



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



## IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS

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

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

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



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

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

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

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



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

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



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## THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE NEWSLETTER

Submission Deadline for next issue:  
MAY 15, 2018

EDITOR Roger Champagne

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*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  
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### REGISTRATION

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



## Reflections

By Shirley Daventry French

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

He follows this up by saying:

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

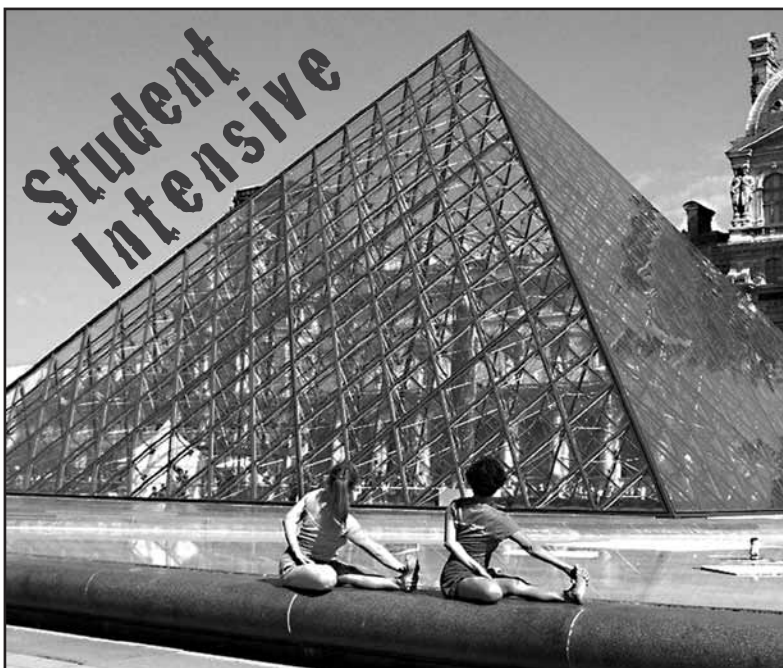
Yoga encompasses body, mind and breath and, if authentic, will initiate changes in all your senses and faculties. In Guruji's own words:

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

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

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

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



## With Lauren Cox and Ty Chandler

August 27 - 31, 2018

9:30 am - 12:30 pm

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

Registration opens April 2, 2018.

Fees: \$250 CDN +GST IYCV Members

\$275 CDN +GST IYCV Non-Members

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



SADHAKAFILM.ORG

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

By Leslie Hogya

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

Doing skillful action becomes true devotion.

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

### Kriya Yoga

#### Tapas

Intensive practice

#### Karma marga

Path of action

#### Svadhya

Self study

#### Jnana marga

Path of knowledge

#### Ishvara pranidhana

Devotion to God

#### Bhakti marga

Path of devotion

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

## JUMP INTO SUMMER

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

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

Members \$55, Non-Members \$60

Registration opens April 1, 2018

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

## Shirley Daventry French Honoured with Distinguished Yoga Teacher Award



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

PHOTOS: TRISTAN BRAND

### By Roger Champagne

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

He began with her words:

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

a lifelong search to change her life and know herself.

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

## Practice Enrichment Series

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

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

**With Ann Kilbertus and Ty Chandler**

Note: Instructor permission is required to attend.

\$35 + GST each session

## In Gratitude

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

**Improve Your Poses by Understanding the Basics**

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

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

# Heart of Yoga 2018

By Leslie Hogle

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Shirley Daventry French and Ann Kilbertus



Dwipada viparita dandasana in the ropes



Dwipada viparita dandasana in the ropes



Parsva yoga mudra in swastikasana





## The Banyan Tree

By Ann Kilbertus

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

### TREE

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

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

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

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

Definitions of ethos:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

## ROOTS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## TRUNK

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**March 24, 2018, April 6, 2018**

**April 7, 2018, April 28, 2018**

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



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

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

## BARK and BRANCHES

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

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



## INTRODUCTORY INTENSIVE FOR TEACHERS IN TRAINING

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

Asana. Pranayama. Philosophy. Peer Teaching.

Celebrate Gurujī's centenary year!

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

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

Only 12 spaces available!

9:30 to 5:30 Daily

\$375.00 members, \$410.00 non-members

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



## INTENSIVE FOR CERTIFIED TEACHERS

**August 13-17, 2018**

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

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

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

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

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

A deposit of \$150 will reserve a place.

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

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

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

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

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

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

## SAP

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Akasa tattva* (space) – everywhere

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

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

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

## LEAVES, FLOWERS and FRUIT

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

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

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

This is it. ॐ

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



### IYAC/ACYI ASSESSMENT DATES

March 16-18, Introductory II, Kelowna, BC

September 14-16, Introductory II, Calgary, AB

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

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

# The Obstacle is the Path

By Jessica Lowry

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

## B.K.S. Birthday

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

Every day I am grateful to have been his pupil.

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

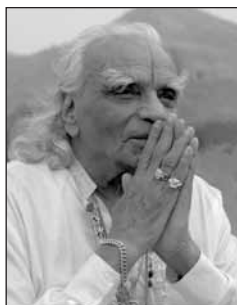


PHOTO: JAKE CLENNELL

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

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

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

In gratitude, Shirley ॐ



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

By Geeta S. Iyengar

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

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

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

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

*Vakratunda mahakaya Suryakoti samaprabha  
Nirvighnam Kurume deva subhakaryesu sarvada*

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

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

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

(continued next page)

## Thank you

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Nothing is achieved by a mind that doubts.*

– B.K.S. Iyengar ॐ

## Building Confidence in Inversions

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

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

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

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





*The practice hall at RIMYI*

## Scholarships and Bursaries

### **Salt Spring Retreat**

June 8-10,  
deadline May 17

### **Jump into Summer**

June 25-29,  
deadline June 1

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

July 4-6,  
deadline May 21

### **Certified Teacher Intensive,**

August 13-17,  
deadline June 29

### **Student Intensive,**

August 27-31,  
deadline August 3

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

Applications for both are available at the reception desk.

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

## IT ALL HELPS

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

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

## Congratulations!

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

Lara Cubitt, North Vancouver, BC

Sean O'Leary, White Rock, BC

Deanne Orrell, Nanaimo, BC

Karen Gibson, Courtenay, BC

Jennifer Van De Pol, Victoria, BC

Ghislaine Atkins, Toronto, ON

Julia MacLean, Dartmouth, NS

Crystal McMillan, Parksville, BC

## IYCV Calendar

### **MARCH**

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

### **APRIL**

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

### **MAY**

- 5 Improve Your Poses by Understanding the Basics

### **JUNE**

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

### **JULY**

- 4-6 Intro Teacher Training Intensive

### **AUGUST**

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

## Members' Practice

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

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





## Eleventh Annual High Tea Fundraiser

\$20 per person  
Free for children

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

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

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

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



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

## Become a Member - Enjoy the Benefits!

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

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

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

### Membership PLUS

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

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

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

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

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

Iyengar Yoga Centre  
of Victoria Society

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

☐ Please mail my newsletter.

☐ Please email me the link to the web newsletter.

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

☐ Receipt required.





IYENGAR YOGA  
CENTRE of VICTORIA



*Guruji sailing by private yacht from Vancouver to Victoria in 1984*



# Student Intensive



**With Lauren Cox and Ty Chandler**

**August 27 - 31, 2018**

**9:30 am - 12:30 pm**

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

Fees: \$250 CDN +GST IYCV Members  
\$275 CDN +GST IYCV Non-Members

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

Refund will be offered only if your space can be filled, and is subject to a \$50 cancellation fee.

## All Levels Workshop with Chris Saudek

**September 7-9, 2018**

This workshop is for All Levels. Pre-requisite is ability to do *sarvangasana*. Ask your teacher if you have questions about attending.

### GENERAL WORKSHOP SEPTEMBER 7-9

Friday, September 7, 5:00-7:00 pm

Saturday, September 8, 10:30 am-1:30 pm, 4:00-6:00 pm

Sunday, September 9, 10:30 am-1:30 pm, 4:00-6:00 pm

### EXTENDED INTERMEDIATE AND ADVANCED CLASS

Monday, September 10, 5:30 - 8:30 pm

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

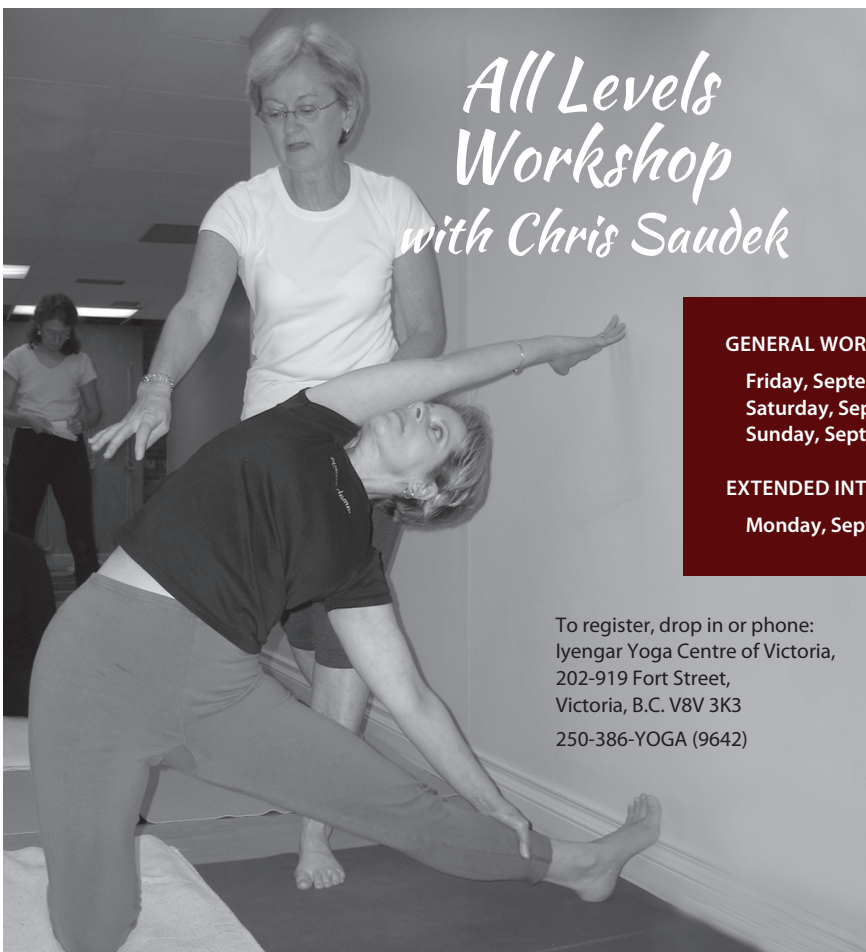
### REGISTRATION OPENS JUNE 7

\$312 + GST IYCV Members

\$332 + GST IYCV Non-Members

Monday class cost TBA

Refund will be offered only if your space can be filled, and is subject to a \$50 cancellation fee.



**IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA  
NEWSLETTER**

**Submission Deadline for next issue:  
OCTOBER 1, 2018**

**EDITOR** Roger Champagne

**NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE**

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Lauren Cox, Johanna Godliman, Melissa Hadley  
Leslie Hogya, Jane McFarlane, Hilary McPhail

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**MEMBERSHIP/MAILING LIST** Hilary McPhail

**PRINTING** Hillside Printing

**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 holds the right  
to publish or edit all articles at its discretion.

**Newsletter Advertising Policy**

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-ACYI events.

**REGISTRATION**

Please visit our website:

[www.iyengaryogacentre.ca](http://www.iyengaryogacentre.ca) for full information  
on classes and workshops.

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

Phone: (250) 386-YOGA (9642)

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We regret we cannot accept past issues of the *IYCV Newsletter*, *Yoga Journal*,  
etc., due to space limitations.





## Reflections

By Shirley Daventry French

In September 1984 B.K.S. Iyengar made a whirlwind trip to Canada where he visited three Western Canadian cities with burgeoning Iyengar Yoga communities: Vancouver, Victoria and Edmonton. He came here directly from an International Iyengar Yoga convention in San Francisco which itself had been preceded by a rapid tour of centres of Iyengar Yoga in the United States.

While in the United States he had also done a lot of travelling and, of course, had travelled a long way to get to North America from India. After all this travel plus a major convention, public talks and personal yoga demonstrations, we expected him to be exhausted. Derek and I were tired from our own journey to San Francisco and participation in this conference. However, the brilliance of B.K.S. Iyengar's teaching and inspiration of his presence invigorated us too. We were determined not to waste a minute of our time with him.

We addressed him as Sir or Mr. Iyengar in those days: the honorific Gururji was to come later and at that time was used primarily by his Indian disciples. They also showed their respect by touching his feet: another tradition which came later to his North American pupils.

Although he arrived in the midst of pouring rain and fierce winds of one of our famed North Pacific storms, Gururji did not appear to be fazed by this nor to be tired. On the private boat which conveyed him from Vancouver to Victoria, in addition to enjoying the pristine beauty of the passage between the mainland and Vancouver Island, he taught an impromptu yoga class. He had implicitly told us that although he would like to visit Canada we must be quite clear that he did

not intend to teach—concerned no doubt to know what on earth was going on in his name, he wanted to see our teachers teaching and offer correction and guidance. Despite this, in each of the cities comprising his Canadian visit, he went back on his own words and after viewing some teachers brought us all together and taught a mega-class!

Gururji had done a similar 'walkabout' in San Francisco. It was a huge convention and there were so many simultaneous classes he could not possibly attend all of them.

Om, and although both Derek and I were on the faculty he did not get to see my teaching there. That was to happen the following week in Victoria! He did, however, attend a presentation on Back Problems which Derek gave to the full convention. This was part of a Medical Panel which included three other physician/Iyengar practitioners.<sup>1</sup>

Always eager to learn from anyone who had done some original thinking, Gururji followed this up with Derek at a special dinner for teachers the following day, as well as later during his stay in our home. Derek's own back injury was the impetus to take up yoga as he observed me practising and decided this might be good for him too: thus entering a new era where he not only healed himself but helped many patients after employing that most yogic of concepts: finding out for himself!

In addition to Gururji, we have also been honoured to welcome Geeta Iyengar and Swami Radha as guests in our home. Throughout each visit not a moment was

wasted. Conversation around the dinner table was lively and fascinating as they plied us with stories and insights from their own vast experience at the same time as learning from any expertise we had acquired. There were many lively discussions peppered with challenges to deepen our own practice and refine our thinking about yoga. Despite the serious nature of the pursuit of yoga and its elusive goal of self-realisation and freedom from all limitations, these conversations were punctuated by peals of laughter—physical and mental fatigue melted away. The greatest of teachers learn everywhere and from everyone!

Naturally when our energy has been expended it has to be replenished and this is where recuperative or restorative yoga has its role. I began to notice something interesting about these master teachers. They had become channels for spiritual energy or light and as long as they remained open to this flow they were able to maintain their focus. Body, mind and breath have to remain interactive. Even the greatest minds need a body to function here on earth and this body needs energy and has to be refueled from time to time. Wise teachers recognize when it is diminishing and yoga had taught them how to replenish themselves in all of life's contingencies. For instance, even in the midst of a full convention Gururji would take time out when he needed to and seek a spot to lie down in *savasana*. His many years of repeated practice of this rejuvenating *asana* meant that the moment he lay down its imprint was so familiar to him that the recovery process began instantly. The idea that there was not enough time did not occur to him. He did what he needed to do and carried on! Sometimes,

<sup>1</sup> Medical Panel at 1984 San Francisco International Convention consisted of Dr. S. V. Karandikar from Pune, Dr. Mary Schatz from Nashville, Tennessee, the late Dr. Bruce Carruthers from Vancouver and Dr. Derek French from Victoria.

after a gruelling day he would ask us to find a place where he could lie down, be quiet, reappearing after just a few minutes to carry on. The fruits of his practice were self-evident!

One of Guruji's maxims is to *Love, Labour and Laugh*, and he was one of those rare individuals who exemplified these qualities in abundance, never wasting one moment of his life or neglecting any opportunity to expand his font of knowledge.

On a walkabout of central London you will often see plaques with the name and accomplishments of some famous person noting that they were born or lived here or perhaps the date when they achieved whatever it is that made them famous! I have often thought my home in Victoria should have a plaque saying that B.K.S. Iyengar stayed here! As I live in a rural area and not in the heart of a big city, few people would see it and, after all, it would be superfluous because Derek and I know he stayed here and how much he has taught us, and it is knowledge which is important.

Another of the seminal lessons I learned from Guruji from my very first class with him is that in the spiritual sphere no knowledge we acquire is ours alone: it does not belong to me and there is no particular merit in having acquired this knowledge unless I make use of it in my life. If any truth can be understood by me it is also possible for others to acquire it. In the words of another sage whom I have never met because he died many years before my birth but for whom I have deep respect, Swami Vivekananda: *If there has been one experience in this world in any particular branch of knowledge, it absolutely follows that that experience has been possible millions of times before and will be repeated eternally.*

In Victoria in 1984, those few days with Guruji also involved another pivotal act in my life. It was the first time Guruji saw me teach and the word whirlwind again comes to mind as I recall his entering the room and taking over my class. Everything speeded up.

Not a mind wandered for a second while he was there. In this and every other class he entered he was determined to convey as much as was possible in a very short time. As far as he knew he might not see any of us again and it was imperative to make the most of this opportunity and pass on as many teachings as he could. In each class there was collective exhalation when he left, indicating that this was enough for those people for today; it was time to move on to another class another teacher. Not always sure about what had exactly happened, there were no dead and miserable faces: everyone was smiling, vibrant and alive!

I have never experienced a whirlwind or tornado but I have been told about the stillness at the eye which lies at the centre of this vortex of energy. This was the experience of working with B.K.S. Iyengar, in Victoria, in Europe, in the United States and particularly in Pune at the source of these teachings.

Out of these energy-charged few days with Guruji in Victoria came another turning point for me when he was honoured by Swami Radha at a private luncheon at one of her teaching centres. She had come to Victoria especially to meet Mr. Iyengar. Most notable was that the two of them hardly paused in their conversation intent on each other's words in this meeting of great and questioning minds.

Swami Radha had established a publishing company called *Timeless Books* which published yoga and other spiritual books. On Mr. Iyengar's 60th birthday a book had been published in India with essays from him and some of his pupils presenting aspects of his work. It was no longer in print and an offer was made from Swami Radha to publish a new edition of this book, to which Guruji agreed as long as some of the material was updated and some new writing and insights included. The publisher at *Timeless Books*, Terence Buie attended this luncheon, he knew my writing and editing experience and

asked me if I would be its editor. Guruji and Swami Radha were also familiar with my writing from our newsletter as well as personal work I had done with them.

My work in yoga took on another level as I did this work. The new expanded and updated edition of *Body the Shrine, Yoga thy Light* was published in 1987 as *Iyengar: His Life and Work*. This started me on another branch of my yoga path in writing and editing on behalf of Mr. Iyengar. It gave me the opportunity to write to him, discuss issues on the telephone and spend many an hour with Guruji in the library in Pune writing, researching and benefiting from impromptu philosophical, psychological, spiritual discourses plus the chance to research old letters and articles written by or about him along with many other aspects of his life and work and yoga in general.

Truly, I was blessed to have this opportunity. Guruji was not only a wise man and a great Guru: he was an accessible and generous man.

As we move closer to the celebration of the Centenary of B.K.S. Iyengar's birth, all over the globe his pupils are reflecting on the breadth and strength of the practice, teaching and learning of this incomparable teacher. ॐ

## JUMP INTO SUMMER

Come jump-start and build your practice for five mornings with Lauren Cox. Sanding, twisting, inverting, back bends, and seated poses will be explored during this morning series.

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

Members \$55, Non-Members \$60

Registration opens April 1, 2018

Refund offered only if your space can be filled, and is subject to a \$15 cancellation fee.

# Calling all Writers

By Jane McFarlane

This fall we will be celebrating Guruji's centenary birthday and there will be many initiatives to honour the work and memory of our guru. The IYCV Newsletter is calling for submissions that are 100 syllables long (100 syllables, not 100 words) for the upcoming special edition, that will join the worldwide celebration.

Deadline for submissions is October 1.

The Institute in India has suggested that you can

1. Share tributes, memories of Guruji
2. Talk about how he impacted you
3. Talk about how his method has shaped you and your world.

Sample:

Dear Guruji

I offer you one hundred syllables,  
Multiplied by hundreds of hundreds more  
Ringing out from the cells of my body  
From bottom to top and topsy-turvy  
Side to side, back to front and inside-out,  
I sing praise to your grammar of posture  
That disciplines, purifies, strengthens and  
harmonizes us around the whole world  
So we might keep the universal vows  
That will free us from blind conditioning

I salute you. ॐ

## Practice Enrichment Series

October 26, 2018, 2-5 pm, November 23, 2018  
January 25, 2019, 2-5 pm, March 29, 2019

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

With Ann Kilbertus and Ty Chandler

Note: Instructor permission is required to attend.

\$35 + GST each session



## RIMYI – A Place to Change Your Life

The Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute (RIMYI) in Pune, India, was listed in a special edition of *National Geographic 100 Places That Will Change Your Life*. This glossy magazine, full of wonders in the world, lists the institute on page 59. (Thanks to Ty Chandler for sharing copies of this magazine at the Centre.)



## International Day of Yoga

Join us for the 4th Annual International Day of Yoga  
on Thursday, June 21

Join us for one or both of the following free, All Level classes:  
10 to 11:30 am with Leslie Hogya, 7 to 8 pm with Adia Kapoor

Celebrate with yogis around the world.

This class is FREE and open to the public.

The United Nations has declared June 21st International Day of Yoga. Come be a part of this global celebration at the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria.



# On the Sutras and Asana

QUOTES FROM JAWAHAR BANGHERA 2018, TRANSCRIBED BY GARY WONG  
FROM AN AUDIO RECORDING OF A PHILOSOPHY TALK GIVEN BY JAWAHAR

“Our practice will not have any meaning if there is no understanding of the background, the *Yoga Sutras*. So it is incumbent upon all students, at one time or another, to go through the book. It is not something that can be understood in one reading. This is something that you’ll read, and have to re-read and re-re-read and so on and so forth ad infinitum.”

“Technically in a yoga class I am involving myself in all eight aspects of the subject.”

“There are important principles that one has to follow before one qualifies to be a student. If these were NOT important, then Patanjali would not have put *yama* and *niyama* first. Otherwise he would have started the exposition directly with *asana*.”

“The practices of *yama*, (these) you have to practice for the benefit of society. It’s not something you do for yourself; it is something you do for others. The next 5 principles, *niyama*, are individual practices...that is what you do for yourself. These two have to be combined to make you qualified for the third limb, which is *asana*.”

“However, the subject being one of compassion, it allows the student to come into the class. Gradually as the student becomes adept, it is explained to the student that the qualities of *yama* and *niyama* are also available in your *asana* practice.”

“So all these principles are hidden in your *asana* practice and also your *pranayama*. So though we may not insist on you being a qualified student, gradually we do bring you to that state. You are made to practice the *yama* and *niyama*.”

“Patanjali says that there are five causes that allow our consciousness to remain unstable. The five causes are demarcated for ease of understanding; it is not that only one affects you. All five affect you at one time in varying degrees. The five *vrttis* are correct knowledge, false knowledge, imagination, sleep and memory. “

“There are just three *sutras* on *asana*. The first one is: be in a position that is stable and the comfort will come. The second one is: your effort should steadily become effort-less so that the infiniteness of the soul is recognized. The third one is: you are now in a non-dual state.” ॐ



## 100th Birthday Special Practice

Mark December 1st  
on your calendar for a  
special practice as part of  
the 100 days leading up  
to Guruji’s centenary.

## CENTRE CLOSED

During the summer intensives, some classes are not scheduled; others are in Birch studio. To confirm your class is running, consult dates on the schedule.

We are closed for the statutory holidays:

June 30, July 1, 2,  
August 6, and  
September 1, 2, 3.

## Congratulations!

The following candidates achieved  
Introductory II certification at the  
March 16-18 assessment in Kelowna:

Angela Grace, Calgary, AB

Janet Harvie, Calgary, AB

Jennifer Krake, Kelowna, BC

Dianne Noort, Horsefly, BC

Marie Landry, Bowser, BC

Soodabeh Seyed-Fathi, Toronto, ON

Maria Stella Patera, Whitehorse, YT

Alison Sisson, Whitehorse, YT

# Victoria Iyengar Yoga Centre 2017 Annual Report



## Report from the General Manager

By Wendy Boyer

The Centre had one of its busiest years in 2017, with class revenue, workshops with Chris Saudek and Jawahar Banghera, the teacher and student intensives as well as the Salt Spring retreat being the largest sources of income. We finished 2017 with a deficit because of an increase in all areas of expenditure: for example, rent increased 8%; hydro increased 4%; printing increased 4%; and teacher costs increased because of increased certification levels. Correspondingly, the Centre had not increased prices for three years. In 2018, the Centre raised class and workshop prices by 8%.

In 2017 the best marketing tool has been reducing the cost of the entry-level classes. The result was a spike in introductory students attending classes and a small increase in revenue. The passes are still popular, particularly the Unlimited pass, offering students any class at their level, anytime. Om Passes for six hours of classes allow a lot of flexibility.

In 2017 the Centre added a video to our excellent website, designed by Peggy Cady. Thank you to Laine and Ty and the folks at Kingtide Films for the successful video that promotes who we are and what we do. Thank you to Shirley Daventry French for her column published four times per year in the newsletter, and to Roger Champagne for his editing acumen. Thank you to Johanna Godliman who distributed posters and schedules throughout the year. Paid print advertising ran bi-monthly in *Focus* and *Monday* magazines. Britta sent monthly e-marketing updates; Ty posted on Facebook; and the Centre continued the first-class-free offer to welcome new students. Three complimentary classes were available in 2017: an all levels on Friday mornings as well as teen, prenatal and family classes.

The September 16-17 Open House, attracted far fewer people than in past years attended because it ran concurrent with another big event in town. On Saturday September 16th we offered three yoga classes, plus a ropes class and Kirtan with Bhavantu Sound. On Sunday, we ran a free workshop with Gary Wong. Thank you to the board and Johanna who prepared, hosted, and cleaned up; our generous bakers who made tasty treats and savories; and to Jane McFarlane who brewed amazing chai. The Centre will hold the 2018 Open House in late October.

In 2017 we gathered as a community for several well attended events: the New Year's Day Practice in January, the 3rd Annual

International Day of Yoga in June, Toonie Movie nights in January and October, and a celebration of B.K.S. Iyengar's birthday in December.

The Centre had 310 members in 2017, 39 of whom are life members, 8 of whom are international members, and 21 of whom reside outside of BC but within Canada. We mail 92 individual newsletters, but encourage students to read the newsletter on the website or, for local students, to pick up the newsletter at the Centre.

The largest cost saving in 2017 came from our committed volunteer, Theron Morgan, our bookkeeper, who contributed countless hours keeping the finances in order. Jennifer Rischmiller saved the Centre a significant cost in 2017 by volunteering to do the maintenance for the Centre. Thank you to Jane McFarlane and Adia, Vicky and Anil Kapoor for cleaning the props and blankets regularly. We salute all of you!

Many people contributed items to the Tea Fundraiser - special thanks to Robin Cantor and Annie Kitchen for their energy and commitment. We are grateful to Sandra Harper, who donated the photocopier that continues to reduce our printing expenses. Thank you to Linda Ellen Bosela for managing the Thrifty's Smile card program. Laine Canivet produced a beautiful fundraising calendar based on photographs she took in India. Donations to the annual appeal and the tea were up in 2017. Thank you to all who contributed to our fundraising events.

Staff provides administrative support for the Centre's many activities. Specifically, thank you to Britta Poisson who manages the office; Jennifer Rischmiller who assists with donations to the annual appeal, the spring tea and donation requests from local organizations; Bruce Cox who maintains the website; Hilary McPhail who handles membership registration; Bob Maher who coordinates storage of waivers and provides desk support for staff vacations; and to Jane McFarlane who creates eye-catching bulletin boards and provides casual desk support. Thank you to Leslie Hogya for managing the class schedule and the teachers. My time as general manager is spent administering the overall operation of our very busy Centre.

Thanks to the board for supporting the Centre, especially for stepping up to assist with the maintenance for special events. Special thanks to our president, Laine Canivet, whose commitment, creative leadership and friendly camaraderie we appreciate. Kudos to continuing board members in 2017: Bev Kallstrom, Amanda Mills, Carole Miller, Sheila Redhead, Stacey Frank, Ann Kilbertus, and Annie Kitchen. Thank you to Jim Bratvold and Roger Champagne who joined the board. Big thanks to Bev,

an excellent, committed volunteer and strong supporter of the Centre in every way, particularly for her work as treasurer over the past six years.

As with any registered charity, the Centre has dedicated volunteers. I can mention but a few here. Thanks to Shirley for her ongoing leadership, the teachers at the open houses, the workshop coordinators and the programming and newsletter committees. Kudos to Adia Kapoor for managing the programming document which is the hub of our programming wheel and to Lucie Guindon for proofing the many spokes in that wheel including the website, newsletter, flyers and Yog-e news. Thanks to Gary for supervising the members' practice; to Lucie for coordinating billets; to Linda Poole and her crew for making bolsters; to Ty who posts to Facebook; to Patty Rivard, our librarian; and to Leslie Hogya and Lucie Guindon for donating time to teach short workshops. We thank you all so very much. ॐ

## President's Report

By Laine Canivet

I wondered how our centre was doing compared to other non-profit, charitable organizations so I asked Mr. Google what other non-profits find most challenging. I'm not sure what I was expecting to find, but it was certainly interesting. Three issues are mentioned repeatedly. The number one issue is "finding the money to accomplish our mission". The second is "finding the right people" to manage the daily responsibilities as well as moving the organization forward. The last is "communications".

**Finding the Money:** The biggest challenge is having sufficient funds to remain vital while working towards a stable future. Yes, we have that challenge, too. 2017 was an especially frustrating year. We kept our costs under close scrutiny; we were fiscally responsible in all of our expenditures and yet, when costs go up we fall behind. How many ways can we ask for dollars from our generous members, students and teachers? There are so many worthy groups competing for everyone's available dollars. Yes, this year we had to dip into our savings to cover the shortfall. Luckily, we have a cushion. In addition to tucking away some cash during our more flush years, a couple of years ago we inherited some of our financial cushion from the estate of a student. I guess one must remember that success isn't always measured in money. Being successful in the non-profit world often means breaking even or worse - being in the red. However, transforming lives transcends profits when you are truly engaged in charitable non-profit work!

**Finding the Right People:** An apparently wide-spread issue for non-profits is finding capable Board members with relevant

expertise and/or getting them to attend meetings and to do what they committed to do. Many organizations have trouble finding enough people to do what needs to be done or burning out the ones who do pitch in. And finally, the two big personnel issues are finding the leadership expertise needed to ensure the organization thrives as well as finding and keeping good employees.

We are extremely lucky in this area. We have a talented and dedicated Board. They all seem to enjoy coming to the monthly meetings even though we don't even serve chocolate! Without exception, they offer to help and lend their individual talent and energies as they can. Meanwhile, Wendy provides the skillful leadership expertise and she does an amazing job of keeping this busy centre operating effectively and at full tilt. The staff is dedicated, enthusiastic and reliable. They are the 'face' of the centre, welcoming people and making everyone feel like they belong.

**Communications:** This covers marketing and getting the 'correct' word out. Many of the organizations I read about don't spend money on advertising, specifically digital advertising. In this day and age, having an effective website to communicate an organization's philosophy, programs and business to potential members, donors and friends is mandatory. But because it takes money, expertise and a long-term plan, many non-profits skimp on this aspect. We do fairly well in this area. We have a great website, a monthly electronic newsletter and we post regularly to Facebook. In addition to electronic communication we have our quarterly newsletter which has a stellar reputation, and it is mailed to several countries around the world, as well as being available on the website. We have a marketing plan that was updated this year and we use our Open Houses to communicate our mission and methods to inquiring people.

On closer examination of and comparison to other charitable, non-profit organizations, I'm happy to report we are doing many things right.

Once again, I must say that it has been a pleasure to work with this year's Board and everyone else at the Centre. ॐ



### 2018 IYAC/ACYI ASSESSMENT DATES

September 14-16, Introductory II, Calgary, AB

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

November 2-4, Introductory II, Fredericton, NB

November 9-11, Introductory II, London, ON



## Treasurer's Report

Year ending October 31, 2017

By **Bev Kallstrom**

Our year end financial statements were prepared by the firm of Stirling Stanford and were signed off by the IYCV president, Laine Canivet and treasurer, Bev Kallstrom on December 21, 2017. The IYCV Society is dedicated to encouraging the physical, mental, and spiritual growth of our members through the study and discipline of Iyengar Yoga.

Our annual budget is based on the actual revenue and expenditures of the previous fiscal year and projected changes, with a goal to contain expenses and maintain our revenue through student enrolment in classes, workshops, merchandise sales and donations. This year, we ended the year with a shortfall of \$10,073.00.

### *Revenue*

Total revenue for 2017 was \$407,631 including gains on investments and foreign exchange. The majority of the revenue is from yoga classes followed by workshops, annual appeal, merchandise and memberships as detailed in the statements. This was comparable to last year, although we experienced a slight drop in merchandise sales, memberships, donations and the annual appeal.

A comparison to previous years' revenue follows:

2017 - \$407,631  
2016 - \$407,111  
2015 - \$377,218  
2014 - \$391,446  
2013 - \$371,324

### *Expenses*

Total expenses for 2017 were \$417,780. Increased costs that impacted our bottom line, detailed in the statements, include wages and benefits, utilities and rental expenses.

Comparative expenses to previous years follows:

2017 - \$417,780  
2016 - \$407,901  
2015 - \$378,689  
2014 - \$375,706  
2013 - \$372,278

### *Statement of Financial Position*

The Statement of Financial Position documents our assets and liabilities as of October 31, 2017. At year end our short-term funds invested in GIC's were \$104,877 expiring January 22, 2018 and November 2018. Our Marketable Securities account is readily available if required.

The Iyengar Yoga Centre is being carefully managed and efforts are being made to curtail costs and increase fundraising and donations to ensure the financial health of our centre remains strong.

I have served six years on the Board and want to thank the members of the Board for their support as my term ends. Serving on the board was enjoyable and a great opportunity for personal growth. I must acknowledge Wendy Boyer, our General Manager, staff and volunteers, (especially Theron Morgan) for all their efforts.

Finally, thank you to this great community of people – our teachers for their inspiration, work, and contributions and to our members and students who support our centre. ॐ

## *Scholarships & Bursaries*

**Certified Teacher Intensive,**  
August 13-17, deadline June 29

**Student Intensive,**  
August 27-31, deadline August 3

**Workshop with Chris Saudek,**  
September 7-9, deadline August 16

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)

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

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

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

Saturdays 10:30 am-1:45 pm:

**October 27, 2018; November 24, 2018  
January 26, 2019; March 30, 2019**

**\$35 + GST each session**



# Annual High Tea

By Ann Kilbertus

The Victoria Iyengar Yoga Centre held a delightful and lovely 11th Annual High Tea Fundraiser on March 22. Each year, our collective efforts help the Centre not only financially but in community spirit. The goodwill, camaraderie, and all around support are very present at this event. Thank you for your extraordinary effort!

Robin Cantor absolutely outdid herself presenting her Tea Pose in *hanumanasana* – while serving tea! Thanks to Jim, Robin's husband, for assisting Robin.

Thank you Robin, for the overall organization of the tea – a job that begins months in advance of the event – coordinating a team of volunteers, organizing the food and entertainment, fundraising in your home studio – and picking all the flowers!

Organizing the Silent Auction is a huge job. Many thanks to Annie Kitchen for keeping the treasures and services coming! Thank you Annie for talking up the tea so enthusiastically at every class! It really made a difference to attendance & to the huge increase in the amount raised. Thanks also to Bev Kallstrom for assisting.

Thanks to Jaya Malaviarachchi for organizing the draw and bringing her artistic talent to displaying the draw donations.

Thanks to Dawn Cox for her role as backstage coordinator, orchestrating the volunteers for set up, take down, serving & clean up: Jane McFarlane, Laine Canivet, Melissa Hadley, Jim Bratvold, Jaya Malaviarachchi, Laura Johnston, Wendy Wimbush, Jill Williams, Johanna Godliman, Alejandra Flores, Avalon (Boni Hoy's granddaughter). The kitchen was so packed with people, food and dishes. It felt like a big family gathering!

The food was wonderful! Thanks to all of you who generously brought sweets, fruit, cheeses & savouries: Jaime Caldwell, Melissa Hadley, Patty Kallio, Joy Illington, Patricia Hofstrand, Ruby Smyth, Penny Draper, Jaya Malaviarachchi, Ginger Mason, Barbara Preston, Lois Badenhorst, Jill Williams, Leslie Hogya, Esther Silver, Linda Benn, Dorothy Liedke, Karin Dayton, Lorna Sandler, Anthea Browne, Billie Essa, Laine Canivet, Boni Hoy, Dave Skilling, Alejandra Flores, Annie Kitchen.

Also, thanks to Melissa Hadley's husband, Doug, for picking up the tea; Laura Johnston for flower arranging; Patty Kallio for meeting and greeting guests.

Thank you Carole Miller for doing a superb job as M.C.

Mae Browne, a student in the Remedial Class, entertained the crowd singing two songs with her daughter Anthea on the uke and her son Murray on the guitar. The Browne family had audience members dancing and singing along with them. Anne Glover, a master storyteller, treated us to a wonderfully animated tale. Diego Fabian Flores played music throughout and performed two exquisite songs along with his family.

Jane McFarlane created eye-catching posters and took great photos. Thanks to Johanna Godliman for posting festive, colourful teapots throughout the Centre.

Thanks to Krysia Strawczynski, Robert Beckett, and Billie Essa for loaning tables, and to Jim Bratvold again, for carrying those tables!

Thank you to Britta Poisson for the flyer. Thank you to Bruce Cox and Jennifer Rischmiller for tallying the proceeds.

Thanks to Darwin Miller of the Renaissance Retirement Residence for supplying the table linens. Thanks to Robin's husband Jim Pask for picking these up, setting up, laundering the cloths and returning them to the Renaissance.



A big thanks to Silk Road Tea for their annual contribution of tea kegs for our fundraiser.

Thanks to Linda Benn and Marlene Miller and the many volunteers who teach the Remedial Class each week and to the students who attend.

With much appreciation to one and all for such a wonderful expression of community spirit in the Light of Yoga. ॐ

# Gather Fruit, Scatter Seeds

## **Part 1 of an interview with Chris Saudek conducted and transcribed by Ann Kilbertus and Leslie Hogle.**

*Chris Saudek has had strong links with the Iyengar family and will be part of our celebration for Gururji's centenary year. She was granted an Advanced Junior Certificate by Geeta Iyengar. Chris will teach a workshop at the Centre September 7-9. She will also teach an extended Monday evening class September 10 from 5:30-8:30 pm.*



CHRIS SAUDEK (C), ANN KILBERTUS (A), LESLIE HOGYA (L)

A: I know that you have lived in India a number of times, for long periods, and I wonder if you could describe what that was like?

C: The first time I went to India was in 1980 and I went for about two months and at that time you could stay right in the Institute. They had rooms downstairs and you could rent a room for a small fee.

A: That was your first trip?

C: Yes, I had travelled before, in the Peace Corps and elsewhere, but I still was not prepared for what things were like in India in those days. Nothing was regulated at all at the airport, and the moment you landed people just started grabbing your stuff. Fortunately I knew Mr. Taraporewala, (who had just been in the USA), and he met me at the airport and took me to his home where he lived with his two daughters and his most wonderful wife. Even to this day when I go to Bombay I stay with his daughter. So I rested a couple of days with them and recovered, and it helped a great deal with my introduction to India.

A: How long had you been practicing yoga at this point?

C: Two years. I had started in 1978. I actually started yoga in 1976 but it was not Iyengar. And in 1978 I was taking yoga with a woman who was teaching out of *Light on Yoga* but who really didn't know Iyengar Yoga. She would open the book and have us all try a pose. But my friend from college, Sally Rutzky, talked me into going to a camp sponsored by the Ann Arbor Y. I think I showed her *virabhadrasana II* and I know my form was terrible. She was very polite and non-judgmental but said she thought I would benefit from the yoga camp.

I went to the camp with Sally and thought I was an advanced student because I'd been taking yoga for a while—not Iyengar, but some yoga. So I went to all the classes, both beginner's and advanced. I have always had scoliosis and an achy back but I still

tried to do everything. After two days I could hardly get out of bed. But it was my arms and legs, not my back that hurt—my back actually felt pretty good! And that was when I started searching for a teacher, because I was living in the middle of nowhere, where there were no teachers. I found one, 93 miles from my home!

It really all began because Sally had suggested that I go to the yoga camp. There were many Iyengar teachers there: Mary Dunn, Priscilla Neil, and Mary Palmer. We had a preliminary meeting before starting and there was Mary Dunn with her two small children around sitting in *upavistha konasana* for half an hour. I thought who could ever do that? She's sitting up straight! I thought I'd never do that.

A: That's often the way you first see it, from afar.

C: Yes, that's right. I ended up going back to the yoga camp and eventually taught there, years down the line. Before I went to India in 1980, I went back to Ann Arbor because that was where the really good yoga teachers were. I think Iyengar yoga started there around 1974. Looking back, who knows what it is that leads one to something. Why did I start yoga? I don't know. Out of curiosity? Maybe. Someone did say it might help you relax. But why did I stick with it? I don't know, but sometimes I really think there are some imprints there, you have a certain *karma* that leads you to where you end up. When I started I was sort of a fanatic. For a while I drove 93 miles, one way, and after that I would drive 100 miles, another way, just to do yoga, and sometimes twice a week!

A: So we can't really complain!

C: In 1980, my teacher at the time told me that there was a group of people from Manchester, England going to India, and so I joined them. I arrived a couple of weeks before the intensive, took the intensive, and then stayed for a couple of weeks after. That was the first time, and I stayed two months. It was perfect. The Institute was much different then. There were only about 35 or 40 people in our intensive. It was just fantastic. Because I was staying right in the Institute I could go upstairs any time, day or night. I only had to be in the Institute by 9 pm when the front gate was closed.

A: Were there other students staying in the Institute at that time?

C: I really can't remember. There may have been a couple of Japanese women, but I can't recall now whether that was 1980 or 1982. In 1982 I remember Mira Metha was staying there, and a woman from South Africa, but some of the time I was there



just by myself. In 1982 I went again by myself, and again for two months.

A: Great!

C: In 1983, when my husband was on sabbatical, we met in Japan and then went on to India and stayed a month.

A: Were medical classes going at this time?

C: Oh yes. This was what was so fantastic about living just downstairs in the Institute. I was able to go to everything.

A: Kid's classes too?

C: Oh yes. Kid's classes...I went to everything. I would either attend class or take notes. I was also able to help in medical classes, which were not nearly as full as now. I learned an awful lot then. Those first two trips, in 1980 and 1982, were really amongst the best. Gurujī was still teaching then, even in 1983. He was so nice with my husband, I remember, because my husband has to be the stiffest person in the world.

A: No, no, I think mine is. (Laughter)

C: Because my husband was in chemistry, Gurujī would make these analogies about flowing like mercury and things like that. He really did try very hard to relate, especially when someone was a guest professor like my husband.

I had a daughter in 1985, and my next trip to India was in 1987. We were there for five months. That was really a nice time for us as a family. My husband was at Pune University and I really enjoyed studying at the Institute and just living there as a family for the five months and being able to settle in. My daughter was two years old. I used to ride a bike with her sitting on the little seat right in front of the handlebars and we sometimes rode down the MG Road. I can't even imagine trying to do that now because the traffic is so bad. Pune has changed a lot.

The next time we stayed for a long time was in 1995. Then I had two daughters, one in first grade, one in fifth grade, and we just took the kids. We just decided we were going, and only then did we start to try and figure out what we were going to do with our house. People asked how we were going to handle all the details, but it seemed that once we had decided to go it just happened and things worked themselves out. There was a problem of getting the kids into the right schools, but once that was settled I was pretty much at the Institute every day. I either took classes or helped in the classes. You know, when you're there for a longer time they don't want you taking classes every day, so I helped on those days and took notes. I took classes about three days a week. Again, it was a very nice time for our family.

A: So Pune has really been the source of inspiration for your practice?

C: Yes, very much so, and those early years were just fantastic. I've of course been back many times since then—I can't even count the times. But those early years were just so good. Gurujī was teaching, classes were smaller, and the people who were helping gave you a lot of individual attention. This is not to say that it isn't wonderful now, but for me it was just so special then, especially being able to stay in the Institute and getting to know the Iyengar family. I spent a lot of time talking to Savita, Mr. Iyengar's youngest daughter, who was still at home and not married...I would sit with her in the garden and also with Vanita, another of Mr. Iyengar's daughters and her two children, Kaushik and Shrinit. In fact, '87 was when Savita got married. We have a wonderful picture of my daughter, Clare, who was two years old, in a sari with the *bhindi* dot, and we went to the wedding. For me, those were really the best times. Just as I got to know everyone there, they all knew who I was.

A: Were you a physiotherapist at that time?

C: Yes, in 1983. I wasn't on the first two visits. It was yoga that actually got me into physical therapy. I have a Master's degree in math and I was teaching math and for some reason I just got more and more interested in anatomy. Although I loved math, I really didn't want to go on any further. At that time (around 1980), I wasn't married, and I was trying to figure out what I wanted to do with my life. And yoga was so interesting to me. I was lucky, because the job I had teaching math was at a small university and I had Thursdays off, which was when my two yoga teachers taught, as well as on the weekend. So I would often go to yoga class on Thursday and go back on Saturday. It was just fortuitous that they taught on Thursday and that was the day I had off.

I never thought I would be a yoga teacher, but I did think I might go back to school and study physical therapy. And then when I went back to school in physical therapy (1981), first of all I met my husband, and then I was asked by the person who ran the continuing education program to teach yoga. They had been getting calls for a yoga class and they had heard that I did yoga. Would I be interested? And that was how I started teaching yoga.

And I met my husband because he is also a wonderful wood-worker and I wanted a back-bender built! So my life is really all built around yoga! (Much laughter.)

I got my physical therapy degree in 1983, and I had been teaching yoga, and had gone to India twice. When I got back from India in '83 I was teaching one yoga class in the continuing education program, working in an orthopedic clinic as a physical therapist, and also editing an orthopedic journal.

And then what happened is that I taught one class of yoga, then two classes, then three classes...

A: And the subject drew you in!

C: Yes, and then in '83 a couple of my friends went to India with me, one of whom was one of my first students. She said to me, "Why don't we start something?" And so we did. We started the centre, really just to support our interest in yoga, supporting our hobby, with never any idea that it would become self-supporting. We just thought that since we were studying yoga, going to workshops, and going to India, we could find a way to support this hobby of ours. So we started with three classes in what was pretty much a dump of a place that we renovated and tried to make into a nice place.

A: The same place you're in today?

C: No, no it was a different place. It was a tile floor and I really wanted wood, and they told me there was nice wood under the

tile. So, I decided to tear up the tile and my husband asked me whether I would be content with a different tile if the wood turned out to be not so good, and I said sure. Well, the wood was horrible and I was not content with the idea of anything other than a proper wood floor. I phoned up some people who did wood flooring and asked if they had any used wood and they said no. Then one of them said a lady had called who had a big old building that had been a roller rink, and then a feed store, and she wanted the wood floor taken up and a concrete one put down. So I called the woman and she told me the wood was mine for the taking. So off we went with hammers and crowbars. It was beautiful wood, but you have to remember it had been a farm feed store and so it smelled a bit like fertilizer and there was feed residue in all the cracks so we had to sweep each piece. It really was a labor of love! In the end, we were able to put down



## INTRODUCTORY INTENSIVE FOR TEACHERS IN TRAINING

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

Asana. Pranayama. Philosophy. Peer Teaching.

Celebrate Gururji's centenary year!

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

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

Only 12 spaces available!  
9:30 to 5:30 Daily

\$375.00 members, \$410.00 non-members

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

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

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

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



## INTENSIVE FOR CERTIFIED TEACHERS

**August 13-17, 2018**

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

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

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

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

IYCV Members \$660, Non-members \$705  
A deposit of \$150 will reserve a place.

a nice wood floor in our new studio. We were there from 1988 to 1998. Eventually our number of classes grew and I was able to find a new place, actually through my dentist, with a nice wood floor already in place!

A: So it sounds as though you had these two parallel careers, the yoga teaching and being a physiotherapist, but it seems that they did not overlap?

C: That's right, and I don't practice physical therapy very much anymore. Why? Well, as soon as I started to practice physical therapy I realized that yoga was just so much more effective in that it works with the whole person and it looks at issues completely differently.

The observation skills that yoga teachers have to develop are so much finer than what you normally develop as a physical therapist. Plus, in this day and age you can't spend very much time with somebody as a physical therapist, maybe ten or fifteen minutes per session. When I had this recent shoulder injury I went to the physical therapist and although she could see some of what was injured, she had no idea what to do with me! So, back to your question. If I did anything, I used yoga in physical therapy, not the other way around. In my own practice, my knowledge of physical therapy and anatomy is very helpful because I do think it is very important to be able to visualize internally. Being able to go a little bit deeper into the internal organs brings a deeper understanding and practice. So, I do think the physical therapy knowledge I acquired has helped me in my yoga practice and teaching. But yoga is so much more, so much fuller and more advanced.

Once I had to do a workshop on the anatomy of the upper quarter with emphasis on inversions and arm balances. I know anatomy but in yoga it is completely different. In physical therapy we normally do what are known as "open chain"

exercises, (e.g., raising the arm up), whereas in yoga we're fixing the arm, then moving over the arm, and asking, "how did that work," and those sorts of things. So I hired a physical therapist to try and help me figure this all out. What was very interesting about all this was that he was fascinated because the newest research that was coming out was all about "closed chain" rehabilitation...and that's really what yoga is!

A: Like dog pose, weight bearing...

C: That's right. When I showed him how we did *pincha mayurasana*, where we put a block between our hands, he found it very, very interesting. I said, "You know the internal rotators are so much stronger than the external rotators and you want to create balance and so we use the blocks." And he was fascinated by that. And then he asked, "So what if someone had broader shoulders?" And I said, "Oh, well we just have this bigger block!" He laughed and said, "Oh, you've thought of everything." So, I honestly feel that yoga is just so much more advanced. And you are dealing with people, not just a shoulder.

Now, I really am not interested in having to convince people of the value of yoga. I really am not. I feel that if people come to class and they participate and they find yoga very useful for them then that is wonderful. I'm very much a person who doesn't proselytize.

But back to scientific studies, I am involved in one. There is a back study going on in West Virginia, and I am involved, but as a consultant. I don't have to try and set up the study and figure out how to control all the variables or interview people. I'm looked at as an expert in yoga, not someone doing a scientific study. I really just want to teach yoga as yoga, which means that it is all entwined...the physical, the mental, the spiritual. I do know that Guruji really wants us to do scientific studies and maybe I will, sometime in the future. ॐ

## Smile! It All Helps

Our Centre is a nonprofit and as such can benefit from a partnership with Thrifty Foods. Thrifty Foods will donate an amount equal to 5% of the dollars you load to your pre-assigned Smile Card. We are eligible to earn up to \$2500 this term, which began April 29, and will support our programming.

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

## IYCV Calendar

### June

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

### July

4-6 Intro Teacher Training Intensive

### August

13-17 Certified Teacher Intensive  
27-31 Student Intensive

### September

7-9 Chris Saudek Workshop

### October

11-15 IYAC Conference, Ottawa  
26 Practice Enrichment  
27 Professional Development

### November

1-2 Open House  
23 Practice Enrichment  
24 Professional Development

### December

1 100th Birthday Special Practice  
14 In the Light of Yoga, Guruji's Birthday



## Thank you to...

- **Giles Hogya** for his design consulting on the office lights. He helped choose the pendant lights and strip light at the desk and solve various technical issues.
- Laine Canivet for her work with having the rope wall inspected and Wendy Boyer, Lucie Guindon, and Leslie Hogya for their input.
- Jayne Jonas for her donation to the library giving us now a circulating copy of the beautiful tribute book called *Beloved Guruji*. (Note: Jayne carried this copy all the way from India.)
- Adia Kapoor for her ongoing work of the program committee, keeping events updated.
- Thrifty Foods and everyone who participated in our spring Smile Card fundraiser. It was a great success and we reached our goal of \$2,500. The money will help support our programming.
- The attendees for our May Bolster Bee: Jane McFarlane, Wendy Boyer, Linda Poole, Lisa Grebinski, Johanna Godliman, Annie Kitchen, Krysia Strawczynski, and Bev Kallstrom.

- All who contributed to the recently updated Chart IYAC/ACYI Syllabi of asanas and pranayama:
  - Bob Maher who corrected typos in the pranayama section.
  - Janice Loukras in Kelowna for making the revisions happen.
  - Marlene Miller and Ann Kilbertus who reviewed and gave input to Janice and later to Bob.
  - Marlene Miller for helping with the changes and proofing and for starting the ball rolling a long time ago with Corrine Lowen.
- Catherine Langpap for donating 4 green foam blocks; 8 cotton blankets; 2 never used pink head bandages; and a wooden meditation bench.
- Hilary McPhail for tracking the people to thank in this column.
- Jane McFarlane for all her creative posters.
- Britta Poisson for the in-house brochures she makes to promote workshops, special events, and the weekly schedule of classes.

Those who helped with guest lecturer Jawahar Banger's visit:

- Leslie Hogya for hosting and organizing his trip.
- Jim Bratvold for Jawahar's pick-up from the airport, especially as his flight was 6 hours late!
- Jane McFarlane, Jim Bratvold, Gary Wong, and crew for keeping the centre tidy and moving props.
- Linda Benn, Brandy Baybutt, Victor Cummings, and all who helped move props around after the intensive finished on Sunday.
- Adia Kapoor and Ann Kilbertus for driving and preparing food.
- Lucie Guindon for coordinating billeting; Laine Canivet and Bev Kallstrom for providing billeting.
- Britta Poisson for all the behind-the-scenes support.
- All the front desk staff for their support: Bob Maher, Jennifer Rischmiller, Hilary McPhail, Bruce Cox.



## Become a Member - Enjoy the Benefits!

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

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

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

### Membership PLUS

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

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

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

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

Iyengar Yoga Centre  
of Victoria Society  
c/o Hilary McPhail  
202-919 Fort Street,  
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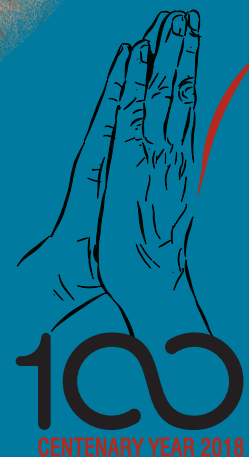
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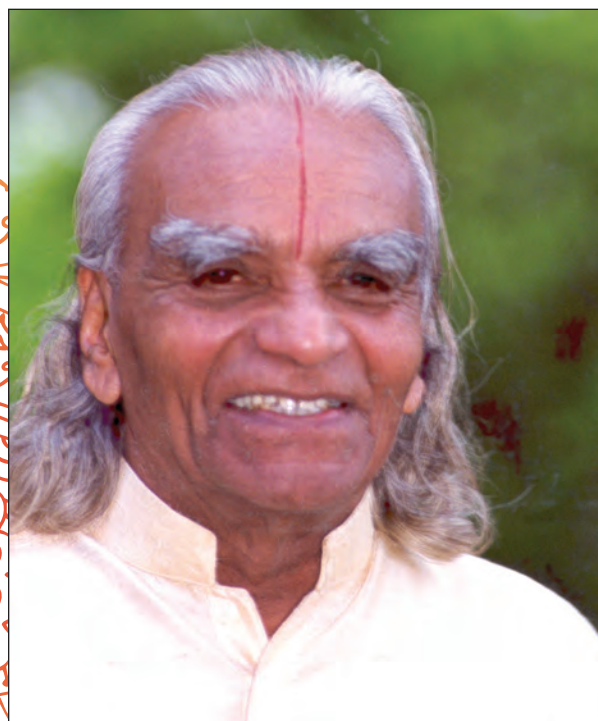
IYENGAR YOGA  
CENTRE of VICTORIA



## A Tribute to Guruji



SPECIAL CENTENARY ISSUE NOVEMBER 2018



*A still of Gururaj taken during filming of Sadhaka*

## From the Editor

By Roger Champagne

This year marks the Centenary of B.K.S. Iyengar. It is a 'once in a lifetime' year; a chance to share our stories and express our gratitude for the life and work of this great man who mapped out a path to spiritual enlightenment for all to follow.

Many individuals in the Iyengar community also felt the need to express their gratitude in writing and share a personal experience they had with Mr. Iyengar. I was touched by these accounts. It was clear that those he had taught directly were deeply changed by the experience. The Iyengar effect was so powerful that it could be transmitted indirectly through teachers to students all over the world and affect their lives. His work is that brilliant.

On a personal note, while studying at Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute (RIMYI) in 2013, I was granted an interview with Mr. Iyengar, and the whole experience had a profound effect on me.

The interview was filled with humour and insight, as he spoke so eloquently on a number of issues about yoga and life in the modern world. Gururaj effortlessly and with wry humour connected Patanjali, ethics, *asana*, and the demands of family life.

I never had the opportunity to be taught by Mr. Iyengar, but I am deeply grateful to have been in his presence and feel his power. His remarks on that

unforgettable occasion, as well as exposure to his brilliant instruction through the senior teachers in Pune, continue to be felt in my practice and life.

Over the past year, to celebrate the Centenary, the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria has been initiating and supporting many outreach activities, for example:

- Ann Kilbertus gave an interview with the *Victoria News Group* in July, which included a video recording and front page *Victoria News* article. Everything was posted on Facebook.
- There are ongoing readings by teachers from the same chapters of many of Gururaj's books in the 100 days leading up to his birthday.
- There is much behind-the-scenes preparation for the very special celebration on his birthday.
- A photographic display will go up a few weeks before his birthday.
- Posters advertising classes at the centre will be posted around town.
- Shirley Daventry French and senior teachers are preparing a special professional development session for teachers.

We offer you this Tribute to Gururaj, in sincere appreciation of the life and work of Sri Bellur Krishnamachar Sundararaja Iyengar. ॐ



## IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA NEWSLETTER

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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  
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2. Advertisements must be only for Iyengar Yoga.
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*"Action is movement with intelligence.  
The world is filled with movement.  
What the world needs is more conscious  
movement, more action."*



## About The Logo

“Yoga is for one and all” – this was the conviction that led B.K.S. Iyengar to undertake the journey of yoga for himself, and make yoga available to anyone who sought it. Guruji B.K.S. Iyengar stood graciously like a lighthouse for all those who came to yoga. The year 2018 will see the 100th birth anniversary of this great being. Maharshi Patanjali postulated that *ashuddhikshaya* (destroying impurities) and *vivekakhyaati* (sense of discrimination) are achieved by the *anushtana* (devoted practice) of yoga.

Along with these two, Guruji radiated two things – unconditional love for creation and everything in it, and gratitude for whatever life offered to him. In this sense, Guruji has effortlessly woven gratitude as an effect of yoga.

Throughout his life, Guruji wove the two-pronged *sadhana* – accepting the exuberant creation as a part of oneself and simultaneously surrendering oneself into creation. He gave much more than what he received – this was his character. Guruji’s palms, folded in *namaskar*, denote his warmth for fellow beings and thankfulness for life itself.

The zeros in the hundred appear in the form of infinity suggesting that we move from the finite figure of ‘100’ towards the Infinite. Guruji’s teachings being eternally contemporary goad us in that direction.

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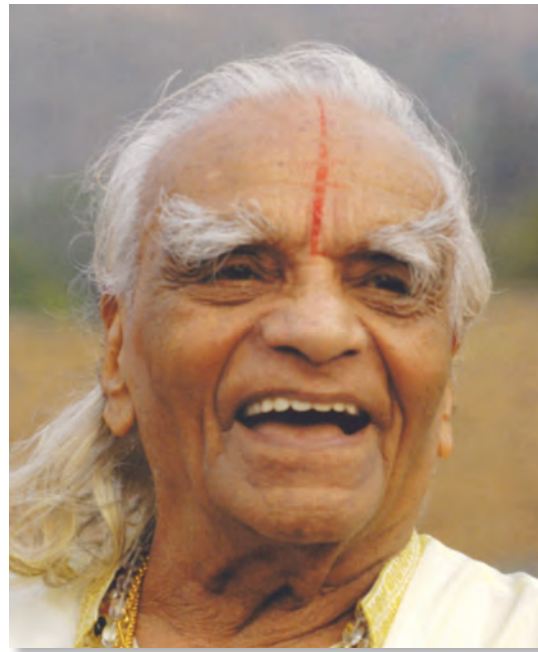


PHOTO: JAKE CLENNELL

**B**ellur Krishnamachar Sundararaja Iyengar was born December 14, 1918, in Bellur, Karnataka, India into a large family: he was 11th among 13 children. His mother was suffering from influenza, and, as a result, Iyengar began life sickly and frail. He was not expected to survive, but survive he did!

He helped his family on the family plot while his father taught in a nearby school.

His sister married Shriman Krishnamacharya, who was a scholar of yoga philosophy and Sanskrit. In 1934 when Iyengar was 14 he went to

live with his sister and brother-in-law in Mysore. There he began training at his brother-in-law’s yoga school, in an effort to deal with health issues such as tuberculosis. The deep intensity that he pushed himself to was a blueprint of his future.

At 18 he was sent to Pune to teach and spread yoga. Thus began a life dedicated to finding out the benefits of yoga; a long process of study and practice that allowed him to understand the health benefits as well as the many benefits for the head and the heart. ॐ



Guruji in conversation with his teachers on his deck

# Reflections on a Peerless Teacher and Very Great Man

By Shirley Daventry French

The dedication in B.K.S. Iyengar's book *Light on the Yoga Sutas of Patanjali* reads: "This work is my offering to my Invisible, First and Foremost Guru Lord Patanjali." If asked to define Iyengar Yoga, Guruji would frequently respond that there was no such thing as 'Iyengar Yoga,' that he simply practised and taught the yoga of Patanjali!

The Preface to *Light on the Yoga Sutas* states: "Yoga is an art, a science and a philosophy." The *sutas* comprise four chapters. *Samadhi Pada* which defines yoga and the movements of consciousness. *Sadhana Pada* (On Yoga Practice) opens with the statement that "Burning zeal in practice, self-study and study of scriptures, and surrender to God are the acts of yoga." The third chapter *Vibhuti Pada* comes with a warning about abuse of powers which can accrue through unguarded practice. And the final chapter *Kaivalya Pada* speaks of emancipation or absolute freedom.

Guruji's work was innovative, direct, practical and penetrating but he never neglected the spiritual foundation of yoga and integrated its philosophical underpinnings into all of his life and work. This was not always easy to see and understand on the part of casual observers, many of whom were quick to criticise him. Nor was it necessarily easy for his pupils to understand. Trust lies at the heart of any effective teacher/student relationship; but sometimes as the trust is developing a student has to suspend judgment, listen and learn.

Not only in class but wherever he might be, the teachings of yoga were Guruji's constant companion. A formal banquet, meals around a family dinner table, while travelling on trains, planes and in automobiles, as he absorbed



Guruji giving Shirley a correction during his teaching in Victoria

his surroundings and listened to the conversation of his companions an impromptu yoga lesson was never far away!

On a walk to the waterfront park close by my home, whilst standing on a rock just above the water relishing the fresh Pacific air, he guided those fortunate enough to accompany him on how to savour each breath; plus a short lesson for me on reducing the deviation of my big toe caused by a bunion. In this last instance I ended up barefooted with a stone between my toes!

On a visit to Niagara Falls which included a gale lashed, rain drenched trip on the tourist boat 'Maid of the Mist,' Guruji and his entourage resplendent, in oilskin slickers and sou'westers, were guided by Guruji to take advantage of this energy-charged atmosphere and fill our lungs with negative ions while taking in the extraordinary view and listening to a discourse on the *vayus* (five vital energies). Despite the foul weather, enormous number of tourists and the tackiness of many of the tourist attractions, none of us were distracted for a moment.

It was a long day and under normal circumstances would have been very tiring; when evening came I was charged with energy and not tired at all! Energy can be a force for creation or destruction. Understanding its power and purpose and learning to awaken and channel energy safely was a central pillar of Guruji's teaching.

During stays in Pune, it was my habit to spend afternoons in the library of the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute, a relatively quiet place where one could read, write, reflect, research and endeavour to make sense of one's experiences in and out of

class. Like the entire Institute, it was an environment wholly focussed on yoga. Time spent in the library helped me digest the intense learning process at the heart of each visit to Pune heightened not only by the teaching and presence of Guruji but from being in India, the birthplace of yoga.

If he were in Pune, Guruji was likely to be in the library going about his own business. Protocol dictated that unless you had a pre-arranged appointment with Guruji, you did not intrude on his space other than a brief greeting as you passed by his desk. One can only surmise whether the placement of his desk so close to the entrance was strategic or coincidental, but after descending the stone staircase which led to the library there was no way to enter into the reading area other than by passing through a narrow passage directly in front of Guruji's desk.

One day in the library, Guruji was having a serious talk with a senior student from Australia, someone I had met many times at the Institute in and out of class. When the interview was over and the Australian left, Guruji looked up and



caught my eye. “Hey Shirley,” he said, beckoning me to come over to his desk. I had not requested an audience that day so I did not know what to expect. What I did know was that with Guruji, there were few accidents or coincidences and each and every interaction would lead into some teaching on practical, psychological or philosophical aspects of yoga: and most often interwoven threads of all of them.

As I stood in front of his desk, Guruji enquired if I knew the man he had just been talking to, going on to say rather sadly: “He is a senior student, a good teacher, and he practises regularly. But he keeps hurting himself!” And then, shaking his head, Guruji stated: “His practice has vibrancy but no illumination!” Vibrancy is one of the three *gunas* or qualities of nature: *tamas* (inertia), *rajas* (vibrancy) and *sattva* (luminosity). And vibrancy didn’t sound at all bad to me as it is the dominant *guna* in my nature and can be very seductive. I have more fear of inertia; but have lived long enough to know that a bias towards any one of these qualities can threaten our existence here on earth.

Why had Guruji called me over? Was it because that day I happened to be at a table close to his desk? And did it matter? What was important was that my most trusted teacher was giving me the benefit of his counsel. Guruji once told me he didn’t read anything, which I took with the proverbial grain of salt, because he was one of the most well-informed knowledgeable people I ever met. A cultured man!

In my native England the expression ‘uncultured’ is often used in a dismissive way about someone perceived to be lacking such an attribute; implying, of course, that the speaker was in a position to make that judgment. Yogis speak of the need to culture the mind and offer teaching to remedy that deficit, to balance all aspects of our nature, body and mind. A Master of Yoga such as Guruji, seeking to create harmony and balance in his

pupils, would not address them all in exactly the same way.

In class he might shout at me and be nice to you. Did it mean he liked you better? The casual observer would be quick to criticise such diverse treatment and Guruji’s teaching methods. In such situations, having a basic understanding of the philosophy of yoga does help in the suspension of judgment until some clarity emerges. Not only does yoga demand a harmonious balance between body, mind and breath but asks us to go beyond all the opposites that feed our imbalance.

On another occasion, looking up from his reading, Guruji suddenly asked me if there could be such a thing as partial truth. For a moment I hesitated, but training had taught me the value of being as honest as possible. Whatever my answer, if he agreed with it or not, he would in all probability elucidate. So I told the truth as I understood it and answered “No,” to which Guruji nodded and then went on to discuss the perils of not facing the truth.

Sometimes the interactions were of a more quirky nature. One day Guruji was speaking about so many of his pupils not being familiar with the traditions of yoga. “They have lost the base!” were his words. After listening a while I asked him if this were true of Indian pupils as well as foreigners. “Yes, Yes,” he stated in a tone of regret, and when I asked, “Why is that Guruji?” he answered, “It’s your fault!” Well, this response did render me speechless and I stood there hoping for some explanation which Guruji provided: “The British! And Genghis Khan!”

Phew! Then he proceeded to further my education in Indian culture and history, much of which had been derived from a less reliable source: history lessons at school in England!

Contrary to current popular belief, yoga is not a class you attend several times a week although it can begin that way. Neither is it something you practise and then your yoga is done for the day. More truthfully your practice sets up

how the universe will unfold for you and strengthens your ability to meet its challenges.

In the second *sutra* of the first chapter of the *Yoga Sutras*, Patanjali defines yoga as the “cessation of the fluctuations of consciousness.” Guruji’s life and work paid homage to this maxim.

The three main paths of yoga are *Karma Yoga*, the yoga of action; *Bhakti Yoga*, the yoga of devotion; and *Jnana Yoga*, the yoga of knowledge. All three intermingle and are essential for a healthy, fulfilling and enlightening life. No matter which one of these draws you into yoga, if you sustain your practice, sooner or later your path will encompass all three. This is the essence of my learning from B.K.S. Iyengar.

During my early days in yoga, teachers I came across often used expressions like ‘The Body is a Spiritual Tool’ along with encouragement to make every aspect of my life spiritual. But often these were empty words, incongruent with either the teacher or the teaching or both. This expression did not truly come to life until I stood in front of Guruji in his class!

The other day I found myself using the present tense while speaking of Guruji. It was not a slip of the tongue. Day in day out his teaching is alive and continues to guide and enlighten me.

Guruji B.K.S. Iyengar *is* my teacher and I am truly grateful. ॐ

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## Father of Compassion

By Krisna Zawaduk

eyebrow hair reaching out like tendrils to grasp  
a hearty but trembling student's eye—  
Guruji, why do we fear your awesomeness?  
You are the Father of Compassion,  
you will not waste our time.

*Vajra*-like bolts of geometric wizardry  
ricochet off the cement floors of the Institute and the grill bars,  
where pre- and post-surgical magic dazzles.

We are stupid, our bodies uneducated, broken and dull,  
uncultured and rigid but you accept us all,  
blind, crippled, and confused,  
drowning in the whirlpool of *samsāra*.

You throw out a thread, a Brahmin's thread,  
*yoga sūtra* threads,  
Will our hands be strong enough to take hold?

All the while, you are grounded in ascension,  
intelligence flowing steadily through your toe roots,  
fingernails, and up through the central channel.

You are dog, cobra and lion—  
Bark, hiss and roar!  
*Anāhata* chuckle and mischievous smile,  
Let us not miss your playfulness.

The wrinkles of disapproval on your face  
are blasted away suddenly by your luminescent Self  
as you coil backwards over a rope swing.  
Your feet seeking, no, arriving at freedom.

The skin of your chest as smooth and taut as an adolescent's—  
90-something year-old bones?  
Probably your marrow also denies the passage of time.

You stay in that backbend,  
arms outstretched, elbows firm,

armpits radiating like the sun for an indeterminable time,  
invisible in your stillness.

Elemental man:  
nostrils of fire, earth, air, water and ether—  
Like mercury, your body pours  
from the chalice of *sirsāsana*  
into *dwi pāda viparita dandāsana*.

Light as the peacock feather that adorns Krishna's headdress,  
You are also the weighty one,  
who churns the seas and oceans  
of our complacency and comfort.

You prick, penetrate, cut and deepen  
with the sword of discrimination—  
Yours is the art of transcendence.

Your eyes open—*ekāgratā*!  
You say with sadness from the yogi's trapeze  
that the art of yoga will die with your body.

Oh Father of Compassion,  
while every cell of your body dances in delight,  
we are obsessed with mechanics and semantics and  
ignore your transmission.

Guruji,  
With the long arms reminiscent of Hanumān  
you distribute the gifts of awareness and wood blocks.

True relinquisher,  
even your name has been an offering to us.  
108, 1008, 10800 *pranāms* are not enough—  
We are indebted.

KRISNA ZAWADUK IS A SENIOR CANADIAN TEACHER LIVING IN KELOWNA BC. SHE SERVES ON THE FACULTY OF THE KELOWNA YOGA HOUSE WHERE SHE RUNS A VIBRANT TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME IN THE OKANAGAN REGION AND TEACHES WORKSHOPS ACROSS CANADA.

ILLUSTRATION: LAUREN COX

# Bloom Where You're Planted

By Ann Kilbertus

On the coastal waters of B.C. in Canada, I'm sitting in a very small boat pondering the life and legacy of B.K.S. Iyengar. His practice and mercurial ways opened the path of yoga to human beings all over the world. Here, in the Salish Sea, to navigate a small boat requires attention to prevailing winds, currents and tides. The terrain under the water's surface must also be considered or the vessel could be damaged.

## A beginning has to be made

My beginnings in yoga were very ordinary. In 1976, I joined a yoga class at McGill University in Montreal and was amazed how good I felt afterward. I bought a book and began to practise a little bit.

Then the currents of my life flowed in new directions, with acceptance at university in the small Ontario city of Kingston. Yoga wasn't easily available at that time in that place, so my energy became focused elsewhere.

In 1984, I found myself with a group of others in a van driving all the way across Canada to finally land in Victoria. It was here that I met the yoga of B.K.S. Iyengar in a class at the

YMCA. This was an ordinary beginning to an extraordinary journey. I wasn't knowingly searching for anything other than a way to feel better in body and mind. Just beginning to take the steps, took me places inside and out I couldn't have anticipated.

## Time has to pass

The benefits of this work took their own time to unfold. Flowers bloom gradually. No doubt I always felt better after a class, but as years passed and my own practice and study developed, the effects of this journey began to surface when I wasn't looking directly.

Piloting through my own inner landscape, the genius of B.K.S. Iyengar became more and more apparent as a guide to this exploration. The conditions of his birth and life on this planet contrast so much with my own, and yet his legacy has spread and crossed the human boundaries of class, country, religion and age.

## Tolerance has to be cultivated

Gurujī's legacy offers so much more than a physical practice. The territory he covered in his lifetime has provided maps and charts for the future of humanity. The versatility, breadth and depth of his work are beyond words.

And, still, each of us must mind our own vessels, paying attention to present conditions. A hundred syllable offering to garland this unique and rare human

being is the only way I can begin to attempt to 'raid the inarticulate'.<sup>1</sup> ॐ

<sup>1</sup> From T.S. Eliot's poem "East Coker" (1940)

## A Garland for Gurujī

Lying, sitting, standing  
move the self, move the mind  
witness from all angles  
I hear his voice  
can you see now?  
can you see now?

Search in each asana what is  
happening  
what asana can do in you  
what you can do in asana  
penetrate with practice  
cooking, culturing, seeping,  
percolating awareness

enter within

pranayama

beyond duality

I hear his voice  
can you see now?  
NOW

— Ann Kilbertus

ANN KILBERTUS OF VICTORIA, BC IS A SENIOR CANADIAN TEACHER ON THE FACULTY OF THE IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA. A FORMER OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST, ANN HAS A GIFT FOR HELPING THOSE EXPERIENCING HEALTH CHALLENGES AS WELL AS TRAINING SKILLED STUDENTS AND TEACHERS.



1918

B.K.S. Iyengar  
born  
December 14

1927

Father dies

1934

Goes to live with  
Sri Krishnamacharya  
(sister's husband)

1937

Goes to Pune  
to teach

1943

Marriage to  
Ramamani

1944

Geeta born



# My Guru, B.K.S. Iyengar

By Linda Shevloff

The concept of a 'guru'—the traditional title for a revered Hindu spiritual teacher—became a popular term in the western world during the 1960s; in the decades that followed, the word took on multiple meanings. In the sixties, particularly in universities and colleges, students started to delve into the philosophies and religions of the eastern world. Perhaps that came about because they had been experimenting with mind-altering drugs that were definitely circulating on campuses at that time. Somehow the world of Indian gods and goddesses, the ideas of *The Bhagavad Gita* and way of the Buddha or Chinese Lao Tzu, exploded into the mindset of the West. Many of those who actively pursued these ideas rebelled against the traditional ways of their governments and institutions and became part of what was known as the hippie movement. Some went to India on spiritual quests and many found yoga and gurus.

Even if the number of people who actually travelled to India on such journeys was relatively small and even if the hippies themselves were really a fringe subculture, they did have a big impact on ideas and lifestyles. Communes and ashrams and alternative communities sprang up all over North America in the 1960s and '70s. There was a negative opinion about these developments that predominated established social circles. There were stories in the news of gurus who misused their power to gain wealth and notoriety. There were examples of charismatic cult leaders with radical ideas who brainwashed groups of followers and deceived them. But there also were enlightening books by famous Indian teachers and there was an abundance of new literature about finding true meaning in life. For the most part, yoga practitioners were looking for this latter teacher, someone to show them how



*Guruji observing students in Victoria*

*His visit was quite a shake-up... Teachers and students became much more attentive to detail.*

to live and to be. People were looking for meaning in a world that seemed unhinged.

In the 1970s, yoga classes had spread all over North America. In many places these classes emphasized physical fitness and relaxation, while in others they brought attention to spiritual teachers like Swami Sivananda, Krishnamacharya, and Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Unfortunately, by the 1980s the West had become so comfortable with the idea of gurus, that any expert on any topic could be called a guru. There were financial gurus and beauty gurus and math gurus. There was every type of guru. There were so many gurus that they were not special anymore.

I was one of the hippies of the late '60s and '70s who, for a time, made

her way on the fringes of society. I began to study Comparative Religions in my elective classes at university and to practice *hatha* yoga and was actually teaching it by the mid-1970s. I went to talks, participated in groups, thought about the possibility of becoming a *sanyasin* but I never really in my heart wanted to abandon my family's traditional values and my participation in society. I got married and had children. My focus was my family, but I continued to pursue yoga philosophy and *asana* practice. I continued to teach. In 1980 we moved to Victoria where I found a very clear teacher with a new approach to yoga. Shirley Daventry French taught classes in Iyengar Yoga and I was very keen to learn.

In 1984, B.K.S. Iyengar actually came to Canada and taught yoga at the YMCA in Victoria. He did not present himself to us as a guru. He was a teacher of yoga *asana* who had been invited to Western Canada by a few teachers who had studied with him in Pune, India.

While Shirley French may have known just what to expect when he arrived in class in Victoria, I don't think she fully prepared the students for the explosion of energy that he was. I remember we were divided into groups being taught by different yoga teachers in separate rooms. Shirley escorted Mr. Iyengar and his entourage from one room to the next. When he stepped into the class I was in, he took one brief look at the *asana* presentation before shouting in highly inflected Indian English that basically none of us knew what we were doing. I remember feeling personally shocked and sorry for our teacher at the front, thinking Mr. Iyengar was being extremely rude and inconsiderate about the feelings of the people in the room, but when he quickly proceeded to demonstrate such a multitude of details about *uttitha trikonasana*, so completely revolutionary, I was able to briefly put aside my sympathy for everyone and just watch him.

### *A Garland for Guruji*

Before Iyengar Yoga  
 Stiff, sore joints,  
 limping, aging?  
 Wisdom of Iyengar Yoga  
 alignment, strength, flexibility,  
 breathing, calm mind, focus  
 Props to make asanas accessible  
 Dedicated teachers committed to  
 their own growth, and mine  
 The lineage of wisdom  
 beginning with Patanjali  
 Guruji, your beautiful smile  
 and joy in your life  
 Inspire and encourage me.  
 namaste

— Lesley Field

*Guruji's legacy offers so much more than a physical practice. The territory he covered in his lifetime has provided maps and charts for the future of humanity.*

His visit was quite a shake-up. I knew I wanted to know more about the *asanas*, but I also knew that I was terrified of him and didn't think I could ever bear to be the object of his fixed attention. I was definitely not ready for B.K.S. Iyengar. However, there was a remarkable development in Victoria after his visit: everyone really sharpened up. Teachers and students became much more attentive to detail. We began to notice and correct errors in our alignment. Even his brief visit had taught us something. We needed to observe, listen and perform with far greater accuracy if we wanted to learn this subject.

By 1987, both my husband and I decided to go to Pune to learn from Mr. Iyengar in earnest. We went as part of an American group led by Ramanand Patel, an Iyengar teacher from San Francisco. There were just thirty of us in the group, so we had the complete attention of B.K.S. Iyengar for a full three weeks. I was much more physically prepared for this experience than I had been in 1982, but I still wished for some personal invisibility—to see but not be seen—though with so few of us present there was no possibility of that. Mr. Iyengar had x-ray vision. On that trip I learned that my right shoulder was weak, that I did not lift my sacrum enough and that my knees were crooked and needed to be straightened. It was not that I did not know these physiological details already, but it was more that I became very aware that I was personally responsible for the state of my body and that only I had the power to change myself. We had to battle our own flaws.

One day a woman infuriated Mr. Iyengar because she had joined the regular *asana* class and had not told anyone that she was menstruating. He

was angry about her untruthfulness. My husband, Michael, somehow decided to speak up on behalf of the woman. He went aside to Mr. Iyengar and explained that likely the woman had not said anything about menstruation because she just wanted to get the most out of the yoga experience with him. Michael said that we had travelled from the other side of the world to learn so it was understandable that someone might want to learn from his teaching rather than do the menstrual poses. Well, that caused a stir. Mr. Iyengar called everyone over and said: "Do you know what this man just said to me?" However, he was not angry anymore. He was actually amused and thoughtful and he seemed to appreciate the courage it had taken to speak out. He paused the class and gave a discourse on the body as a temple and how we must revere and respect it no matter what the circumstances.

Sundays were days off from class and one ill-fated Sunday three of us went to the Karla Caves to see some ancient carvings. Unfortunately, a wild dog lurking in the caves jumped out and bit me in the leg and I bled from the wound. We made the long slow journey back to Pune, panicking about the possibility of rabies. Not knowing where to go, we went to the Yoga Institute for help. Mr. Iyengar sent me to his doctor in his car. For the rest of the Intensive, in addition to rabies injections, I was given a special 'dog bite practice' that took care of me physically and mentally. He had a practice for every set of circumstances.

After the first trip to Pune I began to go there more regularly, at first with the Canadian teachers group and then on my own. I had moved to Hong Kong where there was no Iyengar Yoga community. Because I was on my own, and because



Gururajji explaining a point in the practice hall at RIMYI

I wanted to set up an Iyengar Yoga community in Hong Kong, I met with Mr. Iyengar on a number of occasions to ask questions and seek advice. He always gave me words of caution and words of encouragement. He was sensible, sharp and perceptive. He pushed me and chastised me. He always tried to fire me up to do my best but rein me in if I needed it. It was during that time that he became 'Gururajji' to me, and 'Mr. Iyengar' no longer. It was during that period that I learned much more of the depth of his insight, his complete commitment to the *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, and his life as a living manifestation of that path. He was on a personal *sadhana* seeking *samadhi* and over the years it appeared to me that he went deeper and deeper into himself.

During my time living in Asia there were some difficult struggles that arose between teachers from time to time. There were hard feelings. In answer to these struggles Gururajji did a lot of teaching about human relationships, moral behaviour and personal duty. It was wrong to tell tales about others. It was wrong to keep secrets too. We had to find a balance so that we were honest but not damaging to one another. At one

point, I remember he wanted to stop the growth of negativity and the conflict that would likely follow, so he talked about the practice he used so he would not create negative *karma*. He said he would try to stop the seed of a negative idea from growing in his own mind so not to allow the idea to manifest. He said, "Try it. It is not easy." I do try to do this, and I can report that it is indeed not easy. To do it takes great self-control.

Near the end of his life, and just before the end of my time living in Hong Kong, Gururajji came to Hong Kong and visited the community and the Iyengar Yoga Studio there. It was a joyful event. We were completely blessed. I somehow felt that by that time Gururajji knew me both inside and out. Whereas I had been hiding from his gaze in my early years with him, I was now just being there and he was seeing me as I was. I think this is what we really want from a guru.

We want permission to be ourselves, to be free from our games and disguises. Gururajji showed us how to see, how to concentrate, how to listen. He taught us to discriminate the real from the unreal. He taught us to take responsibility for ourselves. He was my great teacher and I am blessed to have had him in my life.

*Om namah shivaya. ॐ*

LINDA SHEVLOFF IS A SENIOR CANADIAN TEACHER WHO BEGAN HER IYENGAR STUDIES IN VICTORIA WHERE SHE WAS ONE OF THE FIRST IYENGAR YOGA TEACHERS TO TRAIN IN OUR COMMUNITY. AFTER MOVING TO HONG KONG LINDA FOUNDED A THRIVING IYENGAR YOGA COMMUNITY IN THAT CITY. SHE CURRENTLY LIVES AND TEACHES IN VANCOUVER BC.

### *A Garland for Gururajji*

At your feet I place a garland  
Woven from your teachings.  
The petals of yoga illuminated.  
The paths charted.  
Action / Knowledge / Devotion  
Before Jawahar taught, I observed him  
Bow to the statue of Patanjali and  
Look at your picture, touch it, then  
Touch his heart.  
Light on Yoga.  
Light on Life.  
Extend the intelligence to every cell.  
Observe the fragrance of the breath.  
Effortless effort.  
Peace.

— Jana Bodiley

*He maintained: "Before peace between the nations we have to find peace inside that small nation which is our own being."*



## Patanjali Part II

By Rajvi Mehta

A few years ago, a local paper in India wrote an article on Guruji and entitled it “Patanjali Part II”. This got me thinking. Guruji was a *sadhaka*, a student of Patanjali’s yoga *sutras*. But, during his study over decades, he became one with Patanjali, his *sutras* and yoga. Is his work as memorable as Patanjali and would people remember him centuries later?

Yoga existed before Patanjali. What he did was codify the subject into just 196 *sutras* [aphorisms]. His work is so intense that over the past 2500 years, there have been so many commentaries clearly indicating the wealth of knowledge hidden in these 196 statements which needed to be decoded. He starts the yoga *sutras* by defining yoga as “*Yoga chitta vritti nirodhab*—yoga is the cessation of the fluctuations of the consciousness.” Was this yoga different from the earlier masterpiece on yoga—*The Bhagavad Gita*? The *Gita* refers to yoga as “*sammatvam yoga ucchyate*” i.e., yoga is equanimity. Well, only if there are no fluctuations in the consciousness would there be equanimity. So, one cannot say that the yoga is different but it is written at different periods of time and possibly in a language that people of that era could understand and relate to. That is exactly what Guruji did.

Yoga did exist when Guruji started his journey. However, it was not a part of the life of the common man. It was considered a subject for recluses and mystics. People did perform a few *yogasanas* during their daily rituals but that was it. It was Guruji who revived the subject and made it a part of life of the common man, not only in the culture where it originated but also in the diverse cultures across the world. And, therefore, he always insisted that there is no “Iyengar Yoga” but there is only yoga.



B.K.S. speaks at a formal gathering at the Crystal Gardens in Victoria.

For the common man, Guruji referred to yoga as *duhkha nirodha*. Yoga is freedom from *duhkha*—suffering, sadness, pain, agony. For a common man, how can there be a sense of equanimity, a uniformed flow of consciousness if there is suffering? And, therefore, Guruji embarked on a journey to free mankind of afflictions. How can there be any spiritual endeavour when the mind is always distracted by pain. He said, “Yoga helps cure that which need not be endured and endure that which cannot be cured”.

Each of his statements was filled with experience which he managed to transmit to those who came to him—either with pain or suffering. He neither started yoga nor taught yoga as a scholarly pursuit. As we all know, he was introduced to yoga to overcome ill health. The thought of ‘health’ attracted him to the subject. We always value what we do not have. And, thus, not having seen much of good health in his childhood and youth, he was immediately attracted to yoga when his brother-in-law showed him a few *asanas* with the rider that this would give him health. He stuck to his practice and realized that it did give him health but in the process his definition of health changed. Health was not just a disease-free state but a state where each cell of the body was ‘living’. Health was not only relegated to the body but also the mind, emotions, intelligence, consciousness, conscience and there was moral and social health too.

People may start yoga for any purpose. It could be for freedom from pain, disease or mental relaxation. But, once they start their journey with regular practice, the spiritual dimension starts seeping in. And, unknown to them, they started imbibing the philosophy of yoga.

*Iyengar always insisted that yoga is a spiritual discipline, describing it as “the quest of the soul for the spark of divinity within us.”*

1947

Vanita born

1949

Prashant born

1951

Sunita born

1952

Meets Yehudi Menuhin

1953

Suchita born (Abhi’s mother)

1955

Savita born

They did not start their yogic pursuits as a scholarly activity. He would say start practising! The way he taught gave them relief and thus they wanted to pursue the subject. During Guruji's 80th birthday celebrations, a clinical psychologist was intrigued to find out what motivated people from such diverse backgrounds to start yoga and continue it for decades. The findings corroborated what Guruji had said. People did start yoga either for some health-related issue or to keep themselves healthy [with the limited definition of freedom from disease]. However, what made them continue were the spiritual dimensions and the philosophy of yoga!

Practice first and then study the texts. That was the way he started and that was the way he wanted us to learn. He wanted us to get the 'experience' first. What we experienced and felt was the truth! And, it was from this truth that we built our practices further to know the deeper truth. And, this experiential truth could be corroborated with the textual truth. He always

*The fact that made them continue was the spiritual dimensions and the philosophy of yoga!*

said, "Know the known first." Body is the only instrument that we are born with but we know very little about the body. He practiced on himself, he experimented on himself and thus had an extremely clear idea on human anatomy and physiology much more than even the anatomists and physiologists did. Thus, he and even his students managed to give relief from ailments where even medical science failed. This intrigued many doctors and scientists to this science and they conducted their own experiments which provided the evidence that yoga did indeed work! Guruji referred to this as 'third' party studies which were not done by a 'yoga-biased group.'

As one penetrates deeper into one's practices, the *sutras* start coming alive. It was with such joy that Guruji would excitedly reveal the connections between the *sutras* in different chapters, especially in the afternoon in the library. "Why did Patanjali refer to this first in the *Samadhi Pada* and later in the *Kaivalya Pada*?" And, then he would start the explanations of these 'connections'. These moments of his expression would be enlightening for those present in the library at that time. He shared his knowledge which was not directed to a few but all those present. Everything was so clear for him and therefore he could explain and make us experience it so clearly. "*Tada drashtuh svarupe avasthanam.*" He could quieten the elements, the senses and mind, and the consciousness to have a clear vision of his Self as the fluctuations of his consciousness ceased. His compassion for suffering humans was such that he came down to the level of students and patients.



*Guruji accepting flowers when he was given the key to the City of Victoria*

Today, as we celebrate his centenary, he has touched the hearts of millions, many who may not have even come in direct contact with him. He revived yoga in a language of this era and will thus help many generations to come. He is indeed Patanjali Part II.

I feel so fortunate to be born at a time when he was present on this earth and have had the good fortune to have so many opportunities to learn from him—not only *asanas* and *pranayama*, not only yoga, but learn the art of living. ॐ

RAJVI MEHTA OF MUMBAI HAS BEEN A STUDENT OF GURUJI SINCE HER YOUTH. A PSYCHOLOGIST BY PROFESSION, SHE HAS SUPPORTED GURUJI'S WORK IN MANY WAYS, MOST NOTABLY AS EDITOR OF THE RESPECTED JOURNAL YOGA RAHASYA.

### *A Garland for Guruji*

At a time when the world seems in crisis,  
the Iyengar Yoga Centre in Victoria stands apart.  
Here, we lucky clients find order and warmth,  
Kindness, humor, peace, and pure goodness.  
There are few places that help we seniors gain  
both strength and wisdom  
So this Center, with its extraordinary teachers,  
is to be treasured.

Thank you Mr. Iyengar for your wisdom and foresight.

— Author unknown

# Shifting the Paradigm

By Barbara Young

With reference to *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, by B.K.S. Iyengar



Guruji in conversation on his deck at RIMYI

## II:2 The practice of yoga reduces afflictions and leads to *samadhi*.

I came to Iyengar Yoga at a time of illness. Our family had just moved from the heart of Montreal to a suburb of Kelowna. It was profoundly disruptive to move from the rich tapestry of a vibrant, colourful, multi-ethnic community surrounded by like-minded friends, to what seemed, at the time, a dull, monochromatic, homogeneous place, whose people held very different values from mine.

## II:8 Unhappiness leads to hatred.

And so sickness stole over me, physically, mentally and emotionally. I sank into situational depression. A quick Google search of the term lists a tide of symptoms that became familiar companions: sadness, hopelessness, constant worrying or feeling anxious or stressed out, feeling overwhelmed, avoiding social situations and

interaction, thoughts of suicide. I was a poor partner and a worse mother. My body developed strange and unsettling conditions: kidney stones, a long-misdiagnosed appendicitis that might have been fatal, and a ruptured spinal disk in an unusual place – T10 – just behind and below the heart.

## II:16 The pains which are yet to come can be and are to be avoided.

This last condition brought hope. The specialist who took care of me, the wonderful Dr. John Coughlan, insisted that I attend yoga classes with an Iyengar Yoga teacher named Margaret Lunam. I had been immersed in *Sivananda* yoga as a young woman, and knew how deeply and positively it had touched me. I was thirsty for healing, and so, willingly followed his advice and went to see Margaret. Class by class, it became apparent that the pains yet to come could be and were to be avoided.

## IV:3 Nature's efficient cause does not impel its potentialities into action, but helps to remove the obstacles to evolution, just as a farmer builds banks to irrigate his fields.

And so began my initiation into the work of our beloved Guruji. It did not take long before the practice began to irrigate, nourish, and shift the paradigm of suffering. Guruji describes the process eloquently in his commentary to IV:3: "A farmer heaps up banks of earth to collect water and soak part of a field. When one area is soaked, he opens the bank to enable the water to flow into the adjoining area, continuing until the entire field is thoroughly irrigated. Then he sows the best seeds to get the best of harvests, and enjoys the fruits." [p. 249 *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*] Under Margaret's skilled, no-nonsense, compassionate guidance, step-by-step, *kosha* by *kosha*, the practice seeped into the parched earth of my being, and healing began.



## I:14 Long, uninterrupted alert practice is the firm foundation for restraining the fluctuations.

Once it was set in motion, my Iyengar Yoga practice took on a life of its own. Naturally, there have been times of dryness, when more effort and discipline were needed to be constant and firm. When I lapse though, the world leans toward darkness and turmoil. The mere brush of these states rekindles the faith and energy needed to sustain a long, uninterrupted, alert practice. When we are steady, the inner chaos subsides, so that when obstacles and suffering arise, as they inevitably do, they are far less daunting.

## II:2 The practice of yoga reduces afflictions and leads to *samadhi*.

Something Edwin Bryant wrote about Gururji's accomplishments has always stayed with me. Here is a short excerpt from a longer reflection:

"B.K.S. Iyengar presents *āsana*, yogic posture, as not just the third of the eight limbs of yoga, but also as a self-contained object of meditation that can bring about *samādhi*, the ultimate goal of yoga, if approached and undertaken correctly." [p. 140 *The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali*, Edwin Bryant] Gururji describes the process thus: "As yoga practice cleans the

system and rests the nerves, clarity, contentment and serenity establish themselves. You are starting to bring about Patañjali's statement that yoga is about stilling the turbulence of consciousness." [p. 140 *Light on Life*]

It might well appear to be a long way between our first tentative steps toward stillness, and a state of *samādhi*, or perfect absorption. Somehow though, as Gururji's teaching lights our way, we glimpse the very real possibility of penetrating slowly and surely along the pathway that links the two. We come to understand that passage and goal are equally yoga.

I only experienced Gururji's direct teaching a few times at Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute, spontaneously: in the library at the institute talking animatedly with long-time students and newcomers alike; as he stepped in to take over a class when he felt the teacher was off the mark; relaying instructions via Abhi to Geetaji from the side of the hall as he observed the class while upside down in *dvi pada viparita dandasana* over the back-bender.

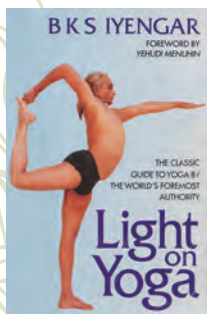
Countless teachers have studied directly with him though, and have taken on the mantle of his vast yogic knowledge. Each has caught a dimension of his teaching and now passes it on. It is as if his light is being refracted and diffused through a host of unique prisms.

I:33 Through cultivation of friendliness, compassion, joy, and indifference to pleasure and pain, virtue and vice respectively, the consciousness becomes favourably disposed, serene and benevolent.

As Gururji taught students and conversed with visitors, he showed a lively curiosity at questions from sincere practitioners, and an enthusiastic generosity in answering them. He expressed infinite tenderness toward those in pain, and could burst into full-bodied laughter at moments of joy and bemusement. In the last years, his practice, quiet and supported, embodied equanimity, and shone with benevolence. May the grace of his teaching bestow peace on us all.

With boundless gratitude to Gururji B.K.S. Iyengar, and to all the teachers who have shared his work with skill and integrity. ॐ

BARBARA YOUNG IS A SENIOR CANADIAN TEACHER CURRENTLY LIVING IN OTTAWA WHO BEGAN HER STUDIES IN KELOWNA BC. ONE OF THE MANY SKILLS SHE BRINGS TO THE NATIONAL IYENGAR COMMUNITY AS WE ENDEAVOUR TO SERVE OUR NATIVE FRENCH SPEAKERS IS HER FLUENCY IN BOTH OUR OFFICIAL LANGUAGES.



1966

*Light on Yoga* published



1966

Audience with Pope Paul VI



1973

Ramamani dies



1975

RIMYI opens



1977

*Samadhi* film made

1970s

Iyengar Yoga begins to appear in Canada

# Guruji – 100 Years

By Margot Kitchen

How does one write about a man who so profoundly has changed my life? A colleague of mine, when asked, “Where would you be without yoga?” answered without any hesitation, “I’d be dead.” At the time I felt the same, and now that I’ve faced life-threatening trauma I know this to be absolutely true—I would most certainly be dead had I not met and been guided by B.K.S. Iyengar.

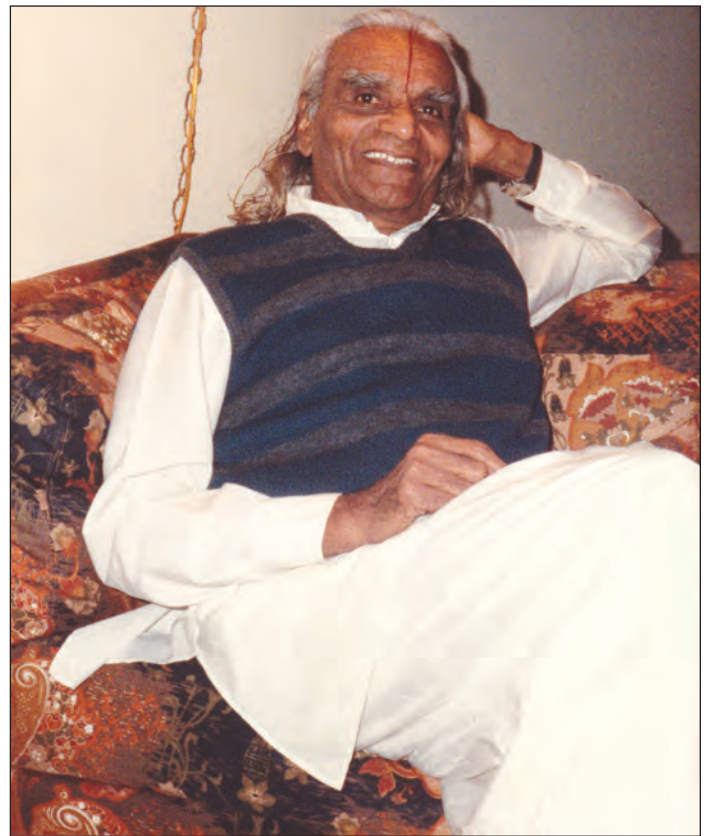
How does one begin? How to explain the unexplainable—the profound sadness for which there are no words. I loved Guruji with my whole being and am forever grateful for the chance to connect with and be taught by such an enlightened master and, I believe, to be loved by him, as he loved all his students.

There are so many memories flooding in and I feel his presence all around me and in everything I do. Today, as I drove home from the Yoga Studio, I passed a High School with a lighted signboard and in bright red letters the words: “Pursue your passion!” Guruji exemplified this and was an example for us all—he ignited the passion for yoga and life!

Gratitude! How blessed we all were, to be taught by a living master. Guruji gave us gifts far beyond learning *asanas*. He gave us tools to navigate this life on earth and tools for helping us to evolve spiritually. For most of us this was not apparent until we had practised for years, returned to India many times, and finally the outer husk started to drop away and there was a glimmer of clarity—not always pleasant, but clearer nonetheless.

In 1987, I went to India for the second time. I had my month all plotted out and had even decided what I was going to learn—how naive!! I have since learned that one needs to have NO expectations where India is concerned. Expectations just block your experience if you don’t get out of your own way. So often the learning is ‘off the mat’ and it’s the whole experience of going to Pune, taking class, manoeuvring around India that is so rich and teaches you so much about yourself. I understand why Guruji insisted that we have a certain number of trips to the source before training teachers or assessing, etc. He was helping us mature and learn about ourselves, out of our familiar surroundings, and away from our normal routines.

In the beginning, in the ’80s, I was petrified of the man—probably because on some level I realized that he could see ME behind the façade I presented to the world. He saw me and much later I realized that he accepted me unconditionally. Guruji once explained in an interview we did together, that he wasn’t fierce toward the student but fierce toward the actions of the student. When I had a rickshaw accident in Pune, Guruji worked one-on-one with me for three weeks. I would end up



Guruji relaxing in Victoria

*Now, with Guruji’s passing, we need more than ever to listen and take to heart the wisdom he imparted.*

in tears with blood-soaked bandages on my knees and the compassion I saw in his eyes spurred me to work through the discomfort. Later in the same interview, he explained that all my energy was going into fear, and that he had to be hard on me to break through the fear so healing could begin.

In 2005, in the practice sessions at the Institute, when Guruji was leaning on the trestle and talking to a group of us, he said, “It’s almost time for me to leave you but I feel I haven’t given all I need to give you.” He lived another nine years and of course in 2005 he published *Light on Life*. For me, it was a very crucial nine years, and I know I’m not alone in feeling this. With the tumultuous world we live in, with all the war, disastrous climate changes, with floods and tornadoes, Guruji gave us tools to handle all with a modicum of equanimity. In the introduction to *Light on Life*, he writes “To a yogi, freedom implies not being battered by the dualities of life, its ups and downs, its pleasures and its suffering. It implies equanimity and ultimately that there is an inner serene core of one’s being that is never out of touch with the unchanging, eternal infinite.” As my husband and I age and face health challenges with





Practicing shoulder stands (above) and playing at RIMYI (below)



ourselves and our friends, and as we attend more and more life celebrations, I return to Guruji's words to help me find some peace and keep my gaze fixed on the unchanging, eternal infinite. Now, with Guruji's passing, we need more than ever to listen and take to heart the wisdom he imparted. What amazing gifts he left us.

In 2012, I experienced a dissected aorta, a genetic condition inherited from my mother. I lived, though the mortality rate

is 85%. My surgeon declared that I survived because my 'guts' were in such good shape. I explained that my guru taught how to use the large muscles and joints correctly in order to protect the organic body. On a physical level, the *asanas* stood me in good stead, and breath awareness was crucial during my four weeks in hospital, but the teachings also helped me on a much deeper level. My life changed drastically, and to some extent the grieving process for what I've lost is ongoing, but thanks to Guruji's teachings I'm slowly learning acceptance and have come to understand a little more about *abhinivesa* (clinging to life).

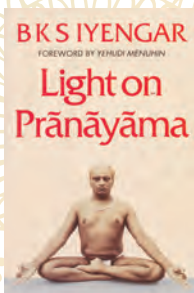
Guruji helped me sail the sometimes-troubled waters of my life; sending practices for my heart, for Parkinson's disease for my husband, and for various students when I was not sure how to help them. He always answered my letters, even to the last ones in 2014. How generous he was with his time, energy, and love. His letters always ended with, "affectionately B.K.S. Iyengar." Years ago, the letters were handwritten, or if someone typed them, there would be additions in Guruji's hand. I treasure all his letters, and these most especially.

I loved the man as a father, and like a father, he was a disciplinarian—quick to anger and quick to forgive. Over the years I've felt his anger, and two minutes later he would be laughing and the incident had passed. As I mentioned earlier, he always said he was not directing his fierceness at the person, but at their behaviour.

I will continue to love the man, and miss him more than I can express. And I will continue to ask his advice and know that his guidance and spirit are still present to help.

In Guruji's words, "It is my profound hope that my ending can be your beginning." ॐ

MARGOT KITCHEN IS A SENIOR CANADIAN TEACHER WHOSE INTEREST IN YOGA WAS IGNITED IN TORONTO. SINCE MOVING WEST SHE HAS BUILT A VIBRANT IYENGAR COMMUNITY IN CALGARY AND TRAINS TEACHERS THROUGHOUT ALBERTA.



1981

Light On  
Pranayama  
published



1982

Canadian  
Intensive at  
RIMYI

1984

Convention in  
San Francisco



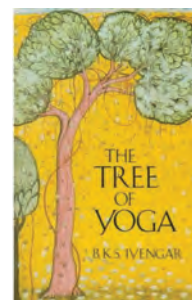
1984

B.K.S. visits  
Canada: Victoria  
hosts various  
events



1985

Second  
Canadian  
Intensive at  
RIMYI



1988

The Tree  
of Yoga  
published



# The Lion of Pune

By Yvonne Kipp

**B**K.S. Iyengar, the Lion of Pune, is the most important Teacher in my life. I found his book, *Light on Yoga*, in 1973, a first edition, in a Toronto bookstore. This book is a legend, a masterpiece and the only book worth having on a desert island. The first time I saw Gurujī was at a conference in Rishi Kesh in 1996. His mighty presence, his movement, his radiance filled any space he entered. I am so fortunate to live in Canada where pioneer teachers, like Shirley French, started a solid foundation of Iyengar teachers across our huge country offering access to these wonderful teachings.

After decades of having yoga deeply in my life, as I race to my seventy-fifth year, I am reaping the benefits of practice and dedication to the Yogic path. Every day I become more grateful for the insights I see.

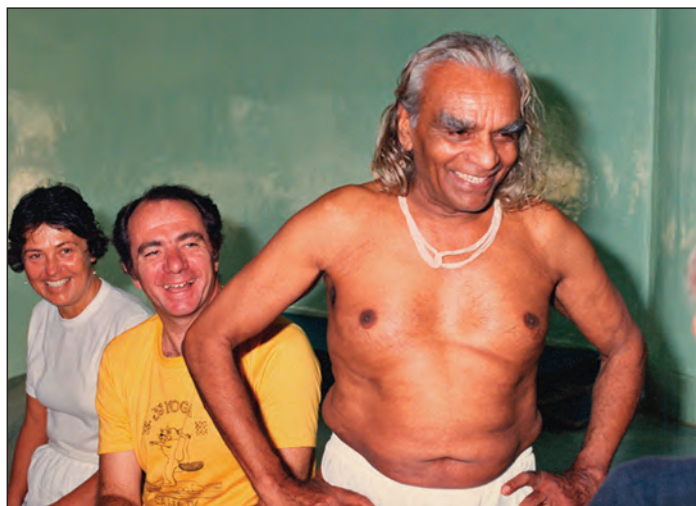
Yoga is for the whole day, to be ready, to be alert, to be alive. The primary pose, *tadasana*, teaches to stand upright with an open chest, eyes looking straight out to the horizon, and know when my posture is off-centre, when I am not focused in the moment, my breath speeded up, my eyes hardening, my knees collapsed and shoulders slumped. Are my feet balanced on the earth so I may stand like a mountain in the heat of life's furnace? Am I feeling *maitri* (loving kindness, friendliness) in my life?

Gurujī was so ready to laugh; he loved life.

This ancient wisdom laid down in the *sutras* of Patanjali and translated and taught by Gurujī, is the text for a good life. This is the way to know how to bend over backwards in life, to twist myself around to bring a fresh view to my interactions, and turn upside-down to renew my brain and my vascular system and open where there are blocks to progress. It takes discipline to get on the mat every day, this work helps in times of negativity and reactivity. I can take a deep breath before moving and hold on just a little longer to see what comes up at the edge of life, to bend forward deeply and surrender humbly to what life offers.

Most importantly, I know how to restore myself and take time for deep *savasana*.

Like a lion, Gurujī's roar woke up a generation of yogis around the world on every continent. His medical classes worked miracles where I witnessed his gentle guidance of a



Jim Rischmiller with Gurujī in 1985

blind student to deeper work. His work lives on in the competent and inspired hands of his family and senior teachers all over the world.

II 46 *Sthira sukham asanam.* ॐ

YVONNE KIPP IS A WRITER, A FORMER SCHOOL TEACHER AND TEACHER OF IYENGAR YOGA. SHE BEGAN HER STUDIES OF IYENGAR YOGA IN WINNIPEG, MANITOBA AND CURRENTLY PRACTISES AND TEACHES IYENGAR YOGA ON CORTES ISLAND, BC.

## A Garland for Gurujī

Likethelift of a conductor's hand—  
where the promise & the potential  
of the whole exists.  
You inspired us to find  
expansion and extension,  
firmness in body and mind,  
exhilaration through exertion,  
stability, clarity, wisdom  
and spirit.  
Finding cooperation between the  
seat of intelligence  
and the seat of emotion.  
My joy, full heart  
gives daily thanks for your guiding light,  
always

— Lauren Cox

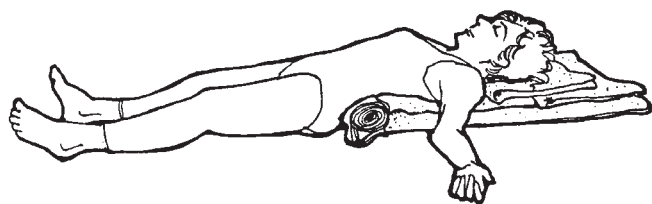


ILLUSTRATION: LAUREN COX



PHOTO: TY CHANDLER

## An Indelible Image of Gururaj

By Karin Dayton

One weekend in 2013, at the Ramamani Iyengar Yoga Institute in Pune, India, an Australian, an American, a New Zealander, and I sifted through photographs. The quietude of the Institute was accentuated by an absence of the week's typical bright and bustling busyness of departures and arrivals, class schedules, and the cheerful sound of Gururaj's reverberating laughter.

An archive project was underway and I felt fortunate to be included in organizing the history of Iyengar Yoga; viewing the original *Light on Yoga* studio stills and helping sort numerous bundles of rubber-band bound Kodachrome snapshots. Here, on a different continent, twelve thousand kilometres from Victoria, the day began to feel to me like a family reunion as the familiar faces of IYCV founding teachers and community members emerged.

Because I've had the benefit over the years of reading Shirley's column, *Reflections*, in the IYCV newsletter, I knew something of our history; and as I peered intently at the photographs, I began to feel an eerie sense of home. I was able to identify many participants of the early intensives at the

*The lone figure sitting quietly on his courtyard bench looked up and greeted us with a smile.*

Institute: Shirley and Derek French, Jim Rischmiller, Carole Miller, Leslie Hogya, Marlene Miller, and others. When I was able to confidently identify the faded photograph of an unobtrusive woman sitting on a

nondescript couch as Swami Radha, I couldn't help but marvel at the mystery of the yoga path and the curious convergences and distances that had led me to this place and time.

While mulling over the configuration of yoga moments, a woman arrived from across the courtyard. Smiling, she graciously served us chai, freshly brewed in the Iyengar family kitchen, deliciously sweet, creamy and redolent of the heart-warming spices which, for me, became the flavour of India.

Later, finished organizing yoga history moments for the day, we closed the door of the cool and shady Institute, and stepped back into sun. The lone figure sitting quietly on his courtyard bench looked up and greeted us with a smile. ॐ

KARIN DAYTON OF VICTORIA BC IS A DEDICATED STUDENT CURIOUS ABOUT ALL ASPECTS OF YOGA WITH A SPECIAL INTEREST IN ITS PHILOSOPHICAL AND SPIRITUAL ASPECTS. SHE DID SOME OF HER UNIVERSITY STUDIES IN RUSSIA WHERE SHE MADE CONTACT WITH THE RUSSIAN IYENGAR COMMUNITY.

# On Guruji's Centenary: A Ray of Light

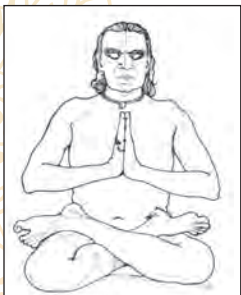
By Melissa Perehudoff

“Come to class, I think you might like it,” said my friend Deborah, 27 years ago. I was suffering from stress in a challenging career, loneliness in a new town, and emotional instability that comes with confusion and lack of support. I was blessed with a strong, flexible body with slight scoliosis and a curious mind, so what did I have to lose? Soon I learned that what I had to gain was what B.K.S. Iyengar described as the purpose of yoga: to develop the body, discipline the mind, and stabilize the emotions in order to refine us as a whole. In class, the teacher gave precise instructions on how to align my body that cut through my sluggishness. She expressed other ideas that were new to me: “Let the consciousness touch every cell of your being.” These concepts did not make much sense at the beginning, but now I can say that I have experienced vastness of consciousness in a pose or the full aliveness of my being after a particularly focused class. The intelligence of the cells can be awakened and the connectivity of mind, breath and body can be experienced through *asana*.

My first Iyengar Yoga teacher was a former physiotherapist, mother and housewife. She was starting a new life on her own as a yoga teacher and was very much inspired by the work and books of Mr. Iyengar. She sprinkled his philosophy in the class: “Your body lives in the past. Your mind lives in the future. They come together in the present when you practice yoga.” “When the mind is controlled, stilled and silenced, what remains is the soul.” Who was this man that had realized mastery of his body and exploration of his soul to ignite so many others on the path of yoga? After practising Iyengar Yoga for 16 years, and completing my introductory teacher training through the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria, I decided it was time to go to the source in India.

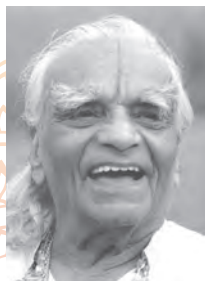


I remember my first trip to Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute (RIMYI) in 2006. I was nervous for the first class and not at all grounded in my body. I quickly unfolded a mat in one of the few remaining spots at the back of the hall of 100 or more international yoga students. My usually sleepy, dull body was pulsating with nervous energy and my mind was bursting in anticipation of the upcoming class. The young female teacher on the stage gave instructions for *adho mukha svanasana* (Downward Facing Dog) and I stretched each finger maximally on the worn Indian yoga mat, pressing thigh muscle back to thigh bone, extending through the side chest to the hips as if stretching the painting canvas on a wooden frame. As my head hung loose from my cervical spine and I gazed between my legs, my eyes landed on those of B.K.S. Iyengar who was in a supported backbend on the trestler directly behind me. His face was serene, his 87-year-old body supple, and I was staring into the eyes of the guru. Lightning bolts of awareness coursed through my veins as



1990

Second visit to Canada: Edmonton

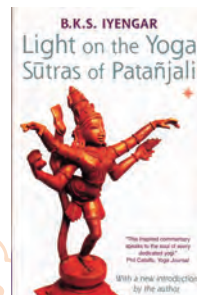


1991

“Padmashri” awarded to Guruji

1993

Third visit to Canada: Toronto



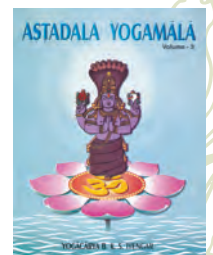
1993

Light on the Yoga Sūtras of Patanjali published



1997

Last Canadian Intensive at RIMYI



2000

Astadala Yogamala first volume published



my brain registered where I had placed my mat. How can the mere presence of a man electrify another's body like that? While remaining completely absorbed in his own practice, Guruji's eyes took in the bodies practising before him. He relayed instructions to an assistant teacher, who ran to the main stage to tell Abhijata, his granddaughter, who was teaching the class, who then conveyed Guruji's instructions to the students. He never rested from his purpose to first teach his body, then his students, and finally his teachers to progress.

It is through continual, persistent practice that we see change. In the yoga path, we are asked to inquire beyond our *asana* practice and consider anything in life. I can see how I was doing with a particular behaviour yesterday and then observe again how I am doing with this today. If there is a positive change, then that is progress. It takes activating the intelligence of the consciousness to observe the behaviour, choose a new response and witness change. Likewise, we are taught to never settle with limitations. I can discover my limitations and then go beyond them because obstacles are meant to be overcome. Learning to balance upside down on my arms with feet on a wall and then moving away from the wall and facing my fears balancing in the middle of the room. Or knowing that one shoulder is weaker than the other and learning to use left and right hands, arms and shoulders evenly in *urdhva dhanurasana* (Upward Bow). These efforts on my yoga mat give me the courage in my daily life to say what needs to be said truthfully and from the heart, or to do something that I may not want to do but keeps me in alignment with my values. In fact, my three greatest gifts from the practice of yoga, besides the health of my body, have been courage, patience and acceptance or equanimity.

Being an Iyengar Yoga teacher with another profession has required me to dedicate time for my *asana* practice. I am not able to do the more difficult poses at the back of *Light on Yoga*, this was never my desire. I was highly motivated to take the teachings deeper into my daily life. The daily self-observation, on and off the mat, has helped me to cultivate 'standing steady' in whatever I am doing in life—a reflection of the basic standing pose, *tadasana* (Mountain). As Guruji expressed, "Self-knowledge starts from the skin on the soles of the feet when standing." Self-responsibility can be learned from asking whose legs are these and whose duty is it to straighten them? When I discriminate the movement of the torso from the stability of the leg, I can learn to discriminate if time is best spent with family, at work or on the yoga mat. As I persevere to learn a challenging pose and perhaps literally fall on my mat, I learn patience, compassion for myself and to see myself more lightly. Perhaps I go to bed planning an invigorating backbend practice for the next day only to awaken with a headache or ill-feeling symptoms. I accept that my yoga practice is to balance my physical, mental, emotional and physiological states of being that change from day to day, and that each day requires a particular, mindful practice. And to be in

*My three greatest gifts from the practice of yoga, besides the health of my body, have been courage, patience and acceptance*

a pose like *kurmasana*, the tortoise quiet and still in her shell with her arms and legs pinned to the earth, is like witnessing a conflict at work or in my relationships with warm heart and cool mind, poised to respond, restrained from reacting and maintaining a wide view. The Iyengar *asana* practice emphasizing symmetry and alignment has been particularly valuable for my spine that has slight scoliosis. When symmetry is created in the exterior, physical body, then balance and health are created in the interior organic body, and the yogi lives in harmony with the world.

On my recent fourth trip to RIMYI I was taught again by Abhijata, now a master teacher in her own right. To find balance in *adho mukha vrksasana* (Arm Balance) she taught us to press each finger joint and wrist joint down and lift all the other joints of the body up. "Do not take the legs off the wall," she commanded, "Allow the legs to come off the wall on their own by doing the correct action." I experienced this Arm Balance so strong yet light, energizing my entire body. It reminded me of another aphorism of B.K.S. Iyengar: "Awareness must be like the rays of the sun, extending everywhere, illuminating all." And so, the legacy and lineage of B.K.S. Iyengar continue with the new generation of teachers. Each teacher at RIMYI is like a ray of the light of B.K.S. Iyengar, spreading awareness and understanding of the teachings. Through the Iyengar system we can access our potential; and from the stillness of mind and heart, radiate our essential nature of generosity, kindness and compassion. ॐ

MELISSA PEREHUDOFF LIVES IN KELOWNA BC WHERE SHE WAS ONE OF THE PIONEERS OF IYENGAR YOGA. IN ADDITION TO HER PROFESSIONAL WORK AS A SPEECH THERAPIST, SHE TEACHES IYENGAR YOGA AT THE KELOWNA YOGA HOUSE.

### *A Garland for Guruji*

My thanks eternally to B.K.S. Iyengar for his timeless generosity and wisdom in offering yoga teachings to the world. I attribute my positive and speedy recovery after two hip replacements to the practice of Iyengar Yoga. I was also aided by our gifted and knowledgeable Iyengar Yoga teachers. My Iyengar practice provided the strength of spirit and body for this task.

— Sharron Warren

# A Personal Tribute to B.K.S. Iyengar

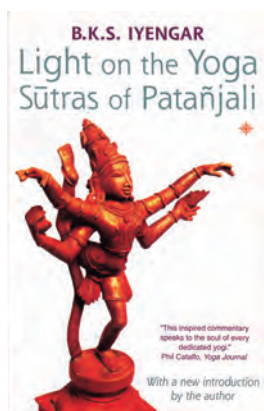
By Judith Mirus

In the Fall of 2003 I was diagnosed with stage three breast cancer. It hit me like a ton of bricks and the bottom fell out of my idea of life and of myself. Guruji says that “Disease fragments and whatever integrates also heals.” I needed to identify and find the resources that would give me emotional and intellectual balance and sustenance. I didn’t so much decide that I should re-read Guruji’s *Light on the Yoga Sūtras of Patanjali* as that now I needed to read it. As I read his commentary, in particular, I felt that Guruji was speaking directly to the ‘afflicted-ness’ of my condition and the means to address it.

In his commentary on *sutra* II.33 he says: “...adjustment and observation in the practice of yoga fuses *paksa* and *pratipaksa*, freeing us from the upheavals of anger and depression, which are replaced with hope and emotional stability. 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.”

Every time I go back to a *sutra* or *pada*, Guruji’s particular analysis infuses them with personal relevance and meaning. I’ve read other translations and commentaries, a few of which have enriched my comprehension. What sets Guruji’s *Light on the Yoga Sūtras of Patanjali* apart, to me, is that he directs us personally, even urgently, to experience, practice and understand it.

There is of course a scholastic, erudite aspect to his teaching and commentary: he made himself a master of the body-mind through the expanse of his knowledge. But what marks, for me,



the power and depth of Guruji’s teaching is that it is unfailingly personal and direct. It stands out not just that he knew, but that he persisted in making available to us what he knew, what he continued to learn and understand. And he expected something of us. If I was ready, he would meet me at the point at which he saw that I could receive it. I sensed this myriad times, even though I was rarely being individually instructed. Being in his presence was an unmatched experience of yoga in action.

He was a Brahman, an Indian male, a recognized and accomplished guru; all of which could have had him stand above and distant from his

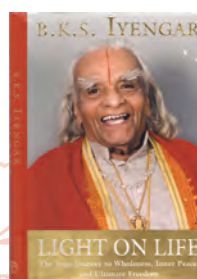
students. He didn’t. He could be fierce and stern, as well as kind in his compassion and a disciplinarian when he instructed us. Always he was ever receptive, generous, gracious. I remember a few years ago, as I was walking into the Institute and he was coming down the stairs from the studio, when we intersected briefly. I mentioned to him how much I appreciated the practice he posted at the back of *Light on Life*. He gave me a big smile and waggled his head appreciatively, in the Indian way. It was a sample of his *maitri*, *karuna*, and *mudita*. *Upeksa* goes without saying. I miss him very much! ॐ

JUDITH MIRUS IS A SENIOR CANADIAN TEACHER FROM EDMONTON, ALBERTA WHO BEGAN HER STUDIES WITH THE LATE SENIOR TEACHER LIZ MCLEOD, IN THE EARLY DAYS OF IYENGAR YOGA IN THAT PROVINCE. SHE HAS A DEEP INTEREST IN YOGA PHILOSOPHY.

“A type of ashtanga yoga focusing on the correct alignment of the body, making use of straps, wooden blocks, and other objects as aids to achieving the correct postures.”



PHOTO: JAKE CLENNELL



2003	2004	2005	2008	2010	2014
“Iyengar” added to Oxford Dictionary	Time Magazine includes B.K.S. in list of 100 most influential people	Light on Life published, last trip to USA	90th birthday celebrated in Bellur and travels through Southern India	Meets Dalai Lama	Awarded Padma Vibhushan
					August 20, 2014 Guruji dies



# Unity in Diversity

By Britta Poisson

When I moved to Victoria, I had already established a daily practice of the *yogasanas*. I would read from a book, and put the postures together any which way. After *savasana*, sometimes I would feel exhilarated and at other times – exhausted. Then, I began taking classes with Linda Benn at the YMCA. After *savasana*, I always felt strong and calm. What was her secret? I went to the bookstore and bought a copy of *Light on Yoga* by B.K.S. Iyengar. Maybe he knew the secret.

I still remember how the book felt in my palm as I withdrew it from the shelf... auspicious. In retrospect, this was the moment my *sadhana* began.

The *asana* courses at the back of the book helped to stabilize the results of my practice and Gururji's brilliant exposition of the *yogasanas* continue to encourage me. However, it was his introduction, "What is yoga?" which may have had the most profound effect on the course of my life. Although many words and concepts were unfamiliar, it made more sense than anything I had encountered before. A



B.K.S. Iyengar in Victoria

*The Bhagavad Gita*, and to honour his centenary this year, "What is yoga?" from B.K.S. Iyengar's *Light on Yoga*.

Re-reading this beautiful, comprehensive, and compassionately written introduction together is like coming home. Lit from the inside, I bow deeply to Gururji for lighting the lamp. I am beginning to understand the importance of daily study and reflection. Like an archeologist, every day I have to look at the dust and decide what to do about it if I am to uncover my true nature. ॐ

\* attributed to Swami Vivekananda

BRITTA POISSON IS A TEACHER ON THE FACULTY OF THE IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA. SHE IS THE FACILITATOR OF THE CENTRE'S YOGA PHILOSOPHY STUDY GROUP, AND CAN ALSO BE FOUND DURING HER DAY JOB SERVING AS THE CENTRE'S RECEPTIONIST AND OFFICE MANAGER.

passion for the philosophy of yoga was ignited!

Some years later, Shirley Daventry French offered a class called "Philosophy of Yoga". I did not know what to expect; I only knew that I had to be there.

For the better part of a decade, Shirley has led and mentored a small group of students for twenty-four Wednesday afternoons each year. Her two-pronged approach – a steadfast faith in yoga and her Guru and an honest look at her life through the lens of yoga philosophy – is an immeasurable blessing.

Actually, there are three prongs. The third is laughter. Shirley has often said, "Never trust a spiritual teacher without a sense of humour."\*

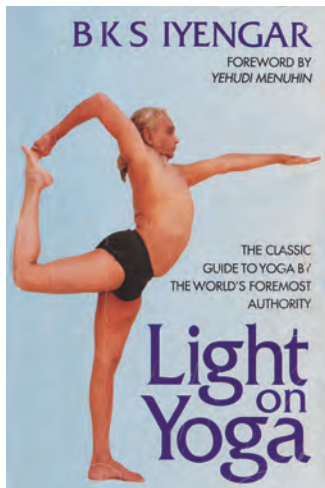
Last year, mindful of her energy and wisely respecting the shift in her *sadhana*, Shirley encouraged the philosophy class to continue, even though she would no longer be leading it. It is a testament to her mentorship that the class continues to flourish. Each week, one of us takes the role of facilitator. We share the joy of studying the *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*,

## Maha Prana an offering to B.K.S. Iyengar

The breath  
Having traversed the vastness  
of consciousness,  
breaks in luminescence on  
the shores of being.  
Bestowing impossible life.

– David Eeles

DAVID EELES IS A POET, ARTIST, DREAMER AND WOOD CARVER LIVING IN TRACADIE, NOVA SCOTIA WHERE WITH HIS WIFE, SENIOR TEACHER DEBORAH LOMOND, HE RUNS YOGAVIEW, AN IYENGAR CENTRE LITERALLY ON CANADA'S ATLANTIC COAST.





# Crossing The Boundaries

By Glenda Balkan Champagne

There is no guidebook for the subtleties of protocol for the first-timer at RIMYI. And so as a new student, I arrive a few minutes before the start of class (too late), wearing socks into the hall (“Psst take your socks off!”) unable to find a space because the room is completely full. I set up a mat in the only spot still empty the back of the hall close to the props, pick up two blankets and sit down.

A few minutes later, Abhijata enters the room with B.K.S. Iyengar. Assistants scramble to set up a trestle and some props and Abhi helps Guruji to the spot – directly behind where I am seated!

Abhijata makes her way to the platform at the front of the hall, sits down and tells us to clear our mats (no blankets) for the invocation. She begins her teaching that day with an admonishment that we are students and that we can only learn if we rid ourselves of what we think we know. We begin practice with *tadasana*. I am aware that right behind me Mr. Iyengar is practising. But my own practice has taught me to remain focused despite outward distractions and I am somewhat able to centre myself in the posture.

We move into *utthita trikonasana*, a pose we’ve been performing since our very first yoga classes. It is an *asana* that is so familiar that it can become habitual. Legs, knees, shoulders,

chest, automatically know what to do. My hand is on my shin, close to my ankle and I am a little pleased that at least I can be ‘at home’ in this pose.

From behind me, I hear a powerful, raspy whisper: “Why do you hold yourself back!? Put your hand on the floor!”

Down goes my hand. Actually everyone’s hand goes down! The classical presentation in *Light on Yoga* is hand to the floor, but I was so used to my hand landing on my leg that my mind never opened to the thought of placing it down. I was comfortable and so I thought I was doing it ‘right’.

Guruji’s demanding question, “Why do you hold yourself back?” is one I ask myself again and again. There is no ‘right’ answer. Sometimes it may in fact be the right thing to hold back. But oftentimes, it might be a lack of vision or imagination that keeps me from seeing that more is possible. And naturally, crossing the boundaries that I have so carefully created is scary!

*Trikonasana* is a metaphor. It has a shape to fit into. It is recognizable. Over time it is comfortable. But in that one moment, like a thunderbolt from behind, Guruji taught me to keep looking, to go further, to open, and that more is possible. *Trikonasana* is the tool, but Guruji’s question is the lesson. ॐ

A HAPPY COINCIDENCE BROUGHT GLENDA BALKAN TO IYENGAR YOGA IN 1997 IN TORONTO. NOW SHE LIVES AND TEACHES IN VICTORIA.

## A Garland for Guruji

DearGuruji  
Iofferagarlandofsyllables,  
Multipliedbyhundredsofhundredsmore  
Ringingoutfromthecellsofmybody  
Frombottomtotopandtopsy-turvy  
Sidetoside,backtofrontandinside-out,  
Isingpraisetoyourgrammarofposture  
Thatdisciplines,purifies,strengthensand  
Harmonizesusaroundthewholeworld  
Sowemightkeeptheuniversalvows  
Thatwillfreeusfromblindconditioning.  
Isaluteyou!

– Jane McFarlane



Glenda with her hand on the floor in utthita trikonasana

## Notes of Gratitude

By Students of Olympic Iyengar Yoga

We at the Olympic Iyengar Yoga in Port Angeles WA, are your little sister community, attending workshops and being thankful for your support to our students and teachers.

Below are some of the deep feelings about Guruji and the Iyengar path. Many of the students found it difficult to verbalize their path; it's a personal path and each has a different perspective depending on the years of study and the depth of involvement.

"Yoga has given me more balance in my life; the hard times are manageable and the good times are full of peace."

— Ann Leeds

"Yoga has put me on the path to discovering my true self."

— Ron Hanson

"The value of life is meant to be experienced in the present."

— Theresa Brookbank

"I have MS and suffer muscle weakness, spasticity and anxiety issues. Yoga has helped me to learn to relax and mentally calm my mind, so that I feel I am more in control and in tune with my body."

— Margaret Strohmeier

"I feel better, more alive and in tune with my inner self. The Iyengar path has given me a direction of continual giving to others, being able to take a pause when necessary and giving my life a wholesome purpose." — Robin Popinski

"My yoga session is my doctor, my therapist and my church. It keeps me physically, mentally and emotionally



Gururaj demonstrates headstand at RIMYI in 1982

balanced from week to week. I can't imagine not having yoga." — Vicki Sutton

"Yoga has given me not only community but a place to be inside myself. I have come to understand my 'home' in a completely different and loving way. Being aware of all of the options and ways my vessel works and how to utilize them. I am more able, more flexible and more capable than I ever would have been otherwise. Thank You."

— Dawn Griffin

"Practising yoga teaches me to be settled when my knees don't point straight, and gracious when they do — ultimately, the yoga isn't about my knees and I have to remind myself, what is the quality of my mind?" — Wendy Bently ॐ

### A Garland for Gururaj

Gururaj brought so many gifts.

Inspiring, healing, cleansing tools  
to create balance and change

We begin yoga asana focusing,

Oms, and shared Patanjali  
invocation, and bells join in  
forming a natural soundscape

Full transformation does take effort,  
your intelligence and forbearance  
guide the way to purposeful life.

— Johanna Godliman

He used to tell his pupils to "be aware that the current of spiritual awareness has to flow in each movement and in each action."



# First Encounters with Guruji

By Leslie Hogle

Celebrating 100 years since Guruji's birth, I continue exploring diaries and reliving memories of my times with him. My first encounter with Mr. Iyengar was in the summer of 1984 at the first International Iyengar Yoga Conference in San Francisco.

Participants at the conference were assigned a group according to their experience, and I was in a C group with two women with severe scoliosis. Each group had a round robin of teachers, and Guruji moved from class to class to observe and guide the teachers to develop their skills. Each time Guruji visited our group, the instructors were facing the challenge of how to help these two women. And each time, he graciously helped each instructor work with them. His compassion was supreme. He gave hints and encouragement on how to help improve their spines. His eyes were sharp, he transmitted his optimism, his encouragement, his hope and his deep love of the subject. I learned later that one of these women went almost directly to Pune and later became a certified teacher.

Soon after the San Francisco conference, Guruji travelled to Canada and one stop was Victoria. The whole

Victoria Iyengar Yoga community had been actively involved in planning his visit. I was fortunate to be able to host part of his entourage and Jawahar Bhangera, one of his assistants, stayed with our family. Mr. Iyengar called Jawahar and Birjoo Mehta, the other assistant, "the boys." Guruji watched various instructors at the YM-YWCA, where the Iyengar Yoga community was based at the time. I was not teaching at this point, but I remember standing with one lifted leg pressing into the wall for an interminable time, as his precise instructions filled the gym. (See the article in the *IYCV Newsletter* from October 1984, archived in our library.) The end of that visit was a gala dinner at the Crystal Gardens. It was a wonderful evening of entertainment, speeches and a delicious meal. My sons were young, but I insisted they accompany me to this once-in-a-lifetime event.

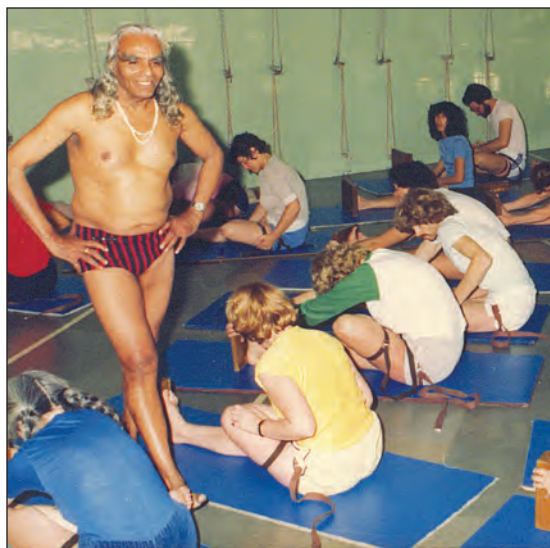
A year later, in 1985, I travelled to Pune for a Canadian intensive that Shirley Daventry French had organized. I was nervous because, prior to 1984, I had been in a terrible car accident, which resulted in ongoing health issues. Though my practice had returned to a basic level

with help from Shirley and Dr. Derek French, I was still having trouble with my neck and could not sustain *sirsasana* for any length of time.

Geeta was our main teacher in Pune, but Guruji would occasionally come in and guide her and us. One day we were attempting deep backbends, and I could not manage to lift into the pose. Then Guruji was there; his touch was electrifying. As he helped me lift into *urdhva dhanurasana*, I couldn't help but yell out, but it was the fear leaving me, not pain that caused this outburst. His touch transformed me, and I was able to face myself in ways that I had not done before. I will never forget that moment. After a few attempts, he gazed deep into my eyes with that well of compassion and said, "This is enough for now."

I have not been able to locate the notebooks from these first times with him. I have no words to quote, but I have the vivid memory of his look, his touch, and his electrifying presence. I am ever grateful for the opportunity to attend those events. I thank Shirley Daventry French for her leadership, support and encouragement. And I thank Guruji for his brilliance! ॐ

LESLIE HOGYA IS A SENIOR CANADIAN TEACHER AND FORMER SCHOOLTEACHER WHO HAS FULFILLED MANY ROLES IN HER HOME COMMUNITY OF VICTORIA AND ON THE NATIONAL SCENE. SHE IS A FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA AND ALSO SERVED AS PRESIDENT OF THE IYENGAR YOGA ASSOCIATION OF CANADA.



Gururaj teaching



Leslie Hogle in Pune, 1985

*"The brain is the hardest part of the body to adjust in the asanas."*





Guruji teaching in Victoria

## Guruji Gave Us Dreams

By Louie Ettling

Guruji appears in the dreams of many of his students. Over the years, when asked, students from all over the world have mentioned to me that Guruji had taught them in their dreams. Sometimes the lessons were kind and at other times sharp. He could be teaching aspects of *asana*, *pranayama* or other practical life lessons.

In my own life the many dreams involving Guruji and the Iyengar family have been meaningful and insightful and have been part of what has kept me connected to the work we share as a worldwide yoga community.

In dreams Guruji has taught me how to look into his ‘eye’ when attempting *virabhadrasana III*.

Upon waking it seemed as if the eye was also the ‘I’ in Iyengar and the responsibility that one has towards one’s own inner ‘I’. That eye provided a focus point, a direction, a reach beyond oneself, resulting in better life balance. Guruji has also shown me how to be familiar; how to offer him tea, with grace and gratitude. He has shown me how to play with small children in a field. He has taught me to fly over a lake with ancestors. In a dream Guruji’s gaze taught me how not to teach and how to be quiet, once.

Our dreams are our own, but such strong imprints came from the practice and influence of B.K.S Iyengar, that he could become part of our inner teaching and potential growth towards the Self.

Guruji’s spirit could visit my inner realm while he was alive and he continues to do so, still. How does one thank another for appearing in one’s dreams? I am grateful and suspect that B.K.S Iyengar will remain in our collective dreams for another hundred years and more, or maybe for as long as we practice his work sincerely. ॐ

LOUIE ETTLING IS THE FOUNDING DIRECTOR AT THE YOGA SPACE IN VANCOUVER. SHE BEGAN HER STUDIES 32 YEARS AGO HAS REGULARLY STUDIED WITH B.K.S. IYENGAR AND HIS FAMILY BOTH IN PUNE AND NORTH AMERICAN INTENSIVES.

### A Garland for Guruji

Here we are, mindful and ready to start our yoga class.

Remembering what we did before and looking forward to another day of practice and understanding.

It is with the invocation that we begin: inviting warmth, compassion, generosity and gratitude into our hearts.

Without B.K.S. Iyengar’s wisdom and gifts, without this studio and our teachers, we would not be here now.

– Glenda’s Level 2 Class

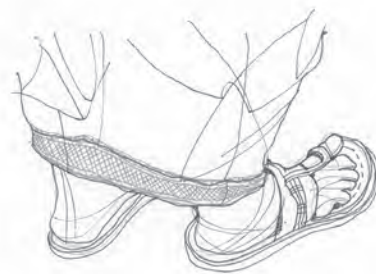


ILLUSTRATION: LAUREN COX

*“You do not need to seek freedom in a different land, for it exists with your own body, heart, mind, and soul.”*

# Bellur Krishnamachar Sundararaja Iyengar

## 1918-2014

“Without consideration of caste, class, creed, religion or region, ... it is said that the only royal path is yoga. This alone is the path that purifies the seeker of truth and no other.

With my deep love and affection toward you all, my heart is throbbing with a sense of gratitude; words fail me and I find it extremely difficult to send a message to you all, my yogic children to whom I am bound.

A message conveys that I am parting with you, but actually I am also close and attached .... Even those who learned and later parted from me are close to my heart because they carry the same message of yoga – the unity in diversity. Please know that we are all brought together by the invisible hands of God to jointly work towards integrating yoga further and further. This yoga – art, science and the self-culture of man braided together – has bound us forever and this affectionate bond and feeling that belongs to the heart, not the head, is not capable of being conveyed. These are feelings which have made us all live in contentment and emanate the rays of love and delight.”

*“You must be as joyful when you fail again and again as you are joyful when you succeed. It is often when you fail that you move toward the goal without being aware of it. You must feel joy even when you have not fully succeeded but only moved toward achievement of your goal.”*

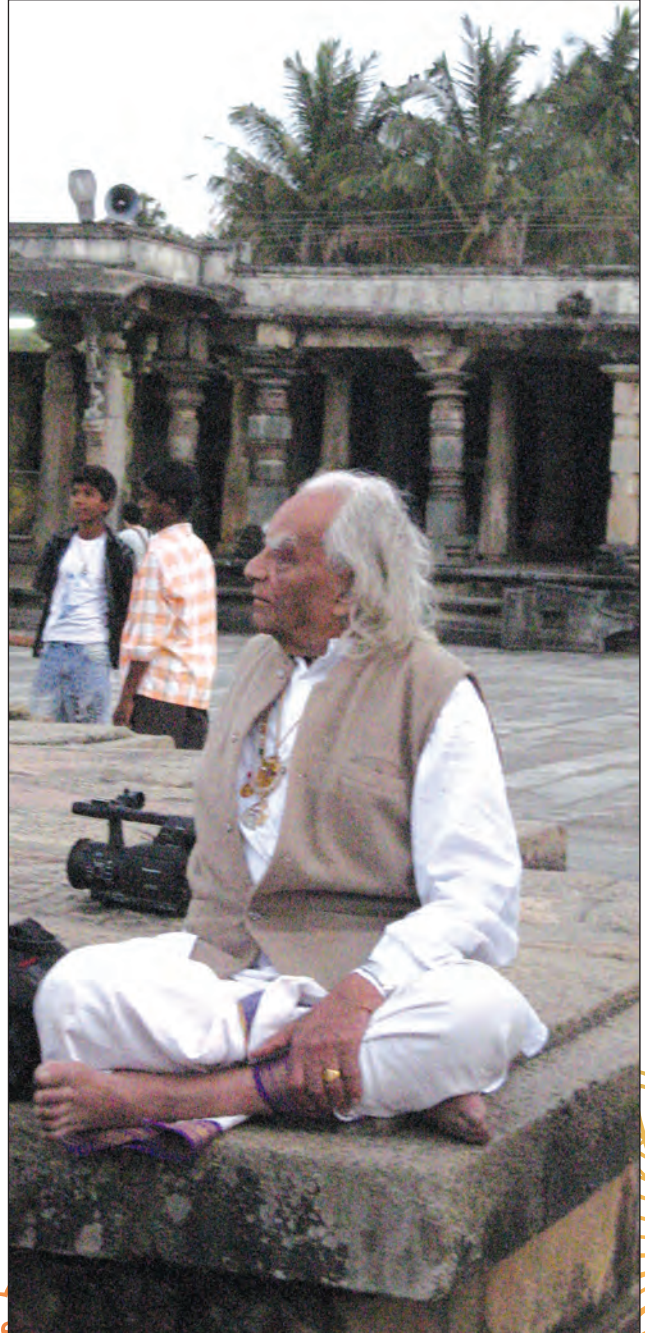


PHOTO: LESLIE HOGYA

Gururji visiting temple on 90th birthday, 2008





PHOTO: KEVIN MASON

## *In the Light of Yoga*

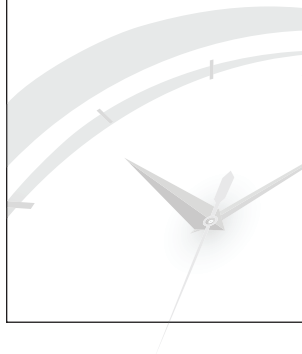
Anniversary Celebration of B.K.S. Iyengar's Birthday

December 14, 2018, 4:00 – 7:00 pm

Come celebrate the anniversary of Guruji's birth with a special class, demonstration, readings, and reflections. Tea and birthday cake to be served.

All are welcome at this free event.

Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria,  
202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8V 3K3  
250-386-YOGA (9642) [www.iyengaryogacentre.ca](http://www.iyengaryogacentre.ca)



**NEW YEAR'S DAY**

## Timed Practice

**With Ty Chandler**

**ALL LEVELS**

**January 1, 2019  
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm**

**2019 IYCV members: Free**

**Non-members: \$40 + GST for**

**Not recommended for beginners**

*Become a 2019 member or renew your membership by Friday, December 21, and register for this 2 hour All Levels Timed Practice with Ty Chandler for FREE!*

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

Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Presents

## *the Heart of Yoga*

**February 23-24, 2019**

Join Ann Kilbertus for an ALL LEVELS weekend workshop. Take the time and space to refine your practice and contemplate what lies at the heart of yoga for you in the New Year. Steady in shoulder stand and ready to learn headstand? This workshop is for you!

Feb 23, 10:30 am - 1:30 pm  
and 3:30 pm - 5:30 pm  
Sunday Feb 24, 12 - 3 pm

REGISTRATION OPENS: OCTOBER 12, 2018

Fees: \$175 + GST members  
\$195 + GST non-members

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



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





## IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS

### The Annual General Meeting of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria will be held February 10, 2019 at 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C.

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.



## Congratulations!

The following candidates achieved  
Introductory II certification at the  
September 14-16 assessment in  
Calgary:

Nicole Arendt, Nanaimo, BC  
Erin Houston, Victoria, BC  
Jessica Lowry, Nanaimo, BC  
Cheryl Martin, Winnipeg, MB  
Vaughn Barkman, Erickson, MB  
Lenore Koreen Lindeman, Lethbridge, AB  
Santiago Arribas Picon, Calgary, AB  
Karina Berrade, Carstairs, AB

## Celebrate B.K.S. Iyengar's 100 years with these free classes

Saturday, November 3  
12:00 - 1 pm with Leslie Hogya

Saturday, December 1  
11 am -12:00 pm with Jayne Jonas

## IYCV Calendar

### November

- 3 100th Birthday Special Practice
- 23 Practice Enrichment
- 24 Professional Development

### December

- 1 100th Birthday Special Practice
- 14 In the Light of Yoga, Guruji's Birthday
- 20-21 Winter Solstice Workshop

### January

- 1 New Years Day Timed Practice
- 25 Practice Enrichment
- 26 Professional Development

### February

- 10 Annual General Meeting
- 23-24 Heart of Yoga Workshop

### March

- 21 High Tea Fundraiser

## Winter Solstice Workshop With Ty Chandler

**December 20-21, 2018**  
**6:00 - 8:00 pm**

FIRST NIGHT:  
forward bend practice  
with inversions.

SECOND NIGHT:  
backbend practice  
with inversions.

Not recommended for beginners.

### Fees:

One night:

\$32 + GST IYCV members,  
\$36 + GST non-members;

Both nights:

\$60 + GST IYCV members,  
\$66 + GST non-members

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

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

## Professional Development Series for Iyengar Yoga Teachers and Trainees

Commit to this series to refine your skills as a teacher and to deepen your understanding of Iyengar Yoga with some of the country's most experienced and respected teachers. Sessions will include teaching enrichment opportunities as well as a wide variety of current and relevant PD topics for certified Iyengar Yoga teachers and trainees.

**Saturdays 10:30 am - 1:45 pm**

**October 27, 2018; November 24, 2018  
January 26, 2019; March 30, 2019**

**\$50 + GST each session**



## Practice Enrichment Series

**October 26, 2018, November 23, 2018  
January 25, 2019, March 29, 2019**

The Iyengar Yoga Centre is the place. Give yourself the extra time and space to join Ann Kilbertus and Ty Chandler in this series of sessions for your own enrichment on the path of Yoga. Asana and Pranayama will be taught to invite the practitioner in finding what Gururji calls "the work of devoted practice". All Level 2, 3 and 4 students welcome.

**With Ann Kilbertus and Ty Chandler**

**\$48+ GST each session**

## Scholarships & Bursaries

**Heart of Yoga, February 23-24,  
deadline February 1**

Bursaries are available to all students presently enrolled in classes. To subsidize your term fees, please apply four 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)

## Interim Classes during

# Winter Break

Watch the front desk for classes and closures during the winter break.



## Twelfth Annual High Tea Fundraiser

Hosted by Students from the Special Needs Class  
Thursday, March 21, 2019, 3:00 pm - 4:30 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. 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.

## Members' Practice

All current members of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria who attend a regular class or have received permission from the practice monitor are welcome to participate in an open practice every Sunday afternoon from 12:30 - 3:30 pm. There is no instruction given in this self-directed practice session. Props, books and other resources are available for the use of anyone who attends. Come for 20 minutes or stay for three hours!



Iyengar Yoga  
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA  
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DE  
Yoga Iyengar

## 2018 IYAC/ACYI ASSESSMENT DATES

**November 2-4,  
Introductory II,  
Fredericton, NB**

**November 9-11,  
Introductory II,  
London, ON**

**March 1-3, 2019,  
Intermediate Junior 1,  
Toronto, ON**

## Thank you to...

- Ingrid Stephen for donating 1 chair, 2 bolsters, 3 wood blocks, and 2 foam blocks.
- Adia Kapoor for many years of collecting the newsletters from the printers and to Laure Newnham for taking over this task.
- Jim Bratvold for his donation of *Props for Yoga* Volume 2 (Sitting Asanas and Forward Extension) and Volume 3 (Inverted Asanas) by Eyal Shifroni, as well as *Yoga for Back Pain* by Loren Fishman, MD.
- Catherine Langpap and Leslie Hogya for their donations to the library.
- Derek Doyle for donating the *Bhagavad Gita* and *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* to the library.
- Laine Canivet and Board for your efforts in getting the interview in the Victoria News! And Ann for being the interviewee! It is a great piece on the front page, and the video is excellent!!
- Jennifer Rischmiller for her assistance in finding copies of the newsletter from the 80s.
- Jane McFarlane for donating a Dyson Cyclone v10 vacuum cleaner.

### *For the 34th Annual Salt Spring Retreat:*

- The dynamic duo of Leslie Hogya and Wendy Boyer for leading this retreat.
- Sheila Redhead, Annie Kitchen and Nigel Sinclair for transporting props, and to the students of the Thursday Level 3 class for helping to load the cars.
- Janine Bandcroft for taking memorable photos.
- The Salt Spring Centre of Yoga for providing garden-fresh, delicious meals and an enjoyable environment for practice and reflection.

### *For cleaning blankets, mats and straps on the Canada Day holiday weekend:*

- Jane McFarlane for coordinating this project.
- Bruce Cox for being a big help on Friday – bundling blankets and carrying them to Jane's car, along with many mats. After the post-natal class, Lauren Cox and her daughter-in law, Eva Stumpf, pitched in, along with students from the Friday evening restorative class.
- Johanna Godliman, for helping to set out the wet mats plus fold blankets with Jane at Scrubby's.

- Vicki and Anil Kapoor for transporting a second load to and from the laundromat, and for bringing blankets back upstairs and onto shelves... thanks also to their visiting guests and Adia Kapoor... they helped, too!
- Jim Bratvold, Lesley Field, Ruby Smyth, Gregg Stewart, and Britta Poisson for returning everything from the drying racks set up in the middle of the studio and on the rope wall to their respective homes.
- Lucie Guidon and Jim Bratvold for helping to upgrade some of the rope wall attachments in the studios.

## Save the Dates!

### GUEST SPEAKER FROM INDIA

coming May 17-20, 2019

Watch for details  
at the IYCV front desk.



## All memberships expire December 31st. IT'S TIME TO RENEW!

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

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

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

### Membership PLUS

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

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

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

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

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

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

☐ **Add \$8 to have newsletter mailed to you**

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☐ Sign me up for monthly yog-e email news

☐ Receipt required