts curious about this mysterious subject. The teacher was Swami Vishnudevananda, a disciple of the revered Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh and author of a book popular at the time: *The Complete Illustrated Book of Yoga*. Most of the students were unknown to Swami Vishnu, but this did not stop him from leading us through one hundred and eight repetitions of *bhastrika*, a type of *pranayama* where air is forcefully drawn in and vigorously expelled in rapid succession.

Keen student that I was, I kept up with him. I was also quite lucky. The only disturbance I suffered was that the following day I woke up stiff and sore around the area of my diaphragm! Later I came across some personal accounts from people who became so addicted to the highs of the practice that they overindulged and became mentally unstable and unable to function in society. One of these was the late Gopi Krishna, a mystic who experienced the sudden and forceful awakening of a powerful force which he described in his book *Kundalini: The Evolutionary Energy in Man*. This destabilizing experience triggered a transformative process that lasted for twelve years during which "sensations of light, splendour and joy alternated with and were often completely overshadowed by sensations of fire, unbearable heat and bleak depression."

Most of us would be delighted by an increase in our personal energy level, but sudden surges of power can be damaging which is why so many of us protect our computers and other electronic appliances through the use of special power bars which are able to absorb the excessive flow of electricity from these surges. There is danger too when the nervous system of the human body is overwhelmed by power it cannot handle. Excessive power is also extremely dangerous in the hands of those lacking compassion, discrimination and wisdom about what to do with it! Clearly *pranayama* practice needs to be approached with caution.

So how can keen yoga students protect themselves from the unbridled surges of power which can be triggered by overzeal and undisciplined practice? By seeking advice from an expert in the field whom you trust and whose guidance you are prepared to follow. This will require patience and restraint on your part along with disciplined practice and non-attachment (the two pillars of yoga: *abhyasa* and *vairagya*).

Powerful tools in the hand of unskilled operators can cause great harm. The practice of yoga provides us with spiritual tools and we need to be trained and supervised until we develop facility and maturity in their use.

Once I heard a Buddhist nun on the CBC radio being interviewed about her journey from a small town in Saskatchewan to a Buddhist monastery in the Himalayas where she received training in the meditative practices of a particular branch of Buddhism. She spoke at length of the value of studying at the source and searching for a teacher

well versed in the discipline you wish to pursue. The interviewer asked her whether there was any danger in meditating without a teacher, and without a moment's hesitation she replied: "Yes, there is a danger that you might grab the technique and run off with it." That same danger is there with yoga!

To restrain that tendency to "grab" the technique, and help those who have no trained teacher in their vicinity, masters such as B.K.S. Iyengar have written books. In fact, one of Guruji's aphorisms states that a good teacher is better than a good book, whereas a good book is better than a bad teacher. A good teacher will always challenge you to go beyond your comfort zone but not so far that it will cause harm. Norma Hodge, my first Iyengar teacher who visited Victoria once a month to train teachers here always called her workshops "From Comfort to Newness." Newness can be uncomfortable on many levels, but does no harm. How much "newness" is dependent on the teacher's good judgment; otherwise students remain comfortable and stuck!

Only last week, I was preparing to teach the final *pranayama* class of a six-week session. It was a small class of trained Iyengar teachers where I was able to

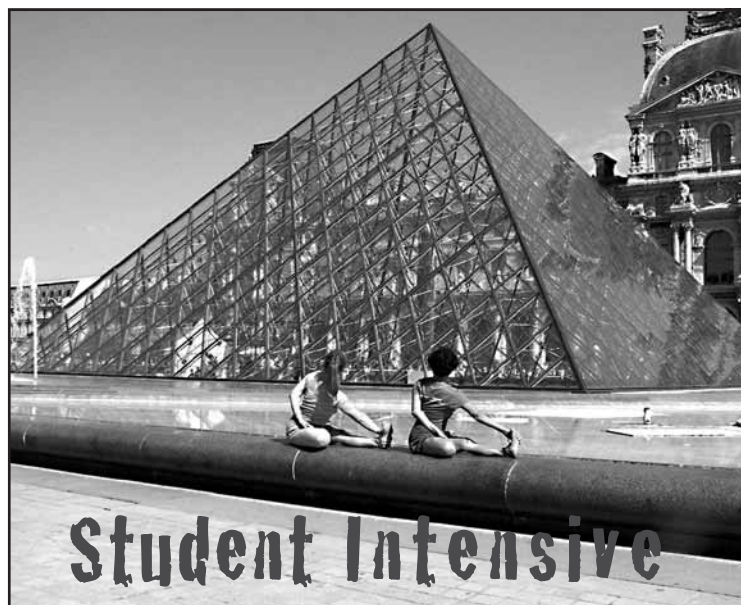
venture into a little newness. In preparation I reviewed some well worn pages of Guruji's book *Light on Pranayama* rereading the chapter on digital pranayama, and came across a familiar diagram of how to divide the fingertips into three portions: inner and outer plus the stabiliser in the centre. These points of pressure are applied differently in inhalation and exhalation. How many times had I looked at this plate, read the accompanying descriptions (even highlighting many words)? In my very first pranayama class with Guruji in Pune in 1979, he had mentioned this differentiation in the fingertips; but it had gone way over my head. Now I have some understanding and later, as I attempted to teach some of this subtlety to my class, I joked that now I was ready for that first class! Sometimes I am a very slow learner but fortunately the memory had lingered long enough for me to make use of this instruction in this lifetime.

This brings up an important principle. With a teacher whom you trust, when you receive instruction which you do not understand or appears to be contradictory to what you have previously been taught, don't throw it out: suspend judgment, practise and find out for yourself if there is anything of truth or value here.

When I attended the pranayama class with Swami Vishnu described at the beginning of this article, I was a neophyte: eager to learn but ignorant. The fact that I was young, healthy and fit with a strong pair of lungs trained from swimming, skiing and other sports, offered some protection. The stiffness in my diaphragm wore off and no discernable damage was done; but I did not seek to repeat that experience! I was beginning to read more about yoga, about the importance of being grounded, of practising restraint and, most important for a yoga aspirant, to discriminate.

What has protected me and allowed me to continue to explore all levels of Astanga Yoga is the systematic approach of B.K.S. Iyengar whose practice and teaching are soundly based on the sutras of sage Patanjali. Recently I came across a piece on the internet where Mr. Iyengar objected to a reporter referring to his work as "Iyengar Yoga" saying what he practises and teaches is "Patanjali Yoga." The dedication in his book *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* states: "This work is my offering to my Invisible, First and Foremost Guru Lord Patanjali."

Following the tradition of Patanjali, B.K.S. Iyengar does not teach practices



With Lauren Cox and Ty Chandler

August 26-30, 2013, 10 am – 1 pm

Learn how to establish and deepen your practice.

All levels

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

Fees: \$235.00 + GST for IYCV members
\$260.00 + GST for non-members

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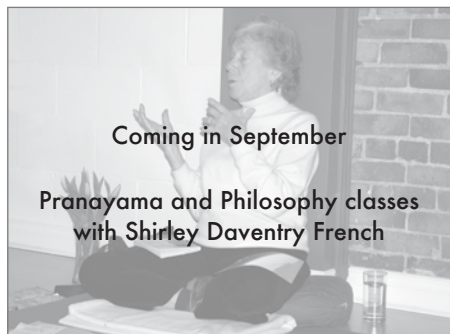
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that we are not ready for—although it often seems as if what we are being taught is way beyond us. Another principle is that you can't stand still on the yogic path for very long without falling off! We are given a glimpse of where the work can take us and taught systematically step by step how to prepare body, mind and intellect for the next step of this journey. Then it's up to us to get on with it.

Astanga Yoga is central to the yoga of Patanjali and Guruji teaches it as a whole, never isolating one of the limbs from the others. The first task is the observation of *yama* and *niyama* (universal and individual moral injunctions) before beginning to practice *yogasana*. And some proficiency and sensitivity in *asana* is required before entering a *pranayama* class.

Traditionally a guru does not accept everyone who comes to them and many will be sent away to put their lives in order or do some service to humanity. Others may be given very menial tasks in order to test their sincerity.

Can you imagine in the narcissistic climate of today, if someone enters the yoga centre wanting to take a class and is told that before they may register they will have to clean our kitchen or toilets, sweep the floor or in some way prove themselves worthy of our instruction? Of course, we are not gurus or masters in traditional India, but even in 21st century Canada, no well-trained yoga teacher who is respectful of their teacher and the teachings will reveal much until the student has shown sincerity.



Coming in September

Pranayama and Philosophy classes
with Shirley Daventry French

Years ago I taught classes in my home studio where I did my own registration. After taking a class, one new student left without paying but saying she would contact me later that day. Over the phone she told me that she would not be returning because my class was not spiritual enough for her. I responded that this does not always become clear the first class! I also wished her well and told her the door would still be open if she changed her mind. She did not and I never saw her again.

Pranayama is often called breath control, but is not concerned solely with the breath. In *Light on Pranayama*, Guruji says "It is as difficult to explain *prana* as it is to explain God. *Prana* is the energy permeating the universe at all levels." Breathing is one of the many pathways to *pranayama*. Breath is vital to our existence. The practice of *pranayama* begins by developing awareness of our normal or habitual breathing patterns. From there we proceed to soft slow smooth inhalations as full as possible without strain followed by slow smooth exhalations, gradually prolonging both of them. First we focus on creating a relaxed inner environment, then establishing a harmonious rhythm, and lastly prolonging inhalation and exhalation.

For many people, even sincere students with a good grounding in yoga *asana*, this can take some time. *Pranayama* does not take a lot of time each day: twenty or thirty minutes of regular practice will have a profound effect. It is the regularity and consistency of the practice which is most important so that stamina is developed and stability can be sustained. Mental clarity may be experienced along with a heightened awareness and an increase in energy level. But given the power and force of the energy that these practices can generate, you are better off if nothing dramatic happens until you have calmed your emotions and strengthened body and mind on all levels.

Practice has to be done steadily and methodically without destabilizing you. After *pranayama*, as with all yoga practices, you should be able to go out into your day and do your duty. Of course, as your awareness expands you may make considerable changes in how you live your life. Awareness is the messenger of consciousness and as you practice you will inevitably see your life from another perspective, but changes must be made in the spirit of *ahimsa* without causing harm to others. Guruji has pointed out to us that underdoing is as harmful as overdoing and we have to constantly search for balance.

In my early days of teaching, at my husband's request I taught yoga to some of his patients in his office. He had been working with a few patients who were open to the idea of yoga for some time before my first visit and told me that he began with a period of breathing awareness and with some patients did not get far beyond this because they breathed so poorly. I was full of bright ideas for doing much more, and Derek listened quietly but said little. And when I returned from my first class, to his amusement, I told him that I now understood his rationale—that I was not surprised that these people were sick, their breathing was so limited I was amazed it sustained life!

In Pune there was a similar instance in *pranayama* class with Geeta. I had taken a Canadian group and Swami Radha had asked me to include one of her devotees who was experiencing some mental and physical issues. Doubtful if he would be able to manage within the group, I consulted Geeta. She told me to bring him, she would take a look at him. One day, we were in the midst of *pranayama* when Geetaji called the class to have a look at this man. He was lying in *savasana* and Geeta was sitting at his head, her legs spread in *upavista konasana*. "Look at this man. See how he breathes," she told us. So we looked and

I saw that his breathing was very shallow. After a while Geeta said: "This man doesn't breathe at all. Not at all! But he's still here so God obviously wants him to live!" He was given suitable support then and during the rest of his stay, and taught the simplest of breathing practices accompanied by the demand that he become attentive to each breath. Geeta also helped him in asana classes to open his chest and free up his diaphragm, and when he left he was still alive and breathing more freely despite the terrible air pollution in Pune.

For everyone, if the very least that happens from your *pranayama* practice is that your normal breathing slows down and your breathing pattern improves, it will be a great benefit. Yogis of old would speak about a finite number of breaths in each lifetime. When we have used up our number, our time in this body is up! This makes a lot of common

sense. They had no machines to measure oxygen uptake etc. as we do now, but had understood the importance of slow smooth inhalation and exhalation!

By the end of the second chapter of the sutras, Patanjali has addressed the first five limbs of yoga. The aspirant is considered to be at a threshold between the external quest (*bahiranga sadhana*) and internal quest (*antaranga sadhana*). *Dharana* (concentration), *dhyana* (meditation) and *samadhi* (profound absorption) are the last of the eight limbs and are addressed in the third chapter. Collectively they are called *samyama* or integration.

This chapter, Vibhuti Pada comes with warnings about trying to jump to higher levels of practice without first establishing a firm foundation in the primary steps of yoga. As we have seen in many cities throughout the world, when the foundations are not maintained it can

lead to disaster. In some Canadian cities recently we have had building, road and bridge subsidence because their infrastructures were poorly maintained or neglected.

In yoga, basic practices have to be followed assiduously if you want to avoid the seduction of power. Regular practice must be maintained. *Vibhuti* is translated in English as "powers" and many are seduced by this idea. There are many instances of people experiencing a sudden lifting of the curtain of ignorance, but these flashes are not enlightenment. Ignore them. The eight-fold path of Astanga Yoga is a path of spiritual evolution. Its motto could be 'safety first.' The foundation must be secure. ॐ

Written with gratitude to B.K.S. Iyengar for his inspired teaching and many good books on this vast subject of yoga.



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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. They have Senior Intermediate I and Senior Intermediate II certification, respectively, and are qualified I.Y.A.C. assessors. They are involved in teacher training in Victoria as well as in other areas of British Columbia and in 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 12 – 16, 2013

With Shirley Daventry French, assisted by Ann Kilbertus

Intermediate Junior and Senior syllabi for certified Iyengar yoga teachers

This intensive offers the opportunity for certified teachers to refine teaching and practice at their current level of certification, and to prepare for assessment.

Shirley is a direct student of B.K.S. Iyengar who awarded her a senior teaching credential. She 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 invited to apply; however, I.Y.A.C. members will be given priority.

Vishva Rupa Darsana in the Practice of Asana (Total 'vision' in an Asana)

By Geeta S. Iyengar

From the very beginning, Guruji was recognised as an expert performer of *yogāsanas*. People saw him as a practitioner of yogic *asanas*. However, they were reluctant to call him an expert yogi. Whosoever came to him, labeled him as an expert in *āsanas*, because their eyes could catch only what he did and showed. Even his expert teaching in *prāṇāyāma* was recognized only in the mid-sixties and early seventies. I am not surprised, when people still call him a yoga practitioner at the physical level.

Try to understand the paradox. Often, we judge people according to our *pratyakṣa pramāṇa* i.e. direct perception. We believe in what our eyes see, we believe in what our ears hear. Almost all our judgments depend on these senses of perception, which often tend to cheat. Therefore, when one sees Guruji practicing and performing *āsanas*, they say that he is an expert only in one of the aspects of yoga and that is *āsana*, and this expertise is equated merely with the performances, the photographs, the presentations and so on.

There are some people who still criticise him that he is far from the science of yoga; that he gives an undue importance to *āsanas* which is only one of the limbs of yoga. He is blamed for regarding only the *āsanas* as the complete science of yoga. In this article we are going to see how Guruji has taken a dip in



the ocean of *āsanas*, how it has given him *samyak darsana* (total vision) and how he worships the Lord within with purity and divinity through his practice.

Let us see this limb of yoga through Guruji's eyes. If you look carefully, you will know that Guruji is the only one who has practiced this facet thoroughly in order to experience what Sage Patañjali has said about it and, at the same time not forgotten, neglected or

abandoned the path he has chosen which leads towards the aim of self-realisation.

The way Guruji has enlightened this single limb which outshines all other aspects, is a *prasadam* [food that has first been offered to God] from him. If he had not practiced it thoroughly and made it rich, tasty and nourishing, we could never have comprehended it. We would never have known its importance and its essence.

We are very close to our physical body. We first learn about ourselves through this physical body alone. A kindergarten child is introduced first to the limbs of its body. The child says "This is my hand, this is my leg." We too have to get introduced to each part, each limb of ours. When you go to your friend's house, you ring the bell, you knock on the door. If it is not answered then you may move to peep through a window. If he or she is a close friend then you may try to go to the back door to find out whether you can enter the house. But, if the friend is not very close to you then you will just knock and leave. Similarly, in *arambhavadhā*, while practicing *āsanas*, you may ring the doorbell every day until you gain entry within. The practice is termed physical till this door opens. We have to knock on the door from all the sides to enter within. But, once we enter in, it is no more a physical practice, but a spiritual practice.

We should know that it is our Guruji, who introduced the variety of *āsanas*. He respected each *āsana*, since it has its own significant effect on the body, the organs of action, the senses of

We first learn about ourselves through this physical body alone. We knock on the door till it opens and then it is no more a physical practice.

Billet at a Yogi's House in Victoria

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For \$40 a night you can stay at a yogi's house.

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just call the IYCV at
250-386-YOGA (9642).



perception, the mind, the intellect, the consciousness and the ego. Many of the yogic practitioners in the earlier days, criticised and reduced the number of *āsanas* thus disrespecting their importance, whereas Gururji picked up each and treated it religiously, and gave an auspicious touch to each *āsana*.

According to Gururji, each *āsana* is a prayer – a *japa*. He has often said that the body is the bow, the *āsana* is the arrow and the soul is the target. This saying of Gururji occurred to him in the fraction of a second when we wanted a quote for the T-shirts for a yoga demonstration. Unless a person is profoundly engrossed in what he does, such a thought cannot flash into one's mind. This shows Gururji's involvement, the perfection he attained and his devotion to his art.

There is an adage that practice makes one perfect. Gururji adds to this adage and says that a judicious practice makes one perfect. However, Gururji's practice, his *sādhana*, is much more than this. His *sādhana* is not merely judicious but also righteous, religious, virtuous as well as spiritual and devotional.

One of the yoga texts [Gheranda Samhita] says – *asanani chātavanti yavantyō jīvarashayah* – There are as many *āsanas*, as are the living beings in this world. This statement is wrongly interpreted that one shouldn't try to perform all *āsanas* since they are innumerable and then practicing them is impractical. But, Gururji rightly comprehended it. He put it as follows.

Our body can exhibit several types of movement. The body is made of millions and millions of cells, and if we have to prolong the life of these cells then we need a proper supply of blood to each cell. According to medical science there are several cells devoid of blood supply. To irrigate these cells it is not merely a movement but an intelligent movement which is required. For instance, if I have to create life in the tip of my fingers, my energy should reach there. The tip of the finger is irrigated only when you introduce several types of movements through different *āsanas*. In this way, in each *āsana* when one adds a new movement it could be called a new *āsana* since the effect changes. We may not actually name them differently but we should realise this new life and understanding.

You may not go 'searching' in all *āsanas*, but just give a thought to them. You have seen that when Gururji works on the patients who have complicated problems, he invents several methods of doing the same *āsana*.

For example, one can perform *utthita trikonāsana* in so many ways. One can turn the front foot out slightly more than 90 degrees and it makes a considerable difference. One can raise the fore part of the front foot and the hamstring extends and becomes free. One can take support for the back foot, and the extension on the calf and the thigh differs. In other words one can learn to activate different parts of the body by a little

change in the position of the foot. Can't every new position be counted as a separate *āsana*? And this is how the statement quoted before is justified by Gururji.

Let us take another example, *mayurāsana*. The *Hatha Yoga Pradipikā* explains this *āsana* but does not mention the positioning of the palms and the wrists. It just instructs that the palms are to be kept together on the floor and to press the abdomen on the elbows and to balance. But stating the effects of the *āsana*, the text says – "*Harati sakal rogan ashu gulmo-duradi*" meaning it destroys all kinds of ulcers and tumors of abdomen. How do you exercise a particular part?

In *mayurāsana*, or peacock pose we keep the fingers and palms turned down towards the legs. Gururji reversed this and pointed them towards the chest. This is called *hamsāsana* or swan pose. When you keep the palms in *mayura* style, it works on the stomach and in *hamsa* style, it works more on the intestines. The change in the position of the palms makes a big difference on the organic action.

In utthita trikonāsana, one can place the front foot out slightly; raise the fore part of the front foot; raise the back foot. The effect of each of these actions on the calf and thigh differs.

Gururji has told us often: "Treat each *āsana* with respect, whether it is *tādāsana* or *vṛishchikāsana*, the simplest or the most difficult; it does not matter. Who knows, one may not be able to do the simplest properly, though one performs the difficult one and vice versa. Each *āsana* has its own significant recognition." Therefore, in the introduction in the *Light on Yoga* Gururji states regarding the names of the *āsanas* that they illustrate the principle of evolution. Don't we require this evolution to occur within us? Our *prakṛti* has certain animal tendencies: Through the practice of *āsanas* we have to see how the evolution of *prakṛti* occurs. We have to uplift ourselves from animal tendencies to human tendencies. Through the practice of several *āsanas* we have to see how all the aspects of *prakṛti* are uplifted, cleansed, purified and channeled so that the evolution reaches the highest level for its fullness. Even the *āsanas* named after our ancestors and the great sages are meant to remind us that we have to evolve from being an ordinary human being to a realised soul.

In the *Varahopaniṣad*, it is said that the practice of *āsana* and *prāṇāyāma* bring *nādisuddhi* i.e., cleansing of the *nādis* by filling them with pure blood. It is said that these *nādis* are full of *rakta purita dhatu*. *Susruta* (blood) is the fourth humour (apart from

vata, pitta and kapha). This *Upanishad* gives details about the practice of *āsanas* and *prānāyāma*, so that one brings the *nādisud-dhi* by allowing the energy to flow – the blood to circulate. The day he found this word – Guruji called me immediately and said: “See here is an *Upanishad* which emphasises the importance of pure blood circulation.” The word is *rakta purita*. It is mentioned as *ratna purita* too. The meaning is very clear: blood and blood counts should be well balanced. We all know that Guruji emphasises proper stretch and extension and the adjustments within the body so that the circulation of pure blood is not hampered anywhere. The varieties of *āsanas* are meant for this purpose.

In *Light on Prānāyāma* he has clearly mentioned, that the numerous *āsanas* have been evolved so that the various parts of the anatomy, the muscles, the nerves, the organs, the glands or rather the entire organism is kept healthy in order to work harmoniously. Similarly, several types of *prānāyāma* are also evolved to meet the requirements of the body, the mind, the ego and the intellect for the spiritual endeavor.

Even if it comes to the stretching and the extension of the muscles, remember, it is only Guruji who can bring the clarity about it. How many physicians can really understand what is over stretch and what is under stretch? How many really understand the connections between the inner muscles and the proper direction in stretching them?

A cardiac surgeon from U.S.A. came to a conference in Rishikesh. He himself suffered from heart-trouble. In the class we often tell you how to keep the palms turned up while doing *setu bandha sarvangāsana* on the bench or support (prop) but you may not even realise the importance of this positioning of the palms. But this surgeon was flabbergasted when Guruji adjusted his hands in the *āsana* because he could realise how the positioning of the palms affected the ventricle of his heart. For him the sensation went from hands to the heart.

Guruji calls the *āsanas snayu-vrtti nirodha* [Asana is the restraint of movements in the muscles]. Everyone knows Patañjali’s sutra “*Yoga citta vrtti nirodhah*” [Yoga is the cessation of movements in the consciousness].

Earlier, people were asked to sit in one comfortable *āsana* and meditate. Guruji’s observation could not accept this. The mind like a butterfly flutters continuously among the flowers of its taste. As the mind goes towards the subject, not only do the senses of perception follow it but also the organs of action, and the very body, which is the slave of the mind, follows it. So, if the energy of the body has to be controlled *snayu vrtti nirodha* is essential. Guruji with his keen observation noticed the change within during his practices.

Medical science will definitely agree with him. If your mind is tempted to do something and physical body is forced to go

against it, the disparity between the body and mind will create disease. If we think of bringing disparity and decide to allow the body to do as the mind wishes then a diabetic patient will also start having sweets. This kind of parity is paradoxical. To check the temptations of the mind, we need to check the body too, the behavior of each cell, the behavior of each muscle. And this checking is called *snayu-vrtti nirodha*. And this is a perfect explanation to Patañjali’s saying “*Tato dvandva anbhigatah*” – thus ends the disturbance due to duality – the *sādhaka* is undisturbed by duality.

The body has its own intelligence. It warns one against such temptations. We have to understand its language and learn to listen to it when it demands discipline from us.

It is true that Guruji emphasises on the practice of *āsanas*. But, then he insists in the practice of *yogāsanas* and not *bhogāsanas*. People say that Guruji is very strict regarding the accuracy in the *āsana*. This accuracy of his is mistaken for a purely physical endeavor. The so-called yogis have always taken the meaning of “*sthira sukham āsanam*” as any steady and comfortable pose. One does not know when a comfortable pose becomes an *āsana* of pleasure.

Let me clarify this. It is like the conversion of a friendship or companionship into so called love, which in turn gets converted into *kāma* or is reduced to a merely sexual desire which is not pure love at all. Similarly, it does not take time for the *āsana* to get converted into a *bhogāsana*, but takes time – takes ages to convert into a *yogāsana*. Remember, one thing very clearly, when



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you do the *āsana* inattentively, the body does the *āsana* but the mind wanders whereas when you do it attentively the intelligence reaches each and every part and the mind cannot wander.

Performing āsana mechanically, without using the mind and intelligence is like taking stale and putrid food which gives nothing but disease. This is bhogasana.

Therefore, Guruji says that performing the *āsana* mechanically, without using the mind and intelligence is like taking stale and putrid food which gives nothing but disease. The *āsanas* performed just for the sake of performing without using the discriminative intelligence will lead the *sādhaka* to become a *rogi* – diseased – rather than a *yogi*.

An āsana done with discriminative intelligence is yogāsana. This makes one free of disease and leads one towards the union with the Lord within.

In other words a *bhogasana* will give *roga*, the *yogāsana* will be converted into a *rogāsana*; whereas the *yogāsana* will not only make one free from *roga* [disease of the body], but lead one toward yoga – the union with the Lord within.

The performance of *āsanas* has to be nourishing and illuminative. The varieties of *āsanas* such as standing *āsanas*, sitting *āsanas*, forward extensions, backward extensions, lateral extensions, supine extensions, prone extensions, inversions, coiling and knotting, uncoiling and unknotting the body in different postures are meant to remind us that we are supposed to respect the universal soul within. The varieties of *āsanas* are meant to find unity in universality and divinity in individuality.

Through the practice of *yogāsanas*, one gains physical fitness, firmness of the body, steadiness of the intelligence and benevolence of the spirit. To do this, one needs patience, perseverance and sustenance in practice. One needs discipline of the mind, and the will-power to continue.

A beginner, while thinking of benefits of *yogāsanas*, always considers *yogāsanas* as medicines. Like taking a tablet and getting alright. But that is impossible. Practice of *āsanas* is a subjective act and not an objective one. It is a process of posing and reposing. It is not an acrobatic action or physical feat; but it is the perfect action in which every cell of the body is placed in its place. Every cell is like a diamond. As diamonds have to be placed in sockets so you adjust the body in a posture so it poses and the mind reposes.

The *āsana* completes at this state. On the other hand, when the *āsanas* are done mechanically the body poses and the mind opposes. While doing the *āsanas*, Guruji does not ask you to pose but he asks you to remove the forces which oppose, so that you repose.

When the āsanās are done mechanically the body poses and the mind opposes.

Undoubtedly, the *āsanas* bring elasticity in joints and muscles and build up stamina as well as physical stability. They bring consistency and evenness in the development of the physical and mental pliability. The postures help one to recover from the stresses and strains of everyday life and give vitality, mental balance, emotional stability, alertness and intellectual sharpness. The various ways of extension of the spine clear the nervous system. The variety of *āsanas* tone and invigorate the various internal organs of the body. They exercise each and every organ and enliven and activate them, so that they function and release properly.

Guruji found various methods of doing a posture, to arrive at the required effects. *Hatha Yoga Pradipikā* declares:

*“Yuva vriddho ativriddho vyadhito dirbalopiva
Abhyasat siddhim apnoti sarvayogi svatandritah,”*

and *Yoga Cintamani* adds to it by saying “*strisudranam capanamam.*” The statement gives assurance that anyone can conquer the self through yoga whether young, old, very old, feeble, weak or diseased. It is fine when Svātāmarama of *Hatha Yoga Pradipikā* says so. But who has the courage to do yoga? Which weak, diseased or aged person, will think of doing yoga, when he is suffering? When the body is torturing a person with all its ache and pain; everyone, whether a child or a woman or a stiff old man or even a strong and healthy man, all these people fall in the category of those who are reluctant to do yoga.

Sixty years ago, no woman could believe that she could stand on her head. No pregnant woman would believe that she could extend her body. No weakling would believe that he/she could stand on the legs. No amputee could think of practicing *āsanas*. But Guruji discovered different methods, several ways. He opened the exclusive path of yoga to one and all so that all could benefit; all could be enlightened.

Though the subject of yoga has become popular recently, this new popularity is caused by the media. But Guruji made it popular by taking Yoga to the common man even when the subject was unknown.

Some yogic texts emphasise the benefits of *āsanas* declaring them as a cure for several diseases. Now, who has to experiment with them and prove them? Guruji opened new horizons.

He did not accept the scriptures blindly. He practiced himself to find out the details, the scope of each *āsana* as far as its effect was concerned. He proved the therapeutic value of the *āsanas*. One may not find his research in black and white as it is required these days. He is neither a doctor nor a medical man. But anyone who thinks of yoga as therapy and wants to know the line of treatment according to yoga has to refer to Guruji's work, his experiences and his books. And that is his achievement. There lies his success.

People ask why one needs to do so many *āsanas* when all that is required is that one has to sit in one of the comfortable postures to meditate. Guruji has answered to this question beautifully in *Light on Yoga Sutras of Patañjali*.

People ask why one needs to do so many āsanās when all that is required is that one has to sit in one of the comfortable postures to meditate.

He says that when the *āsana* is refined it becomes meditative automatically, because the intelligence pervades everywhere and penetrates towards the core of the being. The *āsana* has to be performed in such a manner that the flow of energy and awareness remains rhythmic and even, as well as free from interruption both centripetally and centrifugally throughout the channels of the body i.e. from skin to soul and from soul to skin, from *annamaya kosa* to *anandamaya kosa*, from

anandamaya kosa to *annamaya kosa*. This is how Guruji asks us to sow the seed of *dhāranā* and *dhyāna* in *āsana*.

The modern orators and commentators have separated the limb of *āsana* reducing it just to a physical posture as though it has nothing to do with *dhāranā* and *dhyāna*. The brain has been white-washed since no one has practiced with such sincerity to find the depth of this limb, this aspect of yoga. Fortunately, the original commentators like Maharishi Vyasa have not criticised this limb. Yoga was in vogue in those days. At least the rudimentary practice was not avoided. The basics were known. The background was ready. Unfortunately this rudimentary knowledge had started fading and *Svatmarama* had to remind us of the missing part in practice. But, Patañjali has brought the gamut of *āsana* in three sutras. [II.46-48]

According to Patañjali, the *sādhaka* has to conquer the state of balance, attention, extension, diffusion and relaxation simultaneously in body and intelligence, in order to merge in the seat of the soul. All the instructions and directions given by Guruji, while teaching the *āsanas* are meant to achieve *sthirata* – steadiness; *sukhata* – happiness, *prayatna saithilyata* – effortlessness in effortlessness, *ananta samāpatti* – blessedness, *dvandvanabighata* – cessation of disturbance of qualities.

A neophyte in yoga enjoys the practice of *āsanas* since he sheds laziness and becomes active, gains health and feels energetic, but after some years he may find the practice of *āsana* aimless and pointless, because of the lack of penetration. But the true *āsana* is one in which the thought of *ātma* – the very soul, flows

Thank You!

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Thanks to **Hilary McPhail**, who will take over newsletter ads and announcements.

Our March 2nd Open House could not have happened without volunteer power: Thanks to **Laine** for coordinating the cookies and for cleaning up too. **Krysia**, our president, was there to greet and help with everything. Big cudos to the bakers! Thanks to **Ty** and **Bhavantu Sound** for chanting. And to our teachers: **Melissa, Wendy** and **Lucie**. A big thanks to **Jane** for the wonderful chai, set up, and clean up. A big thanks to **Britta** for being at the desk! And thanks to **Wendy** for organization and promotion.

effortlessly and incessantly through the mind of the *sādhaka*. The practice has to aim at this point. This is called *prayatna saithilyata* in the real sense. Take any commentary on *sutras*. All have commented on this word *prayatna saithilya* as performing the *āsana* without efforts. But Guruji never accepted this meaning. If one has to accept this simple meaning of a meaningful word, then it would have become easier for anyone to attain *samādhi*. But it does not happen like that. All of us sit. In fact all of us always aim at getting a seat to sit comfortably, effortlessly. But the problem is that more we are comfortable in life, the farther we are from self-realisation. The body, the senses, the intelligence – everything tries to put us in the most uncomfortable state in that so called comfortable state. In other words, we can reach the effortless state only when we reach the peak of the effortful state.

The body, mind, senses, ego and intellect always oppose, and stand as obstacles because of their behavior; therefore their nature has to be trained, treated, tamed and toned so that they no longer interfere but instead lead us to effortlessly reach the infinite being within, the very soul. The path to reach the *purusa* within is neither easy nor feasible as long we don't aim at it. It becomes easy and feasible only when we aim at it, when we are ready to meet the infinite within. And this "readiness" comes only when you have a strong determination.

Determination belongs to the faculty of will. It is the will which makes one refrain from doing yoga. It is the will which desists, resists and deters you from doing yoga. And surprisingly it is

the same will, which can enable you to do yoga. Guruji puts it rightly – that to do yoga you need a very strong determination, a strong will-power. To exercise this will you need to make efforts. That is how the effortlessness is exposed and exerted. Effort is seen, effortlessness is not seen. Effort is expressible, effortlessness is inexpressible. This subtle difference is never understood and that is why a verbal meaning is taken for granted and everyone advises you to do the *āsana* comfortably and effortlessly.

You hear all the great men and God-men, the philosophers and sannyasis who say that the Lord is within you and outside you. You have heard them saying that the universe is within and without. The one outside is macro-universe and the one within micro-universe. Yes, we agree. Even the scriptures mention the same. But how do we realise it? For Guruji, each *āsana* is a *visvarupa darsana*. Guruji can see each cell of the body and control it too. He asks us to be the master of the *prakṛti* so that the *prakṛti* becomes our servant. The duty of a servant is to serve the master. Through the practice of *āsanas* Guruji asks this servant to obey the orders of the master, the soul.

All of us have seen Guruji when he teaches in the class. The same *āsana* he repeats for us again and again. He shows the *āsana* from all the sides to have the *visvarupa darsana* [universal form, vision/ beholding] of the *āsana*. In *tirupati*, when one goes for *darsana* of Lord Venkatesa, one will find a long queue of the general public, which is a queue for *dharma darsana*. This *dharma darsana* is open during the whole day. Yet one has to wait in a queue for hours and hours, till one gets a chance to have the *darsana* of the



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Lord. The *darsana* lasts for just a second because the queue has to move fast. The staff at the temples just pushes you and asks you to move. You don't even get a chance to bow your head. Yet this queue for *dharma darsana* is meant for all, since one doesn't have to spend money for it. It is a *darsana* free of charges.

Our practice of *āsana* is like this *dharma darsana*. It is like a poor man having *darsana*. Here in yogic practice it is not poverty in a monetary sense. It is poverty due to lack of devotion. Our practice is "touch-and-go" type.

We do practice, but our practice is like the 'touch-me-not' type. The 'touch-me-not' plant closes its leaves the moment you go near. Similarly, before the *āsana* touches within, we close ourselves, whereas Gururji opens himself from within.

Gururji's practice is like *visvarupa darsana*. After seeing Lord Krishna in his universal manifestation, Arjuna salutes him a thousand times. He says: "O Lord, I bow to you a thousand times, again and again I bow to you." Gururji too salutes the soul within through the *āsana*, repeating it for several times, again and again from all sides, from all angles, from all directions as Arjuna says: "I bow to you from front, from behind and from all sides. You are of infinite powers, and immeasurable might, you have pervaded everything and therefore you are all." "*Sarvam samaapnosi tatotsi sarva.*"

Gururji's devotion to his practice is exactly of the same kind. He never takes his practice lightly. Neither is it blind faith. He may approach the *āsana* from any side in any way but it takes him to the center, towards the destination – the soul. The presentation of each *āsana* is like a graph. Every detail is meaningful. In each *āsana*, there is a perfect blend of *yama*, *niyama*, *prāṇayāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāranā*, *dhyāna* and *samādhi*. While doing the *āsanas* he neither neglects the remotest nor the deepest part of the body. The intelligence flows in each and every part of the body. When he stays (or holds) in the *āsana*, one witnesses not only stability but also the flow of life (*prāṇa*) and intelligence (consciousness). As we say that the soul exists everywhere and Brahman is permeating everything, so we witness that state in him as he is existing everywhere in that *āsana*.

*We can never imitate him in a real sense.
We may try to imitate the means.*

We may try to do the *āsana* beautifully with all the accuracy, but we can't imitate the embellishment that he has brought to his consciousness. The muscles can be imitated but mind cannot be imitated. We may try to sing the *bhajans* of Saint Mira by imitating her style but we can't become Mira. What Mira sang was from her heart for Lord Krishna so she became Mira. What Gururji does is for the Lord within, so he is "Iyengar." All cannot

become "Iyengar." All cannot be the guru or the maestro. To say in Gururji's own words – "We love yoga, Gururji lives in yoga."

In Jñanesvari – a commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita* – Saint Jñanesvara says: "Be in such a posture (*āsana*) that brings your mind to one pointedness (*ekāgrata*) and think with total reverence of the Lord within, who is a Guru. Let the mind be full with *sattva*, fully illumined with absolute consciousness. Let the ego dissolve.

"Let the objects of the senses be out of your mind (*pratyāhāra*). Let the mind be neatly placed on the Lord within the heart. Let the breath support the breath." Jñanesvara calls it *vajrāsana*, *vajra* means thunderbolt. It is the weapon of Indra. It connotes hardness and firmness.


Is Jñanesvara not asking us to be firm in an *āsana* where body, mind, ego, intellect – everything – is controlled and sharpened?

What does Gururji do? Is he not demanding the same from us? Then why do you call it vigorous? Are you calling it vigorous because he is asking you to penetrate into your very "being" like a thunderbolt?

The question remains whether we want to do yoga or have *bhoga*. If we can't follow the discipline, and face the hardship; and do not aim at the goal; then, of course, the path is easy, like *dharma darsana*. It is for us to decide whether we want *dharma darsana* or *visvarupa darsana*.

Even the *dharma darsana* won't be futile. We will have at least some "*punya*" (virtue) in our pockets. We will be carrying at least the blessings. But compared to *visvarupa darsana* that is nothing! It is only *visvarupa darsana* which can lead us towards bliss; towards the end, towards the infinite. ॐ

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In Appreciation of a Noble Teacher

By Norma Hodge, Gabriola Island

In an interview with Carol Cavanaugh published in *Yoga Journal*, July-August 1982, Mr. Iyengar stated that, “Nerves are the unconscious mind; our brain and mind are the conscious intelligence,” and later, “When the nerves have collapsed they cannot supply energy.” If someone who is suffering from a nervous disorder tries to meditate it is likely to cause debility rather than stability. Yoga, on the other hand, feeds the nerves so that energy is restored to the nervous system. Meditation is an introverted art, and if an introverted person meditates they may become more disposed to disease. *Asana* and *pranayama*, on the other hand, are extraverted arts, but even Yoga when practised wrongly can lead to complications and disease.

In October 1978, I wrote in my journal, “It is not enough to find peace only, but deeper truth.” I was introverted and confused between body and consciousness, struggling to use my Yoga practices to help me understand and learn from, as well as live with, the rapid onset of rheumatoid arthritis. Many joints became inflamed on both sides of my body from toes to neck, so that often I did not know how I could move to change position. Through the worst of it, however, Mr. Iyengar’s vibrant eye and voice and stride recalled themselves in my mind and carded me into *asana* and breathing practice. Often I’d hear an echo of this in my own voice as I led a class and was buoyed by the truths within it. Continuing to teach seemed a necessary thing to do for I knew I had already learned so much that is valuable for others as well as myself. Pain was the goad to learning.

Once, in a class in Pune in 1979, I succumbed to fear of pain while Mr. Iyengar was helping me. He literally threw my body out of the posture in a gesture of disgust. Physically I landed softly enough for it was a controlled spontaneous act, an invaluable gift for my learning. To my credit, I knew he had done exactly what my ego needed, though for a shocked second I was overwhelmed by shame in having lost precious connection. Within the hour my mortification in the incident of lost courage was lightened by his direct understanding grin as he tapped me on the head when he walked by.

Not to have trusted enough to endure through the Yogic process he was encouraging in me is a memory that has flashed

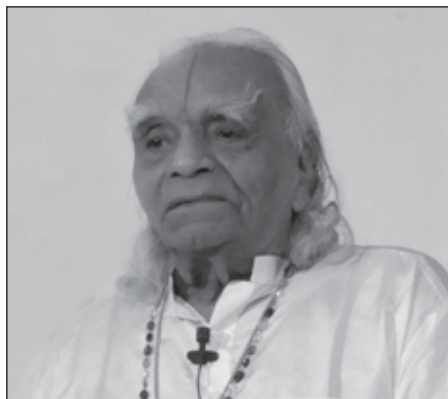


PHOTO LESLIE HOGYA

into positive action in later situations when pain has been the prod to learning a proper humility. The feeling of his presence and the thrust of his teachings have become an integral part of how I honour life. I have wondered how much I could have avoided the joint damage that occurred if I had been able to return to India to remain longer in therapeutic practices with Mr. Iyengar. Nevertheless, I continue to experience extended benefit from the whole atmosphere of his teachings. An example is the inspiration that

has come from reading an early article he wrote on *Savasana*, which I paraphrase from my practice, following his.

The flow of energy in an inert body is up the back, down the front – the feeling of surrendering life. I experience the truth of this, realising the death fears that can be felt in letting go so profoundly, and the peace that comes from doing so. The out-breath having started, goes out forever. The in-breath is a totally new experience coming in forever. Each time it is the flashing miracle of birth. In the live body the flow reverses – up the front, down the back. The primitive hackles smooth, the tail softens down. As I experience and trust life the chest opens and the vulnerable underbelly firms. All this is *Tadasana* – mountain man, man-man. *Tadasana* is one name for that experience knowledge available to me in all positions (moments). In it I become a whole individual, ins and outs harmonised – inertia and rebirth balanced on the point of this moment. On the point of this moment the whole individual is the Undivided Whole. And if Love is an adequate word, this is it. ॐ

Norma Hodge was a sincere student of all branches of yoga. She lived in Vancouver and had gone to the Yasodhara Ashram in the 70s. Her interest in yoga was piqued and she attended classes with Maureen Carruthers in Vancouver, eventually apprenticing and then teaching. I met Norma when she moved to Gabriola Island in the early 80s. Maureen went often to her studio to give weekend workshops. In the late 90s, when Norma was “retiring”, I suggested she move to Comox as we had a yoga community that she could be involved in. She taught many of us yoga philosophy classes – according to the Yasodhara Ashram teachings – for over six years. Her men’s class was a delight. They loved her and called her Normie. One man, a tough logger sort held her head in his hands when she died. Even then she was transforming people... – Vicky Catchpole

Thoughts After a Yoga Class

By Maggie Meredith, Toronto

Recently in a Yoga class Marlene Mawhinney said that someone had referred to her teaching and to Iyengar Yoga as “militaristic.” She was distressed because this is not the essence or intent of either. Yoga, teaching and practice, is concerned with increasing consciousness in all aspects of life. In Iyengar Yoga the vehicle for this broadening and deepening of consciousness is the body. These remarks of Marlene’s led me to my own reflections about the nature of the work we do in Yoga and my reactions to it.

Does it seem militaristic? Well, yes and no. At the level of stimulus response, perhaps yes. When I hear Marlene’s directions, they are clear, commanding, direct and unequivocal. Do This. But what else do I hear? What is the matrix from which these directions are given and into which I receive them? It is the knowledge that in this process the work is to bring light into darkness. The darkness is the unknown which becomes vibrantly obvious in an Iyengar Yoga class. There one confronts the darkness, the unconscious, the unknown in the most paradoxical way: it is in that with which we would expect to be most familiar, our own bodies. If our knowledge in this, our most intimate place of being, is so limited, it is an awesome prospect to consider what else we think we know and do not.

In the gnostic Gospel of Thomas, Jesus says, “If you bring forth what is within you, what you bring forth will save you. If you

do not bring forth what is within you, what you do not bring forth will destroy you.” Thus, there is an urgency to confront what we do not know so that the situation can be transformed. There is a destructive element in being unaware, unconscious. Again, this becomes apparent in the experiences of Yoga practice when we see that joints which were created to have a full range of movement have only a fraction of their potential available. Yet with patience, time, interest and concern these same joints can be released again.

How is a bridge established between the parts of ourselves which are conscious? It is a very difficult process. First, there is an inherent inertia to be overcome. Who wants to undertake the painstaking task of chipping atom by atom into the tomb of muscle encircling one’s shoulder, for example? It is much easier to let the great dragon of lethargy prevail. How, then, does one come to have sight when one is blind? Even if in the abstract, one wanted to be more conscious in general, and specifically in one’s body, consciousness does not come simply because one wants it.

I do not know all the answers to these questions. But to begin to answer at least, it seems that somehow there needs to be a confrontation. One finds oneself in a situation where one has come to a kind of stone wall and feels that density, that lifelessness, that blankness within one’s own body. Then one is forced to step back from that obstruction and ask: “What is that? What have I hit? What has hit me? How can I get through there? How can I have some relationship with this blankness? How can I breathe life into this stone?” These are some of the questions which bring sight. They may be filled with dismay, anger, alarm, discouragement, excitement, anguish, curiosity. However, they are the fuel for the process, the catalysts which activate energies by which we can begin to see the obstructing passage, to work through it little by little and gradually, ultimately, bring forth that which is within us.

In the practice of Iyengar Yoga, one comes to appreciate the precision, strength and sensitivity of the creation that is the physical body of a human being. The work of bringing personal consciousness into this body requires the same precision, strength and sensitivity with which the body was originally created. It is powerful and complex work. It is a path, a journey of becoming a light-bearer into one’s own darkness, to lighten that burden.

This is not a journey one undertakes alone. One needs a guide as surely as the souls of the dead need Charon to ferry them



IYAC/ACYI ASSESSMENT DATES

June 15, 2013
Introductory I, Victoria, BC

June 21-23, 2013
Introductory II, Ottawa, ON

October 4-6, 2013
Intermediate Junior II, Calgary, AB

November 1-3, 2013
Introductory II, London, ON

across the River Styx in Greek mythology. The guide knows where time can go and how to get there safely.

Furthermore, the guide is the voice of consciousness, of possibility and therefore is part of the process of awakening. It is that voice which becomes the clarion call to get started, to move into a new area of the body or to move more deeply into a familiar one. Through incorporating those directions, a momentum and energy begins to surface which moves us forward and at the same time keeps us rooted in our bodies as they are here, now. The voice of the guide is strong. It is precise. It is direct. It must be. These qualities are fused together with the connective tissue of the teacher's compassion and understanding which becomes apparent in the heart and soul of every Yoga class. This is not militaristic.

Everyone in a Yoga class finds different possibilities, limitations, advances, regressions. Integration of these experiences occurs on a personal level. No one can do that for someone else. It must be done by and for oneself. That requires a spirit of respect and love for one's body, for the miracle that it is, for the gift that it is. This gives dimensionality and vitality to the practice in a way that a purely task-oriented attitude does not. Every class, every practice is an occasion to realise more deeply that "the yoke or Yoga, between the local Self and the Deep Self

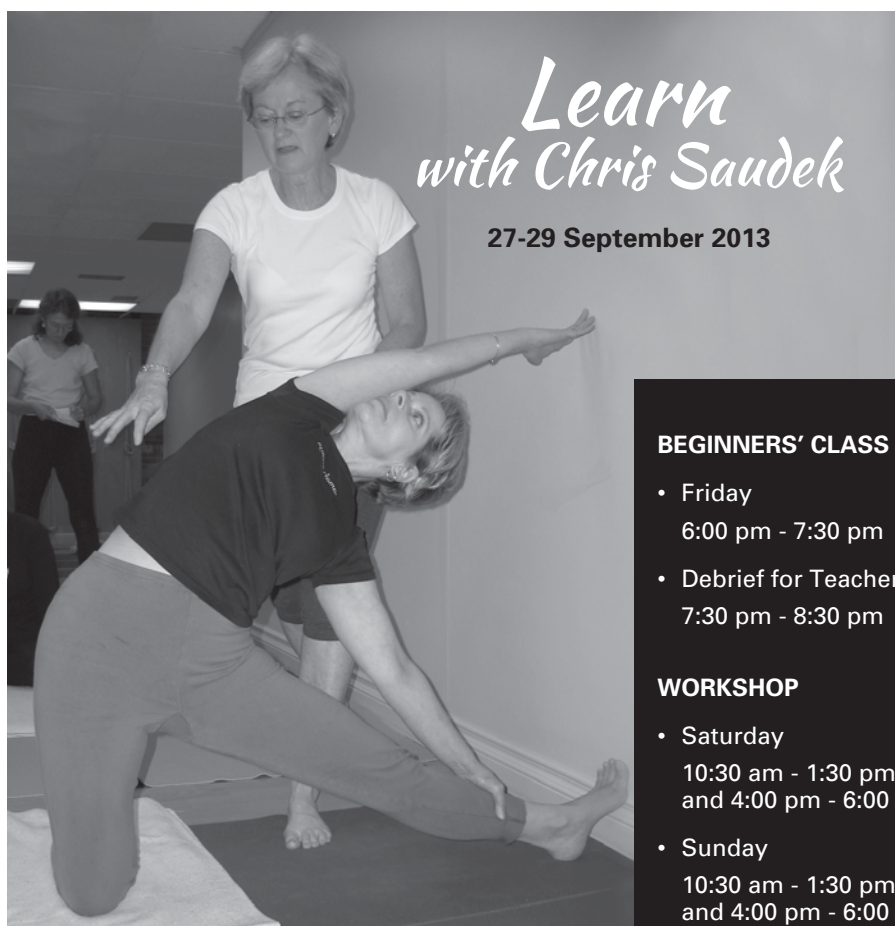
... is love." One becomes more deeply aware of one's humanity and of those around, more centred in one's body. There is unity in knowing that in this experience others are finding something similar in essence, but different in particular. For a brief period, we are together in these, mostly unspoken, discoveries. This is Iyengar Yoga. This is not the military – unless it might be considered a sort of infantry battalion rallying to face legions of light and dark on inner planes. In any case, thankfully there is the clear, strong voice of a fine teacher/guide in our midst. ॐ

REPRINTED FROM *YOGAPUSHPANJALI*, COLLECTED SOUVENIR ARTICLES
1975-1998.

Members' Practice Notice

Ty and Gary are taking a break from the members' practice. It will not run the length of the summer term.

It will end Sunday, June 30th and resume Sunday, September 8th.



*Learn
with Chris Saudek*

27-29 September 2013

BEGINNERS' CLASS

- Friday
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm
- Debrief for Teachers
7:30 pm - 8:30 pm

WORKSHOP

- Saturday
10:30 am - 1:30 pm
and 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm
- Sunday
10:30 am - 1:30 pm
and 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Open to Iyengar Yoga students, general level and above. Ask your teacher if you are wondering about attending.

NOTE: Chris will teach an extended Intermediate class on Monday, Sept. 30, 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm.

REGISTRATION OPENS JULY 2

- Beginners Class \$30 + GST
- Teachers' Debriefing \$50 + GST (including attendance at the Beginner's Class)
- Workshop weekend (Saturday and Sunday)
\$230 + GST Members,
\$240 + GST Non-members

Refunds will be offered only if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$50 cancellation fee.

To register, drop in or phone:
the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria,
202-919 Fort Street,
Victoria, B.C. V8V 3K3
250-386-YOGA (9642)

Exploring How to Work Wisely with Ann Kilbertus

by Tracey Harvey

*"The pains which are yet to come
can be and are to be avoided."*

– *Yoga Sutra II.16 heyam duhkam anagatam*

*"We want to get rid of pain and
be a master of yoga."*

– *Geeta Iyengar 1997 Women's Intensive*

In the workshop, *Working Wisely*, Ann Kilbertus demonstrated ways in which to work wisely throughout the various categories of *asana* (supine, seated, standing, inversions) to create space in the abdomen, chest, shoulder and hip joints. Having three hours gave participants an opportunity to explore more elaborate *asana* set ups (e.g. *bhismacharyasana*) or take apart poses in a more analytical way.

Bed of Arrows Pose

"When Bhismacharya was totally injured in Kuruksetra, he kept himself alive with sheer willpower. He lay on a bed of arrows, known as *sarapanjara*...

But was it not a strain for him to lie on a bed of arrows? He preferred to lie in the same position. Why? Because he was supported by arrows at the cardiac nerve. The ventricle of the heart was supported and that brought him a restful state...In the Institute, those who suffer from cardiac problems are asked to do this *asana*." – *Yoga Wisdom & Practice*, B.K.S. Iyengar, page 226:
Sarapanjarasana

*"...the cause of pain is the
association or identification of the
seer with the seen and the remedy
lies in their dissociation"*

– *Yoga Sutra II.17 drastrdrsyayoh
samyogah heyahetu*



Set up for Bhismacharyasana (Bed of Arrows pose)

I consider myself very fortunate to have attended several workshops and Teacher Training sessions led by Ann in the past couple of years. Ann is a knowledgeable, gifted and well-practised teacher. When Ann smiles, which comes freely and often, it seems to emanate from the tips of her toes wrapping you in a blanket of sunshine like a hug that makes you feel warm and safe.

During the workshop Ann spoke of *prana* (energy) being everywhere in the body. To help us understand this concept, the ancients demarcated certain areas to help focus our awareness such as the legs, the abdomen, the chest etc. These are known as the *vayus*. In a similar way, the ocean surrounds the world, but we call it the Atlantic or the Pacific or the Indian Ocean...in fact, the ocean is one. In a similar vein, to paraphrase



Ann moving from *utthita trikonasana* to *ardha chandrasana* at the wall.



Ann showing how to work with a belt in *baddha konasana*.

the great Sufi poet Rumi, we are an ocean in a drop and a drop in the ocean. The Heart of Yoga unites the personal with the universal. ॐ

IYCV Open House

**Saturday, September 7, 2013
12:00 noon – 5:00 pm**

Free! Come one, come all!

Free Classes on the Hour!

Homemade cookies and chai served all day.

Check www.iyengaryogacentre.ca



12:00-1:00 Chanting with
Bhavantu Sound

1:00-2:00 Intro Yoga

2:00-3:00 50+ Yoga

3:00-4:00 Yoga for All Levels
and Traditions

4:00-5:00 Yoga is a Way of Life:
a philosophy talk with
Shirley Daventry French
Meet the Teachers

Looking For Harmony

by Tracy Harvey

Tracy is an Iyengar student in Nanaimo, who attended "The Heart of Yoga," along with three other students from the Nanaimo studio. Leslie Hogg affectionately referred to them as the "Nanaimo corner" as they had clustered together in the same general area near the main rope wall.

The theme of the workshop was to look inward as we did our *asana* work. As she always does, Shirley weaved the philosophy and teachings throughout the weekend. At one point she touched on *paksa pratipaksa* from Yoga Sutra II.33 (*vitarkabaddhane pratipaksabhavana*).

"Principles which run contrary to *yama* and *niyama* are to be countered with the knowledge of discrimination."

Yama (moral principles) and *niyama* (personal disciplines) are essential to yoga and this *sutra* advises the student to observe and employ *paksa pratipaksa* to balance herself at all levels, physical, emotional and mental. The student is instructed to cultivate those behaviours which are in keeping with the *yama* and *niyama* and counter those ideas that take us away from our intended direction. In his *Light on the Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali B.K.S. Iyengar says "*Paksa* means to take one side...*pratipaksa* conveys the idea of taking the opposite position." He goes on to use a physical example to demonstrate *paksa pratipaksa*. "While practising the *asana*, the *sadhaka* must carefully and minutely observe and adjust the position of the muscles, muscle fibres and cells, measuring lightness or heaviness, *paksa* or *pratipaksa*, as required for the performance of a healthy and well balanced *asana*. He adjusts harmoniously the right and left sides of the body, the front and the back." At one point, Shirley was working with me to straighten my arms in *virabhadrasana* I. I was already working very hard to maintain a straight back leg, looking for that "harmonious" balance between the right and left sides but Shirley gave me a glimpse of further possibilities in the pose.

B.K.S. Iyengar also states in his translation of the *Yoga Sutras*, "The internal measuring and balancing process which we call *paksa pratipaksa* is in some respects the key to why yoga practice actually works, why it has mechanical power to revolutionize our whole being. It is why *asana* is not gymnastics, why *pranayama* is not deep breathing, why *dhyana* is not self-induced trance, why *yama* is not just morality."

I solicited my travelling companions for any revelations they had during or following the workshop. Among them was the simple act of gathering as a community, sharing experiences, stories and teachings. Shirley and Ann were seamless in their leading of the workshop and we all worked hard and accessed



deep layers of ourselves safely and with an understanding that comes from their own work following the teachings of B.K.S. Iyengar: "In *asana*, the pose first brings inner balance and harmony, but in the end it is merely the outer expression of the inner harmony." ॐ



IYENGAR YOGA
CENTRE OF VICTORIA

Scholarships and Bursaries

Members' scholarships are available for:

- **Summer Sadhana with Robin Cantor, July 15-20**
- **Introductory Intensive with Leslie Hogg and Ann Kilbertus, July 8-13**
- **Intermediate Intensive with Shirley Daventry French, August 12-16**
- **Student Intensive with Ty Chandler and Lauren Cox, August 26-30**

Scholarship applications for these workshops are due ten weeks prior to the workshop start date.

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

Applications for both are available at the reception desk.

Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria

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

250-386-YOGA (9642)

High Tea Fundraiser Supports Purchase of Props

The Sixth Annual High Tea Fundraiser held March 28 raised over \$4,300 to go toward the purchase of props for the Centre. There were goodies, teas, raffle prizes and a slide show to entertain the fancy-hatted guests.

The IYCV would like to thank Jaya Malaviarachchi, Dawn Cox and crew, Roger Champagne, Rachel Kahn, Krysia Strawczynski, Keiko Alkire, Laine Canivet, Laura Johnston, Michael Blades, Jayne Jonas, Britta Poisson, Jim Pask, and Renaissance Retirement Living.

Thank you also to the Silent Auction Donors: Chateau Victoria, For Good Measure, VanCity, Poppies, De'lish, Paul M. Bundon of Jawl & Bundon Barristers & Solicitors, Joyce Secker, Jane Albers, Kim Fortin, Jayne Jonas, Shauna Johnson, Ann Smith, Linda Larson, Janine Bandcroft, Lynn Jones, Bob Jones, Bethan Samaros, Krysia Strawczynski, Jacquie Fedorak, Kelly Murphy, Pauline Linzey, Elisabeth Wagner, Barbara Madison, Mary Beeching, Shirley Fleet, Ann Kilbertus, Kelly Mitchell, Patty Rivard, Keiko Alkire, Renate Grinfeldt, Boni Hoy, Roger Champagne, Hieke Miller, Sara Tahiri, Amanda Mills, Paul Bundon, Robin Cantor, Jennifer Tavares, Joan Wotherspoon, Jaya Malaivarachchi, Laine Canivet, Andrea Brimmell, Billie Esse, Suzanne Tremblay, Shirley Forrester, Bonnie Hallett, Vi Peskett, Betsy Gutnik, Tatiana Schneider.



Thanks to Robin Cantor who bent over backwards to organize the Sixth Annual High Tea that netted over \$4,300 towards props!



At right, Robin introduces Roger Champagne, who presented a slide show of his trip to India.



Thank you to our many guests, several of whom wore their best spring hats. (Linda Benn 'bowlered' us over!)



Thank you to all those who brought the lovely and delectable sweets and savories!

The 29th Annual Retreat at the Salt Spring Centre

**June 7-9, 2013
With Shirley Daventry French**

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

Fees: IYCV Members
\$365 + GST – shared accommodation
\$335 + GST – camping
\$299 + GST – commuting

Fees: Non-members
\$400 + GST – shared accommodation
\$370 + GST – camping
\$335 + GST – commuting

The Retreat is now full but there is still limited space for campers and commuters. There is a waiting list. (Don't miss next time!)



Recurring Themes in the Yoga Sutras

By Siegfried Bleher

As my practice progresses I become aware of how my physical practice affects my physical, mental and emotional states not only while I practice, but also later in the day. I also see how my physical and emotional states affect the way I see the world, and ultimately how I live my life. In turn, how I live my life affects the quality and depth of my practice. Inevitably the question arises in my mind whether it is possible to practice in such a way that life, practice, and understanding are seamlessly woven together in the practice, as a greater whole. Otherwise I find myself alternating between moments of reflection, moments of experiencing, moments of daydreaming, etc. In fact, one might say that integrating all the modes of experience is one of the defining characteristics of yoga. From the definition of *sāmadhi* in *sutra* 1.41 we may say that *sāmadhi* is the experience of seamlessness in the thinking mind, the feeling heart and the experiencing body. These aspects of my being are not separate when I am fully in the present moment. At other times I am caught in a particular train of thought without recognizing my state of mind, or I am experiencing something without clearly understanding what it is I am experiencing. My intention for these essays is to explore how to foster a seamless integration of mind, heart and practice.

The method that we have been taught by Guruji is to practice *asana*. This is the way to foster a seamless integration, once we understand how it embodies Patanjali's codification of yoga philosophy. The following essays are examples that show how the yoga philosophy of the Yoga Sutra is embedded within the Iyengar method of practice.

Aligning the Koshas

Alignment is a quality that appears universally as a measure of relationship among the parts of any compound thing. It figures prominently in the Iyengar method, and has even taken on the status of a defining characteristic of the Iyengar method, even though alignment is only one of several defining characteristics that are all equally important, such as sequencing, linking, timing and intricacy. Why has alignment acquired such a prominent status? As pointed out, its status is not due to the absence of other factors. It may, however, rest in just how pervasive the effects of alignment are.

In fact, we might say that alignment reaches all the layers of the being, from the gross physical layer, called *annamayakosha*, to the most subtle layers of *ānandamaya kosha*, *cittamaya kosha*, and *ātmamaya kosha*. These *koshas*, or 'sheaths' are the yogic

way of conceptualizing the deep subjective experience of the human being while in meditative states: we are composed of layers that each have their own identifiable form and structure, but that nevertheless interact with one another in complex ways.

So, for example, the physical body, *annamaya kosha*, has many identifiable sub-layers of its own (musculoskeletal, digestive, reproductive, etc.). And so does *pranamaya kosha*, the layer of *prāna*, or energy, as well as *manomaya kosha*, the layer of the perceptual mind, and *vijnānamaya kosha*, the layer of the intellectual and reasoning mind, etc. Each of these layers is affected by and affects all the other layers, although the most subtle of the layers are considered causal, in that actions and intentions to act are initiated there. We can now ask 'how does alignment in the performance of an *āsana* affect the physical sheath?' And, 'does alignment in the physical sheath affect any of the other sheaths?'

Alignment in a pose refers initially to positioning of the limbs and the spine to approximate the intended shape of a given pose, and is changed by performing movements and actions. Movements are positional changes like placing your feet in the correct position to perform *virābhadrāsana*, bending the right knee until it is over the right heel, lifting the arms to the height of the shoulders, etc. Once the shape or geometry of the pose is achieved (to a 'first degree' of accuracy), then we begin to refine the shape, and to perform dynamic actions. Dynamic actions are linked or paired movements that either refine the external shape of a pose, or that modify the internal experience of the pose, or do both at the same time.

What we discover from an extended period of practice (many years) is that movements and actions can affect not only the physical layer, as may be one's initial aim, but they affect all the layers. Once I align my arms and legs structurally so that the joints are stable and absent of uneven stresses, then I can perform dynamic actions that have the purpose of aligning the organs and energy layer (*prānamaya kosha*), and that begin to align the skin and other senses (where I focus my gaze, how the air touches my nasal passages when I breathe in the pose, etc.).

Actions that align the skin and other senses affect *manomaya kosha*, the layer of the mind that interacts with the internal and external environments through the senses. The decisions I make when I reflect upon the results of these actions, which ones I keep, how I modify them, how long I hold them, the energy pathways to follow, etc., all are made within *vijnānamaya kosha*, so this subtle layer also becomes aligned during the process of aligning the physical and physiological body in *āsana*. In a

similar way *ānandamaya kosha* and *cittamaya kosha* are aligned. At this causal level it is feedback from *āsana* and from life itself that serve as the source of information by which we align

A one aligns the wheels of a kaleidoscope to see the beauty of transmitted light, we align our layers to see the beauty and light of the soul.

our consciousness and self with the universal values of love, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity.

First we recognize different aspects of our experience as components of distinguishable layers. Then we may come to understand what it means for each layer to come into alignment. As one might align the wheels of a kaleidoscope to see the beauty of transmitted light, we align our layers in order to see the beauty and light of the soul.

What is the Meditative Mind?

There are many forms and practices of meditation available in different styles of yoga, in Buddhist and other contemplative traditions. They may all be said to have the aim of cultivating or fostering the onset of a 'meditative mind'. But what is a meditative mind? How do we recognize it, and how does the practice of yoga, specifically Iyengar yoga, foster its onset? In particular, does one have to sit long times to experience a meditative mind, or can this experience happen in the practice of *āsana* like *utthita parsvakonāsana* or *sālamba sirsāsana*? As a way to begin, we refer to Patanjali's Yoga Sūtras for a definition of meditation: sutra 111.2 "*tatra pratyaya ekanata dhyānam.*"

"Dhyāna implies an unbroken flow of contact between the sādḥaka's consciousness and his sādḥana.

This dhyāna may be achieved in both asana and pranayama."

A steady, continuous flow of attention directed towards the same point or region is meditation (*dhyāna*).

"B.K.S. Iyengar writes that "*Ekanata* implies an unbroken flow of contact between the *sādḥaka's* consciousness and his *sādḥana*. We can see, therefore, that *dhyana* may be achieved in both *āsana* and *prānāyāma*." He further compares *dharana* with *dhyāna*, saying that *dhāranā* is the work of stilling the fluctuations in the mind, whereas *dhyana* is the effort to maintain the stillness that has been attained. Let's consider how an *asana* practice cultivates the meditative mind.

Dharana is the work of stilling the fluctuations in the mind. Dhyana is the effort to maintain the stillness that has been attained.

Suppose you are practicing *Dhanurāsana*, bow pose. Turn your thighs in and lift your legs up from the inner edges of the feet. First lift the legs up without pulling the ankles against your hands, so that you can start arching the lower part of your spine first, before the middle and upper spine. As the arching progresses from the lower spine upwards, so the lungs and heart can receive the arching without feeling strain. To be effective in arching the lower back the lift of your legs has to be paired with actively taking the tailbone in (and down). The effort to lift the legs requires some degree of mental focus or concentration (*dhāranā*)—we are acquiring a point of concentration. Performing the linked action of taking the tailbone in while lifting the legs up requires that one adjustment or action be held unwaveringly while a second action is engaged. Since a point of concentration is being maintained rather than acquired, this implies the mind is developing its meditative capacity (*dhyana*). Does this mean we have cultivated a meditative mind? Not yet.

The meditative capacity has to permeate the mind and become stable, so that whatever quality the mind is imbued with while performing a linked or paired action remains within the mind when we let go of that action and come out of the pose. The way this happens is a natural progression or extension from the performance of a paired action to the performance of many such actions. As we become stable in such actions, the senses turn inward and the mind begins to perceive the organs, how they are encased within connective tissues and how they are affected by the organs of action (*karmendriyas*). There is no loss of awareness of the external aspects of the body.

On the contrary, there is a refinement in awareness. Along with 'external awareness' there is a growing 'internal awareness' that acts as an anchor for the mind. The mind becomes steadied by its awareness of the inner body. But for that awareness itself to be stable, more is needed than just a cognitive awareness: our emotional being, which is intimately tied to the organic (inner) body, needs to feel the trust, poise, agility, expansiveness and joy that come from being closely aligned with the *yamas* and *niyamas*.

Then we have cultured a meditative mind, which is capable of letting go of attitudes and ways of thinking that are otherwise frozen and inflexible, and we become ready to receive the grace of *sāmadhi*. ॐ

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Congratulations!

The following candidates achieved
Introductory II certification at
the assessment in Edmonton,
March 8-10, 2013:

Jane Kruse, Toronto, ON

Jenn Reck, Toronto, ON

Maryon McClary, Edmonton, AB

Cathy Allen, Edmonton, AB

Leanna Parker, Edmonton, AB

Darcy Harpe-Lesperance,
Winnipeg, MB

Barbara Ballachey, Calgary, AB

Linda Walker, Brentwood Bay, BC

The following candidates achieved
Intermediate Junior III certification
at the assessment in Toronto,
April 26-27, 2013:

Suzanne Fitzpatrick, Toronto, ON

Jocelyn Hollmann, Toronto, ON

Nadia Horodinsky, Mississauga, ON

Krisna Zawaduk, Kelowna, BC

Cynthia Palahniuk, Calgary, AB

The following candidates achieved
Introductory II certification at
the assessment in Vancouver,
April 26-28, 2013:

Luci Yamamoto, Vancouver, BC

Mark Pezarro, Vancouver, BC

Meghan Goodman, Vancouver, BC

Siobhan Sloane-Seale, Vancouver, BC

Suzan Wood, Vancouver, BC

Shirley Turner, Vancouver, BC

Roberta Vommaro, Vancouver, BC

Terri Damiani, Vancouver, BC

Missi Hegyes, Nanaimo, BC



Gary Wong is presented with his Introductory II certificate by Leslie Hogya.



Membership

For a one year membership,
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or money order to:

Iyengar Yoga Centre
of Victoria Society
c/o Hilary McPhail
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria BC V8V 3K3

Membership fee is \$40 + GST,
renewable each January.

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Country: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

☐ Please mail me my newsletter as I do not
attend classes at the Centre.

☐ Receipt required.

Membership benefits include a 5% discount on classes,
a discount on workshops, borrowing privileges in our
library, free members' practice, eligibility to become a
board member and eligibility for workshop scholarships!



IYENGAR YOGA
CENTRE of VICTORIA

2013 CALENDAR

JUNE

- 7-9 Salt Spring Retreat
- 15 Introductory I
Assessment, Victoria, BC
- 21-23 Introductory II
Assessment, Ottawa, ON

JULY

- 8-13 Introductory Teacher
Training Intensive
- 15-20 Summer Sadhana

AUGUST

- 12-16 Intermediate Teacher
Training Intensive
- 26-30 Student Intensive

SEPTEMBER

- 7 IYCV Open House
- 21 Teachers' Meeting
- 27-29 Learn with Chris Saudek

OCTOBER

- 19 Teachers' Meeting
- 24 Stephanie Quirk
in Sidney BC

NOVEMBER

- 1-2 Going Deeper
- 23 Teachers' Meeting

DECEMBER

- 14 Guruji's Birthday
- 20-21 Winter Solstice

JANUARY

- 1 New Year's Day Practice
- 4 Classes resume
- 11 Teachers' Meeting

FEBRUARY

- 15 Teachers' Meeting
- 23 IYCV AGM

Books Donated to the Library

Core of the Yoga Sutras by B.K.S. Iyengar
donated by Shirley Daventry French

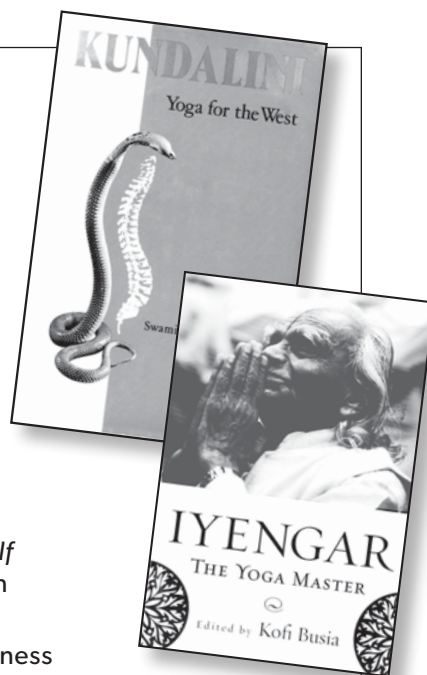
Yoga Body: Origins of Modern Posture Practice
by Mark Singleton donated by Shirley
Daventry French

Raja-Yoga by Swami Vivekananda
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Yoga the Iyengar Way by Silva and Mira Mehta
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The Untethered Soul: The Journey Beyond Yourself
by Michael Singer donated by Johanna Godliman

The library is open to IYCV members during business hours. Members are welcome to borrow circulating books when the center is open. Returning books when they are due is appreciated





IYENGAR YOGA
CENTRE of VICTORIA

NEWSLETTER
F A L L 2 0 1 3



Leslie Hoga observes students in *virabhadrasana II*
at the IYAC Conference in Victoria in May 2013.

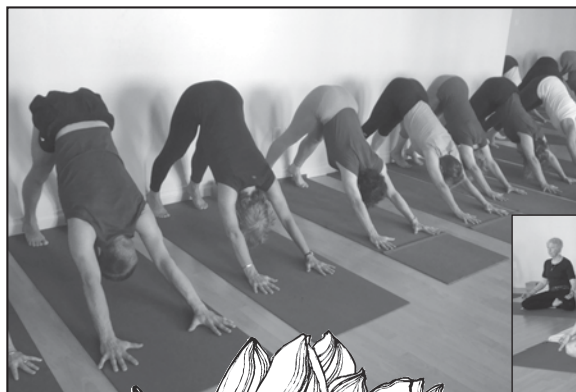
IYCV Open House

Saturday, September 7, 2013
12:00 noon – 5:00 pm

Free! Come one, come all!
Free Classes on the Hour!

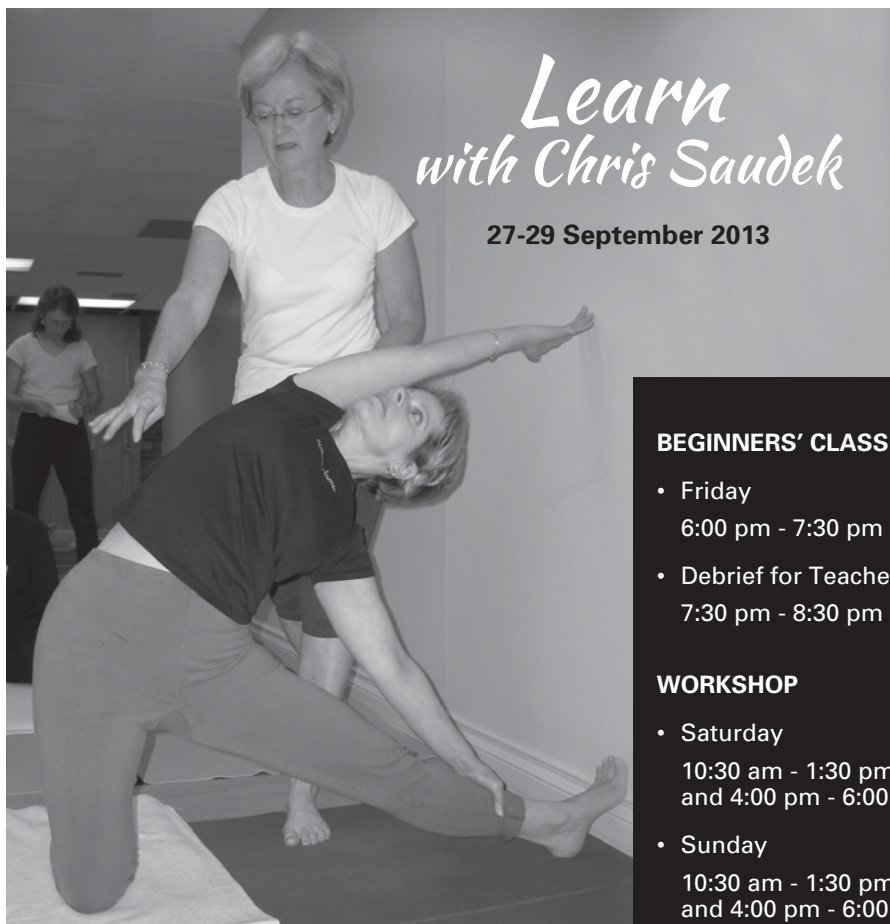
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12:00-1:00 Chanting with
Bhavantu Sound
1:00-2:00 Intro Yoga
2:00-3:00 50+ Yoga

3:00-4:00 Yoga for All Levels
and Traditions
4:00-5:00 Yoga is a Way of Life:
a philosophy talk with
Shirley Daventry French
Meet the Teachers



*Learn
with Chris Saudek*

27-29 September 2013

BEGINNERS' CLASS

- Friday
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm
- Debrief for Teachers
7:30 pm - 8:30 pm

WORKSHOP

- Saturday
10:30 am - 1:30 pm
and 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm
- Sunday
10:30 am - 1:30 pm
and 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Open to Iyengar Yoga students,
general level and above. Ask your
teacher if you are wondering
about attending.

NOTE: Chris will teach an extended
Intermediate class on Monday,
Sept. 30, 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm.

REGISTRATION OPENS JULY 2

- Beginners Class \$30 + GST
- Teachers' Debriefing \$50 + GST
(including attendance at the
Beginner's Class)
- Workshop weekend
(Saturday and Sunday)
\$230 + GST Members,
\$240 + GST Non-members

Refunds will be offered only if your
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To register, drop in to or phone:
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202-919 Fort Street,
Victoria, B.C. V8V 3K3
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SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: NOVEMBER 15, 2013

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IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA

SOCIETY is a non-profit society incorporated under the *Society 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 Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

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

Send contributions, articles, photographs (high resolution), drawings, information or suggestions to: the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Newsletter, 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3.

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

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 will be given to advertisements regarding IYCV events, IYCV sponsored events, and IYAC events.

REGISTRATION

Please visit our website:

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REFLECTIONS

FALL 2013



By Shirley Daventry French

“If one proposes to teach any science to increase the power of sense enjoyment, one finds multitudes ready for it. If one undertakes to show the supreme goal, one finds few to listen to him. Very few have the power to grasp the higher, fewer still the patience to attain it.”

– Swami Vivekananda

The above statement appears in the book *Raja Yoga* by Vivekananda in a chapter called “The First Steps”.

In the first sentence of the book he makes a clear statement that “all our knowledge is based upon experience.” The full title of this book is *RAJA-YOGA or Conquering the Internal Nature*, and includes Patanjali’s yoga sutras. We seek truth and want to experience it for ourselves. Yoga provides us with such a means using body, mind, breath and senses as spiritual tools. This involves disciplined practice—and in case we are not clear about this, Vivekananda emphasizes that “Practice is absolutely required!”

At the heart of yoga practice lies the eight-fold path of *astanga yoga*: *yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana, samadhi*.

Entering into unknown territory a yoga *sadhaka* requires courage, curiosity and ideally a guide. As a student of B.K.S. Iyengar I have had the honour of his

direct guidance for four decades. A consummate guide, he has been following this path for eight decades and probably longer. (I have heard many tales about this.) While I can learn from his experience and continue to benefit from this daily, I still have to make sense of my own experiences which are being perceived by my senses, experienced by my body and interpreted by my mind.

During the summer break I had time to do a lot of reading and reflecting before returning to Victoria to teach an intermediate teacher training course limited to certified Iyengar Yoga teachers at varying levels of experience. Their level of certification limits them to teaching a list of *asanas* and *pranayamas* stipulated by Mr. Iyengar, in the same way that a physician is restricted to certain procedures and interventions until he or she has had further training and demonstrated competence through practical and written examinations. During this period of training they will be supervised, as are all Iyengar teachers aspiring to pass a higher level of certification.

Some of the participants in the Victoria intermediate teacher-training were planning to upgrade to a higher level, some were thinking about it, while others came simply to enrich their teaching at their current level. All would have been seeking to deepen their learning. All would have had ideas about what was required, and my colleague Ann Kilbertus and I had our own ideas.

What we see often in assessments at intermediate levels is that teachers are more polished and confident and know more techniques and details than they did at Introductory level but something is missing: the breadth of their teaching is

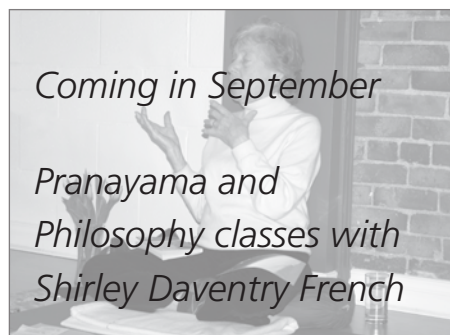
too narrow—generally too many points of alignment, principles not grasped, plus too many words many of which are unclear, ambiguous or unnecessary.

Many times, I have been fortunate to observe Mr. Iyengar training teachers; and his most common feedback was that they were using too many words which were not direct enough. Then, without catching that the students were confused and unable to follow them, they added new points. Our speech and use of words has to be examined by all yoga students, but for teachers it takes on special significance.

In our course, naturally we teach alignment but not purely from a structural point of view. It is part of learning to refine seeing: to see skin and beyond as well as bones and joints. Where does energy flow freely? What effect has the structural adjustment had on the flow of energy? Where is energy blocked and why? Where is support lacking? Where do we see stress and strain? The science of yoga involves all this and much more. It is an empirical study!

We endeavour to make students aware of principles which are unchanging rather than collecting a list of points which may be appropriate for some but not everyone. Students are individuals and unique. Points are varied and variable. Principles are not!

I always like to find a theme for this course which will build links between all of Patanjali’s eight limbs. And I found it at breakfast one morning in France while reading the *International Herald Tribune*. The article was called “Losing Our Way In the World.” The author, John Edward Huth, is a professor of physics at Harvard.



Professor Huth tells a cautionary tale about two harrowing kayaking trips off the east coast of New England where he was ill prepared for the elements. Thick fog rolled in obliterating the coastline. Wearing inadequate clothing and without a compass, he fortunately had the presence of mind to use natural clues. By observing the direction of the wind (southeast), direction of the swell (southwest), and sound of waves on the rocky beach (northwest), he was able to navigate to safety.

His second trip was much like the first except that he wore a wet suit but was still without a compass. However, he had learned the importance of noting wave and wind directions before leaving and stayed close to shore so when the fog became denser he could turn into shore and hug the coastline. In contrast to the panic of the first trip, he describes this one as “a relaxing contemplative paddle”. Two women paddling in close proximity to him were not so fortunate and drowned!

He began to question why he survived and they did not, and came to the conclusion that his observation of wind direction was the main factor. This experience led him into a study of navigation through environmental factors, like the Polynesian and Norse voyagers of old who traversed vast tracts of ocean in their small craft. One of his interesting conclusions was that in their era they were practising a form of science: empirical science.

It was not armchair learning but a process of observation of the phenomenal world around him, learning to concentrate the mind, refine the senses. He concentrated his mind, concluded that no one sign is infallible and organized his observations into “a navigational toolkit”. In his own words: “the way I viewed the world had palpably changed”.

As I was reading this article, I realised that in yogic terms his approach was akin to practising *pratyahara* and *dhyana*. Professor Huth was describing the fifth and sixth limbs of Patanjali's Astanga

Yoga which link the practice of *yogasana* to the contemplative aspects of yoga. In fact, he raises the possibility that his experience was a spiritual awakening! I was excited; here was my theme for the teacher training intensive. It was an interesting and sometimes frustrating week, but light did dawn for some participants!

The words of Swami Vivekananda preface this article, and the final words are from B.K.S. Iyengar's book *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*. Commenting on *sutra* II.54, this is what he has to say:

Pratyahara is the foundation of the path of consciousness. A bird cannot fly if one of its wings is cut off, so is it in the case of the sadhaka. The two wings of yoga are practice, from yama to pranayama, and renunciation, from pratyahara to samadhi. For flight, both are necessary. ॐ



Going Deeper

with Shirley Daventry French

An opportunity for all interested students to deepen their understanding of asana, pranayama and the philosophy which lies at the heart of yoga. Shirley is a direct student of the great contemporary yoga master, B.K.S. Iyengar. Since her first visit to Pune in 1979, she has returned regularly for further study.

Friday, November 1
6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Saturday, November 2
11:00 am - 2:00 pm
4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Fees:
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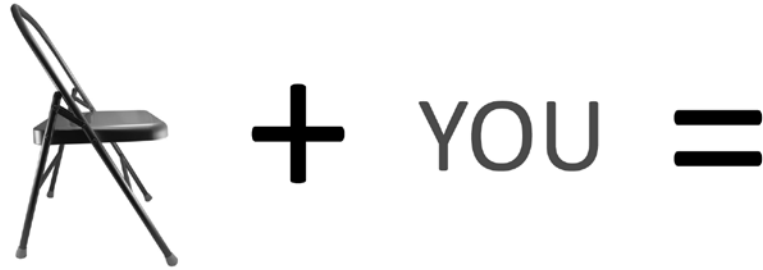
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October 6, November 10,
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Chris Saudek adjusting a student in twisting marichyasana |

Vairagya – Becoming at Ease with What Is

By Sharon Conroy

THIS ARTICLE APPEARED IN YOGA SAMACHAR, SPRING/SUMMER 2009. SHARON CONROY KINDLY ALLOWED US TO REPRINT IT.

Many years ago, inspired by Iyengar Yoga classes and a teacher's encouraging words, I set about establishing a home practice. Each night, I set the intention to wake up and go to my mat. Each morning, I was lured to do otherwise by the voices inside my head. One day, they might advise me to make phone calls before practice. Another day, they might tell me to give priority to a household task. Because I trusted them, I followed their advice. However, within a few weeks, I saw that the voices always found a way to sidetrack me from my practice. And the later I delayed it, the less likely the practice was to happen.

If my teacher had told me to go home and detach from my desires, I would not have known how to begin.

I began to suspect that the voices weren't as trustworthy as I'd always thought they were. Perhaps what they wanted and what I now wanted were quite different. At that point, I came up with a strategy to evade them. I'd wake up and immediately get on my mat and into a pose before I became fully conscious, before the voices could begin bombarding me with alternative suggestions for how to spend my time. The plan worked. While it took will power to get out of bed and onto the mat, I was getting there most days. And, while it took will power to detach from the thoughts that began to enter my mind as soon as I was totally awake, I was able to do so more often than not. With persistence, slowly but surely, over a period of about six months, it became easier and easier to turn my attention away from the voices. Instead of heeding their advice, I was able to continue with my practice.

I.15 *drsta anusravika visaya vitrsnasya vasikarasamjna vairagyam*

Renunciation is the practice of detachment from desires.*



Now, I can see that turning away from the voices inside my head over those first six months was an act, however small, of *vairagya*. If my teacher had told me to go home and detach from my desires, I would not have known how to begin. On the other hand, the concept of needing to practice the poses I was being taught in class was very clear and understandable. By establishing a home practice of *asana*, without even knowing it, I had also begun to practice detachment. *Abhyasa* and *vairagya* are inextricably interrelated. Using the body as a laboratory, I was beginning the journey inward toward my soul.

While Gururji says that *abhyasa* is the path of evolution and *vairagya* the path of involution, he also says, in *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, that the two are “interdependent and equally important.” (p. 64) As we practice *asana* in the Iyengar tradition, methodically instructing ourselves to approximate a more ideal alignment, we are using our mind to penetrate inward from the inception of our practice. At the same time that Gururji distinguishes their differences in his commentary to Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*, over and over again, he also proclaims the interdependence of practice and detachment.

“*Abhyasa* (practice) is the art of learning that which has to be learned through the cultivation of disciplined action.... *Vairagya* (detachment and renunciation) is the art of avoiding that which should be avoided. Both require a positive and virtuous approach.” (p. 6)

“*Abhyasa* builds confidence and refinement in the process of culturing the consciousness whereas *vairagya* is the elimination of whatever hinders progress and refinement.” (p. 16) “A bird cannot fly with one wing. In the same way, we need the two wings of practice and renunciation to soar up to the zenith of Soul realization.” (p. 16)

Abhyasa and *vairagya* form a unique double action. They are seemingly opposite processes which we must cultivate simultaneously. When we are able to do this, transformation happens.

Once I could get to the mat each morning, my practice deepened. However, the voices didn't disappear. In fact, they grew stronger when I was unsure of myself, more vulnerable. This was especially true when I worked on a pose that was new or difficult.

For about a year, *adho mukha vrksasana*, full arm balance, was such a pose. There were times I could get up easily and other

* Quotations are from the 1996 edition of *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* by B.K.S. Iyengar.

times I couldn't get up at all. When that happened, the voices escalated their arguments. They told me in many different ways that if I couldn't get up in this pose, then perhaps I shouldn't be doing yoga. Determined to learn full arm balance, I decided upon a strategy. Every day, I would practice the pose three times. If I got up, fine. If I didn't get up, fine. The voices saw things differently. Every time I didn't get up, they ridiculed me, told me that I'd never get the pose. After several weeks of this daily assault, I dismissed them bluntly and threatened harsher consequences if they didn't heed my words. To my own amazement, this worked.

My determination to learn full arm balance ultimately gave me my first experience of being able to practice *abhyasa* and *vairagya* simultaneously. On the mat, I was in the present moment and at ease with not being able to get up in the pose. At the same time, I was totally committed to evolving, to moving forward, to being able to get up in the pose consistently. I was holding the double action of *abhyasa* and *vairagya*, and my consciousness began to transform as the result of this work.

I'm very clear now that my goals and the goals of those voices were very different. The voices wanted to maintain the status quo, a place where they held a position of power and prestige. I wanted to move further along the path of yoga, towards something new and unknown. In retrospect, I think that my challenges with full arm balance marked a real turning point. Before, I'd always identified with the voices. After, I knew, without any doubt, that they were not me.

Later, as I became more familiar with the yoga *sutras*, I came to believe that the voices were my small self, *ahamkara*, the ego, fighting for its life. While the journey was just beginning, the spell was broken. I was no longer falsely identified with the ego.

I was the Self. That realization, however, did not stop the ego from trying to exert its influence in many different ways.

The more I practiced, the more I saw that the physical body enjoyed the status quo, too. If I took my arms up into *urdhva hastasana* from *tadasana*, the body took the path of least resistance. My thighs pushed forward and my shoulders moved back. The body evaded change. It reflected the ego's inability to see things as they are. In order to bring truth to the body, I had to use my mind in new ways. In order to maintain *tadasana* as I took my arms up into *urdhva hastasana*, I had to intensify the lift of the thighs and press them back firmly, while simultaneously taking my buttocks down and my arms up. If I worked in this way, not only did my body change, but my mind penetrated inward in new ways.

At one point during the 90th birthday celebrations in south India, Guruji said, "Unless your defects are pointed out, you will not change." My teachers help me know where to look when they correct me. I can only change what I can see. If I practice mechanically, I don't see. If I am present when I practice and open to doing things differently, then I begin to see with increasing clarity. In doing so, the ego's dominion is gradually reduced.

While there are always things I need to "do" in a pose, in recent years, I've begun to see that there are also many things I need to "undo," to relinquish. If I grip my buttocks, there's absolutely no way I can broaden the backs of the thighs. If my eyes and tongue are hard, I can't penetrate inward effectively. I'm doing a better job now of balancing *abhyasa* and *vairagya* and, because I'm integrating appropriate actions more effectively, my practice has become less effortful over the past 22 years. I seem to be moving along the path in the right direction.

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I've also come to see that the ego moves towards things that are familiar and tends to resist things that are unfamiliar or foreign. It behaves in a similar way on the mat and off the mat. It doesn't seem to be at all interested in transformation. Its primary concern lies in satisfying its own desires and in maintaining its own power, both of which are done best on home turf. The Self, on the other hand, resides in the present moment and moves fearlessly into unknown territory. It sees the truth and is at ease with whatever is happening. Given these differences, one way to measure our own progress is to notice how we deal with unfamiliar and foreign situations in our daily life.

From what I've observed, most of us need some time to become at ease in new situations no matter how dedicated our practice. For 12 years, I've organized week long yoga retreats at a Benedictine monastery. They are taught by senior teachers and attended by intermediate and advanced practitioners. Over the years, I've noticed that participants' personal likes and dislikes arise much more frequently during the first few days. Almost everyone experiences a certain amount of discomfort about the rooms or the food or some other matter. Then, by the third or fourth day, familiar with the setting, the participants become at ease with what is.

For me, *vairagya* has become just that—the process by which one becomes at ease with what is happening within the present moment. While cultivating such contentment takes time, it's fruitful to ask ourselves occasionally if we're making progress along the path. Can we let go of our personal or culturally induced desires and be at ease with what is happening in the present moment?

When a monastery retreat in our own country tests our ability to be at ease in the present moment, then we should not be surprised to discover that a trip to India can be even more challenging. We have been raised in a culture that tells us relentlessly that happiness lies in satisfying our external needs. Even when we are very clear that this is not true and are devoted to our practice, we have a lot working against us when we visit India for the first time. Ill at ease in foreign territory, the ego's likes and dislikes can begin to manifest quickly and become full blown in no time. We want things done our way, and we may not be able to get that no matter how we try to communicate our needs.

When we remind ourselves that India's culture, unlike our own, teaches that happiness lies within, all at once, we immediately see our complaints in a new light. How promptly the chai arrives and whether the new phone card works are perceived differently. We realize that this trip to Pune is about much more than taking classes with the Iyengar family and practicing at the Institute. We are novices in the practice of *vairagya*, visiting a culture where almost everyone may seem more adept

than we are. Fortunately, with repeated visits to Pune, many of us find our ability to detach from our own likes and dislikes increasing with each visit. Yoga works. Slowly but surely, we are making progress along the path of *vairagya*.

Recently, I've come to understand that age is also helping me to become a better practitioner of *vairagya*. According to vedic wisdom, our life is divided into four stages, *asramas*. Guruji describes the stages as follows:

"They are that of the student (*brahmacaryasrama*), the ordinary householder (*grhasthasrama*), the householder who begins to learn non-attachment (*vanaprasthasrama*), and finally that of the man detached from world thoughts and attached to God (*sannyasasrama*). The hundred-year span of man's life is divided into four parts, each of 25 years so that one may adjust one's life to evolve through these fourfold stages toward the experience of True Being." (p. 285)

At 63 years old, I am in the middle of the third stage of life. There is no question that since my early 50s, I have increasingly sought out situations that allow me to move inward. I welcome opportunities to practice silence. My *pranayama* practice has become much more important, and I keep lengthening the amount of time I sit at the end. I enjoy the practice of writing in large part because I learn so much from exploring myself to explore the Iyengar tradition and our practice of Patanjali's yoga.

I've also noticed that friends my age are moving in similar directions whether or not they practice yoga. What I'm coming to understand is that these *asramas* are not stages of life that are peculiar to Indian culture. Rather, they are stages of human development. No matter what particular culture we inhabit, we each live through each one of these stages. The difference seems to be that some cultures support particular stages better than others.

In the United States, people tend to "retire" during the third stage, *vanaprasthasrama*. Although there's little support for learning non-attachment in our culture, from what I have observed in my own family, there is an innate desire to do so. I distinctly remember my grandmother wanting badly to sell her large home and move into an apartment when she was in her 60s. Unfortunately, my grandfather felt differently, and she had to wait until he died to do so. I also recall my mother telling me when she was in her early seventies that as you get older, you want fewer and fewer things "to take care of." She was clearly saying that possessions had become much less important to her over the years. As we enter the third *asrama*, it might be fruitful to ask ourselves what we can put aside or relinquish. Which activities or possessions have begun to hinder our progress?

In terms of the fourth stage of development, *sannyasasrama*, rather than becoming detached from worldly thoughts and attached to God, the elderly who live alone in our own culture

What I'm coming to see now is the inherent beauty in the overall course of human development.

often suffer from depression. When they become unable to care for themselves, they move into assisted living facilities where they are offered many kinds of group activities to keep them busy and socially involved. Then, there is little opportunity to be alone and move inward in a productive way. And, while one does hear from time to time of a husband who moves into a monastery when his wife dies, this is a relatively rare event in our culture.

When it comes to passing out of this lifetime, we are notoriously ill at ease with this natural process. Having spent time with my grandmother and stepfather in the months immediately before they passed on, I know for certain that there is a gradual lessening of ties to the external world as one nears death. And, as hospice workers have told us for many years, the dying person's gradual detachment from the world around them is usually harder on the family than on the one who is dying.

Contrast our own culture's discomfort with death to an Indian tradition that clearly acknowledges and supports the challenges of the fourth *asrama*. When I was in Pune last December, I gave my condolences to a shopkeeper friend whose father had recently passed on. As the man began to talk about his father's last days, he described a Jain tradition by which his father divested himself of all his possessions once he knew his time had come. The father called his son to his side and formally handed over to him all the property he owned—the shop, the home, and everything contained in both. Then, the father spent the greater part of his final days alone, preparing himself to leave this lifetime. His culture gave him a way to formally relinquish everything for which he had been responsible. In doing so, he could be absolutely present to his own passing. Similarly, in some Native American tribes, an elder will go into the desert to die alone when he knows his time has come. Or, a Buddhist master may sit in meditation knowing that he is ready to leave his body. All three ways of passing on support and respect the needs and challenges of this fourth *asrama*.

Many years ago, when I obtained a graduate degree in child development, I learned that it is very important for young children to become attached to their primary caregivers. If circumstances prevent this from happening, children's development does not proceed in a healthy manner, either physically or psychologically, impacting the rest of their lives in major ways.

What I'm coming to see now is the inherent beauty in the overall course of human development. There's a natural tendency to

engage, to attach, to become part of the community into which we are born. And, there's a natural tendency to disengage, to detach, to take leave of the community as we approach our final days. There's a perfect symmetry to our life.

Over the course of the first two *asramas*, our attachments grow, and we accumulate possessions. Over the course of the next two *asramas*, we gradually disengage from everything to which we have become attached and divest ourselves of possessions.

I feel fortunate to have had elders in my family who have been in touch, and at ease, with the natural progression of human development. And, I feel especially fortunate to have a mother who, at 86, seems to be moving through the final *asrama* with grace and awareness. She is a worthy role model.

While our own culture gives us little guidance on how to move through the second two *asramas*, the path of Patanjali's yoga does. It gives us rich instruction on the nature of *vairagya*. Understanding of those teachings deepens as we ripen in years in our practice.

And, as practitioners in the Iyengar tradition, each of us is amazingly fortunate to have B.K.S. Iyengar as our role model. Here is a man who loves life and is fully engaged in his practice of Patanjali's yoga as he moves into his tenth decade. Guruji has shown us where this path can take someone who practices with devotion and intensity for 75 years. Equally impressive to me is the fact that he has lived his life in such a beautifully transparent way, generously welcoming us to his practices and openly sharing himself with students.

May we use Guruji's life as an inspiration for our own. May we honor our teacher by giving generously of what we understand to others. May our practice deepen so that we can inspire our students as he has inspired each of us. ॐ

© APRIL, 2009

SHARON CONROY IS AN INTERMEDIATE JUNIOR III TEACHER WHO HAS BEEN PRACTICING SINCE 1986. SHE STARTED THE IYENGAR COMMUNITY IN NEW ORLEANS AND TAUGHT THERE UNTIL KATRINA. SHE NOW HAS A CENTER IN GRAYTON BEACH, FLORIDA.

Emotional Maturity

By Leslie Hogya

Recently, I completed Georg Feuerstein's Distance Learning Course on Classical Yoga. It is a 200 hour course to be done over two years. One of the initial chapters told us, after a few pages of reading, "close the book, don't rush through the material." Perhaps I took that a bit too literally. It took me six years to complete this course; sometimes it sat on my bookshelf untouched for months at a time.

The material in the Classical Yoga course is partly based on Georg's own writings and research, the *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* and other ancient texts. One chapter was devoted to emotions, and included some questions for reflection, and on how these teachings pertain to my daily life. I used this chapter as the basis for my final essay.

Feuerstein states that Patanjali assumed the ancient student of yoga had the underlying understanding of the ethical observances, (the *yamas* and *niyamas*) and presupposes emotional maturity. He further says: "...emotions are an integral part of human existence... practitioners are not expected to excise all emotionality, but must step by step overcome negative emotions and refine or ennoble their emotional life...which contributes to greater social harmony and world peace."

The course introduced Sage Bharata (from 2000 years ago) and his list of the eight stable emotions. These are: love, grief, mirth, anger, vigour, fear, disquiet, surprise. I think it is no accident that love is at the top of Sage Bharata's list. Love, and I would add compassion,

sustain me through difficult times. Grief comes when there is loss, or suffering. Anger can be directed to positive action, when injustices have occurred, and my anger can be channeled to action. The opposite of that is when the anger I feel is because I didn't get something I wanted, my ego not rewarded for work done.

Fear comes when there is danger to safety, often from the unexpected. Disquiet, is an emotion perhaps not as strong as fear, but also comes when things are not as they should be. Surprise can be joyful, or negative, depending on the surprise. A friend arrived unannounced at the door with food for my dinner when I was unwell – this was a lovely moment of joyful surprise. Vigour, is what I must call upon to conquer fear, to find the source of disquiet, or come to the aid of someone in need. Mirth is a valued tool, when I am starting to feel cross at something that is quite inconsequential. On a good day, I lighten the atmosphere with a joke. My emotions often revolve around my ego, and its agenda for self satisfaction. The yogic goal is to move towards liberation. Love and mirth help me ride through some of the emotional mine fields that daily life serves up. Interestingly when I first wrote my final essay for the course, I omitted commenting on mirth. This was very telling and a wake up call to plumb my ability to laugh at myself. Mirth is an excellent tool to rid myself of negative emotions.

Another sage, Gupta, (10th century), added 'peace' to this list. He said: "without love, peacefulness is merely a state of empty withdrawal, while tranquility combined with love is a radiant positive state."

Feuerstein says of the mind: it "seeks to return to its natural peaceful mode, which includes an element of love, we can then always try to remember this truth in the midst of emotional agitation."

Yoga practice is the key to overcoming obstacles. *Sutra* 20 in Chapter I reads in part: "Practice with faith, energy and courage." B.K.S. Iyengar's comment on this *sutra* reads: "Practice must be pursued with trust, confidence, vigour, keen memory and power of absorption..." He goes on to say faith is mental and intellectual firmness. This *sutra* is a key for me, as I attempt to move forward with wisdom, courage, faith, and vigour!

The Sanskrit word *shradda* in this *sutra*, means faith. Feuerstein says: "faith when one stands firm in the deepest part of one's being, then has the courage to engage life authentically."

Emotions can take me by surprise, they can be triggered by memories that lead back to childhood events, or deeper hidden negative experiences. If someone is rude to me, I can suddenly find myself full of negativity. If I have the presence of mind to pause and find the courage to enlist my finer feelings, and to look for compassion, for tolerance, then perhaps I will not react in a way that adds to the negativity of the situation. Every day, I am given a chance to watch my responses to those around me.

Feuerstein says of the mind: it "seeks to return to its natural peaceful mode, which includes an element of love, we can then always try to remember this truth in the midst of emotional agitation."

Albert Schweitzer said: “Act humanely towards all. A person is ethical only when life as such is sacred to him/her.

The thinking person stands up more freely in the face of traditional truth – and feels the intrinsic and profound imperishable elements more strongly.”

Chapter one verse 33 is the *sutra* that Guruji quotes frequently and is a beacon of wisdom. It starts out with the Sanskrit words *maitri karuna mudhita upeksha* which exhorts us to be friendly, compassionate, joyful and indifferent to virtue and vice. The course helped me delve deeper into the *sutras* that continue to inspire and be pertinent for me today and everyday. *Namaste. ॐ*

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Note: Georg Feuerstein was a prolific author on yoga philosophy and translator of the ancient yogic texts. You can find out more about his courses at www.traditionalyogastudies.com.

Kannarakoti Venkatachri Parthasarathy

We are saddened to learn of the passing of Kannarakoti Venkatachri Parthasarthy, son-in-law of B.K.S. Iyengar and husband of Sunita Parthasarathy, daughter of Guruji. Sri Parthasarathy died on August 17, 2013.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Guruji, Sunitaji, and the entire Iyengar family.

Thank you Parthasarathy for your life of Iyengar Yoga. ॐ

Uptown Demonstration and Practice

By Johanna Godliman

Summer Solstice was upon us, and we all headed up to the sparkling new commercial space in the northern suburbs of Victoria known as Uptown.

Soo-Youn Ham organised a special Iyengar Yoga presentation as part of this year's Uptown Saturday Open House. Loaded with extra props, reference books and a pile of current schedules, I made my way up by bus to help set up the yoga table. Our location was next to a green oasis. One whole wall was covered with a climbing garden which hung over a narrow pool and nearby families with children played in a shallow pool, dotted with several small fountains. The yoga mats were placed in checkerboard fashion across a path at one entrance to the waterplay area, a barrier ribbon discretely crossing the path to prevent the children from splashing their wet feet across them. This was our designated activity area. Even so there were a number of curious pedestrians who deemed it quite normal to walk right over the welcoming mats in their shoes!

Participants began to roll up on bicycle and foot and before long there were

quite a few of us gathered together and ready to begin the first of two public sessions. Soo taught clearly and confidently against the back drop of the children engaged in their waterplay, despite the many distractions. Familiar faces of students and trainees from the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria and members of the public gathered to share in the summer practice in the open air.

Soo demonstrated strong standing poses: *tadasana*; *urdhva hastasana*; *vrksasana*; *uthitta trikonasana*; *uthitta parsvakonasana*; *ardha chandrasana*; *adho mukha svanasana* and others. Her teaching was at a steady, confident pace, adjusting and adapting for the level of student present. It was a very sunny and festive atmosphere. At the information table there was a constant flow of casual enquiries and engaged conversation with people who had done other kinds of yoga, or Iyengar Yoga before in other cities. Handfuls of Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Free class passes and summer schedules were handed out.

I enjoyed taking photographs and watching the locals coming out to sunbathe and chat as they watched the group practising their *asana*. It was a community atmosphere as the afternoon wound on and the sun shone brightly. In between classes we had a chance to share stories and experiences and some welcome iced tea. The central tower of the complex rose in almost medieval fashion above the central piazza that we were located in. After the second session and much fun and energy had been enjoyed it was finally time to repack the mats and head back downtown. Some of Soo's students joined us for a welcome meal on the wharf as we cooled down. Victoria gave us a fantastic day. ॐ



Extract from an Interview with Lauren Cox in *The Martlet*



Have you seen a trend or pattern in the popularity of Yoga in recent years in Canada?

Yoga has definitely been on the upswing. Victoria's Iyengar yoga community was established over 30 years ago and when we finally found a 'home' to call our studio (now over 12 years ago) we were the only 'kid' on the block. Now there is yoga offered in over four venues in the space of three blocks.

What is the best advice for beginning students in Yoga?

I would recommend finding a school with well trained, certified teachers. Start with a 'beginners' class to learn the foundation. Start with Iyengar yoga to learn the foundation well, as this will help to prevent injury and overdoing and give you a good safe start that can apply to so many things you do – not just moving onto a more strenuous, vigorous discipline – but to things like jogging, racket sports, swimming, golf and triathlon.

What do you think is the best health benefit of Yoga?

Yoga is great for muscular-skeletal issues, but it goes so much deeper! Your organs benefit which would benefit in sleeping patterns, assist in coping with stress, your digestion improves, your lymphatic system is enhanced, your endocrine system, your thyroid, parathyroid is invigorated and enhanced. The quality of life is so much better with yoga in it! Another crazy motto I share with students is "a dog a day keeps the doctor away."

How has Yoga changed you or if you can, please give an example of how it has changed or influenced individuals that you personally know?

Yoga has helped me reach my potential. I am better able to cope with the stresses of life. When I am better able to cope, I am a happier person. Practicing the various *asanas* and *pranayama* (breathing exercises) empowers one, gives clarity, equanimity and good health. The inversions and twists make one smart and keep one young. ॐ

A Conference of Cooperation

Leslie Hogya

In May of 2013, the local Victoria community hosted the Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada/Association canadien de yoga Iyengar's national convention. This involved finding a venue, organizing props, meals, and accommodation. On the national level, the professional development committee with members across the land was asked to develop a theme for the conference and a roster of teachers.

Phone calls, web meetings and many emails went back and forth around the country to start the planning process. It was decided that the Intermediate Junior III teachers would teach most of the classes and Senior Intermediate I/II teachers would do teacher training. We decided the best way to do teacher training was to teach the whole group of conference participants.

The theme of the conference was "interweaving the threads of practice" and we built the topics for each day on it.

As ideas flew about, it was settled that there were ten teaching spots and two teachers were assigned to each one. In some sessions two classes were running simultaneously, and for the main morning *asana* classes, we opted to put everyone together in a large split level room, which added to our challenges. Changes were made right up until the start of each day's sessions.

Ty Chandler and I taught together in the Friday morning *asana* session, and had only a very brief planning meeting. Around the hotel, you would see the teachers snatching a moment here and there to plan.

The teachers were: Barbara young (Ottawa, ON), Deborah Lomond (Kelowna, now in Nova Scotia), Louie Ettling (Vancouver, BC), Vicky Catchpole (Courtenay, BC), Judi Mirus and Teddy Hyndman (both from Edmonton, AB), Ann Kilbertus, Marlene Miller, Ty Chandler and myself, all from Victoria.

One of the highlights was a mega class, when we invited all yoga students from all traditions in the community and crowded 160 people together mat to mat. Afterwards we held a question and answer period. At that time we were joined by our most senior Canadian teachers, and a lively discussion followed.

In a spirit of congeniality and cooperation we practiced together, learned together and laughed with each other. The ten teachers shared their understandings of the work of B.K.S. Iyengar. In an interview with Shirley Daventry French, published in the Victoria 1996 newsletter, Gururji advised us to work together in our own country. He said exhaust your own teachers first before you have a variety of visiting teachers. Thank you Gururji, it is your teaching that inspires us. ॐ



to the IYAC Conference Volunteers and Donors

Thank you to all of the following for making the IYAC/ACYI AGM/Conference 2013 in Victoria such a huge success! It really was a celebration of community.

- The IYAC/ACYI Board and all the teachers for their support & assistance!
- Delivery of props to and from Harbour Towers: Arno de Boer, Jenny Trost, Linda Larson, Gary Wong, Jane Mcfarlane, James Currie-Johnson, Jill Williams, Bruce Cox, Brian Loughran, Johanna Godliman, Keval Kostyna, Linda Walker, Sara Bristow, Christina Peacock and Marlene Miller
- Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria and Peninsula Yoga for the loan of their props, chairs, and bolsters
- For handling the “prop kits”: Kelly Murphy, Tracy Harvey, Mary-Ellen Hannah and Linda Neville
- Jayne Jonas for taking on the huge job of PR and Registrar
- Gary Wong and Charles Campbell for working closely with her in these departments
- Charles Campbell for his ‘garuda’ logo for AGM/Conference 2013
- Jayne Lloyd-Jones for assisting us in promoting the Conference to the larger community and the various media
- Leslie Hogle and Carole Miller for being the liaison with Harbour Towers
- Leslie Hogle for being the liaison with the Teachers of the Conference
- Patty Rivard and her team for assembling delegate bags: Jane Mcfarlane, Johanna Godliman, Melissa Hadley, Jill Williams, Sarah Alpert,

Tracy Silberer, Karin Dayton and Amanda Mills

- Delegate bag gift donors: Vitamin Shop, Bay Centre, Tourism Victoria, IMAX Museum, Island Eye care, Half Moon Cards, Lole, Nanaimo Yoga studio, Rogers chocolates, Ellswear, Silk Road Tea, Brett Holland Roling, Hop-on Hop-off and Linda Neville
- Hillary McPhail for the many signs for shop and Registration and Display Board “Thanking our Sponsors”
- Marilyn Shepherd for taking care of logistics and setting up the altar
- Mary-Ellen Hannah for the lovely flowers
- Laine Canivet for overseeing set up of the shop and registration desk. Also: Maureen Nicholls, Ann Nolan and Johanna Godliman were there every day with: Keiko Alkire, Suzanne Tremblay, Martina Walsh, Bev Kallstrom, Melissa Hadley, Karen Delisle, Linda Benn, Patty Rivard, Sara Bristow, Tracy Silberer, Adia Kapoor, Carole Miller, Jill Williams, Krysia Strawczynski, Brandy Baybutt, Britta Poisson, Wendy Boyer, Glenda Balkan-Champagne, Jan Beckett, Karin Dayton, Jenny Trost, Christina Peacock, Soo Ham, and many more
- Greg Gale for the list of eateries and map for the delegate bags
- The volunteers for the security room: Susan Neden, Janine Bandcroft, Lydia Wiet, Sheila Redhead, Sharon James, Ann Smith, Sharon Broadley, Lois Badenhorst, Donna Brunette, Kim Fortin, Monna Huscroft, Deborah Chiasson, Stacey Frank, Heike Miller,

Cindy Rogers, Joni Mitchell and Magdalena Davvid

- Conference teachers: Ann Kilbertus, Marlene Miller, Leslie Hogle, Ty Chandler, Louie Ettling, Vicky Catchpole, Barbara Young, Judi Mirus, Teddy Hyndman, Deborah Lomond, and all the floor monitors and helpers during the yoga sessions
- Shirley Daventry French for providing the right words of wisdom
- Bhavantu Sound for the kirtan on Saturday night
- The staff at Harbour Towers
- Dave Emery for the loan of the bookcase
- The IYCV Board for all their support.
- Jayne Jonas, Johanna Godliman, and Melissa Hadley for acquiring sponsors from our local community
- ALL our sponsors and the donors of the lucky door prizes! Harbour Ferry cruise, IMAX, Ellswear, Rogers’ Chocolates, HopON HopOFF Bus, Victoria Tourism Board, Linda Neville for the cards, Halfmoon Yoga Props, Margot Kitchen, Norma Janes, Jayne Lloyd-Jones, Brett Holland, Certified Rolfer, Vicky Catchpole, IYCVictoria
- Restaurant sponsors who all gave 10% discount with our IYAC/ACYI AGM ID: Green Cuisine, Rebar, Puerto Vallarta Amigos, Le Petit Dakar, Camille’s, Old Vic Fish & Chips, Paradiso di Stelle, The Joint, Moka Coffee House, Niagara Grocery and Coffee Shop

And a big thank you to Lauren Cox, Conference Chair. ॐ



IN OUR MAILBOX

Dear Wendy [Boyer]:

I am writing to express the deep appreciation of the Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada/Association canadienne de yoga Iyengar to the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria for the generosity shown on the occasion of our recent Annual General Meeting and Conference in Victoria.

I know that the Centre's Board accepted this challenge with little notice last May. With the efforts of many volunteers, coordinated by Lauren Cox, and with the assistance of Leslie Hogya, Jayne Jonas, Carole Miller and many others, the AGM and conference was a wonderful event for Iyengar students from across the country. Many of the teachers at the conference are also teachers at the Victoria Centre and they shared some inspired teachings with the 150+ participants (which grew to almost 200 on Saturday with the open class). I hope the interest in Iyengar yoga shown by the non-Iyengar students attending on Saturday will translate into some new members for the Victoria Centre.

By closing the Centre for the duration of the conference and making props available to participants, your Centre exemplified karma yoga in action.

Please convey our thanks to the Board of the Centre and to all the volunteers who helped make this a memorable event.

Sincerely,
Drew Perry, President

Thank you Lauren and Fellow yogis:

To interweave the threads of practice and the demands of a conference was a BIG task. You did an amazing job of it all.

You brought together a large group of people, organized everything so well and continued to express kindness and patience. You truly showed the heart of yoga.

Thank you all so much.

Namaste.
Teddy Hyndman
Edmonton



Learning the Ropes: A New Twist With Lauren Cox

Part 1 Standing Poses
November 16, 2013,
11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Part 2 Twists
November 30, 2013
11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Each session \$30/\$35 non-members

To register, drop by or phone the
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria,
202-919 Fort St., Victoria, B.C.
V8V 3K3
250-386-YOGA (9642)

Member's Practice

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

There is no instruction given in this self-directed practice session. Props, books and other resources are available for the use of anyone who attends.

Come for 20 minutes or stay for 3 hours!

Salt Spring Retreat 2013

By Janine Bandcroft

Now and then life offers an opportunity to replace a nightmarish experience with something beautiful, and that's what happened for me the first weekend in June.

The nightmare was last year's painful poison oak experience halfway into the Footsteps of Patanjali workshop. The thought of going to Salt Spring Island again created much anxiety, but how could I turn down a chance to attend the Salt Spring Retreat. The Salt Spring Yoga Centre is so beautiful and welcoming, Shirley's experiential wisdom and Mr. Iyengar's teachings so transformative, my fear turned to joyful anticipation.

We arrived on Friday. Britta's pre-dinner restorative practice quieted our busy city minds and eased our travel stiffness. Simple *asanas* with long holdings was followed by a dinner of fresh garden greens and Thai coconut soup, and then a discussion circle focused on the climb up yoga mountain: *karma* (path of service), *jnana* (path of knowledge), and *bhakti* (path of spirit). Many of the participants expressed appreciation for the serenity that yoga has brought to our lives.

We learned more about Shirley. After immigrating to Canada in the 1960s with three young children, she found a course called "psychophysical exercises" while attending exercise classes at the YM/YWCA. Yoga hadn't yet taken hold in the west, but this class offered some introduction. Shirley and Leslie met there, and later worked together to bring the Iyengar style of Yoga to the Y, and also to found the Victoria Yoga Centre

During our morning pranayama practice Shirley reminded us that "awareness is the messenger of consciousness," and encouraged us to let go of our worldly concerns....Release!



Shirley demonstrating adho mukha virasana with a block



Student in urdhva dhanurasana

(12 years ago this September!). But first Shirley would find Gordon Limbrick, the only other yoga teacher in town, and be invited to a brand new course for prospective yoga teachers. From there, Shirley met Swami Rama, and she confessed it was the Yoga philosophy, more than the physical practice, that really held her interest. After meeting someone who had studied with Mr. Iyengar, Shirley's yoga journey was solidly underway.

"Yoga is the cessation of the fluctuations of consciousness," Shirley explained. We align the body, mind, and breath. Observe the body and the rhythm of breath that enlivens it. "Every pore of our being, every aspect, is involved in quieting the *vr̥ttis* of the mind. Find a sense of self that has nothing to do with your name or your role in the world. Put

all that aside in order to know yourself, which is at the heart of this journey of yoga."

Later that evening we were invited to attend a quaint wood fire warmed sauna, explore the grounds, or enjoy a healing massage. In the library, books informed on the *Yoga Sutras*, Indian and Buddhist philosophy and art, meditation, poems, and non-violent resistance. I was drawn to Sharon Salzberg's *Loving Kindness: The Revolutionary Art of Happiness*: "Life, composed of this mind and body, is in a state of continual, constant transformation and flux. There is always the possibility of radical change."

During our morning *pranayama* practice Shirley reminded us that "awareness is the messenger of consciousness," and encouraged us to let go of our worldly concerns....Release! I remembered Sharon's written words: "It is a state of peace to be able to accept things as they are...this universe is much too big to hold onto, but it is the perfect size for letting go." Beautiful synchronicity! I relished the quiet morning, the warmth from the wood burning fire, the profound connection of breath, mind, and body.

At breakfast I asked other yogis what they took away from the session. Sophie recalled Shirley's contemplation on the nature of sleep and the qualities that arise when we emerge each morning, conscious that we're here in this body for another day, to attend our individual purpose or duty. Giles noticed that his breath was hesitant and shallow as the session began, but it deepened and lengthened with the practice. We had calmed our *virtis*, allowed the mind to get out of the way so the body can do what it does best – just breathe.



Shirley guiding a student into virabhadrasana III

During our first *asana* practice, Shirley told us about Gurujii B.K.S. Iyengar who is 95 this year and still developing new ideas. We are each duty bound to maintain active and vibrant minds and bodies, she said. Ultimately there is no separation between the unique practices of *pranayama*, yoga, and meditation. We can learn techniques from our teachers, but ultimately it is through our own practice that we know

ourselves, and find the heart of yoga within.

About props, Shirley said, it's good to mix it up. If you're experiencing pain, then take them. Instead of "I can't," try "I can't today." Occasionally, try breaking from routine and go with less. Give your body a chance to know how an *asana* will feel on its own. Like everything in life, ask, "do I need this? Will it benefit me in the long run, or is it detrimental?" Remember that every day is different and discrimination is an

important tool. You are the ultimate authority over your body.

To exemplify, we removed all our props, including mats, to stand solidly on the studio's wood floor. "They didn't have mats when I started yoga," Shirley smiled. Her daughter, Rachel, was quick to add "and you walked ten miles to school." We laughed, and laughed again when Leslie added, "uphill



Jawahar Bangeria Intensive

Victoria is pleased to welcome Jawahar Bangeria back to Victoria

Jawahar has been a direct student of B.K.S. Iyengar for many years. In 1984 he accompanied Gurujii on a western Canada and U.S. tour. At that first visit, Gurujii inspired local teachers with classes at the local YMCA. He and his entourage were honoured at a gala dinner at the Crystal Gardens. This was the start of a series of lectures, teaching tours, and demonstrations during the '80s and '90s when Jawahar was fortunate enough to accompany Gurujii on his international

jaunts, which included visits to Edmonton and Toronto.

Jawahar teaches in Mumbai and is presently a trustee of the Light on Yoga Research Trust and partner in Yoga, which among other things, publishes *Yoga Rahasya*.

His years of dedicated practice and study have helped make him a teacher who inspires us to move deeper into our understanding of Iyengar yoga.

All levels intensive – pre-requisite:
knowledge of set up for shoulder stand

April 4 - 7, 2014

\$480 + tax for Complete intensive:
members

\$510 + tax for non members

**FRIDAY 12:00 pm – 3:00 pm,
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm (5 hours)**

**SATURDAY 10:30 am to 1:30 pm,
3:30 pm to 5:30 pm (5 hours)**

**SUNDAY 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm,
4:00 pm to 6:00 pm (4 hours)**

**MONDAY 10:00 am to 1:00 pm,
3:00 pm to 5:00 pm,
5:30 pm to 7:30 pm (7 hours)**

Refunds will be offered only if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$50 cancellation fee.

both ways!" Yoga is physically challenging and spiritually awakening, especially when it's joyfully shared.

As we moved through a series of asanas that encouraged mobility and stability Shirley asked us to think about the brain of each pose, the connection between body and mind, also the distinction between the brain and the mind. Over lunch Ann told me "I have more forward flexibility than I thought I did." Bev observed that sequencing makes a difference in how flexible she feels, and Dorothy agreed: "They are all difficult asanas for me, but Shirley's teaching really helped. She's excellent."

The next morning we learned more about the power of *pranayama* – Guruji's lung tests at 70 years showed the lungs of a 20 year old! Just half an hour each morning is enough, but be mindful, Shirley said, how you've slept will influence how deeply you practice. She



explained the importance of having physical comfort (a good bed, healthy food) for support during transitional spiritual work. At breakfast Shauna noted the solitude and beauty of Salt Spring's Yoga Centre makes it easy to release the ego and relax into the *pranayama* practice. Nigel described it as "an astonishing place with a sense of timelessness and permanence." Shirley's husband, Derek, said he's working on two *asanas* – the *asana* of invisibility, and extreme *savasana*.

A remarkable family, a welcoming community, and the natural beauty of Salt Spring Island together encouraged a transformative weekend of inspired awareness. With much gratitude to Shirley, Leslie, and Britta who organized and facilitated the marvelous Salt

Spring Retreat, and to the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria for its continued support and inspiration. ॐ

Congratulations!

Congratulations to candidates across the country who received certification.

The following teachers-in-training from our community passed their Introductory I assessment at our Centre this June:

Brandy Baybutt – Victoria,

Tracy Harvey – Nanaimo,

Jane McFarlane – Victoria, and

Suzanne Tremblay – Metchosin.

Tracy Silberer (who recently joined our Centre) also passed Introductory I this June in Calgary.

The following candidates achieved Introductory Level II Certification in Ottawa on the weekend of June 21-23:

Anne Marie Stewart – Toronto, Ontario

Davina Parkinson – Milton, Ontario

Doris Demers – Fredericton, New Brunswick

Christopher Sutherland – Barrhead, Alberta



Scholarships and Bursaries

Members' scholarships are available for:

Chris Saudek Workshop, September 27-29
and

**Going Deeper with Shirley Daventry French,
November 2-3**

Scholarship applications for these workshops are due September 11, 2013.

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

Applications for both are available at the reception desk. Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria

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

Farewell Satoko Ogura

OCTOBER 18, 1967 - JULY 2, 2013

On July 13, 2013, a large gathering filled the Church of Truth to honour the memory of Satoko Ogura, a long time member of the Iyengar Yoga Centre. During the ceremony the Buddhist Priest gave Satoko her Buddha name, Shining Compassion. This was Satoko.

She was in our teacher training program and completed her Introductory I level. The yoga centre is a bit like a family, and during the unbelievably hard last few years, the people in the community have reached out to her with help in so many ways: caring for her children Mila and Lucca, bringing food, walking the dog, driving her to appointments, and much, much more.

In Satoko's own words in 2009, she explained that she could not continue with chemotherapy and she wrote the following which she addressed to her yoga sisters:

"I had my deep understanding of something about life through this whole experience. I found I no longer need to continue. One of the best thing I learned and still learning is to appreciation. I appreciate to people to give this warming feeling inside. I appreciate everything and everybody. I needed this experience for my life. I had to be ill, so I learned to depend on someone. Being ill and weak I could see and hear better than I was healthy. I truly understand how people being sick, how hard their life would be. Being sick [I] found true friends. Through that I learned and learned and learned about myself. I also read lots of books. I felt like dead twice and I am so happy I am alive now. I only have a moment. It's not that I slept today and tomorrow comes, but I slept today and I only face today. I cannot afford to waste more moment. I am sorry I could not explain my feeling well enough in English, may not in Japanese! I can't wait to see you all!!

LOTS OF LOVE AND HUGS!!"



Britta Poisson spoke about her at the service and read this letter to us and finished with this quote by Rumi:

Every moment is made glorious by the light of love.



MYSTERIES, YES

Truly, we live with mysteries too marvelous
to be understood.

How can grass be nourishing in the
mouths of lambs.

How rivers and stones are forever
in allegiance with gravity
while we ourselves dream of rising.

How two hands touch and the bonds will
never be broken.

How people come, from delight or the
scars of damage,
to the comfort of a poem.

Let me keep my distance, always, from those
who think they have the answers.

Let me keep company always with those who say
"Look!" and laugh in astonishment,
and bow their heads.

FROM EVIDENCE: POEMS BY MARY OLIVER,
BOSTON, BEACON PRESS, 2009. P.62.

Yoga for the Youth: An interview with Guruji

Interviewed by Mr Subodh Tiwari, Kaivalyadhama, Lonavala

REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM YOGA RAHASYA, VOL.20 NO.2; 2013

There are increasing incidences of stress, depression, aggression, divorces and superficial lifestyles in the youth. What are your views on Yoga as a remedy for this pandemic?

Modern life is filled with anxiety causing various problems like stress, strain, depression and so forth.

Yogic practices bring forth emotional stability, intellectual clarity and generate affirmative and positive energies which help one for quick decision making. This saves a lot of energy which is lost in oscillations and vacillations which creates negative thoughts and eats away one's life force. Secondly yogic practices strengthen the nervous system and store energy rather than sap it. This builds up enduring power to bear the burden of life with ease and comfort.

YOGA:

- quietens the brain.
- gives time for the brain to reflect before acting strengthens quality of the mind
- makes the mind calm
- helps to discriminate the pros and cons of each action

As yoga plays a major role in quieting the activities of the brain, it gives time for the brain to reflect before acting. Secondly, they [yogic practices –ED.] strengthen the quality of mind and make the mind to remain calm which helps the thinking power to discriminate pros and cons of each action and guides one to work with wisdom saving lot of time and energy. Thirdly yogic practices help one to be fresh, alert and aware removing boredom from life and making life fresh and green.

Do you think that it is correct for us to modify certain practices to make it easier for the younger generation to understand Yoga?

Yoga has multiple facets. Each facet expresses new and fresh constructive thoughts all the time. As we are veiled with the *gunas* of nature — namely, *sattva* (illumination), *rajas* (activity) and *tamas* (inertia — heaviness and dullness both in body and mind), the yogic disciplines have to be adopted and adapted according to physical, mental, bio conditions. The yoga methodology has to be planned accordingly to break or brake the shackles of heaviness and dullness that are created due to



external environments. They help to experience lightness in the mind and freshness in the brain by doing right actions.

Actually yoga means integration. We have organs of action, senses of perception. Organs of action act as motor nerves, senses of perception act as sensory nerves. Yogic practices have to be done without jamming the motor or sensory nerves. There should be tremendous communication and communion between the two.

If space is created between the two, the mind automatically enters to feel the good or bad effects of the *sādhana*. With the help of the intelligence, the mind acts and guides the senses of perception (*jnānendriyas*) and the organs of action (*karmendriyas*) to function by understanding each other. This is *bahiraṅga samyama* or acts of integrating the external aspects of life force. When these work harmoniously and in concord with each other, then the mind moves towards *buddhi* [intelligence], *ahamkara* [ego] and *citta* [consciousness] to get united with the Core of the being. This is *antaraṅga samyama* or internal integration. If these two forces are together, integrated, then the flow of life becomes smooth.

So we have to help the youngsters to first grasp through senses of perception. Correct their wrong alignments and then make them to bring the conceptual thoughts which begin from the mind to the level of perception so that they follow the yogic practice with ease and comfort.

What is your opinion on teaching of *dharana* [concentration] and *dhyana* [meditation] to teenagers?

A teenager's body moves and acts faster than their minds. They have to be kept alert and well aware of what they see.

Seeing is direct knowledge. Hearing is indirect approach to the knowledge.

I want youngsters to see well of what they see clearly and correct what they see is not correct.

Secondly, a youngster's mind moves towards variety and not on monotonous thoughts. As attention comes under *dhāranā* and awareness on *dhyāna*, why not they be taught on how to keep themselves attentive in their practices and make them feel the oneness of mind and intelligence.

Thirdly youngsters are alert and factual in their bodies and minds. Hence they act fast and to a great extent they are not caught in the net of emotions. The elders are slow, sluggish and brood on the past or the future while youngsters do not think of the past or the future and live in the present. As such they live in *dhāranā* and *dhyāna* without such expression of words. Hence the sophisticated ways of *dhāranā*, *dhyāna* do not fit them as they are already in them.

Elders are afflicted with emotions more than youngsters. Hence to develop this emotional stability and to be free from these upheavals, the elders need *dhāranā* and *dhyāna* and not at all the youngsters.

Let the youngsters be taught to see fully and totally of what they see and then guide them how to build this up more intensely so that they know the finite—the body—mind and intelligence well which automatically takes them towards the highest and subtlest aspects of yoga.

What would be your advice to yoga teachers if they are asked to take an hour and a half workshop on yoga in a regular college/university? What should be the content of their session?

As the adage says, that a sapling can be trimmed, tuned and toned according to one's wish but a tree cannot be pruned so easily as a sapling. My advice is to make yoga as an essential subject so that their brawn and brain are evenly developed so that the brawn can bear the burden of life with ease and brain for quick judgement.

A sapling can be trimmed, tuned and toned but not a tree.

So, teaching yoga to the youth will prepare them to bear the burden of life with ease.

They have to be educated well in *annamaya kosha* (skeletal-muscular body), *prāṇāyāma kosha* (organic physiological body which is subtler to *annamaya kosha*). When these two are well understood or the training of mind is to be taught with the *manomaya kosha* with the idea of *ekatattva abhyāsa* (single pointed attention in action), friendliness, compassion and gladness to have poise and peace in mind. Then they are made to move towards *vijñānamaya kosha* (which has the power to discriminate right and wrong for right judgement), so that the mind and intelligence becomes single and circumambulate (*parikramā*) their frontier—the body—which helps the *ākāśhamaya* [space body] or *anandamaya* [bliss body] *kosha* to extend and expand without creating void inside the body. This is how it has to be planned. As *āsanas* and *prāṇāyāmas* are both expressive and experiencing fields of yoga, they have to be taught well so that they move on their own towards the core of the being and get established there. As this experiencing act is totally personal and individual, it cannot be taught but has to be cultivated whereas *āsanas* and *prāṇāyāmas* are open to one and all. Keeping this in mind they have to be taught.

As such we have to sit together and plan on the practical level and not with utopian ideas.

What is your opinion about setting up basic minimum standards for training courses in yoga? What would be principles which should govern the basic minimum standards, given the diversity of schools?

As I said in answering the earlier question, the basic minimum standards are ethical guidance which show the ways in the art of

In the Light of Yoga

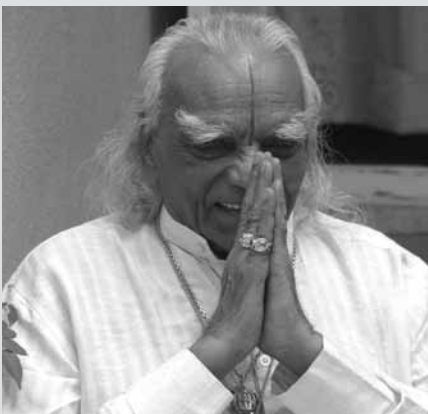


PHOTO: KEVIN MASON

Come celebrate the 95th birthday of Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar with yoga, food, and chanting!

**Saturday, December 14, 2013,
2:00 pm - 5:00 pm**

All are welcome at this free event.

Details to be announced.

Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202-919 Fort Street,
Victoria, B.C. V8V 3K3

(250) 386-YOGA (9642)
www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

living. The second is *āsana*— *prānāyāma* and *pratyahara* [sense withdrawal] which act as the *bahiranga samyama* as these help to bring the alignment between multiple parts of the body as a single unit so that their minds and intelligences co-mingle and get weaved through *prāna sakti* or energy in the *āsanas* and *prānāyāmas*.

As these two aspects have experimental values — they act as *vijñāna sāstra* (science) whereas *pratyahara* gets indirectly involved in internalising the mind and intelligence in doing *āsanas* and *prānāyāmas*. Stress, strain & speed of modern life which makes it a burden can be counteracted with right word, right word and right wisdom on yogic knowledge.

The third aspect of yoga — internal integration (*dhāranā*, *dhyāna* and *samādhi* [profound meditation]) needs matured knowledge and wisdom. I call it as Ph.D. course of yoga which is not meant for all.

Hence we can devote on the first five aspects of yoga which are perceptible and easy to follow. So let the students learn to endure the onslaught of the present day life that is filled with speed, stress and strain. These can be counteracted with right work, right word, and right wisdom of yogic knowledge.

How important are the concrete traditional practices such as *yama niyama*, *āsana*, *prānāyāmas* etc.? In ones pursuit in yoga, (development/growth/self-realisation) can one do away with these practices and derive results only with intellectual means?

A bird cannot fly with one wing. Similarly one cannot climb the ladder of spiritual knowledge without ethical and mental disciplines.

This body has been gifted by God. Hence this is the abode of the Self. As it is the abode of the Self, our first moral responsibility is to keep this body not only healthy but clean. It has to be sanctified with *āsanas* and *pranayamas* so that the mind which is close to the body, organs of action and senses of perception is made to move towards the core through conscious intelligence.

In short yoga is a *sarvanga sādhanā* [all-limb or whole body practice] as it works from the Core of the Being — Self—towards its frontier or its territory—the skin.

Patañjali in the 18th *sutra* of *Sādhana pāda* says clearly that those who like to live in *bhoga* [worldly enjoyment], no doubt derive benefit, but that is not permanent. Hence he advises to use yoga as — a *Lakshmana rekhā* [protective line; refers to line drawn by Lakshmana around Sita in the Hindu epic, *The Ramayana*] between *bhoga* and *moksha* [emancipation]. If *bhoga* is from *moha* [delusion], then freedom from *moha* is *moksha*. Yoga is open to both. It can be abused and amused or it can

be used as a polestar to move towards liberation, emancipation and beatitude. As life is filled with choices, yoga too gives two choices. One is *bhoga* and other is *apavarga* [final release]. It is for the *sadhaka* to choose the best, which is everlasting.

How do you think we can make Yoga popular amongst our youth without losing its traditional basis?

Now, the world has become so close that one can reach a destination easier and faster than the last century.

Body is universal and the mind is individual. The mind is the trouble-shooter or soother. Hence we have to use the body by the mind, for the mind and of the mind so that this individual dividing mind becomes cosmic and universal like the body.

Body structure does not change but the chemical changes take place due to this non-discreet mind and the external aspect, and the body suffers. Hence the body has to be used as a prop to train the mind and other aspects of the mind. Then there is no need to break or brake the traditional basics but to recondition them to fit in today's fast life.

Mahatma Gandhi took two aspects of yoga, namely truth and non-violence and sunk into them to know the real value of peace. Many others too did experiment with one or the other aspects of yoga and reached the pinnacle of life.

As I said before the perceivable things of man have to be re-conditioned and deconditioned which is see-able by all. Let this be a springboard to act further.

As the body is the base for *dharma sādhanā* [religious practice or duty practice], it is also the base for yoga *sadhana*. Today all over the world — the third and fourth aspects of yoga [*asana* and *pranayama*] have become global. This means they have gained popularity. A good deed is better than bad deeds. Let the practitioners be made to sink in these two aspects of yoga which are perceivable and conceivable. Let them dive deep and experience parity between body and mind bringing popularity amongst the masses. Then, they may be guided towards the nobler aspects of yoga without any complications.

Any other thoughts you wish to share on the theme of yoga and youth?

As the elements are universal, their atomic structures as well as the organs, muscles, joints, glands and all systems are universal. Yoga too is a universal subject which can be attempted by all without rhyme or reason.

I want all of us to see the subject in a universal spirit (keeping aside the *sakti* of 'I') so that the *sakti* of 'I' transforms into 'thou' and sees impersonally and guides without personification, the art, science and philosophy of yoga to reach not only those who are evolved intellectually but also those who are

undernourished physically and intellectually so that they too reach the level of the evolved intellectuals.

For this, the key is to unite the four hemispheres of the brain: *vitarka* [analysis], *vicāra* [insight], *ānanda* [bliss] and *asmitā* or I-ness) with the four emotional chambers of the heart (*maitri* [friendliness], *karuṇā* [compassion], *mudita* [joy] and *upeksā* [impartiality]). This union of head and heart is yoga and I consider this as a popular theme to make yoga popular and universal. ॐ



IYAC/ACYI ASSESSMENT DATES

October 4-6, 2013
Intermediate Junior II,
Calgary, AB

November 1-3, 2013
Introductory II,
London, ON

Thank You!

A special thank you to the June
Salt Spring retreat prop crew:
**Janine Beckner, Anne Churchill,
Dorothy Liedtke, Pauline Linzey,
and Heike Miller.**



Short WORKSHOP

Winter Solstice Workshop With Ty Chandler

December 20, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

December 21, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

FIRST NIGHT:

forward bend practice with inversions.

SECOND NIGHT:

backbend practice with inversions.

Not recommended for beginners.

Fees:

For one night:

\$30 + GST IYCV members,

\$35 + GST non-members;

For both nights:

\$55 + GST IYCV members,

\$65 + GST non-members;

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

Refunds will be offered only if your space can be filled
and are subject to a \$15.00 cancellation fee.



Membership

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

**Iyengar Yoga Centre
of Victoria Society
c/o Hilary McPhail
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria BC V8V 3K3**

Membership fee is \$40 + GST,
renewable each January.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Prov / State: _____ Postal code _____

Country: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

☐ Please mail me my newsletter as I do not
attend classes at the Centre.

☐ Receipt required.

Membership benefits include a 5% discount on classes,
a discount on workshops, advance booking for major
workshops, borrowing privileges in our library, free
members' practice, eligibility to become a board member
and eligibility for workshop scholarships!



IYENGAR YOGA
CENTRE OF VICTORIA

2013-2014 CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

- 7 IYCV Open House
- 21 Teachers' Meeting;
- 21 Chair Workshop
- 27-29 Learn with
Chris Saudek

OCTOBER

- 6 Practice Enrichment
- 19 Teachers' Meeting
- 24-27 Stephanie Quirk
in Sidney, BC

NOVEMBER

- 1-2 Going Deeper
- 10 Practice Enrichment
- 16 Ropes Workshop –
Standing Poses
- 23 Teachers' Meeting
- 30 Ropes Workshop –
Twists

DECEMBER

- 8 Practice Enrichment
- 14 Guruji's Birthday
- 20-21 Winter Solstice

JANUARY 2014

- 1 New Year's Day
Practice
- 4 Classes resume
- 5 Practice Enrichment
- 11 Teachers' Meeting
- 25-26 Heart of Yoga

FEBRUARY

- 15 Teachers' Meeting
- 23 IYCV AGM

MARCH

- 15 Teachers' Meeting

Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Presents

the Heart of Yoga

January 25-26, 2014

An Intermediate Workshop
with Shirley Daventry French
and Ann Kilbertus

Saturday 10:30 am - 1:30 pm
Saturday 4:00 - 6:00 pm
Sunday 12:00 - 3:00 pm

Shirley is a direct student of B.K.S. Iyengar. Since her first visit to Pune in 1979, she has returned regularly for further study. The founder of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria, Shirley has been the driving force in making the Victoria Iyengar Yoga community one of the strongest and most viable in Canada. Students from across Canada and around the world have studied with her.

Ann has been a student in the Iyengar tradition for over twenty years. She continues to study with Shirley Daventry French and has been teaching since 1988 locally and nationally. Ann began going to Pune, India in 1992 and returns every few years to study with the Iyengars. Her practice and training as an occupational therapist offer a valuable contribution to further understanding of this work.

Fees: \$168 + GST members
\$184 + GST non-members

Registration opens:
December 9, 2013 for IYCV members
December 16, 2013 for non-members

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

Refunds will be offered only if your space can be
filled and are subject to a \$50.00 cancellation fee.





IYENGAR YOGA
CENTRE of VICTORIA

NEWSLETTER
W I N T E R 2 0 1 3



जन्मदिनशुभेच्छा:

Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Presents

the Heart of Yoga

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Refunds will be offered only if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$50.00 cancellation fee.



Jawahar Bangeria Intensive

*Victoria is pleased to welcome
Jawahar Bangeria back to Victoria*

Jawahar has been a direct student of B.K.S. Iyengar for many years. In 1984 he accompanied Gurujii on a western Canada and U.S. tour. At that first visit, Gurujii inspired local teachers with classes at the local YMCA. He and his entourage were honoured at a gala dinner at the Crystal Gardens. This was the start of a series of lectures, teaching tours, and demonstrations during the '80s and '90s when Jawahar was fortunate enough to accompany Gurujii on his international

jaunts, which included visits to Edmonton and Toronto.

Jawahar teaches in Mumbai and is presently a trustee of the Light on Yoga Research Trust and partner in Yoga, which among other things, publishes *Yoga Rahasya*.

His years of dedicated practice and study have helped make him a teacher who inspires us to move deeper into our understanding of Iyengar yoga.

All levels intensive – pre-requisite:
knowledge of set up for shoulder stand

April 4 - 7, 2014

\$480 + GST members
\$510 + GST non members

FRIDAY 12:00 pm – 3:00 pm,
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm (5 hours)

SATURDAY 10:30 am to 1:30 pm,
3:30 pm to 5:30 pm (5 hours)

SUNDAY 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm,
4:00 pm to 6:00 pm (4 hours)

MONDAY 10:00 am to 1:00 pm,
3:00 pm to 5:00 pm,
5:30 pm to 7:30 pm (7 hours)

Registration opens January 27, 2014 for 2014 members
and February 3, 2014 for non-members.

Refunds will be offered only if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$50 cancellation fee.

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SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: JANUARY 15, 2014

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IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA

SOCIETY is a non-profit society incorporated under the *Society 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 Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

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

Send contributions, articles, photographs (high resolution), drawings, information or suggestions to: the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Newsletter, 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3.

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

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 will be given to advertisements regarding IYCV events, IYCV sponsored events, and IYAC events.

REGISTRATION

Please visit our website:

www.iyengaryogacentre.ca for full information on classes and workshops.

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

Phone: (250) 386-YOGA (9642)



On December 14th of this year, Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar will celebrate his 95th birthday. As we do every year, in Victoria we will mark this occasion with a special gathering. During my first visit to Pune in 1979 we were scheduled to end our intensive course and leave a couple of days before his 61st birthday, but at the close of the final class we held our own small celebration with flowers, an eggless cake and a rousing rendering of *Happy Birthday!* Each year since then this has been a very special date for me. Many times I was in Pune and joined the official program at the Institute honouring the birth of this extraordinary teacher.

It is amazing how many people they are able to pack into the Institute main hall. In my youth I commuted on the London Tube in rush hour for many years, so I know what it's like to be absolutely jammed up against various strangers; but this pales beside the number of people they manage to cram into limited spaces in India. The first time I was present at one of these large events, I went very early to choose an ideal spot where a small person would be able to see Gurujī and get a good perspective of the scene. I found a blanket to sit on the hard tile floor and sat cross-legged in *swastikasana* as is the custom and waited. Fortunately I am quite comfortable sitting this way. And then the mass of people began to arrive and a cry of "Move down. Move down!" resounded throughout the hall—and by the time

Gurujī arrived, rather than spreading my knees out to the side, they were almost under my chin!

In India the practice of surrender is learned in a number of ways from a variety of experiences throughout each and every day!

All birthdays are special, of course, but to paraphrase the familiar quote from George Orwell's *Animal Farm*: "some are more special than others"! In addition to the growing number of Indian students who practise Gurujī's method of yoga and those senior students who visit almost every year, many others are likely to want to make this pilgrimage. One such occasion was Gurujī's eightieth birthday when the celebrations lasted several weeks commencing with a special course taught by Gurujī to a large assembly of international students from all over the world. Gurujī was supported by all his family in various ways throughout these long days; but during the *asana* and *pranayama* classes, whenever Gurujī needed to take a rest, his son Prashant was called upon to step up on the platform and carry on teaching until Gurujī was ready to resume. In this same way Gurujī has trained his oldest daughter Geeta to sustain and develop his work—and in recent years his granddaughter Abhijata.

The end of a decade and the halfway points between decades are often accorded special recognition. With this in mind the editor of our newsletter

approached me about a fitting way to recognize Gurujī's ninety five years on earth and his immeasurable contribution to Yoga worldwide. Searching through archives of old newsletters he had come across a special issue we produced for Gurujī's eightieth birthday and asked me if I would be open to their reprinting an article I wrote for that publication, titled "Portrait of Gurujī". Before answering him I wanted to read the article again and consider its relevance fifteen years later.

Because life moves on apace, I am not keen on reprinting articles I wrote years ago, preferring to explore and clarify concepts and ideas arising from today's practice and reflection. However, having found and perused this 80th Birthday Tribute, I decided that it contained glimpses of Mr. Iyengar the man as well as B.K.S. Iyengar the Master Teacher which could be of interest to today's generation of students. Probably a majority of our current members had seen neither this issue nor this article¹.

Gurujī's life and work is a synthesis of the three major branches of yoga: *jnana* yoga (the path of knowledge), *karma* yoga (selfless service) and *bhakti* yoga (the path of devotion).

In 1998 our Eightieth Birthday Tribute was published by the Victoria Yoga Centre as a gift not only from us but also on behalf of Gurujī's pupils all across Canada. We sought and received contributions from coast to coast of this vast land. In the ensuing fifteen years, as our work increasingly reflected our

Gurujī's life and work is a synthesis of the three major branches of yoga: jnana yoga (the path of knowledge), karma yoga (selfless service) and bhakti yoga (the path of devotion).

¹ The Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria first published its newsletter in 1981. Archived copies of most past issues may be found in the Centre's library. If a particular copy is not available contact the main desk or one of the newsletter committee members.

devotion to Guruji and his work, we began considering a name change to the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria. As we had incorporated as the Victoria Yoga Centre in 1976, such a change needed support of the Board of Directors and the vote of general membership. Having overwhelmingly received that support I was the messenger who asked Guruji's permission in Pune in 2004. We are a not-for-profit society and a registered charity, and our application ran into a few obstacles. The name change became official in 2005 and our President of that time, Silvia Vilches, wrote in the newsletter:

This spring there was a small delay with the legal registration of our name change, as a clerk apparently did not recognize "Iyengar" as a unique name! In order

We are honoured to be members of the worldwide Iyengar Yoga family, trusted by Guruji to bear his name.

to appeal this decision I brought along the Time Magazine feature showing Mr. Iyengar as one of the 100 most notable people of the 21st century, although in the end I think they recognized their own error.

We were studying and teaching Iyengar yoga for many years before this name change—and the work goes on apace today. We are honoured to be members of the worldwide Iyengar Yoga family, trusted by Guruji to bear his

name. This is a tremendous privilege which brings with it the duty to follow his guidance and precepts. The classes we teach and the teachers who teach them are bound by self-restraint which, rather than limiting us, liberates knowledge and strengthens those two pillars of yoga: *abhyasa* (practice) and *vairagya* (renunciation). Guruji's practice and teaching along with the many books, articles, films and videos of his work guide us daily in our own practice of Yoga towards the Light.

Happy Birthday Guruji,
With love and gratitude
From your pupils in Victoria,
British Columbia ॐ



PHOTO: KEVIN MASON

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202-919 Fort Street,
Victoria, B.C. V8V 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)
www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

In the Light of Yoga

*Come celebrate the 95th birthday of
Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar with yoga,
food, and chanting!*

Saturday, December 14, 2013, 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm
All are welcome at this free event.

Birthday Celebration – Hanuman Leaps

- 2:00 – 3:00 Asana class led by Shirley Daventry French
- 3:15 – 3:30 Tree of Yoga – Brandy Baybutt
- Peace Dance – Brandy Baybutt, Aleta Mullane
- 3:30 – 3:50 Hanuman Leaps with storyteller Margo McLoughlin
- 4:00 – 5:00 Kirtan performed by Bhavantu Sound.

Join in with Ty Chandler and Tia Benn.

Birthday cake and homemade sweet and savoury treats will be made in honour of our revered Guruji B.K.S. Iyengar on this special day, celebrated world wide.

A Portrait of Guruji

by Shirley Daventry French

Not a day passes when I do not feel grateful to B.K.S. Iyengar for the Light which he has brought into my life.

There is a large portrait of Guruji in my yoga room and I have placed a statue of Patanjali on one side and a statue of the dancing Siva or Nataraj on the other. Patanjali is an incarnation of Lord Adisesa, the serpent God, and the statue depicts his upper body in human form and lower body as a coiled serpent. To me, Siva and Patanjali symbolise different aspects of B.K.S. Iyengar, and their images have become an altar or focal point for my yoga practice. I always begin and end with a prayerful salute before this altar, seeking divine guidance and expressing gratitude for the teachings of yoga.

In the Prologue to his book *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, Guruji describes the process by which Adisesa came to manifest in human form. The Lord Siva played an important role in this event and influenced the path Patanjali would follow here on earth.

It is said that Lord Vishnu was seated on Adisesa, Lord of serpents, watching the magnificent dance of Lord Siva. As the dance progressed, Vishnu became heavy, making it uncomfortable for Adisesa to support him. When the music stopped, Vishnu became light again and Adisesa enquired what had happened. Lord Vishnu explained that the beauty and majesty of Lord Siva's dance had created vibrations within him which had made him heavy, and Adisesa professed a desire to take human form and learn to dance.

Lord Vishnu predicted that not only would this come to pass and Adisesa would be able to devote himself to perfection in the art of dance, but Lord Siva would command him to write treatises on grammar, *ayurveda* and yoga. And so Adisesa took human birth and in the form of Patanjali produced three



*“Convert talent into genius
by hard work and
uninterrupted sadhana.”*

— B.K.S. Iyengar

great works: a grammar for the cultivation of language; a book on *ayurveda*, the science of life and health; and finally the yoga *sutras*, a guide for mental and spiritual evolution.

Patanjali obviously made the most of his birth because he also became proficient in the art of dance and, in the same way that students of yoga pay homage to Patanjali as the father of Yoga, Indian classical dancers acknowledge him as a great dancer and an inspiration for their dancing.

Siva is one of a triad of major Hindu Gods which includes Brahma, the creator,

and Vishnu, the preserver. Siva is the destroyer, but is also known as the compassionate one and his presence is very helpful in destroying those obstacles which interfere with spiritual progress. Siva dances the *Tandava*, the dance of death but he also dances the dance of creation. My statue depicts him dancing on the back of a turtle which symbolises the ego. It is not easy to overcome the power of the ego; it takes all of Siva's fire and passion. It is impossible to make progress on the spiritual path until the ego is diminished, its dominance replaced with that of the Divine. We need our ego for this earthly existence, but not a very large one. The turtle is small, baby-like, reduced to size. In fact, in my statue of Nataraj, the turtle has a baby's face.

I have seen Guruji dance the *Tandava*. It is well known that in his classes he tramples on egos with impunity; but what is not so often remarked on is that the purpose of this diminution of ego is to reveal the Divine Light within. This dance of destruction is also the dance of creation. I know, because I have experienced it myself.

Guruji does whatever is necessary to remove the veils of ignorance which obscure the light and prevent us from getting in touch with our individual spark of divinity. In Sanskrit this is called *atman* or *purusha*, and in English may be referred to

as our true self or soul. The window of opportunity for Guruji to accomplish this task is generally small. With his foreign students he will see them at best every year or two, and perhaps only once or twice in a lifetime for brief periods. You can rely on the fact that he will not waste this precious time.

In fact, he does not waste time at all. A day in the life of Guruji is filled from dawn to dusk and beyond with yoga in all its aspects: his personal practice, plus interactions with pupils and family as well as constant worldwide demands from those who wish to benefit from the acquired wisdom of this elder statesman.

Guruji never neglects his practice and, since he generally practises in the open studio at the Institute, many of us have been able to observe him practising. This is another dance, a prayer dance, offering the fruits of the practice to the Divine. He becomes so completely absorbed in his practice that you may not notice he is there; something which could not possibly happen when he is in teaching or performing mode.

Once, when studying at the Institute, my colleague Marlene Mawhinney and I arrived a little late for *pranayama* class. We had an interview with Guruji, and you don't cut that short! It was a huge class and we had trouble finding enough space for ourselves and our equipment, but managed to squeeze into a back corner behind a pillar close to the balcony. Geetaji was teaching. First we did *pranayama* in *savasana*, and then she asked us to sit up. As I turned to arrange my blankets, to my surprise I discovered Guruji wedged into an even smaller corner next to us doing a restorative practice. How long he had been there, who knows? Neither of us had an inkling that he was there; we had not heard a sound or felt any disturbance.

Not only did this demonstrate Guruji's ability to withdraw and to all intents and purposes become invisible, an accomplishment Patanjali mentions in the third chapter of the *yoga sutras*¹; but it showed another side of his nature, his humility. How many teachers would make do in their own Institute when they had the unquestioned right and authority to ask that others move and space be made available for them?

When Guruji gives a public demonstration it is yet another form of dance, beautiful and fluid, delighting and inspiring his audience — an incomparable artist!

Like Patanjali, Guruji's productive life has brought him prominence in many fields. A consummate teacher and

practitioner of Yoga, he is also an author of many books including the definitive text *Light on Yoga*, that is sometimes referred to as the Bible of yoga. Together with *Light on Pranayama* and *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* it forms a veritable fount of yogic wisdom for serious students of yoga.

Guruji has also followed Patanjali's footsteps into medicine with his work with health problems and injuries. Sometimes he refers to himself as "a practical doctor." When my husband Derek, who is a physician, was in Pune following Guruji around looking at various cases and trying to understand what was going on, he asked Guruji about one woman. Why had Guruji put her into that position? And Guruji replied, "Because it works!" And it does work!

Guruji's consideration for others was evident on another

occasion, a particularly joyous one for Derek and I, when he stayed as a guest in our home during his 1984 visit to Victoria. Much energy had been devoted to getting our house in order (on many levels) to make the most of his short visit. With the help of Derek's mother who lived with us, we prepared special vegetarian dishes, no eggs. It was early September and we had a vegetable garden full of wonderful salad makings, but word had reached us

that Guruji was not keen on raw vegetables so I cooked an Indian meal. I was also told he liked warm milky deserts, so I prevailed on my mother-in-law to make a traditional English rice pudding. He really seemed to enjoy this and expressed great appreciation of the whole meal, but I am sure he would have been diplomatic even if it were not to his taste. Conversation around the dinner table, or anywhere else for that matter, with Guruji is always stimulating, and this was no exception.

Guruji is also a wonderful companion on expeditions. While staying with us we took him down to the park and beach close by our home, and despite a cool blustery day he revelled in the fresh air coming off the ocean and the beauty of the area. He said this was a special place, and we should not move unless it was to another place with such an atmosphere.

I also had the pleasure to accompany Guruji to Niagara Falls when he came to Toronto in 1993. He had a very tight itinerary, and when he first expressed a desire to go to the Falls, I thought there was not really enough time, that he would find it tiring, and questioned his decision. "No," he said, "This is one of the wonders of the world and I would like to see it while I am there." And so it came to pass, that Hilda Pezarro and I went with Guruji and his entourage to Niagara Falls in a van driven by Andy Orr of Toronto. As we arrived at the Falls it literally poured with rain, but Guruji was out of the car in a minute and standing up on the wall, plastic raincoat billowing

1 "By control over the subtle body, the yogi can suspend at will the rays of light emanating from himself so that he becomes invisible to onlookers. He may again make himself visible by bringing back the power of perceptibility."

— B.K.S. Iyengar, *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, Vibhuti Pada, III.21.

in the wind, revelling at the splendour of the falls. Laughing, we followed him to drink in this sight. Yes, they are indeed one of the wonders of the world, and consequently the whole area was packed full of people. If I had gone on my own I would have probably baulked at lining up for the Maid of the Mist, the boat that takes you close to the falls, or the tunnels which go under the falls and other tourist attractions, but Guruji wanted to see it all. And so we did, and the time waiting in line passed quickly because of the animated conversation which Guruji always generates.

This was a lesson I needed to learn, that the whole day was the experience, including the time spent driving there and standing in lineups, and not just the peak moments. Guruji is a good example of the yogi's creed to live each moment to the fullest.

Occasionally, when a disgruntled student complains about what they perceive as harsh treatment from Guruji, I have heard another respond that he's only human and that it is his human side which shouts or loses his temper. I don't agree with this. In class, I think it is the Guru side of him that does this, trying at all costs to help an imprisoned soul find freedom. Whether they like him or not, like his methods or not, there is the purpose of spiritual awakening. Outside of class, while Guruji can be quick and impatient and sometimes gets irritated by the events of life just like the rest of us, he is often quiet, humble and modest — almost shy on occasions — and with one of the liveliest senses of humour and most infectious laughs I have ever heard. When he is teaching he functions from a different, deeper place with the best interests of the student very much at the forefront. To some extent I see the classes as theatre, with Guruji acting out different roles to elicit certain responses from his students, and he is a great character actor with the talent to play a variety of roles.

This great contemporary Master of Yoga, unparalleled

teacher, celebrated author, speaker, diplomat, unofficial ambassador for his country and culture, has another role of great importance to him: that of philanthropist. Never forgetting the humble roots from which he came, his early struggles to survive and establish himself on the path of yoga, Gurugi is a benefactor to many charitable causes in Bellur, his native village; in Pune, his city of adoption, and throughout India.

I consider myself fortunate indeed to have found such a teacher, to have been taught by him directly, and to have known him personally. Such blessings carry responsibility to share what we have been given. The teachings are universal and all of us who have received the teaching of B.K.S. Iyengar, directly or indirectly, have a role to play in keeping this Light alive in our own practice and our interactions with the world and all its creatures.

Thank you Guruji for devoting your life to yoga, for the grace of your teaching, for your many blessings and the stream of consciousness which emanates from Pune into our community. Congratulations on your birthday and may your journey continue to be illumined by the Light. ॐ

Practice Enrichment Series

With Ann Kilbertus and Ty Chandler

Sunday afternoons 1:00 - 4:00 pm

December 8, 2013 & January 5, 2014

Commit to this series to advance your personal practice of *asana* and *pranayama*. The series is designed for serious intermediate and advanced students in the Iyengar Yoga tradition.

Students will be guided in a strong practice over each three hour session. Each month will build upon the previous month's work to unlock individual challenges.

NOTE: Instructor permission is required to attend.
\$45 each session or \$90 for both

Billet at a yogi's House in Victoria

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To make arrangements, just call the IYCV at 250-386-YOGA (9642).



Chris Saudek Workshop

Held September 27-29

*Intensity, effort, change;
expanding beyond your
limitations*



Chris Saudek adjusts student in Eka Pada Rajakapotasana



Kapotasana





Happy Birthday Geeta

Gems from Geeta

By Leslie Hogya

For many years, I have travelled regularly to Pune to study with the Iyengars. My main teacher on these visits has been Geeta Iyengar, Mr. Iyengar's daughter, and disciple. I also have gone to Portland, Las Vegas, Yasodhara Ashram, Vancouver, and Penticton when she has come to North America.

I recently delved into my notebooks to find the following snippets from her talks and teaching. Thank you Geetaji for your dedication and devotion. Once asked if she felt as she was in the shadow of her father; "No," she said, "I am in his light."

Geeta's words appear throughout this issue.



Geeta's Words

We look at mirror and always see face first, even if we are going to comb our hair, we don't get passport photo of our legs. But we need to study ourselves, and see we are not doing such things as projecting our thighs. But we know if there is a fault in our skin. We know exactly where to put our lipstick on. This is ego, *asmita*.

She told a student to descend the trapezius (muscle at back of neck) and said, "We hold our sins there."

Pratyahara: sense withdrawal, the fifth limb of *astanga* yoga.

Our skin on outside, we have to move it in to be in touch with muscle fibers.

We go to a concert to listen to music. Nothing is wrong with that, but it doesn't transform our cells. In yoga we go in.

Learn to listen to inner sounds. Our eyes look out, we need to look in. ॐ

Thank You!

Adia Kapoor for donating *The Ramayana* (in comic book form!) to the library

Tracy Harvey for great photos of the Chair workshop

Leslie Hogya for volunteering to teach the Chair Workshop

Ann Kilbertus for volunteering to teach the Working Wisely Workshop

Lucie Guindon for cleaning out the storage unit and colour coding each pair of ropes



IYENGAR YOGA

Teacher Training Intensives

July 7-12, 2014

Introductory I and II Syllabi for uncertified Iyengar yoga teachers

August 11-15, 2014

Intermediate Junior and Senior syllabi for certified Iyengar yoga teachers

Fees for each course:

\$585 CDN + GST IYCV members

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Refunds will be offered only if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$50 cancellation fee.

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www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

Pre-classical Yoga

by Jana Bodiley

JANA BODILEY IS AN IYENGAR YOGA TEACHER TRAINEE IN NANAIMO.

Pre-classical yoga refers to yoga of the time from around 1500-1000 BC up to the time of Patanjali. Older yogic roots are found in the Vedas, four ancient scriptures: the Rig Veda, Sama Veda, Yajur Veda, and Athana Veda. These scriptures are thought to have been seen by *rishi* (seers) and to hold the wisdom of the Vedic civilization of India. But in the pre-classical era, knowledge of yoga developed further as a method of working towards unity of body, mind, emotions, and intellect, and of joining the individual self to the universal self in philosophical speculations called the *Upanishads*. Veneration of the master as one who has divine qualities originates during the time of the *Upanishads* but the practice of yoga was reserved for an elite few. A lineage of gurus and disciples studied and practised the teachings, keeping them alive through generations, however, the existing knowledge about yoga was considered to be too sacred to be made widely available. It was not until Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras* appeared that this way of thinking began to change. The *Sutras* are offered to all of humanity from the very first *sutra*: "*atha yoganusasanam*" – now begins an exposition of the sacred art of yoga.

Somewhere between 500 and 200 BC, the sage, Patanjali codified and clarified what was known of yoga in 196 concise aphorisms, the *Yoga Sutras*. Beyond providing a clear theoretical framework for the diverse array of concepts that belong to yoga, Patanjali also wove his own ideas into the fabric of the *Sutras*. This became Yoga Darshana, one of the six systems of Indian philosophy and the basis of classical yoga. Patanjali's works on grammar and Ayurveda prepared him to write the *Yoga Sutras*. The four *padas* (chapters) of the *Sutras* explain all aspects of yoga for both the novice and the experienced student. These aspects are set out as the eight interdependent petals of *ashtanga* yoga: *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *dharana*, *dhyana*, and *samadhi*: (moral and social guidance, work in postures, regulation of the breath, drawing in of the senses, concentration, meditation, and self-realization).

The eight petals comprise a three-fold quest that is simultaneously external, internal, and spiritual. In the Foreword to B.K.S. Iyengar's practical guide *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, G. Devereux warns that, "to practise yoga without the profound and panoramic inner cartography of the *Yoga Sutras* is to be adrift in a difficult and potentially dangerous ocean". Fortunately, Iyengar and many others have translated and interpreted the *Sutras*. In his *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, Iyengar has illuminated the *Sutras*' wisdom through



The studio at the Ramamani Institute in Pune

his own extensive and deep practice and studies, making it accessible to the ordinary yoga student. There are sixteen *sutras* devoted to the *yamas* and *niyamas*: evidence that the practice of yoga depends on an ethical way of life. Iyengar always stresses that the *yamas* and *niyamas* are the foundation for practice. In fact, what is known as Iyengar Yoga is truly classical yoga, evolved from the yoga of Patanjali.

Patanjali describes yoga as the cessation of the fluctuations of consciousness (consciousness meaning mind, intellect, and ego) in his second *sutra*: *yogah cittavrtti nirodhah*. Geeta Iyengar says, "A clear mind alone reflects the Soul" (*A Gem for Women*, p. 11). There are three qualities of nature or *gunas* that affect the state of consciousness: *satva* (illumination), *rajas* (vibrancy), and *tamas* (inertia). The balance of the *gunas* modifies the consciousness in five ways: *pramana* (correct perception), *viparyaya* (illusion), *vikalpa* (delusion), *nidra* (sleep), and *smrti* (memory). To control the fluctuations, Patanjali advises *abhyasa* (practice) combined with *vairagya* (detachment or renunciation). These are not separate entities: part of practice is renunciation.

There are three components to practice and together they are known as *kriyayoga*, the yoga of action: *tapas* (fiery determination), *svadhyaya* (study of the scriptures and self-study), and *isvara pranidhana* (surrender to God or to a higher purpose). These three components encompass all the eight petals of *ashtanga* yoga. We strive towards developing special awareness or the indivisible state of existence, *samadhi*, with the goal of realizing *kaivalya* (liberation): *tatparam purusakhyateh gunavaitrsnyam*, *Sutra* 1.16, translated by Iyengar, "The ultimate renunciation is when one transcends the qualities of

nature and perceives the soul". The final goal of the *Sutras* is to perceive the soul and be established in one's own nature but Patanjali does not claim that the journey ends there. It is expected that the *sadhaka* (practitioner) then moves "from Self-Realization towards God-Realization" (Iyengar, *LYSP*, p. 287).

Patanjali is a legendary man, more of a super-human, thought to be an enlightened being, an incarnation of Adisesa, Lord of Serpents, reborn in order to share a vast range of knowledge with ordinary people. He is said to have come to life as a small snake and transformed to human form in the hands of Gonika, an elderly yogini who had been praying to the sun god for a son to whom she could pass on her wisdom. She named him Patanjali. *Pata* means fallen or falling and *Anjali* means palms folded in prayer. He is known as the father of yoga and "the greatest thinker India has ever known", (Iyengar, *LYSP*, p. 289).

When we invoke Patanjali, we fold our palms and press them against the heart in *namaskarasana*. The word "invocation" means calling in – the invocation represents an individual and communal drawing inwards to begin a class. When the sounds end we bow our heads to humbly and gratefully acknowledge Patanjali's gifts to humanity: treatises on grammar

for purity of speech, medicine for health, and yoga for serenity. We recognize the source of the teachings and we thank all the teachers who have passed the teachings down to us.

The words describe a mythological figure who has four arms and holds a conch, discus, and sword. The symbolism of the conch is related to sound and the word *aham* (meaning "I"). Holding the discus represents control over the mind. The sword symbolises divine wisdom that cuts through the veil of ignorance. The *mudra* (gesture) of the fourth hand is a gesture of peace, assurance, and blessing. Patanjali is depicted in human form up to his arms, of this life yet beyond it, "thousand-headed" and radiant. Examining the symbolism of the figure of Patanjali brings meaning to the Sanskrit words that we chant. As we form the shape and sound of the Sanskrit words, we hear and feel them reverberate, connecting us to our practice, to other yoga students, and to the roots of yoga. ॐ



IYENGAR YOGA
CENTRE OF VICTORIA

Scholarships and Bursaries

Members' scholarships are available for:

**Heart of Yoga, January 25-26,
deadline for applications December 13**

**Iyengar Yoga Intensive with Jawahar Banghera,
April 4-6, deadline for applications February 21**

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

Applications for both are available at the reception desk.

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202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8V 3K3
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Geeta's Words

On *asana*:

We can't just jump to hard poses, body needs to be cultured to movement

In *parsvottanasana*: we are human beings, take your being down to meet the leg.

In *ustrasana* we are not on our knees but on shins. The distance should increase from shins to sternum.

Go back with both hands at the same time.

Sternum like a mirror for inner chest.

Go to wall in *sirsana* to learn, it is not a punishment. Guruji uses the wall. It is his guru.

Accessing the back of thighs above the knees, don't project forward it is not just lifting the knee caps.

In shoulder stand earth element is strong. Except in elbows. Need to bring more earth element there.

In backbends, acrobats use lumbar, we must use hips not just lumbar, mid-buttocks moves into body.

In *sirsasana*: open feet like petals of flower. All toes spread. Outer skirting of feet, little toe side. Lengthen legs, legs like a stem to hold flower petals up.

How to Practice Yoga After an Injury or After a Period of Inactivity

by Gabriella Giubilaro

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE IS REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM GABRIELLA GIUBILARO. IT APPEARS ON THE WEBSITE YOGA WISDOM ITALY, WWW.YOGAWISDOMITALIA. YOGA WISDOM ITALY IS AN ASSOCIATION FOUNDED IN 2010 WITH THE OBJECTIVE TO DIFFUSE THE PRACTICE AND TEACHINGS OF THE IYENGAR YOGA METHOD.

I started to practice yoga in the year 1973, at the age of 23. In that period my body was strong, heavy and stiff. It felt like I had to move stones, every movement was an effort against the weight of my body. I was heavier than now (about 145 pounds), but I felt much heavier. My idea was that to “master” yoga the only thing I had to learn was to become flexible. Flexibility was my dream, and I was watching and admiring everybody who was flexible and could bend forward or backward with no effort. I still remember myself in the class, my legs straight in front of me, stretching, trying to reach my feet with my hands, pushing my head down to my legs, and at the same time turning my head around (I was always observing what was happening around myself, instead of observing my own body) to observe the other students, who did yoga for less time than I did, with their chest touching their legs, and thinking, “how lucky they are!”

In my head I was thinking that once I could cross my legs, bend forward and bend back, the work was done!

The reality was really different. The first thing I had to learn was that the

In my head I was thinking that once I could cross my legs, bend forward and bend back, the work was done!



weight was more psychological than physical. One day I was trying to learn how to balance in *bakasana* (the crane, balance on the hands with the knees resting on the arms) and I was feeling that it was impossible to lift the weight of my body up. So I stopped and I told myself, “I am light, I can do this easily, my body is very light”, and as a miracle it was so much easier to do. Since then, every time I feel heavy, I talk to myself, I change my attitude, and everything comes so much easier. This was just the beginning of a lot of discoveries. We all know about the attitude, about the influence of the mind, about the “positive thinking”, but how to make it work is a different story.

One day I was practicing *hanumanasana* (the split) and I was so far away from it that I just told myself, “relax, let go” and suddenly my legs let go, and I could arrive in the position. And now when I practice, I know that when the body resists and becomes stiff, if I relax and let go from inside, the limit is much different.

This was still the beginning, when I thought that the yoga was just to learn *asanas*.

Now I know that the *asanas* are just a tool to refine the body and the mind; a tool to know ourselves, and to help for meditation. When we practice over and over the same *asanas* and we penetrate

What we should keep in mind is that even when we cannot practice we are not losing anything. The maturity we obtained from the yoga will always stay with us.

inside our body, it is not the *asana* itself that is important, but the maturity, the refinement of the intelligence. If we are flexible or not is not the focus any more. From this point of view it is how we practice, it is our attitude when we are practicing that becomes important.

The biggest challenge for most of the practitioners is when there is an injury and it is not possible to practice yoga for a while. We may think everything is lost, that the yoga is gone forever, that the body is gone. This is not true, nothing is lost, the maturity and the intelligence of the body and of the mind is still there.

When we start to practice after a period of inactivity, we push ourselves to work at the level we achieved before the period of inactivity, to go as quickly as possible to ‘our ideal best physical shape’. Often this attitude leads to new injuries. What we should keep in mind is that even when we cannot practice we are not losing anything. The maturity we obtained from the yoga will always stay with us. What we lose is only the strength of the muscles, the flexibility of the body. So when we begin to practice again, we have to be careful not to push ourselves.

We have to learn how to rebuild again the strength of the muscles, the stamina, the ability to do and maintain the poses. How to regain my strength after my injuries has been for

me the greatest challenge in my years of practice of yoga. (After all, who has never had an accident or adventure that has forbidden us to practice yoga!)

Remember that it is not how much we do or what we do that is important but how we do it. It is the quality of the practice that is important and not the quantity.

Start with a few *asanas*, then increase day by day. Do each *asana* for a short time and increase the time when you are ready. It is better if you practice every day (*abhyasa*), to increase your stamina. If you feel that your body is struggling or shaking don't force and you will see that every day you will get stronger. Respect your body; respect your limit. It is the intelligence of how we do it that will make a difference.

If you had an operation or a treatment ask your doctor when you can start again the physical activity without harm. Ask also to a teacher with more experience to have a guide. ॐ

Members' Practice

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

There is no instruction given in this self-directed practice session. Props, books and other resources are available for the use of anyone who attends.

Come for 20 minutes or stay for three hours!

Being Home: A Student's Experience of the Summer Intensive

by Anne Glover



I took a count recently: in six years, I have moved home seven times. Along the way, I dropped out of yoga classes to see how I would do with a home practice. Not so well, as it turns out; so after an 18-month hiatus, I signed up for the annual summer intensive by Lauren Cox and Ty Chandler. I took this two years ago, and loved the three-hour/day combination of *pranayama*, philosophy, and *asana* practice led with precise, rigorous instruction, humour, and intuitive support.

As day one begins and we move into our bodies, I feel a warm and deep love. I am home. In fact, the whole day is like a joyous homecoming. *Pranayama* brings light into stagnant pools; *asanas* move me into landscapes I'd forgotten. I am so happy to be here I don't even mind how rusty I am. After class, I lie on the ground in the park, watch the oak leaves overhead, feel the weight of my body on the earth.

On day two I am reminded that a homecoming can also be fraught with complex emotions. For three hours on the mat, my monkey mind natters fears and obsessions. "What's wrong with my knee? This hurts. Why can't my back move the way it used to? I'm tired. How short can hamstrings possibly get?" Sometimes there is so much noise in my mind that I miss the instructions. Nonetheless, I am buoyed by a love of this practice. Later, downtown, I see city workers replace street light bulbs. They pass the glass globes between them with such tenderness that I stand watching for a long while, traffic and autumn leaves swirling around us.

Day three, I wake with a deep, wide headache and bike into town with weight in my heart. *Pranayama*: I struggle to stay awake, slipping, slipping into a troubled sleep. Everything is a struggle and I am defeated by my demons. Low energy, low spirits; yet certain small

things bring me back to a gentler place: another yogi's soft chuckle, the sound of tires on wet pavement, the call of a crow. There is a palpable tenderness in the room, and I am awed by the sense of mutual respect among these 30 or so practitioners. It is hard work, but it is a safe place for it. After the closing *savasana*, Ty gently reminds us to drink water and get rest because of the toxins we are releasing. I bike home, curl up on the floor, wake up two hours later. There is a quivering of exhaustion through the core of me. This night I sleep so soundly it feels like I have left for another realm.

It is day four. Even before I open my eyes, everything feels different. My heart is clean. My mind is clear. I am at home in my body. This isn't to say things are easy. There are still aches, and my monkey mind faithfully awaits me on the mat. But I am present in my body in a different way. Today's practice is restorative poses. There is a subtle intensity to their stillness, and a deep, unspecific sadness wells up in me. Monkey mind gets noisy, but during *Pranayama*, I have a moment of profound awe at the sensation of air in my lungs. Meanwhile, Ty is reading a Roger Cole article about restorative practice. (Lauren, seeing how many of



Ty Chandler guides student in utthita parsvakonasana

us are drifting off, refers to this as our "bedtime story.") The reading slips in between layers of consciousness. Later in the day I cannot recall details but I have a sense that beautiful and wise words have entered, nourishing me and bringing me home.

On day five, our last day, Ty and Lauren address specific questions. After four days of intensive, each nugget of information is even more relevant. It's

as though we've spent the previous days getting quiet enough inside to actually receive the teachings. Ty leads a timed practice. The room is quiet. The poses reflect the attention we have put into every muscle, every joint all week. In *savasana* I find a sweet stillness between my temples. Gently we move back into our outer lives. There are quiet and sincere thanks. Props are put away with more care than usual. Those who can stay share a simple potluck, then we disperse. As I ride out on my bike, I notice the pedals where my feet touch, the seat under me, the handlebars in my hands. All at once, downward dog moves into me, opening my shoulders, lengthening my back, carrying me home. ॐ



Virabhadrasana I



Garudasana



Chatushpadasana

Therapeutic Course: Seeing, Understanding and Reflecting from the Base, with Stephanie Quirk

by Sheri Berkowitz and Ann Kilbertus

Five years ago an opportunity was presented to IYAC members certified at the Intermediate Junior and higher levels to join in a six-year course of study in the therapeutic applications of Guruji's work. This was IYAC's first venture at sponsoring a workshop outside of our annual conferences. We took on the challenge, knowing it would not be an easy series to coordinate given this vast land of ours!

The course is intended as a guided experience for intermediate teachers so that they may further their learning of the subject. Under Guruji's guidelines, teachers certified at Intermediate Senior I and above can conduct therapeutic yoga classes, but all can learn.

The series is being offered by Stephanie Quirk, who has lived and studied at the Institute in Pune with the Iyengar family for the past 18 years. Stephanie had observed that many teachers from the international Iyengar community were coming to the Institute and participating in medical classes in Pune either as students with their own needs, or as observers and helpers. It was clear that while many things could be observed and learned in this way there was nothing yet available that would give a systematic approach to articulate what was seen and experienced in these incredible classes.

Since creating the six-part program, Stephanie has been teaching this course around the world, (South Africa, Australia, many places in the U.S. and the U.K., Europe, Russia), as well as here in Canada.

Asanas from the Intro I and II syllabus are adapted and applied to use with students living with health challenges. We have all heard that there is no such thing as a "list of *asana(s)*" that is "given" to everyone with a specific condition. Each individual and their challenge are to be observed, understood and considered in a personal and respectful way. Individual programs are developed over time so that the changes required to balance and heal the underlying situation can be revealed and applied.

The year one gathering was in Vancouver at The Yoga Space; year two in Winnipeg at Yoga North; and year three in Ottawa at the Iyengar Yoga Centre.

In September 2012, 29 of the original Canadian participants gathered again for year four in Kelowna, hosted by Kelowna Yoga House. (Sadly, a few have had to leave the course for personal reasons. Stephanie has been very clear that to miss a session is to relinquish one's ability to continue as each session builds upon the last. Three of the group who were unable to be with us for year three in Canada went to L.A. to 'catch up' in order to continue.)

Each of these communities has made a major contribution to this study by cancelling regularly scheduled classes and offering their studios and equipment for four days.

There are many lessons and shared challenges as we work through different student scenarios. A grassroots style of community-building from coast to coast has taken place as we have immersed ourselves each year for four days working, learning and struggling together side by side.

Volunteer note-takers and photographers have donated time each year to record what was being taught for further practice and review over the year. Notes are compiled by Jayne Jonas and made available to the workshop participants.

With two years to completion, we look forward to the further unfolding of this incredible aspect of B.K.S. Iyengar's work.

This year's workshop, year five, took place in Sidney, British Columbia at Peninsula Yoga, October 24-27, 2013.



Stephanie Quirk and participants at the Ottawa Iyengar Yoga Centre

Update from Ann Kilbertus:

Pictured above is the group that was in Ottawa in 2011. We haven't had a group shot since then, but many of the same people and some different ones have been attending each session. Twenty-seven Canadians have followed through to part five which recently took place. We also had two Americans who were taking this part with us because they had time conflicts doing it in their own country. One of our Canadians did year five in Italy this year so she didn't join us, but will continue with us for year six in Vancouver, which is the last part! ॐ

LAST YEAR SHERI BERKOWITZ WAS AWARDED A LIFETIME IYAC MEMBERSHIP FOR HER CONTRIBUTIONS TO IYENGAR YOGA IN CANADA. SHE LIVES ON SALT SPRING ISLAND. ANN KILBERTUS STUDIES REGULARLY WITH THE IYENGAR FAMILY, AND HAS SERVED ON THE IYAC BOARD IN VARIOUS CAPACITIES. SHE LIVES IN VICTORIA.

Happy Birthday to Shirley Daventry French

She aspires for herself and inspires the rest of us.

Shirley Daventry French is turning 82 this year. She has a lot to celebrate as another year rolls around and we at IYCV have a lot to celebrate thanks to her. While Shirley and Derek were busy creating a lasting marriage and successfully raising three children, she embarked on and journeyed down her yoga path. To our lasting benefit, her journey included establishing our yoga centre.

From the very beginning, the IYCV Society has been a collaborative effort. It began with Shirley, Derek and a small group of like-minded people. At first, they explored yoga in their homes, then later Shirley began giving classes at the YMCA. While always a group effort, I believe it was Shirley's commitment to yoga and her confidence in B.K.S Iyengar's teaching that kept the momentum going year after year. It takes stamina, determination, vision and leadership skills to build a centre such as ours. Shirley has all these in spades.

Over the years, Shirley's firm focus on the values inherent in the *yamas* and *niyamas* has provided a bedrock for how this centre operates. In addition to being a non-profit society, we are also a charitable organization. While everyone needs to make a decent living, Shirley is crystal clear that yoga is not about money.

Her clear teaching of *pranayama* and *asana* has inspired dozens of yoga students to become certified Iyengar yoga teachers who continually strive for deeper understanding and higher certification. As a result, Victoria has many excellent teachers carrying on her legacy.

I first heard of Shirley about 12 years ago when I began attending classes at the centre. Her reputation was that of an excellent teacher who demanded the best you could do. With a bit of trepidation, I took a short workshop led by her and could confirm what I had heard. I know Shirley best from the annual Footsteps of Patanjali retreat on Salt Spring Island. She and Leslie Hogya share the morning tasks of teaching *pranayama* and *asana* classes. In late afternoon and evening, they lead discussions based on the *sutras*.

It is these discussions that make the retreat so special. Shirley shares the wisdom she developed over the years and the lessons she had to learn and those she is still struggling with.



She entertains us with stories of Pune and her own shortcomings. Shirley has an excellent sense of humour, so often these discussions are fun and we laugh a lot. They can also be quite moving and enlightening. I know Shirley really enjoys this retreat. While it will not happen this coming year, I am keeping my fingers crossed for 2015.

Shirley is also an inspiration to those of us who have no intention of teaching. I asked a few of my fellow students what I should say in this piece. The word "inspirational" kept coming up. Here are some of the comments: "Shirley inspires

me so that things I cannot do at 62, I am hoping to do at 82." "She continually sets new goals for herself and they reflect her self-awareness, which is very inspirational."

I am very grateful to Shirley and all those who work and worked with her to make this centre a reality. Thank you Shirley and Happy Birthday. ॐ

– Krysia Strawczynski, IYCV President

Shirley Daventry French

S – for Shirley- sharp in words and wit
H – honest, hard-working
I – inspirational in her teaching
R – respected around the country and world
L – loving to friends and family
E – energetic, enthusiastic
Y – yogini

Our Shirley, she continues to teach us yoga through her energy, example, and through direct experience with Guruji. Her teaching inspires us to delve deeper and asks the hard questions. She guides with her love, sharp seeing and clear understanding.

– Leslie Hogya



Adia Kapoor and Johanna Godliman enjoy an orientation in the FLXyoga studio at the London Farmers Market.

Congratulations!

The following candidates achieved Intermediate Junior Level II at the assessment in Calgary, Alberta, on October 4 – 6, 2013.

Jayne Jonas – Victoria, British Columbia

Leigh Anne Milne – Chester, Nova Scotia

Beena Parekh – Toronto, Ontario

Megan Jacobs – Aurora, Ontario

Didi Hall – Toronto, Ontario

Gerie Primerano – Vancouver, British Columbia

Karin Rensfelt – Happy Valley, Goose Bay, Newfoundland

Andrea Erb – Winnipeg, Manitoba

The following candidates achieved Introductory II Certification at the assessment in London, Ontario, on November 1- 3, 2013:

Johanna Godliman – Victoria, British Columbia

Adia Kapoor – Victoria, British Columbia

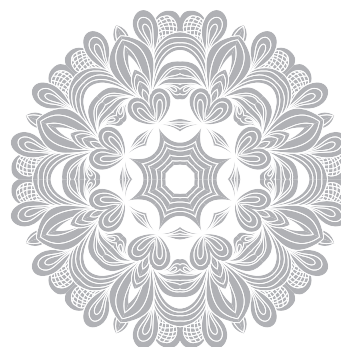
Jayne Smiley – Toronto, Ontario

Nesta Falladown – Wilberforce, Ontario

Sharon Citron Himel – Toronto, Ontario

Karin Young – Kitchener, Ontario

Waruni Maya Wensvoort – Uxbridge, Ontario



Geeta's Words

Bhagavad Gita – She talked about Krishna:

He couldn't show his true form to Arjuna;
he couldn't bear it.

Krishna: "If you cannot search for me
elsewhere, know that I dwell in your heart."

Geeta said, "When I remember the lord is
in my heart, I know I can do no wrong."



IYAC/ACYI ASSESSMENT DATES

February 7 – 9, 2014
Intermediate Junior III,
Toronto, ON

March 21 – 23, 2014
Introductory II, Saskatoon, SK

March 21 – 23, 2014
Intermediate Junior I,
Kelowna, BC

Enrichment Series with Ann Kilbertus and Ty Chandler

by Tracy Harvey

Yoga Sutra 1.14 “Long, uninterrupted, alert practice is the firm foundation for restraining the fluctuations (of the mind).”

And so began the Enrichment Series on October 6, 2013. This special series was offered to serious intermediate and advanced students who were looking to deepen, enrich or perhaps to enlighten their practice (Wendy Boyer has been referring to it as the “enlightenment” series). It was a crisp, sunny Sunday autumn afternoon when the group of us gathered at the studio for our first session with Ann and Ty. These three-hour sessions provide ample opportunity (long) to work progressively through the *asana* work. What a gift to put aside this time (uninterrupted), under the guidance of Ann and Ty (alert practice) to share the teachings (the firm foundation).

We all know that establishing a daily practice is important but it’s not easy and even more challenging to do well. I have heard many experienced practitioners say that it takes many years to establish a daily practice. We are familiar with the practical challenges that keep us from establishing a daily practice, which are well stated in Sutra I.30 “These obstacles are disease, inertia, doubt, heedlessness, laziness, indiscipline of the senses, erroneous views, lack of perseverance, and backsliding.” We, as individuals have to undertake the practice but sometimes a little push is helpful.

So for these first three hours Ann and Ty “pushed” us along expertly. They guided us through the work with clear, crisp instructions. Deftly providing hands-on corrections or modifying according to the needs of the student. The purpose of this series is to enrich our practice which means that this afternoon session was only the spark. We meet again in November, but in the meantime we have homework.

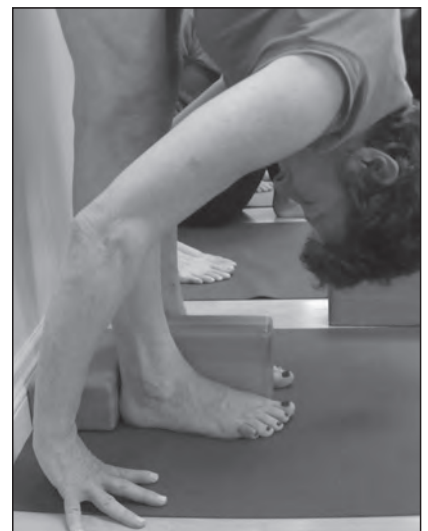
Over the next month we are to include the following goals in our daily practice:

- *supta virasana* – work up to 10 minutes
- *salamba sirasana* – work up to 8 minutes
- *dwi pada viparita dandasana* – work up to 8 minutes
- *halasana* – work up to 5 minutes
- *salamba sarvangasana* – work up to 10 minutes.

It takes only one spark to start a fire. Will this spark ignite the fire and can we keep it burning with zeal?

In the words of the master B.K.S. Iyengar: “Yoga is a light, which once lit, will never dim. The better your practice, the brighter the flame.” ॐ

We all know that establishing a daily practice is important but it’s not easy and even more challenging to do well.



Ty Chandler teaching sirasana

The Commonwealth Interview

An Interview With B.K.S. Iyengar, Part I

Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar is one of the truly great contemporary yoga masters. He is renowned and respected all over the world for the depth and refinement of his study, practice and teaching of yoga. His dedication to his art has inspired teachers and students on every continent, and sparked a light which illuminates the study of yoga in all corners of the globe.

The Victoria Yoga Centre is honoured to present the first of two interviews with Mr. Iyengar which were conducted at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute in Pune, India in November 1985. The second interview will be published in a future edition of our newsletter.

Present at this first interview were Shirley Daventry French, Leslie Hogle and James Rischmiller of the Victoria Yoga Centre, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. We were joined by Caroline Coggins and Peter Thompson of the Sydney Yoga Centre, Sydney, Australia, and have designated this "The Commonwealth Interview."

THIS INTERVIEW WAS TRANSCRIBED AND PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION
BY SHIRLEY DAVENTRY FRENCH.

On yoga in the west

Shirley Daventry French (Victoria Yoga Centre):

Gurujī, it's three years since a Canadian group came to Pune for an Intensive, and that was one of the last Intensives taught by you. At that time you granted us an interview which we published in our newsletter. During those three years you've done a lot of travelling. Would you speak about the changes that have occurred during that period both in your personal work and the work that is being carried on in your name all over the world?

B.K.S. Iyengar: As far as I gather, the work has been carried out very well. At the same time my only fear is that people emphasize things where very little emphasis is required, and do not pay attention where attention needs to be paid. If this barrier is taken off, in view of the missionary zeal for propagating yoga, the work will have a better background. Otherwise, I am afraid that it may get stale soon. It should not get stale.

Shirley: Have you seen this happening?

Iyengar: Yes, I have. For example, there is a proverb – "out of sight is out of mind." People who come here regularly and

hear the same words hammered in again and again, naturally develop a grip.

Unfortunately others who come only once, go away without clarifying to themselves if they have understood or not.

For instance, India is a hot country, even in winter: here a little rest does not disturb the body. The blood current will continue to flow to the extremities due to the weather conditions, so we can offer a little more explanation. Many Western countries are very cold; there if the explanations are too long, the warmth of the body disappears and it takes time to recharge that body. This is one way one has to adapt between the East and the West.

In the West, the teacher should be careful to see that the warmth of the pupils is maintained. When the body is cold even if the correct technique is given, the body cannot accept it; all explanations lose their charm. You have to demarcate how much you can explain whilst maintaining the body's warmth, and continue from there next time. But I am seeing that

teachers try to explain so much in one day that they exhaust themselves as well as their pupils. Teachers should break their sentences, see whether their words have been digested or not and whether the system has absorbed the instruction. Give it time. Then add a few more words.

In the West teachers are not differentiating between untrained beginners and someone who has been practising for years. They are all listening to the same instructions, but with an untrained student the teacher should say, "Stop now – because you're a beginner, you cannot take it". This has to be known.

When we give an intense course there is no uniformity in our dealing with the groups. We give these courses on condition that you have practised sufficiently to take our points, but many who come are very raw and haven't got much experience. Old students, new students – how soon we can see the difference! The intense course is too much for some. So we also have problems, but by looking we know exactly that we have to give points for the beginners and for toned up bodies.

Teachers should observe how much the pupil can absorb, otherwise what is the use of expressing, boasting of my pride, my intelligence? It's of absolutely no value unless the pupil can receive it. When we run classes we give our technique and present how the poses should be done because we know



the subject, but at the same time we see what mistakes are happening. This is known as feedback. Teachers in the West must develop this feedback, capture the weaknesses of their pupils and build from there. That will make the teacher a good teacher, and also help the pupils – understanding will come slowly. Maturity in the pupils will come as the teachers mature. That is what I say is lacking and when that develops, I say, “Wonderful!”

Shirley: There’s more patience in India than in the West.

Iyengar: It’s not just enough patience. Do you mean to say that there is no impatience here? Your brain may say, “I want to get it today”, but can your knee take it, can your spine take it? If your arm is injured and you cannot lift it, what is the use of my saying I want you to lift it? The range of movement must be understood – that range may be too much but what about this range? This is known as coordinating. It is not impatience, it is skillfulness in understanding.

We teach *asanas* as living anatomists. Although many western people have an intellectual knowledge of anatomy and physiology and can name the different parts of the body, they don’t really understand their functions. Only *asanas* can teach this. His leg is long, your leg is short. We cannot depend on anatomy alone to teach yoga because it does not give the whole picture.

There is a tremendous interest in the work and people are coming more and more, so the responsibility increases.

Recently in London, I made a video of standing poses taking about six or eight people, and actually I cried that even those who call themselves advanced students could not even do *trikonasana* well. What is the use of such people? One person who holds an advanced certificate could not straighten his elbow in *adho mukha svanasana*, and I said, “What is this? You consider that you are an advanced teacher, holding an advanced certificate, and you can’t even do a dog pose?” How much it hurts me, tell me? The students in the West, when they become teachers, they don’t practice themselves. Now is this the ethics of teaching (I am not speaking of yoga)? When I do not practice what right have I got to teach? When I am not doing this pose well, what right have I got to teach this pose?

Analysis and experience should go together. Teaching is analysing, analysing the students – their mental calibre, their physical calibre – then discovering how to bring their deficiencies in par with their mind or their mind in par with the body. Sometimes an ignorant man does better than an intelligent man. Why does this man without brain present well? Why does this man with such understanding commit a mistake? Compare the bodies. That is known as factual intelligence from which you can gain the methods of teaching.

Shirley: That’s the science of yoga.

Iyengar: Yes, that’s the science of yoga. I know the *asana*, I know the technique of the *asana*; but I also have to know how this technique is going to help the individual.

No doubt, very good work is going on. I have been teaching sincerely for years, people love my work, although they were criticising before. Now they come to you because they know I am a strong teacher and at least you people are sincere and honest; so they go to you – if you don’t kick them or anything like that. [laughter]

Shirley: If my feet were as sensitive as yours I might kick them. [laughter]

Iyengar: My intelligence flows everywhere so I act fast.

On rhythm and cycles

Leslie Hogya (Victoria Yoga Centre): In the Intensive, Geeta’s explanations are very clear and I’ve appreciated the focus on each step and the progressions. She is really emphasizing the correct order of practice. Are you taking more time to emphasize this?

Iyengar: Correct order means rhythm in the body, otherwise there is no rhythm. For example, take music. When you go to a high pitch in music, can you come suddenly or do you come gradually?

Leslie: Gradually.

Iyengar: Ah, now you have understood. When you go to the ascending order, don’t you go scale by scale? When we finish the work we send the pupils away with joy because we bring them back to the normal. For example, can you do back arch immediately?

Leslie: No.

Iyengar: You gradually build up to the back arch. After the back arch can you suddenly come back to forward bends? They are known as cycles. We can group these cycles but for certain persons they may not work at all, so we have to show another way according to their body. You know that in cars they have four or five gears. Can you change the gear without coming to neutral?

Leslie: No, you’d grind the gears.

Iyengar: It’s the same in yoga. We lose our tempers when we see people come and suddenly do the back arch, or suddenly they go back over the rope. What happens without coming to the neutral poses?

Leslie: Injury.

Iyengar: We are showing that cycle. You have to experiment on several people to know the ill effect and the bad effect. That's why we change immediately if something happens.

Take that girl in your own group who has been suffering since childhood with cough and cold, I changed the whole system for her. Only yesterday she said, "Now I feel life is coming." I told her that she would have to stay here six months to get her life back, but she is only here for the three week intense course, so I cautioned her, "Don't listen to anyone else for six months but just continue with what I have given you. Don't change anything, and remember the cycle. With the same cycle, gradually increase the time and the endurance will come. Even if it's stale, you have to continue. Don't take a risk." That is known as rhythm. There should be rhythm in yoga. In music unless there's tone and tune, do you listen to that music? What is body, after all, but an instrument and the vibration is the sound, the tune? The vibration in my body must synchronize in my movement. That is why poses are done in a certain order.

For example, we recently started a class for beginners upstairs; I gave them a syllabus to use in my absence whilst I was in

London. First, the teacher should demonstrate the pose two or three times, then stand and take the class. If the pupils have not understood, show it again twice more, and then the third time do it with them saying, "Look at me. Look at my leg. Look at my hand. Look at my other leg." In the beginning the teacher has to work thirty minutes and the pupil only twenty minutes. After one month the teacher will be working twenty minutes, the pupil will be working twenty minutes. After four or five poses have been taught, the first pose will be shown once and taken also once.

When I am doing the pose with my pupils my practice improves, and I know what to teach them next. As I am explaining I am looking at them to see what is missing. Capture one or two mistakes then teach the same pose tomorrow giving only one or two points – major points, not minor points. Until we bring the gross mistakes to the surface, we should not touch the finer ones. Gross points are important. You have to make the gross body a foundation to correct the finer points. Later, these finer points will give you the idea of rhythm and cycle. ॐ

(To be continued in the next issue)

Open Letter to our Community

Some changes were made to the class schedule, and questions have come to the front desk, so I am taking the opportunity to try and answer some of these questions.

Ending five minutes early was a request from some teachers. And as writing up the schedule each term is time consuming for our staff, we made the decision to end all classes five minutes early. The people who type the schedule each term find it difficult when there are exceptions to the five minute ending time. It becomes a challenge to track this, as there might be one term when there are two classes back to back, and the next when there are not. All teachers have been told that they certainly can go to the end of the hour or half hour if no other class is following theirs.

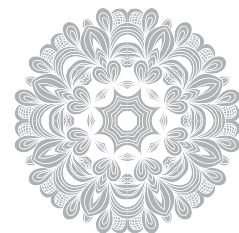
Many studios around the world have one-hour beginners' classes, including the institute in Pune. While some like an hour and a half, other beginners find an hour more than enough. We encourage people who have taken beginners classes for three terms, to think about moving to a general level class which is usually one and a half or even two hours.

Marlene's Saturday class changed times and is now a two-hour class starting at 8:30 am. This is a compromise between the former early time of Corrine's class, which is discontinued at Corrine's request, and the time Marlene used to start. The change to two hours was a request by many students.

Teacher wishes and availability, student requests, and demands on staff are being juggled all the time. Ideas or suggestions are given consideration, but we are not always able to implement them.

Also, being an Iyengar centre informs our decisions. ॐ

Namaste, Leslie Hogya, for the Centre



Geeta's Words:

Words to live by:

We need to develop our *saatvic* nature, live in truth.

Just be in yoga.

Don't label as like or love.





Calling All
Iyengar Yoga Centre
Members

Renewal Time is Here!

All memberships expire
December 31, 2013.

Membership in the Iyengar Yoga
Centre of Victoria gives you lots of
benefits!

Reap the benefit of membership
with discounts on registered
classes and workshops.

Members enjoy our library
and free admission to special
members' practices and to our
New Years Day practice. Being a
member also allows you to stand
for the Board.

Out-of-town members receive
the IYCV newsletter by mail at
no charge.

The Iyengar Yoga Center of
Victoria's Newsletter is a special
resource. It is sent around the
world and is even on the shelves of
the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial
Yoga Institute in Pune, India.

**Ensure your membership
continues. Please renew today!**

Use the renewal form on this page
or phone 250-386-9642.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS

The Annual General Meeting
of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
will be held

Sunday, February 16, 2014, 2:00-4:00 pm
at 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C.

* * *

2:00 Asana Practice

3:00 Annual Meeting for all Members
with tea and refreshments

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

If you are interested in serving on the board, please contact the front desk for application forms.

**All memberships expire
Dec. 31, 2013 Renew now!**



Membership

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

**Iyengar Yoga Centre
of Victoria Society
c/o Hilary McPhail
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria BC V8V 3K3**

Membership fee is \$40 + GST,
renewable each January.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Prov / State: _____ Postal code _____

Country: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

☐ Please mail me my newsletter as I do not
attend classes at the Centre.

☐ Please email me when the Newsletter is
available on the IYCV website.

☐ Receipt required.

Membership benefits include a 5% discount on registered
classes, a discount on workshops, advance booking for
major workshops, borrowing privileges in our library,
free members' practice, eligibility to become a board
member and eligibility for workshop scholarships!



IYENGAR YOGA
CENTRE of VICTORIA

2013-2014 CALENDAR

DECEMBER

- 8 Practice Enrichment
- 14 Gururji's Birthday
- 20-21 Winter Solstice

JANUARY 2014

- 1 New Year's Day Practice
- 4 Classes resume
- 5 Practice Enrichment
- 11 Teachers' Meeting
- 25-26 Heart of Yoga

FEBRUARY

- 15 Teachers' Meeting
- 16 IYCV AGM
- 22 Short Workshop: Improve Your Basic Poses with Lucie

MARCH

- 15 Teachers' First Aid course (cancels Teachers' Meeting)
- 27 Special Needs Tea

APRIL


- 4-6 Jawahar Bhangra
- 18-20 Easter Weekend

MAY

- 3 Teachers' Meeting
- 3 Short Workshop: How to Practice with Leslie
- 22-25 IYAC/ ACYI AGM and Conference in Halifax

JUNE

- 6-8 Salt Spring Island Retreat
- 14 Teachers' Meeting
- 20-22 IJ 2 assessment in at IYCV



NEW YEAR'S DAY

Timed Practice

With Ty Chandler

ALL LEVELS

January 1, 2014, 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Free for 2014 IYCV members – renew NOW
\$40 + GST for non-members

Pre-registration is required by Friday, December 20, 2013
Not recommended for beginners

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

Short WORKSHOP



Winter Solstice Workshop With Ty Chandler

December 20, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
December 21, 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

FIRST NIGHT: forward bend practice with inversions.
SECOND NIGHT: backbend practice with inversions.
Not recommended for beginners.

Fees:
For one night: \$30 + GST IYCV members, \$35 + GST non-members;
For both nights: \$55 + GST IYCV members, \$65 + GST non-members;

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

Refunds will be offered only if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$15.00 cancellation fee.