



yoga centre of victoria

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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December 1990 - January 1991





Reflections

By Shirley Daventry French

Once a week I teach an introductory class at the YM-YWCA, followed by a class for those who are (in the words of the Y brochure) "Fifty-five and Better". Many of the participants are better than seventy and some better than eighty. They are all women. One day, as they were entering the room and taking their places, a student about to leave from the earlier class, asked me: "Do you have any classes for fat old men?" She added: "I'm thinking of my husband. If he came into this class and saw all these women in such good shape, he wouldn't stay."

That's probably true. I've seen that scenario repeated over and over again, and it certainly doesn't apply only to men. Male or female, young and old, individuals in poor shape have difficulty in staying with yoga long enough for it to begin to help them. With an Iyengar Yoga class, it is not because they are being asked to do things beyond their capacity; this method can be adapted to any individual no matter how restricted. It is because they are being asked to look at their capacity - realistically!

Students drop out of class for many reasons, sometimes because they don't like the teacher, but very often it is because to stay would necessitate an honest appraisal of the state of their body, and accepting responsibility for some of the neglect and abuse to which it has been subjected. In addition it will require acceptance of the fact that there are some things which other students in the class can do and you cannot - possibly because they have more experience and have practised yoga for a while already.

In an Iyengar Yoga class all students are shown how to work to their individual capacity. They do not have to sit around and watch others perform. With modifications and the aid of props they can work at their own level.

Teachers trained in Mr. Iyengar's method will have learned how to explore and discover ways of helping students into basic yoga-asanas. From the very beginning, all students can begin to derive some of the benefits of these postures and improve their state of mind as well as the body.

Why do so many prefer to practise ongoing denial and avoidance, rather than face some initially difficult truths and begin a process of change which will eventually improve the quality of life?

The element of competition is one of the greatest deterrents. "They are all better than me." If "they" are female, and "I" am male, this presents even more of a dilemma. It is very limiting attitude, because it means that you cannot begin to learn anything new. Obviously you can't expect to be "good" at everything you attempt right from the start.

Competitiveness is by no means limited to the male sex. It is prevalent in people of both sexes and all ages who will do anything to avoid looking and feeling silly or awkward, who hate to draw attention to themselves, who find it difficult to accept that someone else can do something better than they can, and who, in failing to acknowledge their weaknesses, cannot ever discover their strengths. Constantly measuring themselves against others, they often fall short in their own estimation.

This is all a complete waste of time. It not only prevents us from exploring our own ability and inhibits the release of our creative energy into worthwhile endeavours, but forces us to live a damped down life where little is risked and therefore little is gained.

We have to tread the path of yoga like a warrior. Once, when I was teaching and

mentioned this image, someone objected, feeling that it was warlike and that in yoga we are trying to get away from the violence and aggression of our society and find a kinder and gentler way of life. This is true, and something we must do if we are going to survive individuals and as a species on this planet. But there is another aspect of the warrior: an individual who goes on a quest - for the holy grail, for the golden fleece, for

self-realisation, who ventures into the unknown, who faces fear and tests his or her mettle. At this time of year we celebrate the birth of Jesus, a man of peace, but a warrior in the magic sense.

A warrior will not survive unless he or she is able to assess the current situation realistically, plan a course of action and follow this through, drawing on the strength and stamina built up from some form of basic training. There is another element which helps a warrior to survive, and that is flexibility.

A warrior must be able to think quickly on his or her feet and having made a plan, change it, if it isn't working out or if the situation changes, rather than going down a dead end or even a destructive path.

The human spirit needs challenge, and soars when these challenges are met. If we shy away from the path of the warrior, try to live a safe life and avoid challenge, it doesn't work. Why not train ourselves, physically, mentally, spiritually to meet whatever challenges life has in store for us with courage, honour and dignity? This may require us to go out and actively do something, or remain still and do nothing from choice - not because there is no alternative, but because we consider this to be the best option. Inaction of this nature is not opting out, but an active choice made from strength. As Krishna tells Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita: "They who see action where there is inaction and inaction where there is action, live in wisdom. Their consciousness is unified, and their every act is done with complete awareness." (Chapter 4, Verse 18, The Bhagavad Gita for Daily Living by Eknath Eswaran)

To become a warrior, first we have to take that initial step and begin the training. It isn't easy. Anyone who has developed expertise in any field will testify to this. Certainly natural ability and instinct play an important role, but it is not until a training program has been established and followed for some time that

PRANAYAMA with Shirley Daventry French

*For students with experience of yoga-asana in the Iyengar tradition.
No previous experience of Pranayama is necessary*

These two classes will focus on breathing awareness, basic pranayama techniques and deep relaxation. For those who are already practising yoga-asana, pranayama leads naturally into a state of relaxation and contemplation.

Where: The Yoga Studio of the Victoria "Y"
When: Thursday, December 27th 1990 &
Thursday, January 3rd 1991
Time: 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.
Fees: Two classes: 'Y' Members \$20.00
Non-Members \$22.00
Single class: 'Y' Members \$12.00
Non-Members \$14.00

Please pre-register at "Y" Main Desk
Registration is limited.

INFORMATION
Shirley Daventry French 478-3775

potential is realised.

The list of excuses not to begin, or having begun not to continue, is endless - I'm too busy, I'm too old, I'm too fat, I'm too stiff, my children need me, my husband needs me, I've got to earn a living I'll do it tomorrow, next week, next year, sometime The yogis tell us that even if we manage to postpone this task until the end of our life, we shall have to do it sooner or later in another lifetime and perhaps without as many advantages as we have in this one.

If you have never done yoga your first challenge is to begin. The next is to continue after the first few classes when you have seen that the task ahead is not an easy one. Once you have become a regular participant in yoga classes, your next challenge will be to establish a regular personal practice. You mean, do it on my own? Yes! And once you have established a regular asana practice, when are you going to begin to practise pranayama?

For a warrior on the path of yoga, there is no retirement age; the practices may vary at different stages in your life and but there is no shortage of challenging, stimulating, rewarding and beneficial things to do. If you so choose, you need never be bored again.

The ladies in my "Fifty Five and Better" class would probably not think of themselves as warriors, but this is what they are. Last week, James Traverse, a yoga teacher who has recently moved to Victoria from Halifax, came to observe this class. He told me afterwards that he had felt like applauding at the end. He was very impressed with the calibre of student and the quality of their work. Their postures may not be perfectly correct, but are practised with a very positive energy and integrity. Their endurance is impressive. This did not come about overnight, but is the result of perseverance (most of them did not begin yoga until they were in their sixties or seventies). When I teach this class, I do not patronise them, I challenge them and they respond to this challenge in the true spirit of yoga.

Personally I don't like the name "Fifty-five and Better", which I find rather condescending. I would prefer this class to be called "Yoga for Seniors" which suggests a maturity earned through experience, and this is one of the main purposes of yoga.

A DAY OF YOGA

Asana and Pranayama
in the Iyengar Tradition
with

Shirley Daventry French

on

**SATURDAY,
February 2, 1991**



10 am to 4 pm in
The Yoga Room
3918 Olympic View Drive
R.R. 1, Victoria, B.C.

FEE \$45.00

Shirley is a senior student of B.K.S. Iyengar and an experienced teacher of his method of Yoga.

This workshop will be limited to 12 people with previous experience of Iyengar Yoga.

For information and registration.

Phone 478-3775

MY SPIRITUAL DIARY

by Jim Rischmiller

When I started Yoga umpteen years ago one of the questions asked of me was "Why are you here". In Kundalini class my answer was "To find Time for myself", and in Hatha class I learnt to keep asking myself that question.

As the years progressed my job got busier and busier. I am an easygoing chap who finds it hard to say no. So I started teaching yoga, took on executive duties with the Yoga Centre and dropped my music practice. In my work I took some time management courses which mostly assumed I had some time to manage. (Make lists, prioritise your work into A, B, C. Do the A's now, re-evaluate the B's tomorrow and dump the C's). My problem was A's were coming faster than I could make lists. Then I started using a time planning diary system, finally giving up on it when I realised you have to have good time management to make full use of one.

Hard practice and hard words from my teachers helped realise that my need was to do Everything perfectly. But just like a stiff body trying to do Yoga I couldn't hear advice on changing the situation. I started a Hatha practice intermittently and felt guilty for years when I didn't get it done. The same thing happened with my Kundalini papers. But any practice works so I started to get a few other clues. My Kundalini work showed me I need to reflect. Not just at the end of day but instant by instant. One of the best tools for reflection is a spiritual diary and after buying a nice spiritual diary book I took a workshop on how to use it and then lost my expensive pen.

On the second day of the workshop I was obeying my body's command to do some Yoga whilst listening, when I realised that I had time for myself. I have had this experience for moments before but this time it is sticking. I had stopped looking outward for time for myself and found it in my posture I was practicing. So this is my spiritual diary, my body, me.



Jim Rischmiller, Mr. Iyengar, Edmonton

The Victoria Yoga Centre
Presents

New Year's Yoga.

Sunday January 20th 1991.

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

A yoga workshop to help cast off the old
and renew with the new year.

A practice for grounding. How to relax.
Making choices in your life.

Workshop leader is Jim Rischmiller, an
experienced Iyengar Yoga teacher.

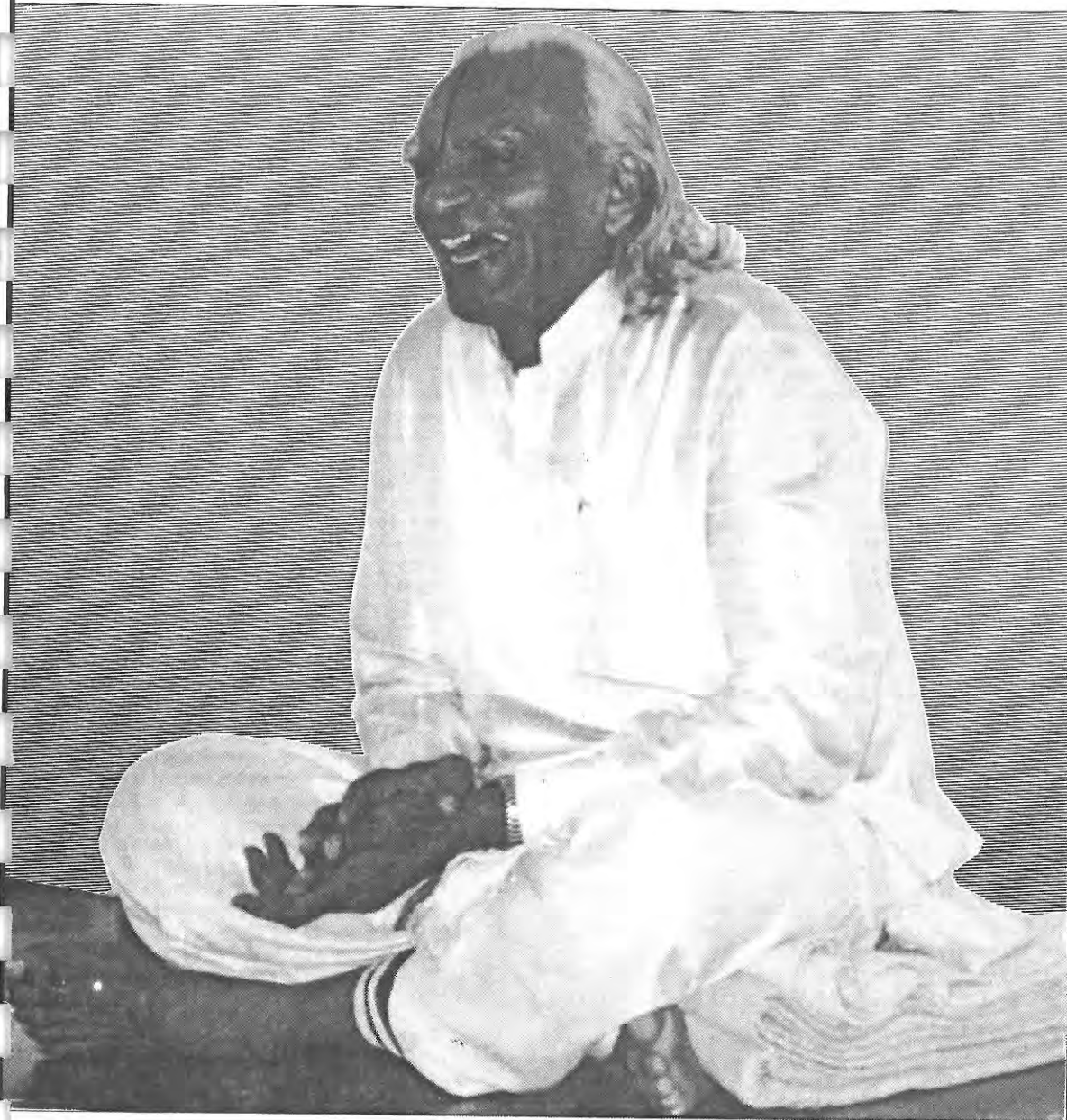
Light refreshments are included.

Fees: Yoga Centre members \$15.00,
Non-members \$18.00.

At the Yoga Studio Victoria YM-YWCA.

To register: Contact your Yoga Teacher at
the Y, or phone Jim at Home 474-5630 or
Work 382-6464. Please leave a message if
he is out.

THE PATH OF YOGA



An Interview with B.K.S. Iyengar

Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar is one of the truly great contemporary yoga masters. He is renowned and respected all over the world for the depth and refinement of his study, practice and teaching of yoga. His dedication to his art has inspired teachers and students on every continent, and sparked a light which illuminates the study of yoga in all corners of the globe.

We are honoured to publish the following interview with Mr. Iyengar which was conducted by Margot Kitchen of Calgary on Thursday, July 5th 1990 at the University of Alberta in Edmonton during the Canadian Iyengar Yoga Conference. It was transcribed and prepared for publication by Jennifer Rischmiller and Shirley Daventry French.

Margot Kitchen: Welcome, Sir.

B.K.S. Iyengar: Thank you very much.

MK: Perhaps we could start at the beginning with a definition of yoga. What is yoga?

BKS: The traditional meaning of yoga is to unite the individual soul to the universal spirit, which is rather abstract and difficult for the common people to understand. So the simple definition is that yoga is to unite the body with the mind to the level of intelligence of the mind, and then take the body and the mind, which becomes vibrant, to come in contact with the serene spirit within.

MK: Yoga has escalated in the last decade or so in the West. Why? What are we searching for?

BKS: For the simple reason that all the technical growth and material comforts, have not brought mental peace or physical freedom. When people started practising yoga, having experienced freedom of the body and lightness of the mind, the interest has come, because they are seeking something which can be eternally blissful. Where material benefits are concerned, they have reached the zenith.

MK: But the restlessness is there.

BKS: Yes, the restlessness is there, so they are turning to the East because the East is known for the relaxation of the very self itself.

MK: Popularity, though, can sometimes damage the true nature of a subject. Has this happened to yoga in your estimation?

BKS: Well, it is true that it does happen, for the simple reason that we try to improve ourselves physically, morally, mentally, intellectually and spiritually; but when people come in contact with their human being, pride sets in, name and fame come in. They forget the essence for which they practise; then the mind jumps immediately that "I want to be popular" like film actors, film actresses, personality cults. When the personality or individual wants to develop, then problems do come, however true, however real it may be.

MK: People have many misconceptions. For example, is there any religious dogma attached to the practice of yoga?

BKS: You know, the meaning of religion is realisation. Realisation of what? Of the self. You get involved in a righteous life, a virtuous life; so the moment virtuousness is introduced, it appears as a religion.

MK: But it is spiritual as opposed to a religion.

BKS: Yoga is a self-culture, and has no denomination of religion.

MK: Ah, one myth dispelled! But there are other myths! I think a lot of people associate walking on coals and pretzel-like behaviour as

the aim of yoga. That is not the aim. What is the true aim?

BKS: Again, that is exhibitionism. The aim of yoga is to develop humility with perfect intelligence. According to Patanjali's yoga-sutras, one has to purify the intelligence to such an extent that by continuous practice of yoga the light of yoga goes on progressing without arrogance.

MK: People are afraid of change.

BKS: That is true.

MK: Can people practise yoga as you have described and still live in our western society as a householder?

BKS: In a higher sense it is difficult to transform soon. But yoga has two aspects. We use the term "bhoga". Even to enjoy the pleasures of the world one should have good health; without health they can neither enjoy the fruits of the world nor can they think of God. So from that sense I think there is nothing wrong to begin yoga to have perfect health and mental harmony.

MK: So one does not have to live in solitude.

BKS: Not at all. One can remain in Picadilly Circus or anywhere downtown and be peaceful. A man in a cave may appear serene, but what about his inner mind? How does it toss? How do we know?

MK: So those of us who are staying in society must have it a little more difficult perhaps?

BKS: It is not difficult. Our intellectual exposure is always to the external world. Yoga can be practised in the middle of a town or in a crowded place. The moment you begin yoga, the direction of the mind goes inward toward itself. You are cut off, at least for the time being, from the external world. So is it not something to be in contact with your own body, your own mind, your own self? That way, I think yoga can be done anywhere.

MK: So you can be in contact with your own mind, your own self, and be at a cocktail party.

BKS: Yes.

MK: There are many interpretations of yoga that have come to the West. How do we discriminate,

and find the true practice?

BKS: It is very interesting because the fundamental principles of yoga are unknown. I wrote a book on yoga to which I gave the title Light on Yoga. Somebody else writes a book and they call it, say, "Yoga for Enlightenment". The titles differ but, if you observe the contents, the contents cannot differ because they have to go to the origin and the origin is the same.

The yogis when they studied all these things, gave only four pathways for self-realisation. One is the path of action, the second is the path of knowledge, the third is the path of love, and the fourth is the path of yoga. This yoga, as you put the question before, gradually got polluted to such an extent that one started calling it mantra yoga, laya yoga, raja yoga, hatha yoga, tantra yoga, mantra yoga. These words came later, but yoga is one where it is to associate oneself with one's own higher self. You cannot call hatha yoga physical yoga and Patanjali's yoga mental yoga. Only the definitions vary: one book says control the mind, the other control the body and the mind so you will be one with God - but the aim is the same.

We have been given arms, legs, an emotional centre and an intellectual head. The path of action has to be followed by the organs of action and the organs of perception, arms, legs and so on. Knowledge has to be gained from the head so that is jnana marga. God has given all three paths to each individual: hands and legs for action, brain for knowledge and emotional centre for affection and love. Compassion, friendliness, do not come from the head, they start from the heart. So these three are already given, blessed by God, to each individual in order to develop purity in action, purity in intelligence, purity in love. The fourth path, yoga, becomes the instrument to develop or to gain control over these three paths. In that way, yoga becomes the fountain for the other three paths. These were the only paths given by the sages of the early days, but naming them differently is the will of each individual.

MK: There are many books on yoga that are available nowadays. Does one need a teacher?

BKS: No doubt at all subjective knowledge needs the help of an experienced teacher. But there are lots of books. As you put your question about the purity of the work - a good book is

better than a bad teacher! If a good book is available, then I would have to say it is a better guide than a bad teacher.

MK: Then the next question has to be, what are the qualities of a good yoga teacher?

BKS: I would not say only a "yoga" teacher. The quality of a teacher is that the teacher has to study the calibre of the pupil. The teacher has to climb down to the level of the pupil and gradually bring the pupil from that standard to his standard. If the teacher can do this then I say he is a top class teacher.

MK: There are many "India returned" teachers. Is it necessary for one to go to India to be a good yoga teacher?

BKS: If you have a good teacher available here, there is no need to go to India to learn. If you cannot get a good teacher, and they are rare products nowadays, then it is worth going to India; not just going and coming back as "India returned" without getting the best from the teacher.

MK: So the student must be very discriminative, ask questions, compare and not just accept the first "India returned" teacher?

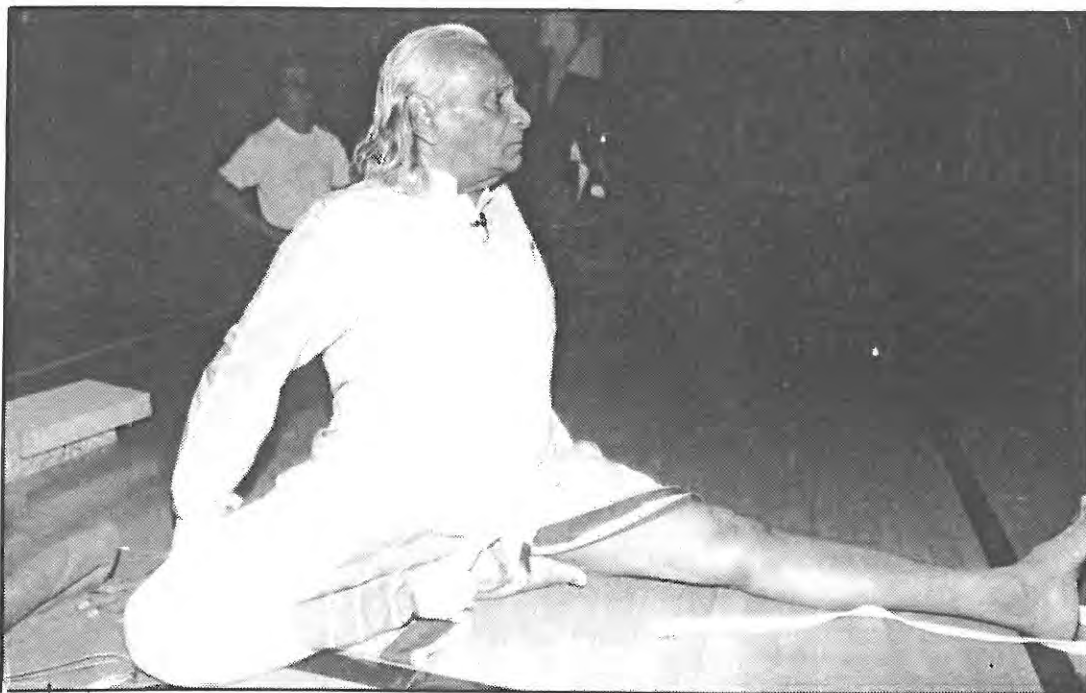
BKS: Yes, definitely. What has happened, yoga being a subject from India, is that if a teacher announces "I am India returned", then people think oh, they have gone to the source. So this illusion should not be created just to build up their egos and pocket books, more than yoga.

MK: The word "guru" has been used indiscriminately here in the West....

BKS: The word guru means: "gu" = darkness, "ru" = knowledge. One who removes the darkness of the pupil and enlightens with the light of knowledge, he is a guru.

MK: Sir, you are called Guruji. When is it appropriate for one to call you Guruji?

BKS: People never called me Guruji. I have been teaching yoga since 1936 and people started calling me Guruji only a decade ago. Even today, people call me Iyengar, some people call me Mr.



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Iyengar, but those who have experience staying with me and learning the light which came to them, then they automatically call me Guruji. I don't tell them to call me guru.

MK: So it comes from the heart?

BKS: From the heart. It means some light has come to them, otherwise they should not call me Guruji. Yesterday some people addressed me as Iyengar. I never asked them why they are calling me Iyengar without even adding Mr. We are told we are dust in the eyes of God, but if a student feels that I have the light and calls me Guru, then of course it's alright. As I say, I am a rare product.

MK: Yes, that's true!

BKS: Out of two thousand million population, I don't think there is another man in my field who has drunk the depths of the good and the bad of each posture or each breath.

MK: Do you have an understanding of why you have become so revered throughout the world?

BKS: For the simple reason, I think, of my sincerity, integrity, honesty and dedication to the subject.

MK: Yes. I have read that your early life was very difficult.

BKS: Yes.

MK: Would you tell us how you came to be on this yogic path?

BKS: In the early days, I had a tough time. I could not find even one meal per week. I was living on water. I don't know what made me do yoga. I had no interest to do yoga. I was suffering from tuberculosis; I had no health at all. There was no penicillin or injections available in those days, so my sister's husband, who is my guru, said: "Why don't you do some poses for gaining health?" I thought, instead of living a parasitic life, why should I not try? When I tried I never got healthy for another two or three years.

In India, the ladies were not mixing with men in those days, and if they wanted to learn they were not willing to learn from a grown up man. I was only sixteen years old, so the ladies told me Guruji - we don't want to learn from you, but if the young boy teaches well, we'll learn from

him, but we don't want to learn from any of your senior students or you. We are interested in yoga - solve the problem. So Guruji said, they want you to teach. I said, I don't know anything! He said, whatever you know, you teach. That's how the life began for me. And I developed. I had not mastered the poses. I used to refer to lots of books, all yoga books. Knowledge was very little at that moment. All the books were filled without experiences. I would look at the illustrations: they would write something, the figure was different. I said, this is not yoga. Then I took a challenge.

MK: I'll say!

BKS: I said, no, these illustrations which I see in the books, they are not in alignment to one another. Some people keep their head on one side, some to the front, some to the back. Some people throw their legs backwards, some forwards. Then I thought, let me do this, let me do that, and find which would give serenity in the pose. I started searching for serenity in each pose, from restlessness to restfulness. All poses were restless, no matter which method I tried. Then in a flash, I would feel the restfulness. I struggled to find out how did I get this restfulness.

I developed, and the colleges in Pune invited me to teach and whether it could be taught in mass. In those days Yoga was only taught on an individual to individual basis and not at all in a group. I said, I can teach one individual or fifty people at the same time. I was young and ambitious, and whatever chances came to me I accepted. Whatever diseases came to me, knowing very well that I did not know anything about yoga, I said - let me try! It was bearing fruit, and poses were not coming to me. When I did the pose I was unhappy because it was not coming. I was restless, and as I let go, within five minutes my inner voice would say, do it again, try again, try again. This voice, which was coming from inside, made me continue yoga. So though I was not attached to yoga, yoga was attached to me then. Now, I am attached to yoga. (Laughter) That's how we two got married, the subject of yoga and me. (More laughter).

MK: I have read that at the beginning of this period of trial and error, when you were teaching you would take the pain of the students into your own body to better help them. How?

BKS: Yes. Even now, I have got that character. If I see a person, the way they walk, the way

The Victoria Yoga Centre
and the Victoria YM-YWCA
are pleased to announce an

IYENGAR YOGA INTENSIVE

to be held this summer at the Victoria "Y"
with Senior Canadian Teachers

July 27th to August 2nd, 1991

Fee: \$325.00

- daily classes in Asana and Pranayama
- seminars on Yoga Psychology and Philosophy
- therapeutic yoga

*Classes will be taught by the following senior students and
experienced teachers of the Yoga of B.K.S. Iyengar:*

**Dr. Bruce Carruthers
Liz McLeod
Shirley Daventry French
Dr. Derek French**

*For out-of-town students: Victoria is a popular tourist centre with a wide
selection of hotels and motels. The Residence at the "Y" has a limited
amount of inexpensive accommodation for women. Billets will also be
available with members of the local yoga community.*

For brochure or further information contact:

**Victoria Yoga Centre
3918 Olympic View Drive
R.R. 1, Victoria, B.C. V8X 3W9**

Telephone Enquiries: **Shirley Daventry French (604) 478-3775
or Linda Benn (604) 598-8277**

they stand, I create that same kind of crookedness in my body and I walk. Then I understand that these are the muscles that need work.

MK: But now, though, you can just look at someone ...

BKS: Well, fifty five years of non-stop practice ...

MK: ... and lots of bodies that you have seen.

BKS: My fingers have touched between one hundred and two hundred thousand people. By touch, I can say what happens - my skin is so sensitive, my eyes are so sensitive, that by just touching the idea comes to me. You can call it the insight of yoga.

MK: You demand a great deal of your students and your teachers. In your own words you are an "intense" teacher. This is sometimes misinterpreted as aggressiveness or even violence, and I think it is time to dispel that myth.

BKS: My friend, even Patanjali has used that word. He says there are four types of teachers and four types of students. Mild teachers, mild students. Average teachers, average students. Keen teachers, keen students. Intensively intense teachers, intensively intense students. Now, if I belong to that quality of intensity as a teacher, then I will want all my pupils to be intense. If I am mild, I will definitely introduce mildness. But I did not learn anything in mildness; I had to work so intensely that I realised it is only by intense sadhana that it is possible to get the benefit of yoga, not otherwise.

MK: So when you are teaching and you touch your students, that is just to bring their consciousness to that area?

BKS: Yes. Consciousness exists everywhere, but it is hidden, dormant. So when we practise the asanas, we have to remove that dormancy of the consciousness, which is even at the bottom of the foot. If I say, feel the toe, consciousness rises there, otherwise it does not rise. So why not keep the consciousness in an even state over the entire frontier of the body. That is known as intensity, because to keep the consciousness not in compartments but in an absolute state of oneness in whatever position you may be in, demands intensity. Intensity appears aggressive sometimes, but intense is intense! (Laughter)

MK: I'll quote you a lot because I have read your book (*Iyengar - His Life and Work: ED.*) several times. I can remember you saying that a parent has to be stern, but it is done with love. That's what I understand from you.

BKS: This morning I was in a class, and I told them that when I look at a person, if the brain does not take the message, I am aggressive to the brain, but I am compassionate to the body which is affected. If the knee is bad, I am sympathetic to that knee not to the head.

MK: You have just struck a nerve. I remember that very well! (Laughter) I would like to talk a little about health and yoga. You have said that yoga is a way towards integration of body, mind and spirit. Where does our disintegration come from? We have spoken about that as far as the aim of yoga is concerned, but if you could elaborate a little more on how we got to this state of disintegration that we are in.

BKS: You know the health is dependent upon the cellular system because trillions and trillions of cells take birth and die in a split second. Our everyday life today is like a stillborn child. The delivery was healthy but the child was still. Similarly our cells, to a great extent, are stillborn cells. The practice of yoga, whether asana or pranayama, is the gateway to see they generate full of life and die after serving the needed ingredients of the body. I consider this as supreme health.

MK: So it is very important to the asanas. For someone who is not aware of yoga, how do they differ from other exercises?

BKS: Other forms of exercise work on the structural or physical body: the muscles and the joints. But the yogi says, this is not the end, only a peripheral part. What about the physiological organs, like the liver, the spleen? What about the respiratory system, the circulatory system? How does the liver work, how does the pancreas work? So this is the difference between other exercises and yoga.

Yoga mostly begins from the physiological level not the physical level, but until the physical organs are made to function well they will have no effect on the physiological organs. We have to build up together the physical and the physiological body, which are so near to each other; unless they are exercised through the simple basic poses, then we cannot go towards

the mind. Between the physical body and the mental body there is a physiological body which cannot be forgotten. The physiological body, being the bridge between the mind and the outer body, has to be built; that is known as integration. The body has been integrated to the mind through the cellular system which is the physiological body.

MK: Have these aspects been recognised by the medical profession?

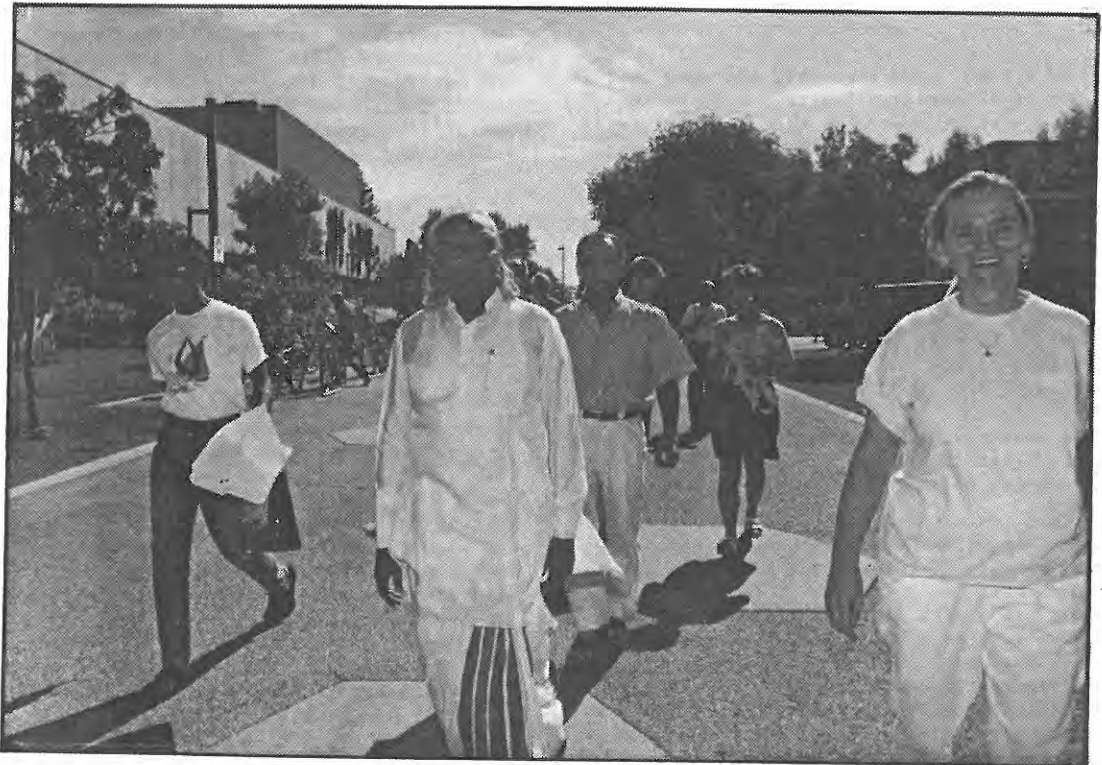
BKS: I think they have just begun - within ten years you may hear about results from the good practices of yoga. For example, you know the yamas, the ethical disciplines of yoga? The scientists recognise these now: do not smoke, do not drink; so part of the ethics of yoga have already been accepted by scientists in just about ten years. Slowly, as they have accepted this, soon they will also accept that chemical changes take place in the brain when the asanas

are done, which may be of great help to the future generation. The load is on them, no doubt, but they have to keep their eyes and ears open. Unfortunately today, the scientists have their own dogma and they want the experience of the yogis to fit their dogma. But keep the eyes and ears open, and let us see what comes of their practices.

MK: So all your pupils, just by their example, can keep spreading the word?

BKS: Yes. Recently in San Diego, there was a pulmonary test of the yoga students conducted by some doctors. The result was that the pulmonary system of all the yoga students was healthy, because they blow out beyond their capacity. They take breath in beyond the capacity of their instruments.

MK: What about cardiac function? The West is obsessed with aerobic activity, and the first



Enjoying 'sunny' Edmonton!



question that I am very often asked is, is there an aerobic benefit to the practice of yoga?

BKS: I don't think so, because aerobic movements are strenuous. There are two types of exercises: one is irritative, one is stimulative. Yoga is stimulating not irritating to the nerves. For example, there is a feeling that if you do jogging or aerobics your heart starts pumping more so it supplies the blood. But at what cost? What irritation is caused? We do setu bandha sarvangasana where the cardiac nerve which begins from the thoracic-dorsal spine is made to exercise passively, and takes the blood towards the heart for the rhythmic control of the beat and there is no strain at all. It pumps the same way. I take cases where the left ventricular is almost one hundred percent closed, and today they are doing all the work even though they have reached the age of seventy. Dr. Karandikar is doing the same work on cardiac cases at the Pune Institute with the help of two eminent cardiologists. Yoga is introduced, the results are very good and will be published in a few months. The patients come to Pune from America for treatment. I told the doctors not to come out too soon that the

patients are improving. I said let us take another five or six cases, now we will take twenty more so that we can be sure of the results when we tell the world what has happened.

MK: I hope it comes soon.

BKS: I hope here (in Canada - ED.) also Dr. French and Dr. Carruthers will take, because today I have shown them through yoga what forward traction means, what neck traction means. It is completely logical and scientific.

MK: And practical! Would you give us some examples of specific medical problems that you have been able to help?

BKS: I have worked with polio patients.

MK: Post-polio syndrome is something that has just come to light in the past few years.

BKS: Yes. I have given life; they can walk, they do not have to depend upon others. They ask if they will come to a completely normal life. I tell them, no; but I have given them some

control and self-confidence that they can lead a natural life. I have taken some heart cases; they can even do head balance. In the Institute I have handled three or four cases, and it took me two years for them to do head balance. I didn't do that straightaway. I toned their bodies, and it took two years for them to keep the head down - forget about going to sirsasana. Some of the doctors who come from Europe who have seen him before, ask how is it that this man can stand on his head. In addition to the heart problems, one person had Parkinson's disease, and he couldn't even interlock his fingers.

MK: So you take these people and do a form of therapeutic yoga?

BKS: I will give you another example of my daughter. When she was to deliver her baby, she was under the care of a doctor who comes to my class. The doctor told me that somehow the foetus was not moving to the centre, that time was up and they would have to do a caesarian. The doctor asked me to do something. Today or tomorrow? That's all I said. She said, I'm not sure whether you can do it in one day, and I told her, don't do your class today, be with my daughter. Then I put my daughter into setu bandha sarvangasana, which you all know is a back-arch in shoulderstand on a bench, and revolved the bench three or four times from side to side, keeping each time to two minutes. Next I made her do baddha konasana in setu bandha sarvangasana, and rolled the bench from left to right, right to left. Then I had my daughter stand up, and asked the doctor to examine her. The doctor said, it has come to the centre. Within a few minutes I had brought the baby to the centre, and the doctor took my daughter to the hospital for delivery.

MK: That's a wonderful story. Have you treated any patients with AIDS?

BKS: Yes. One was in a very bad condition. He was from San Francisco. He was in Pune for one month, and I taught him. The first thing, perspiration stopped within one month. Water was just dripping from the body, and this stopped. The wetness of the generative organ was there, and for that I had to work very, very hard. I said to him, if you have willpower it can be done, not otherwise. The person showed willpower only for a few days, and from the periphery the generative organ began to dry out. He returned to the U.S., and the doctors when they tested him said, your T-cells have

tremendously built up in your body, more than before you went to India.

In some of the hospitals in San Francisco, some of my pupils are teaching AIDS patients. There is a very interesting case in France also, where a man developed AIDS about six years ago. For the last five years he has been doing yoga. Last year he developed pneumonia; the doctors thought he would die. They called me and asked me what to do. I immediately wrote, having seen this patient when he was recovering, defensive strength in this body is very good now; he must have done a lot of back bends. Find out whether he has devoted his time to back bends? The answer came back, yes he has. I immediately said, stop. Ask him to do stimulative poses: head balance and neck balance, one hour in the morning, forty-five minutes in the evening. No other poses. The doctor who was observing him every two or three days was so impressed at how quickly his pneumonia went away. He asked his patient how this could be, and the patient told him, my guru told me to do these poses and I'm doing what he told me to do. Not only that but he couldn't eat any normal food for five years. Now, within six months, his diet is normal. Now he says, I am normal. But will the patience be strong enough to dry the generative organs from such poses. It's very, very hard.

MK: A woman who is a friend of mine went to you in Pune with a respiratory condition, and she followed to the letter what you asked her to do. Now she is working with doctors in Calgary with people who have respiratory problems. It is very exciting; the doctors are amazed at the difference in the patients when they are doing the practice that you showed Erin.

BKS: Yes, I remember. I only gave stimulative poses to stimulate the inner system.

MK: The practice you gave her was completely passive. It's amazing.

BKS: I am teaching hundreds and hundreds of students, but the doctors have to change their way of thinking. There is one good thing, the change is now to preventive medicine, alternative medicine; they are coming in place of conventional medicine. So at least, there is a slight change; people are realising conventional medicine is not such a help and are turning their minds towards alternative healing methods. I have attended two or three international conferences on the subject. I went to Russia on the same subject as a guest of the

Russian government. Yoga was banned in Russia until 1988. It was only opened up last year, and the first conference was held by the government of U.S.S.R. not the people. When I went there I was surprised to know that my book Light on Yoga in the Russian language had been distributed underground for yoga practitioners.

MK: When you went to Russia, you went to a conference on health and preventive medicine. What did you do at the conference?

BKS: I gave a demonstration. I told them how to prevent disease, how to increase health. Health is a dynamic process. As the cells improve, as the body improves, health also improves. Health is definitely dynamic, not just a static "I'm alright". Negative health has been taught up to now by the medical people. Nobody has taught a positive way to health. All our systems are joined, we don't allow the calcification to form, we do not allow the arteries to get blocked by various positions, so naturally the health is to be gained by keeping each and every part as it was when we were born. This helped them to understand more and more.

For example, take sports medicine. I have attended three or four sports medicine clinics. Even the German doctors were impressed. Once I told them, the good athlete is there: he has to run and he gets a cold, what do you do? Just with an ordinary cold his vitality is sapped. You can dry the running of the nose, but will you give the needed vitality? The pills are there, but do they build the inner strength? I took two or three athletes on the platform, and asked them: do you have a runny nose? Some lifted their hands, and I put them in halasana. They said, now I feel the passage is clear. After five minutes they came down and said, I feel very light. I said, that man is fit to run. Now do you understand? So yoga is going into sports medicine this way.

K: And hopefully it will influence athletes so that, rather than taking steroids for their outer strength, they will work on their inner strength and have an edge in that way.

KS: You may not know that John McEnroe came back through Iyengar Yoga; that's what he says: "It's a very rigorous method but I practise Iyengar Yoga". I read, in some magazine, that he does yoga for his backache. Now the test match cricketers in India are all coming to Pune and undergoing training. They say their fielding has



Jawahar Bangera, Mr. Iyengar, Birju Mehta, Faeq Birla. Liz McLeod In Sirsasana

improved, their bowling has improved, their batting has improved.

MK: As you know, the Olympic Games were held in Alberta in 1988 and I had an occasion to talk to some of the coaches of some of the international teams, and they were using as aspect of yoga - they were using visualisation but they were not, as yet, using the postures. So that is where they need to be educated, to use the postures.

BKS: Slowly this is coming. That is what I am interested in.

MK: Another aspect that we are very involved with here is stress. Could you explain the ancient art of relaxation, savasana, and how it could help us with modern stresses?

BKS: It is an interesting question. In the yogic field stress comes by tension. Tension comes from the nervous system. When it comes from the nervous system, the energy which has to flow in the nerves cannot flow, it gets blocked. So when you do the asanas, forget about savasana. Even when you do sarvangasana or back arch, what do you do? You extend the nerves, the entire nervous system is extended so that the block which has taken place due to stress is removed. The nerves are dilated in the poses so that the energy will flow uninterruptedly and there will be no stress at all.

MK: So poses are the antidote to stress?

BKS: Including savasana, but only a person who knows how to stretch fully knows the art of full relaxation. A casual stretch only brings casual relaxation. So to enjoy savasana, I say try to get the full extension of the system so that in savasana it is extended like a river where the flow of water is uninterrupted by any obstacles. Keep your system in such a way that the energy in savasana flows uninterruptedly and supplies energy. With stress we create a bottom on the ends of the nerves. Yogic practice makes the nerves to remain bottomless so that you can take any load. (Laughter)

MK: I have quite a few students with multiple sclerosis, and we are working with yoga. That is one thing I am going to tell them, because they are really involved with their nervous system. Are there specific poses that you would give to someone who came to you who was hypertensive?

BKS: Yes. You know, when we use the word "hypertension" the stress is on the brain, so how to make the brain "hypo"? Sometimes we keep weight on the floor of the brain, which is an aggressive brain. Due to the weight the student cannot think so the brain becomes hypo in certain poses: halasana, viparita karani, setu bandha sarvangasana. Keep a little weight and then the nerves that get inflated inside get deflated and calmness comes.

MK: And breath plays a very important part?

BKS: Normally each inhalation is a stressful action, each exhalation a non-stressful action. Normal inhalation is not done by the lungs, but by the brain over the entire body. In normal breathing the entire body inhales, the entire body exhales; but in yogic breathing the brain and the extremities of the body are made to remain passive, only the lungs are used. So in normal breathing, the blood has to be sucked by the brain. By the force of inhalation not only does the brain draw the energy, but also sucks the blood, and in exhalation the brain releases the blood. So inhalation/exhalation is nothing but the pumping of the blood in and out from the brain. Because of this inhalation is a stress to the brain, so yogis say - normal inhalation, quiet soft exhalation, so that there is no load in the cells of the brain.

MK: So paying more attention to a quiet soft exhalation?

BKS: Yes, so that the stress is taken off once and for all. If the scientists explain the pressure of inhalation on the brain and the pressure of exhalation on the brain, then we and the scientists can meet very fast and show the way for the common people to relax.

MK: Another area which is kept very tightly is the diaphragm which is the main breathing organ. How could the layman get in touch with his diaphragm?

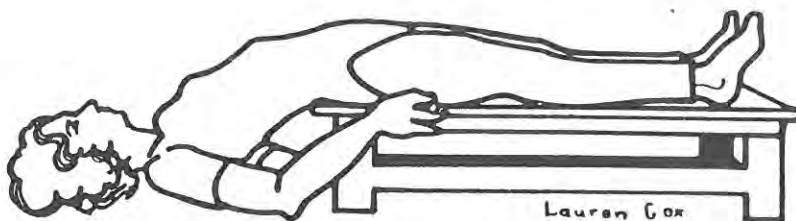
BKS: It is very interesting, is it not, that when you get a fright, where do you hold first? That is why I always use the words that the diaphragm is the medium between the mind and the soul, or between the physiological body and the mental body. Learn to release the diaphragm, then the tension in the brain also disappears.

MK: So how would you tell a student how to release their diaphragm?

BKS: When we do setu bandha sarvangasana, what happens? The diaphragm is extended towards the side. Medical science knows only up and down, but the yogi also knows horizontal movement of the diaphragm. The moment we give a lot of stretch on the horizontal aspect of the diaphragm, then the brain becomes quiet.

MK: So you would use props, bolsters and so on?

BKS: Yes, so that the diaphragm does not move up and down but sideways - like viparita



SETU BHANDA SARVANGASANA

andasana, setu bandha sarvangasana even urdvha
anurasana on a rolled stool or drum, so that
the diaphragm is kept stretched from one extreme
of the floating ribs to the other.

K: And that will keep it naturally softer?

BKS: Yes. In all cardiac diseases the first
indication is if the diaphragm muscle is tight
and their breathing is shallow. Nature has sent
warning that this is going to be a problem for
their heart later. Anyone who opens their mouth
to breathe, the first warning comes from nature
that your heart is going to be affected; that
means your diaphragm is very tight. The moment
you make the diaphragm more elastic, naturally
the breathing is deep and the strain on the
heart is less.

There is an inter-connection between the
diaphragm and the heart which I think the
doctors have to explain so that the common man
who practises yoga can understand the value
deeper than the yogi who cannot explain the
inner functioning of the body as clearly as
doctors and scientists. I think that the
scientists should work with the artists of yoga,
and the artists of yoga should work with the
scientists.

MK: And it is coming!

S: Slowly coming - in ten years time we may
have a lot of improvement and mutual
understanding between the two.

MK: But the more information we can get out,
and the more myths we can dispel, the more
quickly it will happen.

BKS: Yes, you are right.

MK: I would like to talk a little bit about
yoga and meditation. Perhaps you could define
meditation, and tell us how it fits into the
system of yoga?

BKS: My friend, meditation is yoga, yoga is
meditation!

MK: Definition done! (Laughter)

BKS: Yoga is known as samadhi, samadhi is known
as yoga. The seventh aspect of yoga is dhyana,
meditation. Meditation is not a separate subject
beyond the yogic principles. Yoga has got eight
aspects: yama, niyama, asana, pranayama,
pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhi. If
people say, and it is a common way of telling, I
will teach you meditation - where is the asana?
Why did Patanjali use that word "asana" as a
third step and "dhyana" as a seventh step? A
perfect body is needed for the mind to be free
from the contact of the physical body. Patanjali
says, do the asanas. When the mind is freed from
the contact of the body, then it is fit for
meditation.

MK: So start from the periphery and work from
there?

BKS: Yes, and that is not a different subject.
It is all intermingled in yoga. But the
definition of dhyana is to bring the complex
mind to a state of simplicity, and to live in a
state of innocence is the quality of meditation.

MK: That dispels the myth that hatha yoga is physical only. Each asana is a complete meditation.

BKS: Yes!

MK: I have been listening to you as you have been talking with your teachers, asking them to keep the purity of your work in the poses. Is it possible to keep the purity of your work and still be an individual within your system?

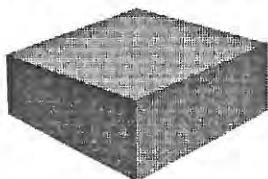
BKS: Certainly. You can go to the station several ways, but you reach the station, don't you? Similarly, I say, go anywhere but come back to that point. Many of them forget that they have to come back to that original point.

MK: Is there the possibility, though, that a teacher in trying to adhere to the purity could become very rigid?

BKS: No! Rigidity will not come. Purity is not rigidity.

MK: Ah! (Laughter)

DO YOU WANT NEW BLOCKS?



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BKS: It appears rigid, but it is not that. Purity means the presentation and language become simple. That is what I wanted in the class, for the teacher not to use words which cannot be understood by the doer, but to use simple words and stop in between so the students understand what you have said before you go further. Then the purity is maintained. If you have been in the class, you have seen that for many I have built up from where they stopped; for some I have destroyed so that they can relearn; for some I have constructed - I know that you cannot understand further, now I will guide you from there. I have done all these methods, but it is for people to understand how I guide them.

Yesterday in one class I destroyed a person so that they could relearn. Destroying means destroying their old thoughts. The presentation was very bad, so naturally I had to destroy the habit. I have to be strong so that they can learn fast, forget that habit and start in the right method.

MK: Get them thinking very quickly.

BKS: Yes. (Laughter)

MK: Could you give some advice to people who might be sparked to begin a yoga practice?

BKS: It is very simple. I will say, don't go to the depth of yoga. Your body is your capital. God has given this body as capital or a bank to start anything. Take care of this divine capital which God has given to you. Look after yourself. See that your joints, your muscles, your nerves, your blood current run rhythmically in the body. Please learn so much. Then I say, the other parts will automatically take their sadhaka to follow.

MK: When it is time.

BKS: One should not say the body is the temple. Make the body a fit temple for the soul to live in. Make the body purposeful for the intelligence and the heart to do good work.

MK: Sir, it has been an honour to speak with you, and I thank you very much for being with us.

BKS: Thank you. You are all so very kind to me. God bless you.



Norma Hodge from Gabriola Island, B.C., and Mr. Iyengar



Four organizers of the 1990 Canadian Iyengar Yoga Conference receiving 'thank-you' T shirts. Marlene Mawhinney, Hart Lazer, Liz McLeod, Val Paape

YOGA CENTRE GATHERING

Friday, January 11, 1991

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6-7:00pm Asana Practice

7-8:00pm Supper, to be ordered in

8:00 - Discussion

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LINDA SHEVLOFF

FEBRUARY 17, 1991

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Leslie

by Leslie Hogya

The Victoria Yoga Centre will have a new treasurer as of the new year, I will step down. For the past three years I have spent hours entering numbers in ledgers and fretting over missing pennies. I learned to file sales tax forms. I think a few tellers at the Royal Bank cringe when they see me coming! One thing I seemed to do really well was to confuse the executive about where and how our money was being spent!

I never did like math. In the third grade I had about six or seven substitute teachers and never learned some fundamental computational skills. The fact that I did the job of treasurer at all amazes me, but I think I've done it long enough. This is definitely a case of rising to the level of my incompetence.

When Jim stepped down as treasurer, little did he know he would be stuck having to get me out of scrapes and spend untold hours unravelling my errors and really finding those lost pennies.

I teach school and someone asked me, jokingly, what I teach my kids about math. I teach them to guess, I replied. Luckily, I teach the youngest kids and I can handle that. As part of our professional development, our school staff participated in a learning style inventory. I learned that a person good at math and numbers would be a logical, sequential person. I also learned that I am the exact opposite.

I am not logical but abstract; not sequential but random.

What does this really mean? It means I do a lot of things at once, in no particular order and may not finish any of them. The other day, for instance, I intended to get a bank deposit ready in time to attend Shirley's 10.00 a.m. asana class, and then go on to teach my kindergarten class.

I started out by making a cup of tea. While I waited for the kettle to boil, I thought I would fill the dishwasher. As I rolled the dishwasher to the sink, I noticed some dog fluff and swept it up. Just as I was about to empty the dust pan, the phone rang - it was a parent with a concern. I hung up the phone and the kettle was boiling. I glanced at the clock, grabbed my tea and ran upstairs. As I opened my briefcase, a yoga centre newsletter fell out and I remembered I had a deadline coming up for an article. What could I write about?

When I finally began entering cheques in the deposit book and then the bank slip, I knew I wouldn't make it to the Y for yoga. There were piles of cheques from Aadil's workshop, I filled three deposit slips when I usually use one. I punched in the numbers on the calculator and almost held my breath to see if the two sets of numbers balanced. No! I added everything up again, still it didn't balance. I had to go through each entry, look again at each cheque.

The phone rang once more, I realized I had better get to school to deal with some deadlines there. So I peddled off to school, the deposit spread all over my desk, the dishwasher sitting open and the broom propped against it! Maybe 'abstract, random' is just a way of saying sloppy?

I have learned a lot as treasurer: I can estimate better, spot errors faster (usually) and generally I am more sure of myself in this area. But I do have to say a tremendous thank you to Jim Rischmiller for all the help he has given me, and to the Yoga Centre executive for their patience.

MIND AND ENERGY MANIFEST

by Clare Smith

Here is a paper by Clare Smith written for a Kundalini class. The paper is indicative of the work that students are doing, the topics that they investigate. The investigation is ongoing, exciting yet confusing. As you read Clare's paper you will see how the process works, the gradual clarity that comes when the thoughts are written and examined. The work is inspired by Swami Radha and the process is derived from her book Kundalini Yoga for the West.

OCTOBER, 1990.

I used to think of God as being 'out there', great and powerful; inspiring me with fear. As a child I was afraid in case he appeared to me in some form. I was scared by the thought that someone could be so powerful as to be able to read my thought, even if they were unspoken. 'God is in you'; an idea beyond my reach.

This image has long since disappeared, but replaced by what? A sense only of great power that I see clearly

operating in my life at times - but still external to me. I often go for walks along the breakwater and reflect as I go. There I glimpse what I think is meant by the manifestation of that great creative power in the large expanse of water, sky, distant mountain and solid earth beneath my feet. The life in the water; seals, fish, seaweed, birds, etc. I am left with an impression of that power of creation, of Mother Nature, in that moment and then I'm no longer aware of it. That greatness of power being present in all things is a new thought for my mind to grapple with.

I do not remember feeling awed by human beings, and yet there is much to be wondered at in a human body, as I think of the life force manifesting through the five senses; each sense having its own unique way of functioning and of using that energy. Then to think of the instruments of those senses; which are all miracles in themselves. It is odd when I think of the fascination that I had the other day watching, for the first time, a spider building its web, and yet my own faculties are so familiar that I don't think about them. When wonder and awe come to mind it is when I glimpse the miraculous in the outside world, but to be in awe of the

way my body functions, brings that great power much closer than I have ever considered. To focus on the imperfections of that body now seems very small minded, because it denies that power of creation that moves through the vehicle of my body.

That great power is also expressed through invisible ways; through air, through thoughts. The energy that is available for thoughts is always available, like the life force that is always available to my body. I cannot stop thoughts from happening, although I can slow them down by making a conscious decision not to give them any energy. As the thoughts slow down, so does my heart beat, so does my breath. As long as I breathe, I suppose I will have thoughts. The energy gets expressed through my body and mind in these twin ways.

First comes the thought, then thought and emotion, then thought and speech. The original thought has grown, taking up more and more of my mental space. The more energy I give it, the more it occupies my mind of its own accord. It gathers momentum until it creates a pressure, the thrust is for me to do something about it. Action is

certain, the thoughts reach uncomfortable proportions. This is thought giving birth to action.

The faculties of the mind are like the different senses in the body; they have different functions which use the Energy in different ways; memory; logic; ability to plan, make deductions. Hypnosis occurs when the faculties of the mind are being manipulated without conscious direction, without awareness. Then there is creative thinking. How do these new thoughts come into being and how does understanding take place? There is a constant evolution of thoughts, going on; old thoughts getting changed in the context of new experiences. This is that great life force working through the mind, as it does through the body.

As I think about the evolution of thoughts I think about my tendency to make absolute statements, to feed my need for security, I presume, and that all thoughts no matter how compelling, need to be held more tentatively. I also think that in order to glimpse more of that Divine Power at work I need to move from the concrete way of looking at the world.

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YOGA CALENDAR

DECEMBER:

7: Pranayama at the Y. 5.30 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. Register at the Y.

JANUARY:

7: Pranayama at the Y. 5.30 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. Register at the Y.

16-18: A two day workshop with Aadil Palkhivala in Bellevue, Washington. Call Aadil for registration or information, 206-883-7667.

19: Victoria Yoga Centre meeting to be held at the Y in the lounge.
6.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. Asana practise.
7.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. Supper
8.00 p.m. Discussion

17: Yoga in Metchoshin begins with Shirley Daventry French, 478-3775.

17: Yoga in Metchoshin begins with Shirley Daventry French, 478-3775.

18-20: The Wholeness & Universality of Yoga. A workshop with Danielle Arin-Strutt to be held in Vancouver. For more information call Gioia Irwin at 604-734-7696 or Doris Maranda at 604-879-5197 or 604-947-0147.

20: Workshop led by Jim Rischmiller. 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. at the Y. See ad this issue.

FEBRUARY:

2: Day of Yoga given by Shirley Daventry French. See ad this issue.

17: Workshop at the Y. Watch the next newsletter for further details.

LOST

Newsletter layout person.
General Description:
Creative, hardworking,
able to work with the
newsletter committee.

FOUND

Someone who is able to spend
a few days a month preparing
the newsletter for the Yoga
Centre.

MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION FORM

It's time you joined the Yoga Centre of Victoria! As you read this newsletter, you are receiving one of the benefits of membership. As you attend your yoga classes or a workshop, you are receiving the benefits of membership. These take time and money and your membership fees and participation really help.

Please fill out this form and send it with your cheque or money order to:
YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA, 3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R. #1, Victoria, B.C. V8X 3W9

MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION FEE IS \$20.00/year.

Name: _____

Street: _____

City/Prov: _____ P.C: _____ PHONE: _____

I am enclosing a cheque or money order in the amount of: _____

☐ Please do not mail me the newsletter; during class sessions I'll pick one up at my "Y" class.

The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY is a non-profit society incorporated under the Societies' Act of the Province of British Columbia whose purpose is, *"to encourage the physical, mental and spiritual growth of its members and other interested members of society at large by the study and discipline of Yoga"*. The Society owes inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

The Society Newsletter is published regularly, providing current information on events concerning yoga in Victoria and area and at the Yasodhara Ashram. Published by the Victoria Yoga Centre Society.

Anyone wishing to contribute articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions to the Newsletter may contact the Editor, Jennifer Rischmiller, 4489 Lindholm Road, R.R. #1, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8X 3W9. Telephone: (604)474-5630.

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DEADLINE FOR FEBRUARY ISSUE: JANUARY 16th, 1991

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY

3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R. #1, Victoria, B.C. Canada V8X 3W9



yoga centre of victoria

PLEASE
SUBSCRIBE

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

February 1991



The Temple

*"my little dream,
my beautiful
dream of my little
temple....each
time in the dream
I would come a
little closer, and I
would wander
around. And I
wondered what it
was all about."*

*Swami Sivananda
Radha*



Reflections

By Shirley Daventry French

"Before peace between nations, we have to find peace inside that small nation which is our own being."

.....B.K.S. Iyengar

On the second day of the Gulf war, I awoke feeling exhausted. My sleep had been fitful, my dreams wild. My body felt battered. My yoga practice helped, but my mind continued to be caught up in the war with a mixture of horror and excitement.

Canada, my adopted country, and the United Kingdom, my native country, are combatants. As I listened to the news I began to recognise that although I had strongly opposed the idea of war as a means of resolving this conflict, now it had begun I had taken sides and wanted my side to win. The fighting, at present, is limited to the Middle East, yet this is a global war brought directly into our homes through radio, newspapers and television. Whether glued to the news or studiously avoiding it, we feel its effect. We are all combatants. My body and mind were quite clear about this.

I have had personal experience of war: as a child in England during the second world war, and a young wife living in the Middle East during one of the many conflicts in this area with my husband on active service as a medical officer in the British Army. My body remembers these experiences. I have been conditioned by them. The sirens on police cars closely resemble an air-raid warning, and whenever I hear them my heart drops into my stomach. A solitary plane flying over my house at night (the precursor of a very bad dive bombing

attack) often causes me to wake up with a start alert and tense until I remember where I am. When this happens it takes quite a while for my heartbeat, breath and general state of body and mind to calm down. My experiences and far, far worse have been shared by millions of human beings all over the world, and yet here we are again at war. Can't we ever learn?

As I drove into town to teach an intermediate yoga class, I was listening to a discussion on the radio between four Iraqis living in Canada who strongly disagreed on the causes of this war. One man accused Saddam Hussein of atrocities against innocent civilians in Kuwait and Iraq, information he had received from the victims; a second man would not accept this, saying that stories were not reliable testimony. He would only believe it when he saw it in writing. I asked myself, what is reliable information? How do I find it? Where is the truth?

During the first world war, U.S. Senator Hiram Johnson, said that: "The first casualty when war comes is truth." All the news is censored, our own and theirs. We are fed propaganda. Lacking facts, we speculate - endlessly.

Continuing my drive, I wondered whether I would mention the war at the beginning of class or not. It would obviously be at the forefront of all the students' minds. A discussion might help emphasise the benefits of practising yoga as a means of lessening our own aggressive tendencies and minimising the violence in the world. On the other hand, it might be better to say nothing and simply get on with the practice. I decided to play it by ear.

As students entered the classroom the decision was made for me by one student who, highly disturbed, spoke out loudly. I waited until all had taken their place and then as we sat in virasana tried to correlate the external events going on in the world with our practice of yoga. I mentioned the discussion on the radio, the questions it raised in my mind, and talked about my sense of yoga as a means of gathering reliable information and finding truth. As I searched for my own ways of dealing with the catastrophe of war, I encouraged my students to do the same. I urged them to tune in to their actual feelings, rather than deny them, and emphasised the importance of doing this before beginning their practice so that it is well-founded, not on denial and ignorance but on acceptance and tolerance.

A solid foundation cannot be built on quick assessments and knee-jerk reactions but requires us to gather information, test it over a period of time, make unemotional observations before coming to conclusions, and subject these to constant re-assessment and critical appraisal. Then we can proceed as informed human-beings, and not just go on doing the same thing again and again when it obviously hasn't worked before. This is what I believe we have to do in the world. This what yoga teaches, and why the world would be a better place if more people practised yoga.

In the yoga class we had a minor conflict of our own: while the discussion met the needs of the first student, it angered another who in no uncertain terms stated that she had come to do yoga and get away from the war. The first person lives alone and needed to air her thoughts, feelings and fears, while the second, who teaches in an international college with students from all over the world, had already spent many hours discussing the conflict. Here were two very different needs.

While this was going on, a few others expressed themselves; the rest remained silent. Was it an uncomfortable or thoughtful silence?

Talk or silence, neither one is good or bad in itself. Talking can lead to clarification but it can also be an avoidance. If you choose not to talk, is it because you understand the wisdom of silence and have no need to put forward your point of view, or from fear of speaking out? Silence can be peaceful, receptive, contemplative, wise or sullen, resentful, timid.

It can be positive or a form of avoidance. The value of both these attributes is in their application. We have been given the ability to act or not, to speak out or not. We have also been given the intelligence to discriminate, and this is what we must develop.

Before we can practise discrimination, first we must tune in to and understand our thoughts and feelings. The Bhagavad Gita, one of the world's great spiritual texts, deals with the necessity to confront the violence in ourselves and destroy this tendency. As long as we practise denial we are vulnerable because what is suppressed will sooner or later erupt into action, ill-health, suffering - inflicted on ourselves and others. We cannot become peaceful until we become truthful, and to be truthful we must become congruent, allowing ourselves to acknowledge and reveal our innermost thoughts and feelings so that what's on the outside matches what's on the inside. We cannot be truly peaceful until both these states, inner and outer, are non-violent.

If we recognise our own violent tendencies and have learned some discrimination, we will have the good sense not to act at that time but to pause and practise restraint (tapas - one of the niyamas). That's the first step, and the next is to get on with the work that will create a different state of mind by practising yoga.

How can we begin to create a peaceful world unless we create those qualities in ourselves?

We can do yoga to forget, to feel better, and then it's like a drug which will work for a while but eventually wear off leaving us in the same predicament which will have to be faced sooner or later. Or we can do yoga to change, a long term prospect demanding effort, stamina, surrender, and a lifelong commitment.

When you practise yoga you will frequently feel insecure, unsteady and uncertain, sometimes the very foundations of your life seem to crack and open up, but this is only because they are not very secure foundations. If you can learn to tolerate some discomfort and confusion, and be honest with yourself, then you will begin to create a solid foundation on which you can build. When you acquire some proficiency and continue to practise, you will begin to find meaning and purpose in this life. First there is a glimmer of light, then as you evolve and mature as a human being this glimmer will become a beam which will eventually lead you towards

its source - the truth. This is the promise of yoga.

YAMA (moral-restraints)

Ahimsa - non-violence
Satya - truth
Asteya - abstinence from stealing
Brahmacharya - chastity/celebrity
Aparigraha - absence of greed

NIYAMA (observances)

Sauca - cleanliness, purity
Santosha - contentment, absence of desire
Tapas - austerity, restraint
Svadyaya - self-study
Ishvara Pranidhana - dedication of all actions to the Supreme Lord

A WORKSHOP WITH LINDA SHEVLOFF

On Saturday, February 16th

In an interview with Mr. Iyengar in India in 1985, he encouraged us first to learn all we can from our own teachers before calling in others. In his words: "Exhaust your own people, then call some others, then there will be a good build up." We heeded his advice, reduced the number of workshops with visiting teachers to one or two a year, and at the same time offered students the chance to "exhaust" the knowledge of their local teachers by setting up a series of workshops with them.

In Victoria we have a pool of well-trained teachers with many years of experience between them. In addition to their ongoing personal practice, they learn from each other at regular teachers' meetings, practise together, attend weekly classes, and share the fruits of their practice with the community through various forms of karma yoga. It is from this pool of mature teachers, that we have selected the people to lead our Sunday workshops. On February 16th the teacher will be Linda Shevloff.

Linda first became interested in Yoga eighteen years ago while living in Vancouver. She became a student of Iyengar Yoga when she moved to Victoria in 1981. Seeing her ability and integrity, I asked her if she was interested in teaching, and after completing her apprenticeship Linda joined the "Y" teaching staff six years ago. In 1987 she travelled to India to study with Mr. Iyengar and his daughter, Geeta.

In addition to teaching yoga, Linda has another professional teaching role from Monday to Friday, when she endeavours to enlighten seventeen and eighteen year old high school students on the benefits of literacy and literature.

Linda and her husband Michael have been active members of the yoga centre since their arrival in this city. Their home which they share with two teenage sons and a large Irish setter, has been the site of many a meeting and other yoga event. It is a welcoming place.

Linda has developed a mature practice of yoga well-founded on its philosophy. In addition to her studies of Iyengar Yoga, for the past seven years she has attended weekly classes in Kundalini Yoga with Swami Padmananda at Shambhala House.

Linda is articulate and lively, not saintly but rather full of spirit, with a mischievous streak which is much in evidence and exemplifies one of Mr. Iyengar's maxims which encourages us to "love, labour and laugh". She is fun to teach, fun to practise with, and fun to learn from. She does not exhaust easily! Do join her at the "Y" at 10.00 am on Saturday, February 16th.

Shirley Daventry French



Opening Your Heart

A Yoga Workshop
with Linda Shevloff

Saturday, Feb. 16th
10:00am - 1:00pm

We will consider the relationships between physical, emotional and spiritual levels of the heart and use yoga asana to bring us in touch with them.

Linda has studied Iyengar yoga for eleven years and Kundalini yoga for eight years. Her main teachers have been Shirley Daventry French and Swami Padmananda.

Refreshments will be served after class.

Cost:
Yoga Centre Members: \$15.00
Non-members: \$18.00

At the Yoga Studio
Victoria YM-YWCA

To Register Phone:
Linda Shevloff at 479-5847
Linda Benn at 598-8277



CLASSES, WORKSHOPS, PRACTICE

What's the difference between a yoga class and a workshop? Does a class take the place of my practice?

A class is something you sign up for a fixed period of time, say eight weeks, and plan to attend regularly. For the duration of this class you will have the same teacher each week unless some emergency or unexpected event arises, or the teacher has a prior and unavoidable commitment. In that case the teacher will arrange a suitable substitute. During the eight week duration of this class you should expect to learn techniques which you can practise on your own at home, to be corrected, adjusted and guided in what you are doing. You will discover weaknesses along with strengths, be encouraged to work to your maximum, and hopefully get a glimpse of your potential. In beginning classes you will learn basic yoga asanas, and as you move to other levels these asanas will be refined and more challenging asanas introduced.

No! A class does not take the place of a personal practice. If you want to derive lasting benefit you have to practise on your own. This would be true even if you were to attend a class every day of the week (which is not recommended), because in a personal practice a different kind of learning takes place; you become inner rather than outer directed, more aware of your breathing, contemplative and perhaps even meditative.

With a few exceptions, most people find it harder to practise on their own than to attend a class. It's better to go to class than to do nothing, but if you want to derive much benefit from your yoga it's important to make the attempt to establish a regular practice. When you practise you begin to absorb what you have learned in your class, and the changes which are happening at many levels are gradually integrated into your body, your mind and your life.

Workshops are usually a one-time event: one-day, one weekend, one week. The format will vary. A weekend workshop might last for ten or twelve hours, a one week workshop offer one or two classes daily, a one-day workshop morning and afternoon classes with a break for lunch. Sometimes there is a special topic such as Yoga and Health, Restorative Poses, Sutras, Pranayama; or focus on a particular groups of poses such as standing asanas, forward bends, backbends, inversions. We may invite a skilled teacher from elsewhere to come and help us upgrade our skills as students and teachers; for instance the workshop which will be held this September with Ramanand Patel.

The Saturday or Sunday workshops at the "Y" were devised to complement the work going on in the weekly classes. They are taught by experienced local teachers, and last for three hours followed by refreshments. They are longer than general classes which usually last for one and half or two hours. However, you should not expect to be exhausted by three hours of asana, the teacher will pace the workshop to the level of the participants. The extra time may be used to introduce aspects of yoga philosophy, to study certain postures in depth, focus on breathing, or enjoy a long savasana (deep relaxation). There is time for questions and discussion, and when refreshments are served after the practice you are able to meet the teacher and other students.

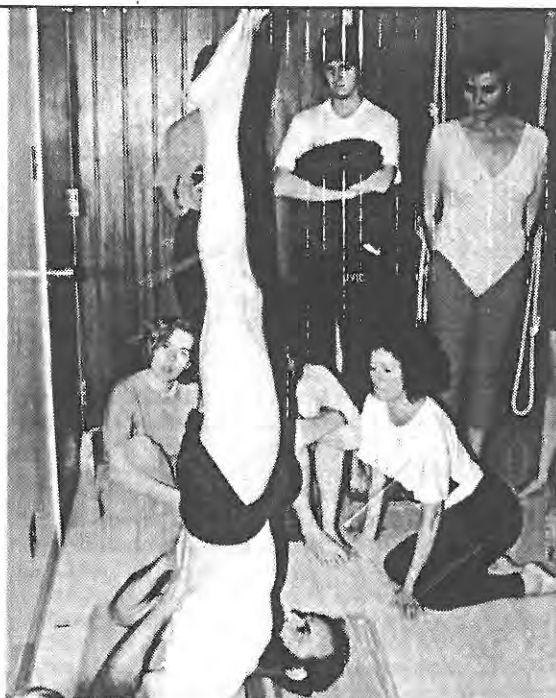
Sometimes in a class or a workshop under the direction of a good teacher you may have a breakthrough. This is wonderful, but it will not be sustained unless you go away and practice.

Those who have been to India and studied with Mr. Iyengar have undoubtedly experienced this. He gives us a glimpse of our potential or, in a phrase he uses frequently, takes us "to the maximum!" Under his direction we surpass ourselves, but when we return it may take several years of practice before this opening becomes a natural part of our existence.

In Victoria we have added something new to our program this year: a one-hour group practice to begin our yoga centre meetings which are held once a month on Friday evening. Again, this is not intended to replace the practice you do on your own, but to complement it. Your practice is an offering and when a group of people practise together in this way it generates positive energy, love and tolerance - qualities badly lacking in the world today. These practices will be led by one of our teachers and are for all levels of students. Even if you are a complete beginner and wish to join us, please come. We will take care of you.

Shirley Daventry French

Workshop with Aadil Palkhivala, Victoria
November, 1990



YOGA IN METCHOSIN with Shirley Daventry French

YOGA AND THE SUTRAS

a weekend workshop

Feb. 22nd to 24th

\$120.00

PRANAYAMA

Saturday mornings

March 2nd and 23rd

May 25th, June 22nd

\$15.00 per class

Ongoing Asana classes

daytime and evening

plus an afternoon class for people with special problems

Shirley is a student of B.K.S. Iyengar
and an experienced teacher of his method of Yoga
Information: 478-3775



yoga centre of victoria

PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR 1990

The newsletter is produced by members of the Victoria Yoga Centre Society. I want to thank all the members of the society for their support in making production of our newsletter possible. Particularly Linda Benn, Jennifer Rischmiller and Shirley Daventry French for the pasteup and editing respectively. Linda has decided to phase out her direct involvement over the next few months and is training her replacements now.

-In 1990 we held meetings and workshops as well as carrying our part in bringing Gurujii to our annual Canadian Teachers meeting in Edmonton. We produced a newsletter which is favourably received around the world. We finished the year in reasonable financial shape and generally held to our budget.

-We looked at our meetings format and decided to change to that which we are best at. This was felt to be practice, eat and talk. So this year's meetings will be a practice followed by some eats and then some talk. Business will be attended to at separate meetings entirely.

-I will be President and treasurer of the Victoria Yoga Centre Society until someone else volunteers. Jennifer Rischmiller and Shirley Daventry French with help from Linda Benn and others will be the newsletter team. Derek French will be the Vice Chairman and Marlene Miller will help where possible. Linda Shevloff and James Traverse want to help with our program and Michael Shevloff is guardian of our mailing list.

-Yoga has many more dimensions than either only physical or mental involvement. Many of us like to have a nice secure environment where changes come at a pace we can absorb. However we are being faced with vitally important questions and we need all the tools we can find to help us understand our part in them. Yoga helps us understand how we stand, and the Victoria Yoga Centre stands as an important focus or our work. It provides us with an opportunity to grow through selfless service. To be part of our yoga family and to nurture one another through good and bad times along the path. We are lucky to have this opportunity.

Namaste

Jim Rischmiller

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE GATHERING

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8th
at 6 pm

in the Lounge at the "Y"
6-7 pm Asana Practice
7-8 pm Potluck Dinner
8 pm Programme

Everyone Welcome

Bring Food and a Friend

YOGA CENTRE NEWS

We held the Annual General Meeting in December and, although the meeting wasn't well attended, the members present went through the business in hand efficiently. Then we passed on to the real business of the evening, the eating and the visiting!

Actually, the number of people not attending yoga centre meetings has been the subject of discussion at several meetings! Even the people who have been attending the meetings haven't been clear as to whether they wanted to be there! Everyone realised that changes were needed, so the yoga centre has moved into a different format for 1991. The number of directors has decreased and the executive meetings will be held separately from membership meetings. There will be time to enjoy the evenings together and plan programs.

In fact, the first meeting following the new format was, in my opinion, very successful. There were 24 people who came together at the Y for asanas. After an hour of practise led by James Traverse, supper was served and then we watched a video of Mr. Iyengar followed by a short discussion. Other meetings will be held along similar lines so watch your newsletter and listen to your teacher for future dates.

Now, of course, it's up to the directors to come together for a business meeting. I hope it is as successful as the membership meeting! Anyway, we're going to try it out so that we can involve more people and provide some fun and relaxation for those already involved. Let us know what YOU think!

The following members were elected as Directors of the Yoga Centre and for positions on the Executive Board:

Jim Rischmiller	President
	Treasurer
Derek French	Vice-President
Shirley Daventry French	
Linda Benn	
Marlene Miller	
Jennifer Rischmiller	

Other members of the Yoga Centre have been busy planning workshops that will take place throughout the year, you'll find dates in the Yoga Calendar and see special ads in the newsletter.

The Sunday Workshops will be happening on a monthly basis and there are some extra classes being given so watch out for those dates.

Shirley Daventry French will be leading a retreat on Saltspring Island during June 7, 8, and 9. During these days of yoga there is a chance to explore the asanas more fully and to look more closely at the spiritual aspect of yoga. There's also time to relax, the food is terrific and the atmosphere very restful.

At the end of July, the Yoga Centre and the Y will be running a week long workshop with daily classes in Asana and Pranayama, seminars on Yoga Psychology and Philosophy, and the use of therapeutic yoga will be demonstrated. We are honoured to have Bruce Carruthers, Liz McLeod, Shirley Daventry French and Derek French as teachers for this intensive workshop. The workshop has already happened for two years consecutively, there was a "rest" for the teachers last year because of Mr. Iyengar's visit to Edmonton. However they have agreed to come together again and everyone here is looking forward to the privilege of being part of the workshop.

Mark these dates on your calendar so that you can plan to attend.

by Jennifer Rishmiller

REFLECTIONS ON THE TEMPLE OF LIGHT



by Swami Durgananda

The following article by Swami Durgananda of Yasodhara Ashram tells about the Temple that has been planned and constructed over the past two years at a beautiful site on Kootenay Lake, B.C. Inspired by Swami Sivananda Radha's dreams and visions, the Temple has become the heart of the Ashram which was built on its present

location almost thirty years ago. It is through Swami Radha's dedication, plus the prayers and donations of many supporters, that this Temple has finally taken form. We thank all of those who have helped this miracle happen, and we welcome any further support you may want to offer.

Walking up the road from the Farm building, I stop at a clearing where there is an open view of the Temple on my left. I always stop here to enjoy a peaceful look at this beautiful structure, the manifestation of Swami Radha's vision which took so many years to come to fruition. At this moment there is an opening in the clouds over the mountains, and the sun breaks through, creating an aura of dazzling light around the dome and exterior arches of the Temple. It is a breath-taking moment as I am reminded that this is a Temple of light, expressing the underlying unity of all religions.

I slowly walk up the driveway towards the Temple. Swami Radha's dream flashes into my mind. As a child, and for many years into her adult life, she had dreams in which she would walk up a road approaching a beautiful temple. As she described it in her dreams she would come closer and closer to it and then, finally, in one dream, she opened the door and looked in and then entered the interior of the temple.

My approach to the Temple has a feeling of wonder and awe as I reflect on the unusual circumstances surrounding its construction. Her dreams were so clear that when she founded Vadodhara Ashram in the B.C. Pootenays in 1963, she located the site for the future Temple from the details in those dreams. Once construction on the foundation began, the dreams ceased.

I look up at the majestic sweep of the arches meeting at the top, mirroring the curve of the dome beneath them. I recall the first meeting of the Temple Committee with the architect when we showed him the design for the Temple. It was a sketch made by Swami Radha on a napkin in a restaurant several years before. He was impressed by the uniqueness of the concept, but admitted his lack of experience in designing a domed building. He must have picked up our enthusiasm as he finally expressed a willingness to use the sketch as a basis for the plans.

I step up onto the lotus-shaped concrete foundation, remembering the first stages of construction. Although the original foundation was built in the 1960's, the actual building of the temple was not started until 1969. As I walk on the platform around the outside of the building, I recall the intense work with jack hammers, pick axes, and shovels used to remove the center of the foundation which had become unsafe due to rotting beams underneath.

I notice a pile of broken concrete lying beside the Temple, a reminder of what happens to old foundations that need to be replaced. I remember the long summer days in 1989 when joists were laid, flooring nailed in place, and finally one of the octagonal walls was raised, a joyous sight. When the last sections was put up, defining the actual shape of the Temple, we all gathered on the site to chant and give thanks. We recognized the significance of acknowledging our spiritual space and giving it definition. It was a special time, being out in the open where the setting sun cast a soft light and several birds, attracted by our chanting, added their songs to ours.

I stop beside one of the exterior arches rising from its solid base on the lotus foundation. Each phase of construction had its tense moments, its magic, its victories. Building and raising the arches was one of the most dramatic experiences. One at a time the curve of the wood was formed on the floor and then lifted into place with pulleys and ropes and many helping hands. Each arch then had to be completed to a specified thickness. This was accomplished by residents and volunteer workers, some with little or no experience in construction. There was encouragement and guidance given by the two local builders who were hired to supervise the job. They had built many houses but had never undertaken the construction of a domed temple. However, through their participation in weekly hatha and kundalini classes, they had a connection to the Ashram and were

attuned to the meaning and purpose of the Temple.

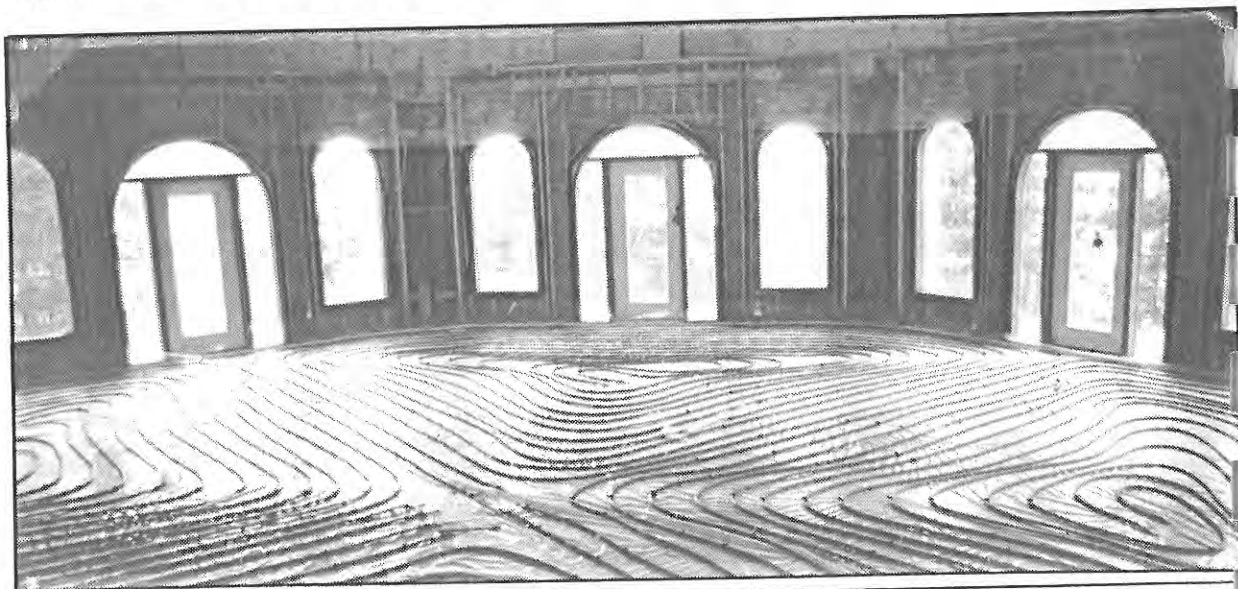
I walk around to one of the main entrance doors and step into the hallway of the auxiliary building connected to the Temple. I think of Swami Radha's dreams when she finally stepped inside the Temple. She looked around and saw what she described as columns of light hanging down in shimmering clusters from the dome. These unusual lights were impressed on her memory, but she didn't think she would ever find anything like them to put in the Temple when it was built. Another miracle occurred. One day she was walking past a lighting store in California with a friend when she looked in the window and saw her Temple lights hanging inside, shimmering and sparkling like hundreds of little stars. That was it! They actually existed. These lights were ordered to be installed in the dome to become the focus of the Temple of All Religions, the Temple of Light.

I walk into the interior of the Temple. My eyes are immediately drawn upwards by the lifting curve of the dome. The skylight at the top creates a mandala-like design filled with light. There is a feeling of space

and sacredness here. The work is incomplete, the plastering of the dome has yet to be done, but there is a sense of reverence and peace. Swami Radha has urged us to put ourselves, each other and the Temple always into the Light. She said the Temple would not be built until there was harmony at the Ashram.

And now it is here, a symbol manifest with many meanings for different people to discover. As I walk around the inside of the Temple, I hear my footsteps echoing on the concrete floor. Each time I pass one of the seven doors around the building, I get a glimpse of a view of the mountains, trees, lake, sunlight sparkling on the water, Divine Mother's manifestations of beauty all around. Her presence has guided and inspired us each step of the way.

I turn and walk outside, taking a final look at the dome now glowing a soft orange in the light of the setting sun. As I walk back up the road, I reflect on the Temple as an expression of Swami Radha's work, her teachings about discovering the Light within. May we honour that Light in all of us.



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ERRATUM

Credit for "Is a Daily Asana Practice Necessary for the Yoga Teacher?" by Arthur Kilmurray, which appeared in our November, 1989, issue should have read as follows:

This article originally appeared in "American Yoga Newsletter", Volume 2, Issue #9, 5/84, a monthly publication by "Yoga Journal" from 1982 to 1985. It was reprinted here with permission, copyright c 1984 Yoga Journal. All rights reserved.

Teacher's Meeting

FEBRUARY 9, Victoria 'Y', 9 am - 1 pm
 MARCH 9, At Norma Hodge's, Gabriola Island
 10 am
 Phone Marlene Miller 656-3183

Canadian Iyengar Treachers Intensive In Pune, India, October, 1992.



Ten B.C. teachers will be eligible to attend

Criteria: Applicants must be teachers who have previously attended one public or intensive course in Pune and be listed as teachers in the current Canadian Teachers Directory. Intermediate level teachers are encouraged to apply.

Interested candidates should contact Gioia Irwin in Vancouver (734-7696) or Linda Shevloff in Victoria (479-5847) by February 28th.

BOOK REVIEW

THE RUNNER'S YOGA BOOK A Balanced Approach to Fitness by JEAN COUCH 1990



We are fortunate to have two excellent new books on Iyengar hatha yoga, *YOGA, THE IYENGAR WAY* by the Mehta family and *THE RUNNER'S YOGA BOOK* by Jean Couch. Perhaps these accomplishments are the result of the maturation of western students in this ancient eastern science as taught by Mr. Iyengar.

For many years I have listened to fellow students and teachers lament that the original *RUNNER'S WORLD YOGA BOOK* by Jean Couch was no longer available. I was unable to buy a copy for myself but managed to borrow one, and carried with me some quotations to read to my students at appropriate moments. Now I am looking forward to having my own copy to study. Donald Moyer and Linda Cogozzo are to be thanked for encouraging Jean with a revised edition.

Jean Couch lives in California, teaching yoga in Palo Alto, as well as leading workshops and retreats throughout the United States. She has written numerous articles on hatha yoga and athletics for *Runner's World*, *Yoga Journal*, and other periodicals.

In the last *Yoga Centre Newsletter* (December-January) there is an interview with Mr. Iyengar. In it he declares that it is better to have a good book than a bad teacher. No matter which good book or competent teacher you go to, there is a core of basic principles and techniques that Iyengar yoga students and teachers must understand. Ultimately, the source is Mr. Iyengar and the yoga tradition but Jean Couch has listed and expressed them very clearly and enthusiastically.

Yoga people are generous and wise. They have a basic understanding that knowledge should be shared and communicated as accurately as possible. This is in the tradition of Mr. Iyengar and his students who have become our teachers here in North America. It is amazing how quickly new ways of practising an asana or expressing a concept ripple throughout the world, usually from the centre - Mr. Iyengar in Pune, India. I appreciate people such as Jean Couch who have the skills and energy to speak, write and produce video and audio tapes. This work is especially useful for students in smaller communities who do not have easy access to senior teachers.

As the title suggests, *THE RUNNER'S YOGA BOOK* is written to appeal to North Americans, particularly those involved in running and other fitness activities. For example, there are sections offering yoga practice routines for before and after running. Yoga practice can counter the imbalances inherent in many sports, from bicycling to racquet sports to backpacking.

When Aadil Palkhivala was teaching in Victoria recently, he spoke of having a champion body builder in his class. Apparently this highly disciplined and strong woman had difficulty with many yoga movements and poses. She embodied our culture's idea of physical beauty and health, but as Aadil said, it was all for show, for competition. There was not the quieter motivation of seeking inner harmony of body, mind and spirit to balance that external drive. Ms. Couch clearly states that each individual can work in a fitness and yoga framework which

leads to physical, mental and spiritual balance. Having a good attitude, maintaining keen attention, and practising consistently are included in a checklist of reminders to all of us. Most of all, she wants to impart her enthusiasm and the joy of yoga to her readers.

THE RUNNER'S YOGA BOOK is essentially an introduction to Iyengar hatha yoga. The first chapters give a basic definition of hatha yoga and why it should attract athletic people. From a physical point of view yoga is an "effective way to both stretch and strengthen the body, it promotes physical balance, and helps to prevent injuries and discomforts". One does not have to be a fitness fanatic to benefit from this book. Yoga can be practised by everyone.

Several pages discuss the physiology and kinesiology of movement. Both teachers and students will benefit from the clarity of her explanations. What never ceases to amaze me as I learn more of the scientific details, is how much 'common sense' is in this 'mysterious' eastern technique.

The majority of the text and 400 photographs are devoted to the asanas. The models have different types of bodies and yoga experience. Beginning students can see how aids are used to improve balance, make the stretching more effective, and bring the body into alignment. The photos are adjacent to the instructions for placement, pose, variations and aids. Not all the asanas are covered. The author has chosen basic postures which can form core programs of practice. Reading the introduction to each section and then practising carefully will give understanding of the basic principles involved in each category.

I would like to see this book available in recreation facilities, in the weight rooms, racquet courts and fitness gymnasiums. Recently, I attended an aerobics class in which the leader stopped to show the participants how to stretch and align. Unfortunately, the class was scattered about the gym, lying on the floor and the loud music drowned the teacher's voice. An

Continued on page 2

IYENGAR YOGA INTENSIVE

July 27th to August 2nd 1991

with

Dr. Bruce Carruthers

Liz McLeod

Shirley Daventry French

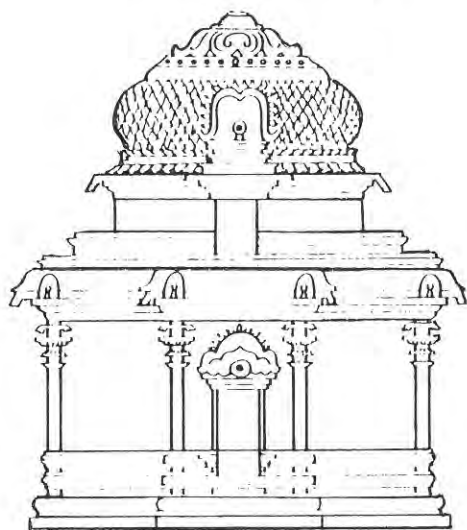
Dr. Derek French

The brochure for the Summer Intensive at the "Y" is being sent out with this newsletter to those members who receive their copies through the mail. Brochures are also available at the "Y" or may be obtained in Victoria from Yoga Centre directors or your yoga teacher. This workshop brings together four of Canada's most experienced teachers who will teach daily classes in asana and pranayama and present seminars on yoga psychology and philosophy. This is a chance to deepen your understanding and practice of yoga.

For further information contact:

Shirley Daventry French 478-3775 or Linda Benn 598-8277

BOOK REVIEW



IYENGAR: HIS LIFE AND WORK

Timeless Books 542 Pages 52 Photographs(1987)

This book is a rich compilation of articles either by or about B.K.S. Iyengar and his work with yoga. It offers the reader a view into Iyengar's life as well as a sense of the profound effect his work has had on many of his students. As I read the book I felt drawn into the essence of yoga - the power of clarity and inner rejuvenation. It is very inspiring to read Mr. Iyengar's elegant descriptions of his way of moving into the asanas alongside articles by people who have been healed of serious medical problems through his method.

The book begins with an eighty page autobiographical piece. Mr. Iyengar tells something of his early life, his sickness and weakness, how he came to yoga, and the gradual process of self-refinement. It can be valuable

for us, his students, to realize the humanness of his life. We see how he struggled to develop himself as the perfect embodiment of the power of yoga, and this gives us the courage to continue our own personal progress in yoga.

There are many short articles by Mr. Iyengar, such as "The Art of Relaxation: and "Yoga - A Path to Self-Realization" that clarify his method and the results it brings to those who study it. For example, in the piece on self-realization he writes, "Yoga then is to be understood as the uniting or bringing together of the Jivaatma (the individual Self) with the Paramatma (the All-Pervading Spirit of the Universal Self) and the discovery of the ecstasy implied in that union." (p. 117). When we practice Mr. Iyengar's method of yoga, we touch our deepest core and gradually come to join more and more with that place of inner vitality.

There are many articles by students from all parts of the world; from Bombay to Boston. Many of the pieces by the Bombay students give their impressions of Mr. Iyengar's presence and personality. They note his remarkable devotion to yoga. Even in times of tragedy and family obligation, he would go to Bombay every weekend to teach his dedicated students. The articles by students from other parts of the world focus more on the impact yoga has had on them. One section of the book, titled "Curative Aspects of Yoga," contains articles on students' experiences with arthritis, spinal problems, general fatigue, depression, and hopelessness. These inspiring stories are reminders of the healing power of yoga. It is up-lifting to read the full extent of which so many have experienced the power of yoga through Mr. Iyengar's guidance.

To me, the most beautiful aspect of the book is the constant presence of quotations from Mr. Iyengar. Short, strong statements he has made while teaching or in interviews appear throughout the book and in a final section entitled "Wisdom of the Master." These statements guide our spirits into the fullness of the yoga: "When you are fully in the body you meet the soul." "To bring the mind to a state of innocence without ignorance is meditation." "As pearls held on a thread, all the limbs should be held on the thread of intelligence."

The book stands as a tribute to B.K.S. Iyengar and the deep effectiveness of his work. Originally compiled for his 60th birthday celebration in 1978 and entitled Body The Shrine, Yoga Thy Light, it has been expanded and revised into its present form. This edition honours the occasions of 1988

and reflects the growth and development of his method and the Iyengar community in the last ten years. The new edition is a fuller, richer book. The section of quotations in particular has been much expanded. The book allows us to draw inspiration from the widening sphere of Mr. Iyengar's guidance and influence. It offers clarification of the nature, the purpose, and the meaning of the yoga that we practice every day.

Zoe Stewart

Zoe Stewart teaches yoga in Cambridge, MA. This article was first printed from the Newsletter of the Iyengar Association of Greater New York and Massachusetts and then reprinted in the B.K.S. Iyengar 70th Birthday issue of the Victoria Yoga Centre, December 1988.

PLEASE NOTE:

These books and several others of interest to Yoga students are available from the Victoria Yoga Centre. Please contact your teacher or Linda Benn 160 Beach Drive, Victoria, B.C. V8S 2L5. Phone 598-8277

MR. IYENGAR'S VISIT TO WALES

Key Learning Points

by Glenys Shepherd

An article printed in Dipika, the magazine published by the Iyengar Yoga Institute in London, England. First printed in the winter, 1990, issue.

Whenever I am blessed with the opportunity of attending either classes or lectures given by Gurujī, I leave both chastened and inspired.

Chastened in the knowledge of my lack of knowledge, inspired to unlock the mental and physical doors debarring

that from which I seek in Yoga. It seems there are countless doors, each of which once unlocked opens onto its own aspect of knowledge of Yoga.

Gurujī, the keeper of the keys, unfailingly offers them up to his pupils, but of this vast collection am able to grasp only the keys to the few doors I recognise as being closed. The rest remain on the ring with the keeper until awareness motivates me to take them up.

Meanwhile, here are the 'key'

learning points I was able to grasp from Guruji's visit this year.

1. Practice must be daily and uninterrupted.

Work not only from the outside but from the inside out.

2. The skin being the largest sense of perception, feel the action and reaction of the spindles of the muscles and fibres.

Seek equilibrium of intellectual flow in all poses both by observing the differences in type of presentation on the right and left as well as the intensity of stretch from plane to plane, limb to limb, muscle to muscle, joint to joint, side to side and posteriorly and anteriorly. Create equal stretch, stability, spacing and intensity of movement.

3. Allow the intelligence of the body to percolate in the whole body in each pose as the pose demands. This intelligence flashes very accurately in the beginning but fades soon - catch it and cultivate it. It flashes without the interference of the brain; it is independent of the head.

4. After that time, one experiences the surrender of the ego to the asana or breath. When the brain is free from dictation but adjusts from the movement of body intelligence, the self shines.

5. Observe the effect and use it as a cause to do better. If the cause is subtle, the effect is gross. So, watching the effect, go from gross to subtle. This requires total attention. The body is the element of earth. It should be firm. The mind is fluid and moves the mercury, as mercury shoots up as the temperature rises. Energy is like gas. It should spread, and the mind which is like fluid

should be sharpened within the body as one does the asanas. Mind, body and energy become one. This is meditation in asana.

6. Spiritual enjoyment comes only with mastery. Pranayama and inversions are practised daily by Guruji, but he creates his own cycle of asanas daily to keep in touch with all the asanas.

Earlier I said I grasped but few keys. The reason this may not seem to be the case is because rather than risk misinterpreting Guruji I sent the basis of this article for him to edit. True to form, he took each of the points I submitted and expanded upon them. What you have read are his words.

The Runner's Yoga Book

Continued from page 18

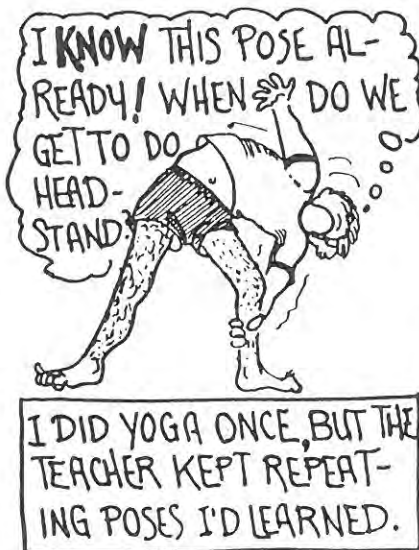
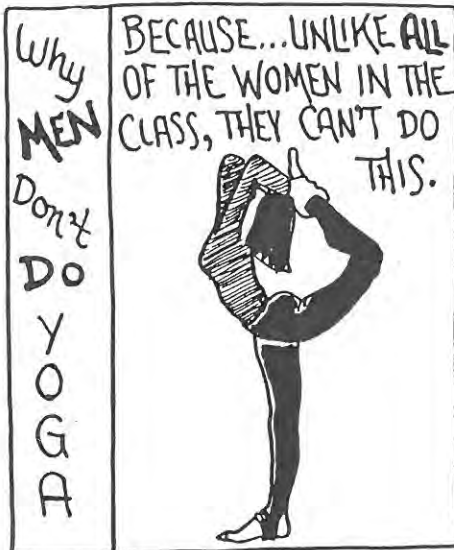
approachable book like this would help people enjoy their fitness activities with more awareness, perhaps with a different attitude and more attention to using their bodies well.

The ring binding is a bonus, allowing the book to lay flat. I hope that the wrap-around cover will stand up to sustained use. There is a good list of resources (books, props, audio & video tapes) included for those interested in learning more about the practice and philosophy of yoga. Although published in the United States, some Canadian addresses are also given for those seeking information and the locations of Iyengar yoga teachers.

I am sure this book will be in the stores soon and I hope that the Victoria Yoga Centre will have it available. Published by Rodmell Press, 2550 Shattuck Ave., Suite 18 Berkeley, CA 94704 \$17.95 (US funds).

Linda Benn

THACKER



MY SPIRITUAL DIARY

by Jim Rischmiller

ADA Taxi exchange Oct 27 1985.
Two days living in a jumbo jet, it
seems so long since I left
Victoria. Bombay airport needs
painted and life instead of echoing
the mustiness of the Raj. I
survived my hassle trying to get a
cab to Pune. A sea of urchins
trying to offer me help to Pune,
or that refused help to find the
dispatcher, (where I could book a
cab to leave immediately?), or
that refused guidance to 'their'
cab and a deal (for them) from the
driver. Finally any help that will
place a bond between us to be the
root of a trade. On the way to

DaDa my driver asked me if we were
on the right path. I tried to look
helpful as I turned his
instruction sheet the right way
up. Maybe he learned to read in
Sirsasana. He stopped at the next
light, turned off the motor and
ambled over to another taxi for
direction. I sunk into the seat as
the lights changed twice and every
driver in sight leant on his horn
before mine returned. We were on
the right road it appeared so I
relax and savour the fresh air as
we cruise by awful habitations.
Bombay air has a human touch,
assaulting my nostrils and eyes.

MOLIVOS YOGA MATS

THE ORIGINAL STICKY MAT FOR YOGA

Wholesale prices available; lowest in North America.

Now Molivos Mats come in two thicknesses:

The Standard Mat — the original 2 mm

The Professional Mat — thicker, warmer, 4 mm



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- **SAFE:** It insulates from a cold floor and protects you from dirt and splinters.
- **FIRM BASE:** No wobbling, whether you're on your feet or your hands!
- **LIGHT & COMPACT:** It weighs only 1¾ lbs. (800 g) and can be folded and slipped into a travel bag. Machine washable. 24" x 66" (165 x 60 cm)

USA: (US\$) Standard Mat \$12.00 + 4.00 mailing. Professional Mat \$16.00 + 4.00 mailing.
Canada: (CDN\$) Standard Mat \$20.00 + 2.50 mailing. Professional Mat \$26.00 + 2.50 mailing.
Personal check or money order payable to: Elizabeth McAvish, 37-2137 West First Avenue,
Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6K 1E7 (604) 731-7099

DaDa taxi exchange is a hut squeezed between the sidewalk and a cricket pitch. One pays, then one waits until enough people turn up who are going the same way. As I sit on the waiters bench the crack of the bat hitting the ball takes me back to my youth and a foaming ale. (Which is what cricket is all about). It's hot and I have been scared out of my skin by stories of Indian water. At least I will have less need of a toilet if I don't drink. A couple of hours go by and I am thinking of paying more. If I pay enough I will end up with a whole cab to myself. I decide I don't want this and watch more cricket. Eventually a man in a hurry turns up and he and I share the back seat of a cab built for a total of four people. Three drivers crowd into the front seat. There are pirates on the road to Pune they explain. Having received our cash they can now afford to gas up. A scooter in the lineup at the gas station provides comic relief as its owner claims our driver(s) ran over his foot. I am impressed with the argument carried on in Indian by one side and in English by the other.

Droning out of Bombay we pass a dead cow. I smelled it several blocks away actually. Luckily I have an empty tummy. India is a very busy place a continuous boxing day sale. The roads, two lanes wide, are particularly busy with nose to tail traffic at 60 mph whenever possible. We pull out to overtake a lorry, directly into the path of a bus coming the other way. The lorry is long and our acceleration poor so I occupy the time calculating the moment of impact as the bus bears down on us. We squeeze back in front of the lorry which attempts to speed us up with a push. "This is most dangerous " my fellow traveller exclaims, "this fellow is a bad driver". I smile, I am still alive.

SHAMBHALA HOUSE



1500 Shasta Place
Victoria, B.C. V8S 1X9
(604) 595-0177

Shambhala House Victoria is a spiritual centre in the city, a place to find how spiritual life can be applied daily in a concrete way wherever you are. Swami Radha immersed herself in the yogic teachings in India 40 years ago, and practiced them intensely in her own life before bringing them to the West, and adapting them to the Western mind.

Shambhala House follows in the tradition she established: it teaches self-investigation conducted with clarity and compassion, it offers the tools to bring about the changes you now find necessary to make in your life, and it points the way to establishing an intimate connection with the Divine.

Workshops and Events

Divine Light Invocation Workshop

"I am not the body, I am not the mind. I am Light eternal." Discover your own inner Light as you learn or deepen your understanding of this ancient spiritual practice.

Friday, February 15, 7:30–10:00 P.M., Saturday and Sunday, February 16 & 17, 10 A.M.–6 P.M.

Fee: \$115, \$25 deposit

Building the Inner Temple

As we grow spiritually, we are each building what Swami Radha calls our "Cathedral of Consciousness," our own inner temple. Through visualization, reflection, and drawing you will discover what kind of temple you want to build, and how you can make it a reality.

Friday, March 15, 7:30–10:00 P.M., Saturday and Sunday, March 16 & 17, 10 A.M.–6 P.M.

Fee: \$115, \$25 deposit. All fees will be donated to the Ashram Temple Fund.

Swami Radha's 80th birthday

Join devotees of this great teacher in a satsang to honour her.

Sunday, March 24, 8–9 P.M.

Weekly Activities

Kundalini Classes

Clarify your values, concepts, and ideals. Participate in a weekly class based on Swami Radha's book, *Kundalini*

Yoga for the West. This course provides a foundation for personal growth, and will introduce you to specific spiritual practices that will change your life.

Fee: 10 classes, \$110.

Hatha Yoga: The Hidden Language

Mondays: 5–7 P.M. (10 week session)

Saturdays: 9:30–11:30 A.M. (drop-in)

Swami Radha's method of Hatha Yoga aims to integrate body and mind, and to unlock the deeper meaning of the asanas. A continuing study of this method can bring both improved physical and mental condition, and a deeper understanding of the body as a spiritual tool.

Fee: 10 classes, \$100; \$10 per class, drop-in

Satsang and Bhajans

Sunday: 7:30–9:00 P.M.

Satsang is a time to quiet the mind and open the heart: to sing to the Divine, listen to an inspirational reading, and chant mantras for those who have asked to be on the Prayer List. All are welcome to join us in this time of prayer and meditation.

LOST AND FOUND

The newsletter committee is very pleased to announce that several volunteers have come forward to help with the paste-up and design of the newsletter. We are hoping to start a 'rotating crew' so that people don't get burnt out so quickly!

Should there be anyone else out there who would like to offer some time for preparing the newsletter, collating, mailing, typing and so on, we'd love to see you.

Newsletter meetings are few and far between and usually held during a meal! So let me know if you'd like to come along and see how it works.

Jennifer Rischmiller
474-5630

YOGA CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

1-3: Mantra Workshop at Shambala House. Call 595-0177 for details.
2: Day of Yoga given by Shirley Daventry French. Call 478-3775 for registration.
8: Yoga Centre Meeting at the Y. See ad this issue.
15-17: Divine Light Invocation Workshop at Shambala House. Call 595-0177 for details.
16-17: Yoga Workshop given by Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galiano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.
16: Workshop at the Y given by Linda Shevloff. Call 479-5847 for registration. See ad this issue.
22-24: Yoga and The Sutras, a weekend workshop with Shirley Daventry French. Call 478-3775 for registration.

MARCH

2: Pranayama Class/Asana Practice with Shirley Daventry French. 8am till 12 noon. Call 478-3775 for registration.

8: Yoga Centre meeting. Time and place to be announced.
9: Teachers meeting on Gabriola Island.
16: Workshop at the Y with Anne Gilbertus.
15-17: Building the Inner Temple Workshop at Shambala House. Call 595-0177 for details.
23: Pranayama Class/Asana Practice with Shirley Daventry French.

APRIL

5-7: Health Enhancement Workshop with Bruce and Maureen Carruthers on Galiano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.
13: Teachers meeting.
12-14: Straight Walk Workshop at Shambala House. Call 595-0177 for details.
28: BIG, BIG PRACTICE. Watch newsletter for more details.

The Yoga Centre of Victoria Newsletter Advertising

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2-28: Yoga Workshop with Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galiano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

MAY

4: Day of Yoga with Shirley Daventry French. Call 478-3775 for details.

5: Hidden Language Workshop at Shambala House. Call 595-0177 for details.

11: Teachers meeting.

24-26: Video Workshop at Shambala House. Call 595-0177 for details.

2: Pranayama Class/Asana Practice with Shirley Daventry French.

JUNE

1-9: Saltspring Retreat led by Shirley Daventry French. Watch future newsletters for ads.

8-9: Rose Ceremony at Shambala House.

2: Pranayama Class/Asana Practice with Shirley Daventry French. Call 478-3775 for registration.

27-July 1: Donald Moyer workshop on Galiano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

JULY

4-7: Iyengar Teachers meeting in Ottawa.

12-21: Health Enhancement Workshop with Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galiano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

27-August 2: Iyengar Yoga Intensive to be held at the Victoria Y. See ad this issue.

AUGUST

3-7: 5 Day Immersion Yoga Workshop given by Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galiano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

SEPTEMBER

6-14: Workshop with Ramanand Patel at the Y.

OCTOBER

12-13: Yoga Workshop with Angela Farmer and Victor Van Kooten on Galiano Island. Call 539-5071 for details. Register early.

25-27: Health Enhancement Workshop given by Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galiano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

NOVEMBER

15-17: Yoga Workshop given by Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galiano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION FORM

It's time you joined the Yoga Centre of Victoria! As you read this newsletter, you are receiving one of the benefits of membership. As you attend your yoga classes or a workshop, you are receiving the benefits of membership. These take time and money and your membership fees and participation really help.

Please fill out this form and send it with your cheque or money order to:

YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA, 3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R. #1, Victoria, B.C. V8X 3W9

MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION FEE IS \$20.00/year.

Name: _____

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I am enclosing a cheque or money order in the amount of: _____

[] Please do not mail me the newsletter; during class sessions I'll pick one up at my "Y" class.

The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY is a non-profit society incorporated under the Societies' Act of the Province of British Columbia whose purpose is, *"to encourage the physical, mental and spiritual growth of its members and other interested members of society at large by the study and discipline of Yoga"*. The Society owes inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

The Society Newsletter is published regularly, providing current information on events concerning yoga in Victoria and area and at the Yasodhara Ashram. Published by the Victoria Yoga Centre Society.

Anyone wishing to contribute articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions to the Newsletter may contact the Editor, Jennifer Rischmiller, 4489 Lindholm Road, R.R. #1, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8X 3W9. Telephone: (604)474-5630.

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DEADLINE FOR MARCH ISSUE: FEBRUARY 14th, 1991

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY

3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R. #1, Victoria, B.C. Canada V8X 3W9



yoga centre of victoria

PLEASE
SUBSCRIBE

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

March 1991



Teachers should roar like a lion
outside
but be like a lamb
inside...

Wisdom of the Master.
Maxims by Shri B.K.S. Iyengar



Reflections

By Shirley Daventry French

Last night I had a powerful dream. I have been suffering from the flu for a week. My sleep has been restless, disturbed by a stuffy nose and dry, tickly throat. Twice during the night I got up. The first time to put on a vaporiser and add moisture to the air in the bedroom. The second to get a drink of juice and jot down some ideas which were going round and round in my head, and which I thought could be the basis for this month's column. Yesterday, with the deadline approaching, I had had two abortive attempts at writing, both of which ended up in the trash file of my computer where they belonged. Given the state of my body and mind, under seige from one of this winter's viral infections, was there any creative energy available?

After making my notes, I returned to bed around 4:30 am and fell into a heavy sleep. I dreamed I was staying at a large resort hotel where some ritual games were going on. These games were directed by a man; the participants were all women. I was one of them. Our participation was not voluntary; we were there under duress. We were divided into groups of twelve, and this group was further divided into groups of four by drawing lots. I was in the third group of four. For three consecutive days four women would enter an area set aside for this game armed with revolvers and stalk each other until two of them were killed. The first two contests were held; four women died. Tomorrow the remaining four would test their skills. My turn had come.

That evening I was sitting at a table in the hotel restaurant with my room-mate and friend, who was also one of the four women to enter the fray tomorrow. We didn't speak. My mind fluctuated wildly: a sense of my ability to remain cool and sufficiently centered to stalk my prey and shoot before being shot,

intermingled with fear of my death. Then other feelings began to surface: outrage at being in this situation. Suddenly I said to my friend: "I'm not going to do it. I'm going to leave." She replied that she was having the same thoughts. We began to plan our escape which would be in the middle of the night. The details of our plan are not important here, although they have considerable importance as symbols to help me get the fullest understanding out of this dream. What became evident as we considered and faced the obstacles to our getting away, was that the skills we were drawing on to ensure our escape and survival were the same as those we would have used to play the deadly game. What was very different, was the end to which they would be employed.

I woke up before our journey to freedom had begun, shaken and aware of tremendous tension in my body. I lay there thinking about the implications of this dream, and, although I felt rotten, I had a sense of something worthwhile happening here. Perhaps my lowered state of resistance had allowed an important message from my unconscious to penetrate. It would not be the first time. On other occasions when I have been unwell or incapacitated in some way and unable to follow my normal busy pattern of life, once I have finally accepted this state of affairs (which always takes a little time), I have made some significant discoveries and breakthroughs.

This dream could relate to many things: my physical health, my state of mind, the way I live my life and interact with others. To whom do I give authority? It involves taking responsibility for my own actions, even in the most difficult situations and, most important without any guarantee of success. The figure of authority was a man, the women were his pawns bringing in the Jungian idea of anima and

animus. Yesterday I had been reflecting on the lack of conviction in modern Christianity; about Lent, and how this period of forty days of renunciation and contemplation leading up to Easter and the Crucifixion is almost totally unobserved these days. Now, in my dream, I find myself in a situation reminiscent of Christian slaves in a Roman amphitheatre. Could it have anything to do with renunciation? Could it have anything to do with the Gulf War, very much on my mind, triggering memories of my own war experiences many of which my body still retains?

There are so many ways of interpreting this dream, and many levels at which it can be approached. This is work I must do if I want to understand its message, and not treat it simply as a melodrama.

On awakening, my first thought was that I wished I had stayed asleep long enough to see if I made good my escape, but it doesn't work that way. I have a choice to use my talents, skills, creative energy to follow a path of liberation or a path of enslavement. On the surface it would seem as if there is no contest. Naturally I seek liberation. Do I? Am I willing to pay the price? Am I willing to risk every thing?

Isn't a fifty-fifty chance of survival better than unknown odds? That depends. In my dream, even if the odds were in my favour and I were one of the survivors, I would still be a victim of my own lack of conviction and a slave in the power of this man. Fifty per cent of nothing is nothing. The odds begin to look different. I have no assurances whatsoever about the outcome of my journey to freedom only the conviction that it is worth making at any odds.

While it is a waste of time to seek reassurance and certainty, it is not a waste of time to practise yoga and develop discipline, stamina and skills which will be helpful on this journey; not necessarily to make it easy, but to make it possible. They give us the physical, mental and spiritual strength to choose freedom instead of slavery, and to follow the path of liberation for its own sake unconditionally.

Of course, it's possible it would not have been difficult to escape from the tyrant in my dream. Perhaps there was no need for all the planning and subterfuge, and we could have just walked away. I don't know. That's for me to find out.

YOGA IN METCHOSIN

with Shirley Daventry French

A DAY OF YOGA

Asana and Pranayama

May 4th 1991

\$45.00

PRANAYAMA

Saturday mornings

March 23rd

May 25th, June 22nd

\$15.00 per class

Ongoing Asana classes

daytime and evening

plus an afternoon class for people with special problems

Shirley is a student of B.K.S. Iyengar
and an experienced teacher of his method of Yoga

Information: 478-3775

Yoga Centre News

I have good news this month. The new format for meetings, business and social, is working well. We have had two gatherings at the Y now with a practice and a pot luck supper. There was a strong spirit present in the room for me, a sense of community.

During the practice people were in tune with one another and, at times, I felt they were in tune with themselves, the energy was directed inwards. The opportunity to look at oneself in amongst a crowd, that's exciting for me. It means that there is always a time when I can explore the inner me, alone or with other people. It means that I don't have to travel the same road, that we can all work differently, yet we can be at one with each other, part of the whole.

The evening continued with fine foods and informal discussions. Some people had their first glimpse of Mr. Iyengar, on video, as we watched him demonstrate some asanas and heard a little about his early life. There was a lot of interest in his life and many questions about where hatha yoga leads.

We hope to continue these discussions and to provide some insights by sharing our experiences. Please join us for the next gathering at the Y.

Jennifer Rischmiller



Ann Kilbertus

A Workshop With Ann Kilbertus March 16

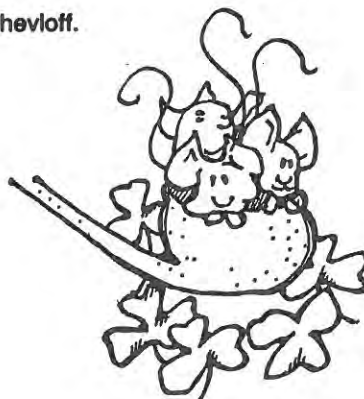
"Recycling yourself" is the theme of the next workshop being offered at the YMCA, sponsored by the Victoria Yoga Centre. The teacher will be Ann Kilbertus, an individual who takes an active interest in creating a healthy community to live in through her environmental awareness and action.

As well as being a yoga instructor, Ann is an occupational therapist. She works with adults aged 19 to 100 who are physically disabled. A large part of her training has been in the area of anatomy and physiology, enabling her to assist patients with problems in body alignment. This scientific knowledge of the body is a valuable asset to a yoga teacher and, conversely, being an Iyengar yoga teacher is an asset in her work.

Ann began her study of Iyengar yoga in 1985, taking lessons from Shirley Daventry French. Yoga originally attracted her because it provided physical fitness without stress, but through practice and time her understanding of yoga evolved to encompass more than simple physical exercise. Although she has not yet been to Pune, Ann has taken classes from many fine teachers who have offered workshops in British Columbia. Last summer she attended the Canadian Iyengar Teachers Conference in Edmonton where Mr. Iyengar was present.

Ann has been teaching yoga at the Y for two years. Her enthusiasm and thoughtfulness will ensure an enjoyable workshop. Plan to attend.

Linda Shevloff.



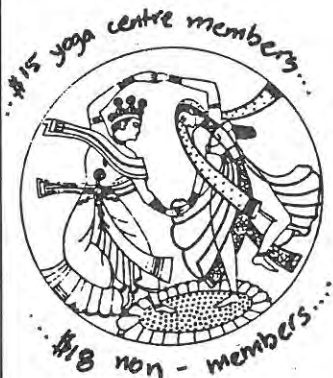
Recycle Yourself

A green yoga workshop for
St. Patrick's Day weekend

Date: Saturday,
March 16

Time: 10a.m.-1p.m.

Location: Yoga Room,
YMCA



Instructor: Ann Kilbertus

This workshop will focus on cycles of asanas which complement each other and can be united to build a short practice or expanded to develop a longer practice.

The workshop will be followed by light refreshments and informal discussion.

To register or for further information call:

Ann at 383-4094 or Lauren at 382-3287

Letter To The Editor

Dear Ms. Rischmiller,

Several years ago my wife started hatha yoga. Perhaps, typical of some other yoga widowers I have had my reservations about her chosen path. However, we have toughed out her Kundalini classes, hours devoted to teaching, endless meetings, workshops and administrative details.

Now, I'm a bit of a male chauvinist but I have mended some of my ways. At first I resented the time my wife devoted to yoga rather than to me. But in time, I have grown somewhat used to the idea. I even began to believe that she deserved her freedom away from the domestic scene after having brought up six children, all of whom have grown up except me.

But then the yoga mats arrived. For quite a while now she has regularly brought home the yoga mats - some three dozen or so - and spent several days washing and drying them. The washing machine groans and chugs through load after load of mats and there are few showers to be had at our house for a few days. At first this was an interesting diversion; green, slimy growths draped over lawn chairs, fenceposts, balconies, clothes lines and even the rhododendrons. But in winter they moved indoors and their perspiration created a green house effect in more ways than one. And, is this actually progress - her moving toward freedom from family chores only to wash other people's dirty linen?

I am sick of yoga mats. I asked my wife, "Can't other people do them?" Apparently not many want to, and then if they do, they only want to do a few at a time. Is it too expensive to have them commercially cleaned? Seems so, as there are lots of more important things to spend sparse funds on.

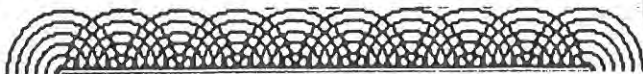
Dear fellow students please save our marriage from the green mats. Share the honour and the privilege of doing your bit for the Yoga Centre. Offer your washing machine in the fight against grimy mats.

DON BENN
aka THE GREEN WIDOWER

Thank-You, Thank-You, Thank-You

I am very grateful to the Victoria Yoga Centre for awarding me a \$300 scholarship to attend the Canadian Iyengar Yoga Teachers Meeting in Ottawa this July. I shall do my best to represent the Victoria teachers who are not able to be there. Thank you for your support.

Linda Shevloff.



Forget Happiness!

*I will not be found, like a lost purse;
It will find you, like a lost person!*

*If you would be found,
Be little to be seen,
Be silent to be heard,
Be simple to be known,
Be heartfelt to be loved,
Be giving to be strong,
Be empty to be filled,
Be rooted to be grown!*

Hubert Meeker



The Victoria Yoga Centre
and the Victoria YM-YWCA
are pleased to announce an

IYENGAR YOGA INTENSIVE

to be held this summer at the Victoria "Y"
with Senior Canadian Teachers

July 27th to August 2nd, 1991

Fee: \$325.00

- daily classes in Asana and Pranayama
- seminars on Yoga Psychology and Philosophy
- therapeutic yoga

*Classes will be taught by the following senior students and
experienced teachers of the Yoga of B.K.S. Iyengar:*

Dr. Bruce Carruthers
Liz McLeod
Shirley Daventry French
Dr. Derek French

For out-of-town students: Victoria is a popular tourist centre with a wide selection of hotels and motels. The Residence at the "Y" has a limited amount of inexpensive accommodation for women. Billets will also be available with members of the local yoga community.

For brochure or further information contact:

Victoria Yoga Centre
3918 Olympic View Drive
R.R. 1, Victoria, B.C. V8X 3W9

Telephone Enquiries: Shirley Daventry French (604) 478-3775
or Linda Benn (604) 598-8277

Pranayama-Thoughts For Beginners

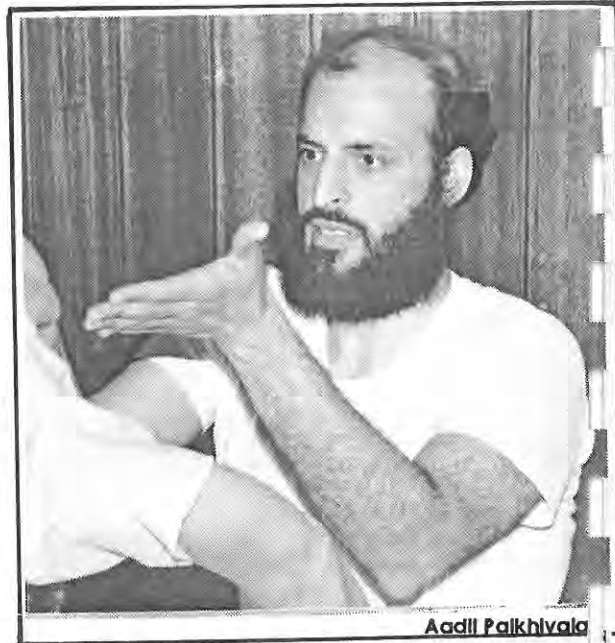
by Aadil B.A. Palkhivala

REPRINTED FROM THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
IYENGAR YOGA INSTITUTE OF WASHINGTON STATE
NOVEMBER - DECEMBER, 1990

The asana "initiation period" is over! Years of labour now allow you to move to another realm - it is time to add pranayama to your daily practice. But why pranayama? Why all this fuss over breathing? Don't you breathe anyway? Doing pranayama is to normal, daily breathing what doing asanas (yoga poses) is to normal, daily moving. To wit: steady vs shaky; broad and powerful vs short and weak; deep vs superficial; intentional vs necessary; important vs urgent; aware vs unconscious; changing vs familiar; controlled vs fickle; disciplined vs capricious; growing young vs growing old. It is guided effort battling years of ignorant living.

A Yogi's life is measured by the number of breaths he breathes and not by the number of years he chooses to live: hence the need for pranayama, to broaden the span of time available to do one's work in this world, by lengthening the breath. At first this reasoning seems esoteric if not implausible, but when you realize the following facts, it becomes esoteric. As the breath becomes longer, it becomes slower. As it becomes slower, the heart slows down (strengthening in its broadness, pumping more blood with each beat), the tension eases from the external muscles, especially those of the perpetually tense neck, shoulders and face region, the brain becomes more relaxed and calm, the diaphragm becomes more elastic and strong, providing better support to the thoracic cavity and to the heart, the blood gets oxygenated more efficiently and the circulation improves. With less wear and tear on the internal and external body and mind, the practitioner lives a longer, and more importantly, a fuller and freer life. The regular practice of pranayama will lengthen and slow the breath, providing these and a multitude of other benefits, such as the one Lord Tennyson wrote about in "The Two Voices,"

No life that breathes with human breath
Has ever truly longed for death.



Aadil Palkhivala

Muscles and joints get hard, immobile and stiff, and organs become sluggish and diseased without controlled living and proper stimulation. Similarly, the brain loses its gargantuan abilities without proper nourishment. This nourishment takes two forms: exercise and food. Exercise is the use of the brain in doing creative and calculative thinking. Food is a rich blood supply, brimming with the energy of the universe, prana.

There are movements which require strength which one performs with one's external strength. There are movements which require power which one performs with one's internal controlled strength. With muscular strength you may lift two people with one hand. With inner power, you can lift the race. Similarly brain strength is the ability to perform herculean tasks computing the 27th root of 50 digit numbers mentally in seconds and dabbling in the formulas which explain the wheeling of the worlds. Brain power, on the other hand, is the rare and usually cultivated ability of being at total peace in conditions which induce extreme stress and tension. It is being the calm eye of the storm, "keep(ing) your head when all about you are losing theirs and blaming it on you." It is the ability to project your thoughts or yourself across the room or across the world. Pranayama, aside from revitalizing the body, helps the mind

acquire this immense power. The mind is fed with prana. Prana is the all-pervading life force. Even a brain, stale and rusted from lack of use can be revitalized and can learn to think clearly with disciplined pranayama.

Prana is energy, be it the raging fires of the blazing suns flung across the vast darknesses of the cosmos, or that which causes the tiny butterfly to unfold its frail wings. The vehicle for this prana is the breath. The vessel of the breath is primarily the lungs. The method of controlling the prana in the lungs in particular, and in the body in general, is pranayama.

The inhalation (puraka), the exhalation (rechaka) and the retention (kumbhaka) of the breath - each has its own specific purpose. The inhalation stimulates and energizes the human system, filling the lungs with life-giving air, the true inhalation bringing the unconscious knowledge of So'ham (the Immortal Spirit, He am I) into consciousness. The exhalation relaxes the system, relieves tension, emptying the lungs of all noxious air, the true exhalation bringing into consciousness the unconscious knowledge of aham (I am He). The kumbhakas concretize these experiences, holding them within the body with a totally still and perceptive mind. Thus, the inhalation is the power breath, the bringer of the perdurable immortal into the fleeting mortal. The exhalation is the emptying of the mind of all illusions, the breath of humility, the surrender of the transient mortal before the everlasting immortal.

Just as the body reflects the mind and the mind the body, all illnesses, physical and mental, are reflected in the breath. Conversely, a shallow, harsh, heavy or jerky habit of breathing due to external circumstances leads to disease and decay. Learning to do pranayama leads to learning to do something properly that you do subconsciously every moment of your life; that subconscious something which, even as you read these words, is energizing or enervating you. As you gain awareness and learn eurhythmic control of the subtle breath under a worthy teacher's guidance, the root cause of the ill health is eradicated by bringing about the delicate balance in both the internal and the external energy fields of the body, by directing the prana.

Learning and practising the rhythmic patterns of basic, slow, deep breathing, you will find that the respiratory system is strengthened and works at its peak. This necessarily exhilarates and enlivens the circulatory system, aiding in the process of digestion and elimination of toxins - toxins which would otherwise settle in the body, spreading disease and ill health. Also, rhythmic, slow breathing soothes the much-abused nervous system. Your eyes become softer and stronger, your words more sincere, your heart lighter, your body less a burden to bear. In turn this reduces cravings and attachment, making the mind more free to practice dharana (concentration).

Many a time have I healed myself of severe pain in just a few seconds simply by the control and proper channelling of the prana with the mind. The healing power of the prana is so great and so vast that once you have learned to balance its droughts and floods, and learned to control its thunderous torrent which is, ocymoronically, gentler than the pressure of an uncurling leaf bud, most other medicines and forms of healing become practically superfluous. The prana, as Iyengar has said, is the most powerful force in the world. It is also the most evanescent, the most subtle, the most delicate, the most ethereal.

Continued on page 12



Bruce & Maureen Carruthers
Demonstrating Pranayama

Victoria York Director



Derek French



Shirley Daventry French

oga Centre

rs 1991



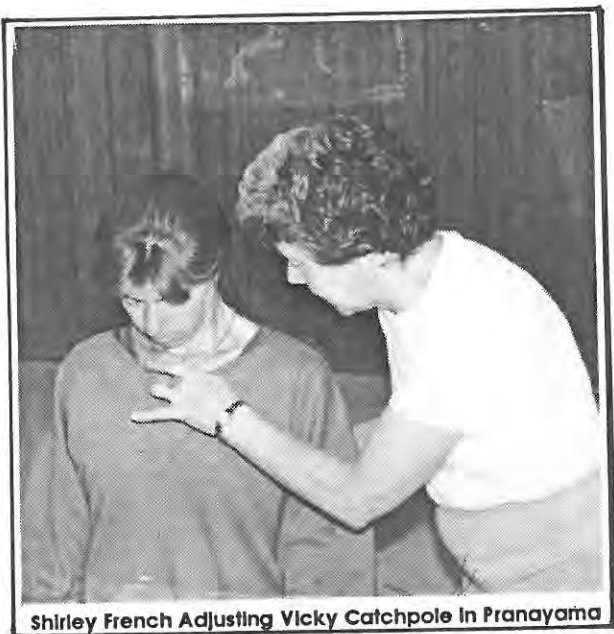
Marlene Miller



Linda Benn



**Jim and Jennifer
Rischmiller**



Shirley French Adjusting Vicky Catchpole In Pranayama

The more powerful the energy, the more care is required in its handling. One would hardly approach a mild, tame fawn with the same thoughts, preparation and prayers as a growling wild tiger. The prana is like a wild tiger, untamed, and should be brought under control very gradually.

The pranayama is not to be toyed with. You cannot and should not learn it from an inexperienced teacher or a book. Neither should you attempt it without a certain degree of proficiency in the asanas as determined by your teacher. Exact positioning and strengthening of the spine, torso, neck, abdomen, lower pelvis and fingertips in digital breathing must be fully understood, and the dexterity in the respective parts developed before you actually perform the pranayamas. As with all potent energy, the breath has as much power to heal as to destroy. Do not rush into pranayama expecting repute and acclaim. Recall the words of Alexander Pope,

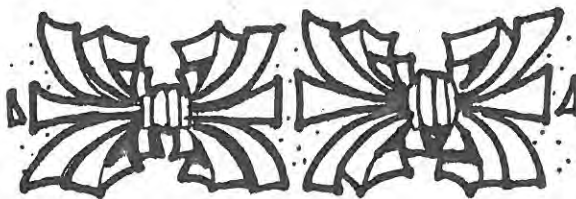
Who pants for glory finds short repose:
A breath revives him, or a breath o'erthrows.

If one does asanas incorrectly, usually physical and sometimes organic injuries take place. But the incorrect practice of pranayama leads to organic

injuries only if one is lucky. Usually, severe mental trauma results from a shattering of the nervous system, a system too weak to bear the tremendous power of the descent of the prana into the physical frame.

You cannot pour molten lava into a styrofoam cup. The universe is based on balance... The asanas give the external balance, the pranayama the internal balance. Hence, the asanas are indispensable and cannot be circumvented. The asanas give the body the organic and nervous strength to handle the power of the pranayama. The Hatha Yoga Pradipika cautions the student to move very slowly while learning the control of the breath, "otherwise it will kill the practitioner." (Chapter 11, verse 16).

Consider this frightening foreboding and weigh this alarming prognostication with care and due respect. Then go forth and start your practice with sincerity and humility, for you are about to invite into your body, mind and self, the most powerful force in the universe.



Tadasana's Journey

A Mythological Tale of How Tadasana Came Into Being

Andrea Schneeman
A student of Jyoti Hansa in Beginning Yoga
at Smith College

Reprinted from The Newsletter
published by the Iyengar Yoga Associations
of Greater New York and Massachusetts
Spring-Summer 1990

Patanjali, the father of yoga, stood among his pupils, who were mesmerized by his still posture. They felt the energy surrounding him, pulling in opposite directions, yet unified and stable.

"He seems so full of life, yet he is just simply standing there", his pupils thought quizzically. "This posture, *tadasana*, is everything but 'just standing'," Patanjali said, as if reading their minds. "*Tadasana* is yoga. Completely yoga. In this state, I can achieve a balance of my masculine and feminine energies. The masculine energy pulls my shoulders, hands and feet downward, wedding me to the ground, keeps my feet solidly balanced and my weight evenly distributed throughout them. The feminine energy, conversely, helps me extend upward in my spine, inner thighs, arches, chest, neck and neck. In this stable 'masculine' - or physical - state, I can allow my 'feminine' state of divine essence to inhabit my being more fully. The complementary forces of inhaling and exhaling work together in harmony because I am neither resting or exercising - I am not still, for surely my muscles and internals are active, yet I am not moving. This equilibrium state is necessary for the attainment of the 'yu' or union of the human and the divine. There is nothing aggressive, judgemental, or inconsistent about this posture. The Eightfold Path can be experienced entirely within *tadasana*: Self-restraint, Self-discipline, Posture, Control of Breath, Control of Senses, Concentration, Meditation, and Self-Realization."

"Why don't we just learn *tadasana*, then, teacher?"

"You must also learn to be open-minded and flexible. Then your self-realization will come to you more easily in *tadasana*."

"*Tadasana* . . ." one of Patanjali's students pondered. "That means 'mountain'."

"Yes, it does - and I'm sure you can understand why, for both my mental and physical selves are as firm and stable as a mountain. But actually, *tadasana* was first the name of a person . . . it is actually quite an interesting story, and one you should all hear and keep in mind throughout your life."

"Tell us!" his students urged.

Once there was a man named *Tadasana*, and he was a man admired by all. He was actively involved in the organization of community; he was intelligent and creative, and he had an ideal physical body -

strong, flexible and healthy. *Tadasana* was thankful for all of these gifts, but as he grew older he became more and more aware of his discontent with himself and his life. He often used his brilliant logical mind in order to attempt to crack the code of his unhappiness.

"My existence is shallow, almost dry," he told a friend.

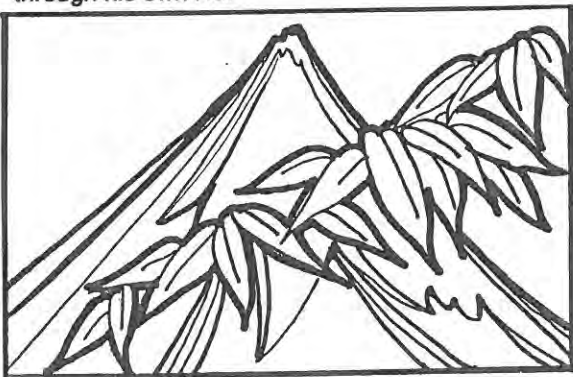
"My dear *Tadasana*, how can you possibly say that? You are deeply involved in all aspects of our society. Your wisdom surpasses all of ours; you must have greater insights to life in general and humanity as a whole by virtue of your daily evaluation of your broad experience."

"Of course, but my life still does not feel as if it were flowing through me continuously. There is a blockage in me somewhere - I feel as if maybe I am not giving free reign to my conscious and unconscious mind!"

"What do you mean by that?" his friend remarked skeptically. "Your mind is of greatest flexibility, and I believe that you use it in every way possible."

Tadasana shook his head, for he knew that no one would understand if he himself could not understand.

A day later *Tadasana* became ill. It was then that he was positive that the link that would establish a connection in the cycle of life needed to be discovered soon. He decided that he would need to take a journey to heal himself physically and spiritually. He needed to "flow through" the physical, natural world in order to have nature flow easily through his own life.



He set out on his journey immediately despite his illness. He had no idea where he was going to go, but, once he freed himself to the open environment, he felt some kind of animal instinct inside him leading the way. Already he felt himself more in touch with the universe and himself, for he was trusting both.

The first path that he walked on led through the forest. Tadasana noticed that the forest had an unusually large amount of game, and he started to pull out his bow and arrow because he was hungry. He could not shoot, however, before his body was taken over by a fit of coughing. "No" he thought. "I do not even want to shoot these animals. I do not crave meat, but sweet or sour fruits and vegetables." As he proceeded onward, he realized that he really had had no desire to be aggressive, either; he was in a very passive mood. "But how can this be good?" Tadasana thought and frowned. "If I am not active and assertive, will not my mind and body waste away?" He had no answer but to let himself move on.

Soon he reached a division in the path. The way on the left, he saw through the fire-bright foliage, led out of the forest, and the right path was overgrown; he could not distinguish its end. He wanted to leave the forest, and he headed down the left path for a few minutes until he stopped in his tracks. He realized that he had followed his ego, and not his heart, which now seemed to be urging him to plunge deeper into the forest, the unknown - for that was the only way he would discover the hidden medium which would allow his life to flow through him perfectly. He turned and plowed through the vegetation. Branches and thorns scraped his face and arms, drawing blood. Rocks underfoot were so sharp they pained his feet through the soles of his sandals. He grit his teeth and let the pains of nature come to him. As he neared the end of the thicket, the pains seemed to lessen, perhaps flowing out just as they flowed in.

Once outside of the forest, he stood up straight, and found much release in being able to stretch upward and feel as tall as the mountain in the distance. He relished the stable feeling of his feet pressed evenly against the ground after having been prodded by rocks and uneven earth. Then he lay down on the ground and began to stretch, elongating every part

of his body. He felt space growing in his body, making him lighter as if he were a balloon.

He moved through the open field. The idea came to him to exercise all of his newly discovered internal space by studying his patterns of breathing. After while, he realized that he could naturally control his breath and clear his mind of everything else while doing so. It allowed him to connect his body and mind to the flow of his source of life, breath.

Eventually he arrived at a village, but he felt the need to be separated, rather than socially integrated as he normally was. The sights, sounds and smells were difficult to ignore; however, Tadasana knew that he would lose sight of his journey if he didn't control his response to stimuli. He became more aware of his own inner stimuli, and by the time he neared the outskirts of the village, he realized that he needed to reach the mountain. It became his focal point; he concentrated on it with all his might, controlling his breath, and walking tall as he approached it.

He ascended the mountain, and as increasing spiritual satisfaction found its home in his heart, he knew what his goal was, finally; he had never felt so tired and energetic at the same time. Near the top of the mountain he discovered a cave which seemed to draw him into its negative space. He knelt down and began to meditate.

He had no idea how long he had been meditating when he understood. He had been born of the mountain, but, as a baby, had been washed away into the valley below, by the rushing spring. As a child of nature, he had developed his masculine self almost to perfection, but he had always lacked his feminine self, and longed to be reunited with it. And there he was, experiencing the 'yuj'.

He left the cave and walked to the very top of the mountain. He looked down, and he looked up. The universe was everywhere to be seen - and felt.

"And that," said Patanjali, is why the word for 'mountain' and this posture, is tadasana, for you can relive Tadasana's journey through it and all of yoga."



THACKER

HERE SHE IS, LOVELY VANA..
:click: THEOLOGIANS AND
SCIENTISTS AGREE :click:
TO TAKE AN E PAT..:click:



EARTH SHATTERING REVELA..
:click: A-A-A-Y SPIN HER
AGAIN..:click: SEEKING
SINCE THE BEGINNING OF..



:click: TIME'S UP DOROTHY
A-A-A-W THE..:click:
MEANING OF LIFE IS..:click:



♪ cheese, pickles, lettuce,
onions, special sauce on
a sesame seed bun ♪



© Nance Thacker '90

My Spiritual Diary

by Jim Rischmiller

It's halfway from Bombay to Pune and we have stopped for chai. The drivers and owner of lamp factory' (my companion) have vanished into a cafe. Scared of being left behind I have stayed in the taxi. I am alone in a sea of people and India is huge. The bright sun casts dusty shadows in the earth drawing my soul to this moment. The earth itself is yellowish brown, ground to a fine dust by the aeons it has been here. How many feet have passed this way, were those people thinking of their next step? In an unguarded moment toothless love shines between grandmother and grandson, oblivious to the hubbub around them. A poor bull in harness stoically follows his master steered by whacks on his shoulder. I am fascinated by the bright colours of the ladies saris, then by their carriage, in youth upright then bending with age. An old lady limps over and bangs on the door, no english but her language is plain. What do I do? At home I don't give to beggars but here? My experience at the airport when 5 rupees drew a full house has made me cautious so I sink deeper into the seat. Finally the drivers and my companion return and we are back to playing chicken on the road. We stick ourselves to the back of a truck with large eye's painted on its rear and the words 'Horn Please'. My companion explains we must blow our horn before overtaking which means all horns appear to be blowing continuously.

I had forgotten how quickly old Sol sets in the tropics. Daylight one minute and inky night the next. There are no street lights but I can see we are entering a city, yes it is Pune. My companion is coming to life now as we near journey's end without an accident, and he asks me where I am going. To study with Mr Iyengar, I reply. Ah, yogi, he says and a bond is established between us. We arrive at the Pune taxi stand, I hope God knows where I am. We ask our drivers the whereabouts of the Hotel Pathik, blank looks all round. The same is true for the first 10 rickshaw drivers and my companion sends them on their way. I would have taken the first one and been touring Pune for the night. Eventually a young man with a shy smile agrees to transport me. "Pay no more than 15 rupees", my friend says as we part

with a handshake and 30 minutes later we pull up at our destination. "50 rupees" Shy Smile demands. I am tired and in overload so I pull out 15 rupees and hand it to him. He follows me beseechingly from the road into the hotel lobby where a couple of men and a woman are sitting behind the counter. The woman stands up and with strength I wish I could muster, consigns my driver to the void, or at least that's what it sounded like. Then in beautiful english and with a nice smile she says "Mr Rischmiller your room is ready". So am I.



SALTSPRING ISLAND RETREAT

with
SHIRLEY DAVENTRY FRENCH

June 7-9, 1991



The Newsletter this month has been designed and prepared by Loren Cox and Ann Kilbertus who have embarked upon their new careers with the Victoria Yoga Centre. Of course they will continue their other careers! Our gratitude is extended to them for their help and for their talent. Linda Benn has set an outstanding example for them and they will continue to maintain her high standards in layout and creativity. Loren has drawn cartoons, pictures and diagrams for past newsletters, Ann is a yoga teacher at the Y, so they are both aware of the Yoga Centre activities. I am sure this will help them, as it did Linda, to produce an informative, interesting newsletter. By the time you read this issue, Linda will be in Hawaii with her husband, Don. Her trip will be a combination of yoga lessons and basking in the sunshine - true enlightenment! Thank you Linda for your efforts on behalf of the Yoga Centre newsletter. A special thank you Linda from the editor for all your help to me which enabled the newsletter to maintain such high standards.

EDITOR

YOGA CALENDAR

MARCH:

- 2: Pranayama Class/Practice with Shirley Daventry French.
 8: Victoria Yoga Centre Gathering at the Y.
 9: Iyengar teachers meeting on Gabriola Island.
 16: Workshop with Ann Kilbertus at the Y, see ad this issue
 17: Building the Inner Temple, a workshop at Shambala House. Call 595-0177 for details.
 20: Pranayama Class/Practice with Shirley Daventry French.
 See ad this issue or call 478-3775 for details.

APRIL:

- 5-7: Health Enhancement Workshop with Bruce and Maureen Carruthers on Galiano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.
 8: Victoria Yoga Centre Gathering at the Y. See ad this issue.
 11: Teachers meeting
 14: Straightwalk, a workshop at Shambala House. Call 595-0177 for details.
 20: Big, Big Practice. Watch newsletter for more details.
 28: Yoga workshop with Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galiano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

MAY:

- 4: Day of Yoga with Shirley Daventry French. Call 478-3775 for details.
 5: Hidden Language Workshop at Shambala House. Call 595-0177 for details.
 11: Teachers meeting
 24-26: Video Workshop at Shambala House, call 595-0177 for details.
 25: Pranayama Class/Asana Practice with Shirley Daventry French. Call 478-3775 for details.

JUNE :

- 7-9: Saltspring Island Retreat led by Shirley Daventry French. See ad this issue.
 8,9: Rose Ceremony at Shambala House, call 595-0177 for details.
 22: Pranayama/Asana Class and Practice with Shirley Daventry French. Call 478-3775 for details.
 28-July 11: Donald Moyer workshop on Gallano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

JULY:

- 4-7: Iyengar Teachers meeting in Ottawa.
 12-21: Health Enhancement Workshop with Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galiano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.
 27-August 2: Iyengar Yoga Intensive to be held at the Victoria Y. See ad this issue.

*Learn the
Sanskrit
names of
the poses
with*



101 Yoga Flashcards and Audio Tape

by Ramanand Patel and
Beatrice Briggs

Each kit contains

- complete instructions
- pronunciation guide
- 101 illustrated flashcards
- Sanskrit-English translation of the name of each posture
- audio tape keyed to the flash cards
- sturdy 3"x5" file box
- 10 dividers

To order your "Learn the Sanskrit names" kit, send \$29.95, plus \$4 shipping (in U.S. funds) to: Cittavritti Productions, 3432 N. Bosworth, Chicago, IL 60657 (312/929-5565).

Quantity discounts available.

AUGUST:

3-7: 5 Day Immersion Yoga Workshop given by
Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Gallano Island.
Call 539-5071 for details.

SEPTEMBER:

6-14: Workshop with Ramanand Patel at the Victoria
Y.

OCTOBER:

12-13: Yoga Workshop with Angela Farmer and
Victor Van Kooten on Gallano Island. Call 539-5071
for details.

25-27: Health Enhancement Workshop given by
Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Gallano Island.
Call 539-5071 for details.

NOVEMBER:

15-17: Yoga Workshop given by Maureen and Bruce
Carruthers on Gallano Island. Call 539-5071 for
details.

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE GATHERING

**FRIDAY, APRIL 5th
at 6pm**

in the Lounge at the 'Y'

6-7 pm Asana Practice

7-8 pm Potluck Dinner

8 pm Programme

Everyone Welcome

Bring Food and a Friend

The Yoga Centre of Victoria Newsletter Advertising

If you have products or services of interest to Victoria's yoga practitioners, this is your advertising vehicle.

Because our rates are so low, all advertising material must be supplied camera ready - that is, exactly as you want it to appear in the newsletter. If not, the copy will simply be typed and inserted. If you wish, we can arrange to have an advertisement prepared for you, but we must charge extra for this service.

Our policy in accepting advertising is that all advertisements must not conflict with the aims of the Centre, as stated elsewhere in the newsletter.

If you wish to buy an ad or require further information,
please contact our Advertising Manager, Carole Miller:

721-3477

1807 Forest, Victoria, B.C. V8N 1H5

RATES per ISSUE

Full Page	\$36.00
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1/4 Page	\$12.00
Business Card	\$9.00

SHAMBHALA HOUSE



1500 Shasta Place
Victoria, B.C. V8S 1X9
(604) 595-0177

Building the Inner Temple

As we grow spiritually, we are each building what Swami Radha calls our "Cathedral of Consciousness," our own inner temple. Through visualization, reflection, and drawing you will discover what kind of temple you want to build, and how you can make it a reality.

Friday, March 15, 7:30–10:00 P.M., Saturday and Sunday, March 16 & 17, 10 A.M.–6 P.M.

Fee: \$115, \$25 deposit. All fees will be donated to the Ashram Temple Fund.

Swami Radha's 80th birthday

Join devotees of this great teacher in a satsang to honour her.

Sunday, March 24, 8–9 P.M.

Straight Walk® Workshop

Clarify your thinking, your direction, and your choices, and take the next step in your spiritual development. Based on an ancient Buddhist walking technique from Po Lin Monastery.

Friday, April 12, 7:30–10:00 P.M., Saturday and Sunday, April 13 & 14, 10 A.M.–6 P.M.

Fee: \$150, \$30 deposit

MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION FORM

It's time you joined the Yoga Centre of Victoria! As you read this newsletter, you are receiving one of the benefits of membership. As you attend your yoga classes or a workshop, you are receiving the benefits of membership. These take time and money and your membership fees and participation really help.

Please fill out this form and send it with your cheque or money order to:
YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA, 3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R. #1, Victoria, B.C. V8X 3W9

MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION FEE IS \$20.00/year.

Name: _____

Street: _____

City/Prov: _____ P.C: _____ PHONE: _____

I am enclosing a cheque or money order in the amount of: _____

☐ Please do not mail me the newsletter; during class sessions I'll pick one up at my "Y" class.

The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY is a non-profit society incorporated under the Societies' Act of the Province of British Columbia whose purpose is, *"to encourage the physical, mental and spiritual growth of its members and other interested members of society at large by the study and discipline of Yoga"*. The Society owes inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

The Society Newsletter is published regularly, providing current information on events concerning yoga in Victoria and area and at the Yasodhara Ashram. Published by the Victoria Yoga Centre Society.

Anyone wishing to contribute articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions to the Newsletter may contact the Editor, Jennifer Rischmiller, 4489 Lindholm Road, R.R. #1, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8X 3W9. Telephone: (604)474-5630.

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DEADLINE FOR APRIL ISSUE: MARCH 18th, 1991

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY

3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R. #1, Victoria, B.C. Canada V8X 3W9

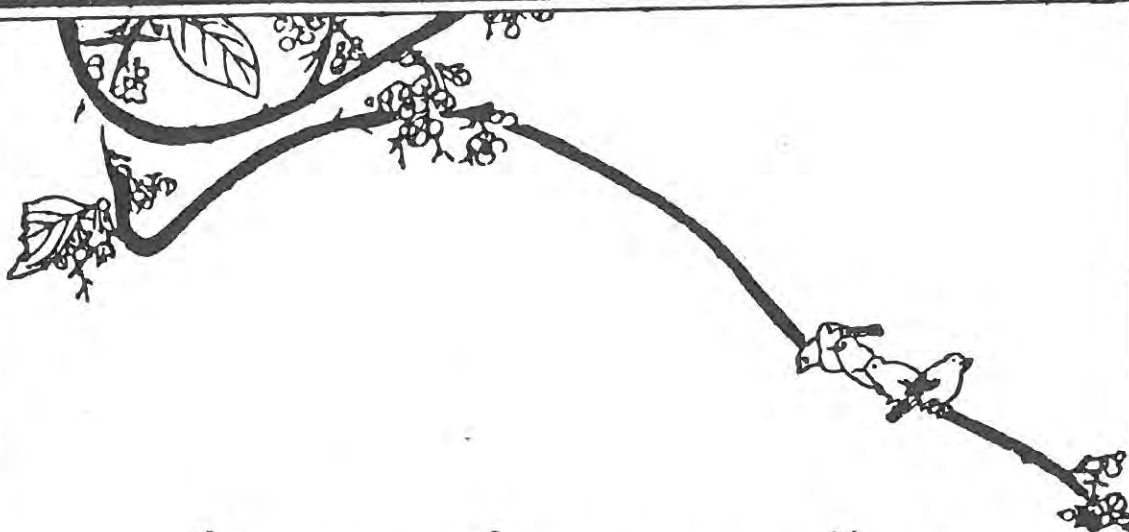


yoga centre of victoria

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

PLEASE
SUBSCRIBE

April 1991



You must savour the
fragrance of a posture.

*Wisdom of the Master.
Maxims by Shri B.K.S. Iyengar*





Reflections

By Shirley Daventry French

During the past month I have reflected a great deal on the nature of being a woman and the role certain women have played in my life. These thoughts were triggered by three separate events: a yoga teachers' meeting at Norma Hodge's studio, the 80th birthday of Swami Radha, and the birth of a daughter to my daughter, Rachel.

At the beginning of the month we journeyed up-island and took the ferry to Gabriola Island to hold our monthly teachers' meeting there. Norma Hodge, who has built a thriving yoga community on this small island, is planning to retire to the mainland, and this may be the last time we gather there. We went to honour her, but she also honoured us with a very special yoga class.

I first met Norma one Christmas at Yasodhara Ashram. She had recently returned from studying with Mr. Iyengar in India. I was very impressed with her teaching and, eager to learn more, invited her to come to Victoria and teach on a regular basis. Once a month, a small group of Victoria yoga teachers gathered with Norma at the Pacific Centre on Esquimalt Lagoon for a very special and very intense workshop. She helped us lay down a firm foundation in Iyengar Yoga, and opened a channel through which many of us have travelled to India to study with Mr. Iyengar and his daughter, Geeta. In the guise of Norma Hodge, Divine Mother gave birth to the Iyengar Yoga community in Victoria.

Around this time Divine Mother was busy in Victoria; in the form of Swami Radha she had already nurtured the birth of the Victoria Yoga Centre. In the early days of my yoga, I would spend wonderful, uplifting periods at Yasodhara

Ashram and return home full of love, light and joy only to see this quickly evaporate as I became enmeshed in the stuff of my life. Must it be this way, I began to ask? I knew I did not want to go and live in an Ashram, so I began to look for ways of sustaining spiritual values here in Victoria. There were others in the same boat, and with Swami Radha's encouragement and guidance, we gathered together for practice, discussion, satsang, offering mutual support and we struggled with our demons.

The penetrating insight, courage, compassion and honesty of Swami Radha, taught me to be more honest with myself and as a result I found strength. Through her, I learned to value my true nature as a woman. I learned to seek the highest in all my endeavours. I learned the value of community and how to bring spiritual values into all aspects of my life. And I learned that while none of this would come easily, nothing less was worthwhile.

Thirty years ago, through the grace of Divine Mother, I became a mother when my daughter Rachel was born. As I watched her this week nurture her own newborn daughter, I thought of the bitter sweetness of being a mother. The joy, the pain, the laughter and tears - the incredible bond which is there right from the start. When I was a child and naughty, my mother would say: "One day I hope you have a daughter just like you." I had two! Was this a curse or a blessing? At the time, in her frustration, she meant it more as a curse, but it has proved to be a tremendous blessing. My two daughters, in their very different ways, have both taught me so much about love, life and women's mysteries. I gave them physical birth but they have given birth in me to a deep appreciation of what it means to be a woman.

I did not always appreciate being a woman. I grew up angry about the favouritism showed to the males in my family, and always on the defensive. Through yoga I have become strong enough to lower many of these defensives, and to live life wholeheartedly in this female body.

This column has been written with a deep sense of gratitude to my mother, to Swami Radha, to Norma Hodge, to my daughters, Rachel and Stephanie, and the many women whose wisdom has guided me along the way.





YASODHARA ASHRAM

Box 9, Kootenay Bay
B.C., Canada V0B 1X0
Tel: (604) 227-9224

Spiritual Director: Swami Sivananda Radha

We are needing help again this year with the building of the Temple, as well as help to prepare for Swami Radha's 80th Birthday Celebration in July. So we are extending an invitation to people to come and work here for free anytime between April 1 and September 1. People must be willing to come for a minimum of 7 days (or 2 weeks if only working part-time). We have decided not to have brand new people come on this work exchange program as we have found they have trouble adjusting to working here. We would prefer to have people who have worked here or taken a few courses here before.

There will be no room and board fee for someone working full-time; we will charge a fee for part-time work but will reduce it from our usual \$188 per week to \$108 per week.

There is still lots of room in the Spiritual Renewal workshop being held from April 27-May 4. Take the time and space to do more extended spiritual practices in a supportive atmosphere. The week will include guidance in your practices of Mantra Yoga, the Divine Light Invocation, Hidden Language Hatha Yoga and Karma Yoga. Open to anyone who has taken our Yoga Teachers Course, or upon application. Fee: \$460, \$90 deposit.



A DAY OF YOGA

Asana and Pranayama
in the Iyengar Tradition
with

Shirley Daventry French

on

**SATURDAY,
May 4, 1991**



10 am to 4 pm in
The Yoga Room
3918 Olympic View Drive
R.R. 1, Victoria, B.C.

FEE \$45.00

Shirley is a student of B.K.S.
Iyengar and an experienced
teacher of his method of Yoga.

This workshop will be limited to 12 people
with previous experience of Iyengar Yoga.

For information and registration.
Phone 478-3775



ESPECIALLY FOR WOMEN
Aphorisms of Swami Radha
(excerpted from the book *Seeds of Light*)

True love between man and woman
is only possible when there is no emotional dependence
They can then become each other's best friend.

The major problem facing woman is to develop her emotional
independence. She can do this by recognizing her Divine nature.

Woman's nature is to preserve.
Her nurturing instincts should never be turned into a
destructive force.

Woman should not allow the anger accompanying the womens'
liberation movement to turn her against her nature.

The revolution of women can be a revelation, a liberation.

The female must develop maleness in a fifty-fifty proportion.
The male must develop femaleness in a fifty-fifty proportion.

Only women who can break loose from limiting attachments
can find liberation in one lifetime.

*The book Seeds of Life, a collection of aphorisms of Swami Radha, is available in
Victoria at Shambhala House, at a cost of \$9.95, or can be ordered directly from
Ashram Books at Yasodhara Ashram, Box 9, Kootenay Bay, B.C. V0B 1X0*



An 80th Birthday

by Leslie Hogya

I'm writing this on the occasion of Swami Radha's 80th birthday. Birthdays are a time to think of gifts. In a state of thankfulness I send and contemplate all the gifts she has given us.

The best gifts are those given from the self. It is not difficult for me to drive my car to the store, pick out a pretty scarf and card, put it in a box and mail it. A present I receive like that is nice, but it is more the excitement of seeing the package arrive and knowing that someone thought of me that I'm grateful for. In a year or two, I may not always remember what I received from that person.

If I receive a scarf that was decorated or woven by the sender, then it means much more. The gift has a special quality because the giver has spent considerable time and effort producing the scarf. For many years I will cherish it.

Swami Radha's gifts are of a more ethereal nature, but last a lifetime. Her presents are available, whether or not we take and use them is up to us. She gives the gift of herself. She has devoted her life to teaching and writing in order to share with others what she learned from her own spiritual practice and the teachings of her Guru, Swami Sivananda.

The Light Invocation is one spiritual practice I learned from Swami Radha. It is a practice that on the surface may seem simple, but in its simplicity it is all encompassing. Practicing the Light Invocation involves awareness, reflection on its meaning, concentration and surrender; the corner stones of spiritual practice. To do the Light Invocation I must focus and concentrate my mind and senses. I must put aside the ego and become aware of a higher divine energy. Finally I surrender any expectation of outcome as I release into the Light.

The Light is without creed or doctrine, and can be practiced by persons of any religious belief. Light is without name or form, yet it is a practice that gives great comfort. It is a way of sending healing energy to people or projects that I am concerned about.

Another offering has been her teachings directly to me in workshops as I struggle with my role as parent, wife, householder:

1. Take time for myself.
2. Love myself enough to create beauty around me.
3. I can't change anyone but myself; I can change how I react.
4. Children need responsibility.
5. A child cannot grow in the shadow of a big tree; step back from them.

6. If an issue keeps recurring in dreams or in my life, make a plan to deal with it.

Some of these things have been easier to accomplish than others. I have realized that giving myself time is not selfish but pays back in untold dividends. If I feel whole and centred, I have a much greater capacity to love, and be patient, with the people in my life. Honoring others instead of trying to change them has been important to me. I believe it is one of the main reasons my commitment to my marriage has strengthened over the years. My husband and I celebrated our twenty-fifth wedding anniversary last summer, not an easy task in late 20th century North America! I stopped trying to change my husband and worked on myself. As for my children, they have been the subject of many articles in this newsletter. I have struggled with how much to let go, how to provide the right limits, honoring myself and them. I step back from them, but in time of trouble or distress I leap forward again. The oldest is now 21 and is living on his own and starting his own business. The other is 16 and learning to be more responsible and independent.

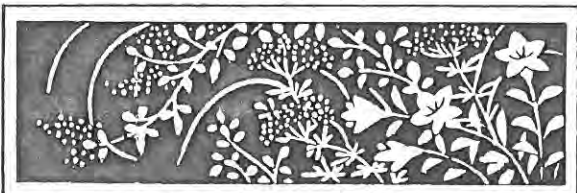
The list of gifts goes on. There is the Ashram itself, on the shores of Kootenay Lake. The bookstore, farm, kitchen, guest house, print workshop, prayer room, etc., etc., are all manifestations of her faith. At the Ashram, growing from its lotus base is the beautiful temple, a true vision come to being. The Temple of Light.

For me as I live and work in the world I am grateful for her contributions to so many communities: Shambala House, now growing in a new form called Radha House in England. As my daily life pulls me in one direction, and my emotions begin to reign, I find refuge in my Kundalini class or occasional weekend workshop. The book Kundalini Yoga for the West is another great gift. I felt stuck and was struggling with a personal issue last week. I couldn't write a paper so I turned to the book, knowing if I read and answered what question I found there, I would find what I needed. And it was so true. I found a passage on forms Shakti takes. There was what I needed; strength, wisdom, harmony and perfection.

The people who have studied with her for many years and become Swamis themselves, or heads of Shambala Houses, or teachers, all are more reasons to be grateful for her work.

As I write this and think of all the ways she touches and enriches my life with her many gifts of selflessness, I am moved and touched very very deeply.

OM OM



Saltspring Yoga Retreat

Jennifer Rischmiller

At the beginning of each year, Jim and I plan a budget so that we can prioritise our activities based on which ones we want to spend our money on. Of course, yoga figures largely in our lives so it is a top priority for both of us. First of all, I wrote down all of the yoga workshops, retreats, etc. that I would like to do, not taking into consideration how much they cost. You never know, I thought, maybe I can afford to do them all! However such is the yogic path of life, there were choices to be made as my budgeted portion set aside for yoga turned out to be a lot less than I needed. After I had made my final decision, there was money enough for my regular yoga classes and a couple of Saturday workshops with Shirley.

I congratulated myself on being able to make such decisions in such an unattached way, taking the information and using it without emotion. That was putting my Kundalini learning to the proper use, making each happening a priority, putting energy into making things happen instead of putting energy into why they weren't happening for me. After some time had passed I found myself figuring out how I could make something more happen for me. I had really wanted to take the Sutras weekend workshop with Shirley Daventry French but the money was not in the budget. My birthday falls in April so I asked Jim if he would pay for the workshop as a birthday gift to me. He agreed but then the workshop was cancelled. I looked again at my list of activities and asked Jim if he would pay for the Saltspring Retreat for my birthday gift. He agreed to that and so I am going again to the Victoria Yoga Centre Retreat to be held on Saltspring Island in June.

What a gift! Although it seems to be a matter of money, there are other factors at work here. I have had a struggle for a long time to take responsibility for our household budget. I have had to learn to be careful with my money, that there isn't enough for everything! These struggles are all part of the learning I have been doing, the looking at myself, the decision about who I am and who I want to be. The Saltspring Retreat has been a place where I can look more at the aspects of me that I want to be more aware of. However the looking has often been a struggle for me and the Retreat

YOGA IN METCHOSIN with Shirley Daventry French

A spring session of Yoga in the
tradition of B.K.S. Iyengar.

General classes daytime and evening
plus an afternoon class
for people with special problems.
Classes commence April 23rd.

Enquiries: 478-3775

provides an environment that is supportive and nourishing. Working with Shirley Daventry French during the days enable me to reflect on the activities of the day, social activities, including satsang, in the evenings help me renew connections both with the human and the divine. The periods that are not scheduled during the day and evening are often, for me, snapping, reading and writing. In my 'regular' life, I don't often give myself such long periods of time for such activities.

What a gift!

Thank you Jim.
Thank you Shirley

Learn the
Sanskrit
names of
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The 1991 Weekend Retreat at The Saltspring Centre

with

Shirley Daventry French

Friday, June 7, 6:00 pm thru Sunday, June 9, 2:00 pm

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Shirley Daventry French is a senior student of B.K.S. Iyengar, and one of Canada's leading teachers of the Iyengar method of Yoga. She has visited India several times to study at the Iyengar Yoga Institute in Pune, most recently in November 1988. This rich and extensive training, combined with a lively humour and articulate style is a powerful catalyst for students seeking the next step in their journey.

The retreat will provide time for spiritual renewal and reflection. In addition to daily classes in asana and pranayama, there will be chanting, satsang and periods of silence. Delicious vegetarian meals will be provided by the dedicated members of the Saltspring Centre and there will be time to swim, take a sauna, have a massage or simply enjoy the idyllic island setting. Indoor accommodation is provided. There is also space for tenting.

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Victoria, B.C. V8X 3X1

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Questions & Answers with B.K.S. Iyengar

Reported by Lorna Walker

Notes taken on July 15, 1989.

Question 1

Why does my face go purple in Sirsasana and Sarvangasana?

Mr. Iyengar pointed out that the student's nose was "deviated". He told her to exhale through her mouth. He also explained how to prepare carefully for Sirsasana with forward bends, Uttanasana, Pashimottanasana and half Halasana.

Mr. Iyengar explained that in Sarvangasana we push our ribs forward and this blocks the air passages. This is an incorrect movement.

Question 2

I have not understood the instructions about keeping the arms long in Sirasana.

Mr. Iyengar: Keep the arms long. They must extend along the floor. We don't have connection between the cells of the skin and the flesh. The skin should go one way, the flesh the other. Keep the sensation on the inside and outside of the arm. Awareness should be equal on all points. Don't have dullness. The attention must not be thoughtless. Learn the subject and object. When you bring the attention the object becomes the subject, e.g. when you bring the pressure to the big toe of the foot you tend to lose it on the little toe side. This is wrong.

The seeker is seeking. The seeker is the seer, the seer the seeker.

There is deviation if both parts (e.g. parts of the arm) are not working the same.



Mr. Iyengar observing Jim Rischmiller and Celia W. in sirsasana.

Question 3

What purpose do the eyes serve?

Some people close the eyes in meditation. The eyes when closed do not charge the brain. In asanas the eyes are open. They penetrate outwards. In Pranayama they are closed and penetrate inwards. The eyes are the windows of the brain, the ears are the windows of the mind. The brain is conscious, the heart subconscious. (Mr. Iyengar then asked which was foremost (conscious or subconscious) when you do Viparita Dandasana or Setu Bandha) Subconscious! In asanas making the subconscious conscious is meditation.

teaching people to sit straight not using the physical body? That is also physical. The self in us is always the same. Our structures only are different. We are short or tall...

There should be no air bubbles in the system. Water fills evenly to fill any shape. We should be doing likewise in doing the asanas. Consciousness should be such equally.

Everything is one when all is touching equally.

Question 4

My legs are different in Savasana. One rolls out more.

Mr. Iyengar asked the student to lie in Savasana. He then pressed down lightly with his toes on one of the student's hips and aligned his pelvis. The legs rolled out equally. The student said, "I thought the other leg was wrong. I like it this way."

Mr. Iyengar: This is not a miracle. It is a way of observation. When it feels ripe - a ripe memory, it is a ripe experience.

BSERVE!

Question 5

When you refer to the inner body are you referring to the consciousness?

Mr. Iyengar: The mind is like a computer. A piece of it discriminates. It is the reasoning mind. Yogis have refined the mind like the other essential organs.

The reasoning mind causes you to look inwards.

For Yogis the consciousness has three parts: (1) mind, (2) intelligence and (3) sense of touch.

The mind gives information that something is wrong. Then the intellect shows what is wrong - the muscles are different. The discriminating mind is the educating mind. When the "I" covers the whole body the "I" is the subject. This is the inner body.

Do you understand?

Student: I think I do.

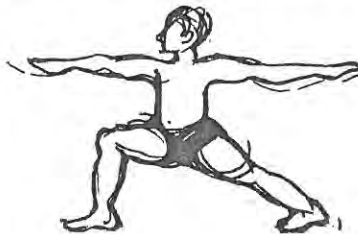
Mr. Iyengar calls the student with the problem in Sarvangasana forward. He shows how the mind and body should come together. The consciousness fluctuates from one leg to the other. Until the two become harmonious the consciousness is not in the leg.

When I am teaching I compartmentalize what I am teaching. Then it has to be put together. The pupil has to come up to the level of the teacher. The teacher has to challenge the pupil. The pupil has to bring the teacher to silence. When the pupil is working correctly there is no need for the teacher to speak. That is why I have to make a lot of noise. (Laughter.)

A half-empty vessel makes a lot of noise. You are all half-full I have to make a lot of noise. Until you are full I cannot remain silent.

In my class, when a pupil is in need of help, if I do not help I am doing evil. Not correcting is inviting an action some years later. It affects my karma. When a teacher sees something wrong and does not correct it, that is evil. A true yogi does not find fault with others.

Yoga is now taught in America for AIDS because, when I taught some students, they improved. I gave them some years of life. I took an AIDS student here (in Pune). I taught him outside on the balcony (the class was inside). When I adjusted him I only shouted at the class. I did not touch the class. I only shouted "Do this, Do that" to them. The doctors were worried. Only I touched him. I put nobody else at risk. The student used his own equipment and washed it after class.



Question 6

Could you explain about the tempo of the class and how you deal with the different levels?

Mr. Iyengar: I go step by step so that stability can be gained, increasing the tempo as intelligence increases. You should do backbends as I showed Savasana (with the conscious mind directed everywhere).

The tempo is set by looking for the weaknesses of everyone. It is the intellectual tempo, not the physical tempo.

Question 7

My ankles are very weak and they tremble in Prasarita Padottanasana. What is wrong?

Mr. Iyengar showed how her knees rolled in as she bent forward.

Question 8

I do not understand how the shoulders move in Virabhadrasana 1.

Mr. Iyengar: The upper arms are not stretching (the student is doing the posture). They are projecting forward.

He put a pole behind the neck and in front of each of the biceps. The arms became straight and shoulder blades moved into the body.

Mr. Iyengar: The flesh lifts, the skin descends and the shoulder blades move in, not up.

Mr. Iyengar then asked another student to show the lifting of the arms with feet together and pointed out how the thighs and pelvis moved forward as the arms were lifted.

The student struggled to correct this.

Mr. Iyengar: This is a common fault.

Question 9

Mr. Iyengar, you stood on my thighs in Supta Virasana. Can I now claim I have studied under Mr. Iyengar? (Much laughter.)

Mr. Iyengar then asked the student to do the pose.

He pointed out how the thighs have to remain the same size and shape in Supta Virasana as in Tadasana and showed how to achieve this.

This closed the session. The class showed their appreciation with prolonged applause.

Notes taken on 22.7.1989.

Mr. Iyengar began the session by asking what we thought of the course. Answers were "fantastic". It has shown us how little we know and how much more there is to learn.

Our bodies will vibrate for years!

Mr. Iyengar then spoke for a short time:

If you understand the simple postures - stabilizing - then, in complicated postures, you cannot make mistakes. Each position should give you feedback.

Is the reaction coming? Is it a two way path? The development is there then. There is a conative and cognitive reaction. Many students do not react to action. If they feel a slight movement, they think they are doing well.

The nerves and cells send messages but you are caught in the brain. You have no time to receive the action. Impede the brain, then think 'Is cognizance there'? In Sirsasana, for example, we think how the right leg is working. We have no time to think of the left leg. The sole of one foot is working. You should ask why is the other sole not working? This work is known as mental discipline. It is using the body to train the mind. Patanjali says sweetness leads to liking and pains to aversion. Joy leads to desires. Patanjali says 'I enjoy' is not Yoga.

Mr. Iyengar then spoke of a Doctor student in his class that morning. The student said 'I feel nothing. Make me do it in a hard way'. Then he felt what the posture could do.

This is cognizance. There should be reaction to the action. Just doing is not Yoga. Think of the centre wall of the body. You should spread from that. Yoga is like the sun. The sun's rays penetrate. Yoga should be like the sun, penetrating, making it a spiritual and mental practice. If you stretch the nerves, measure how the movement flows, it brings warmth. You have to adjust to feel the warmth all over. It is a judgment of the mind. It is a oneness - fibres, spindles, skin, nerves and bones. The structural body is the middle portion.

A child is born with straight limbs. It is the parents who allow it to develop wrongly, with bow legs or knock knees. You need to tuck the muscles nearer the bone. There should be no under or over stretching, no dullness on one side of the leg or the other.

Mr. Iyengar later showed how the skin on his leg moved evenly on each side of the shin bone - and the flesh around the shin bone was even on both sides.

"That is mastery," he said.

Until you know the maximum function, the oneness, you cannot have full health. You are in holes, I am whole. (Mr. Iyengar had previously pointed out the holes in our practice. He called it 'holistic' not 'wholistic'.

Ask yourself why one muscle is heavy and the other light. From this realization comes.



Question 10

I have tinnitus. What can I do for it?

Mr. Iyengar: Ringing in the ears is caused by wax, liquid in the ears, or closing of the bones. All these things could be avoided. The ear should remain circular. When going into inverted poses you should make sure the centre of the ear is perpendicular. The lower and middle head should be lower than the top of the back of the head. In all poses, watch the centre of the ear. When you turn your head the ears should remain round. The ears affect the eyes. The eyes are the diaphragm of the brain and should be relaxed. When we first work the body is stiff. As we work the body changes. You should continually re-examine. Then if the ears are heavy in Sarvangasana check if the skin is running from the bottom of the head to the neck. It should move from the base of the neck to the head. Question the mind. If you extend the centre of the neck more than the sides, it brings deafness. You need to test and re-test. You should have unanimity in stretches - alignment - equal balance. Healthy can become unhealthy by wrong use of the mind. You do everything with a busy head, but you should empty your heads and keep on polishing the postures.

Question 11

What Yoga postures should you give for people with emotional disturbances?

Mr. Iyengar: Sirsasana, Viparita Dandasana, Setu Bandha Sarvangasana, Adho Mukha Vrksasana, Urdhva Dhanurasana, Halasana. Halasana and Sarvangasana can be repeated, fast, ten times to take off dejection.

Emotional disturbance comes from the chest rather than the brain. For the blood to circulate well and the organs of perception to function well, the chest needs to open.

Short Kumbhaka with positive sound brings back confidence. It should be done with fineness but with more sound.

Question 12

Why, when lying in Savasana, does it take so long for me to calm my mind?

Mr. Iyengar: You need weights on you from your feet to your head, then restfulness will come. The weights send the nerves in a different direction so relaxation will come. It will only come through the nervous system, not physiologically. Introverts need positive movements - to shift the blood. Extroverts - the nerves extend, there is no emptiness - put on the pressure of a weight and the nerves recede backwards. Weights are an indirect way of calming the mind. The direct method is to use the mind itself. You can be extravagantly using the mind, using inner strength.

Question 13

What causes shaking after Savasana?

Mr. Iyengar: It is relaxation with stress, not freedom. You try to relax by keeping the nerves taut. Weights on the legs from thighs to calves will help.

Question 14

I have a lot of tension in my throat.

Mr. Iyengar: It is the tongue. Doctors will say it is glandular problems but it doesn't come without stress on the tongue. (Mr. Iyengar made us do Paschimottanasana. We found that the tongue became thick and tense as we moved down. Similarly, in Trikonasana it moved to the side. In all postures, he said, the tongue should remain relaxed and thin.)

You are all unaware of what your tongue is doing when you are doing the poses. You should keep the inner body quiet. This is why it is not physical Yoga but mental Yoga.



Question 15

How do you cope with the frustration because we are all so slow?

Mr. Iyengar: If I hadn't faced frustration all my life I would not be teaching you now.

(He laughed) I create frustration in you. When you get dejected I lift you up by coming to your aid. I also use strong hands. How many times I explain. A hit means cognizance. The hit changes from person to person because different parts weaken. When the part moves my frustration is gone.

Question 16

Why am I not stiff after your classes?

Mr. Iyengar: Because you surrendered to me. Mr. Iyengar went on to explain about teaching - A man who knows the subject can explain. A person who comes to learn from you cannot judge your work. He is stupid if he thinks he can. Don't get carried away by praise. Re-do postures a dozen times when things are wrong and knowledge will come. Don't practise thoughtlessly. If you read the posture line by line you will learn.

Question 17

I have AIDS positive students. How do I work with them?

Mr. Iyengar: Special poses were given in San Francisco. (The questioner was American). Standing poses drain AIDS positive people. They have little strength. They can do Trikonasana, Ardha Chandrasana and Paravottanasana. These are the least draining. These people have a wetness in the genital organs. Drying postures have to be used. - Urdhva Dhanurasana, Viparita Dandasana. As you have to dry with a cloth, you have to do poses that dry the genital organs. I have a student who discharged blood every morning. I gave her the drying poses and now she has no discharge. How the asanas are done is important. They need to be suited to the student - Sirsasana, Sarvangasana, Viparita Dandasana, not Ustrasana or Salabhasana.



The Victoria Yoga Centre
and the Victoria YM-YWCA
are pleased to announce an



IYENGAR YOGA INTENSIVE

to be held this summer at the Victoria "Y"
with Senior Canadian Teachers

July 27th to August 2nd 1991

Fee: \$325.00

- Daily classes in Asana and Pranayama
- Seminars on Yoga Psychology and Philosophy
- Therapeutic Yoga

*Classes will be taught by the following senior students and
experienced teachers of the Yoga of B.K.S. Iyengar*

Dr. Bruce Carruthers
Liz McLeod
Shirley Daventry French
Dr. Derek French



For further information contact:

Victoria Yoga Centre
3918 Olympic View Drive
R.R.1 Victoria, B.C. V8X 3W9

Telephone Enquiries: Shirley Daventry French (604) 478-3775
Linda Benn (604) 598-8277

SUMMER OF '91

Iyengar Yoga Intensive in Victoria

July 27th to August 2nd 1991

This summer the Victoria Yoga Centre in association with the Victoria YM-YWCA is offering an intensive course in Iyengar Yoga with senior Canadian teachers: Bruce Carruthers of Galiano Island, Liz McLeod of Edmonton, Shirley Daventry French and Derek French of Victoria. Bruce and Derek are physicians who integrate their understanding of yoga into their medical practices. Liz and Shirley are respected teachers who teach nationally and internationally. All are dedicated students of Mr. Iyengar, and between them they have a wealth of experience.

This course is intended for teachers and students with experience in Iyengar Yoga who wish to deepen their practice and broaden their understanding of the philosophy and psychology on which the practice is based. There will be daily classes in asana and pranayama, discussions on how to practice, how to teach and teacher/student relationships, plus the opportunity to participate in special teacher training sessions. Seminars will include: Seeing and Understanding Bodies, Back Problems, Patanjali's Yoga Sutras. Classes will be held in the well-equipped Yoga Studio of the Victoria "Y".

PROGRAMME

Saturday, July 27th 1991

5.00 to 6.00 pm - Reception and Orientation

Sunday, July 28th to Thursday, August 1st 1991 inclusive

9.30 am to 12 noon - Asana
12 noon to 2.00 pm - Lunch break
2.00 pm to 4.00 pm - Seminar
4.00 to 5.00 pm - Pranayama

Friday, August 2nd 1991

9.30 am to 12 noon - Asana
12 noon to 12.30 pm - Lunch break
12.30 to 2.00 pm - Wrap up panel and discussion
2.30 pm An afternoon of relaxation and
contemplation at French' residence
& nearby Witty Beach Park
6.00 pm Buffet supper & party at French's

THE TEACHERS

All the teachers for this Intensive :

- are longtime students of the Yoga Master B.K.S. Iyengar
- are experienced teachers of his method of Yoga
- have studied intensively with Mr. Iyengar in India
- train yoga teachers through apprenticeship programs
- teach nationally and internationally
- work in many ways to promote Yoga and support the work of Mr. Iyengar in their local area

and

- are committed to building a strong Canadian Iyengar Yoga community.

Bruce Carruthers is a physician and specialist in Internal Medicine with a personal and professional interest in the practice and teaching of health enhancement. He practises medicine and teaches therapeutic yoga classes in Vancouver, and offers residential workshops on yoga and health in the beautiful home-work space which he and his wife, Maureen, have built on Galiano Island, B.C. Bruce is a founding member and past-president of the B.K.S. Iyengar Yoga Association of Vancouver.

Elizabeth (Liz) McLeod of Edmonton, Alberta began her study of Yoga in 1970 out of an interest in body awareness, gymnastics and dance. Liz has been in the forefront of the growth of Iyengar Yoga in Alberta. After working for several years on the executive of the Yoga Association of Alberta, Liz founded the B.K.S. Iyengar Yoga Association of Edmonton and serves as its President. She has been teaching in Edmonton and throughout Canada for nineteen years.

Shirley Daventry French was introduced to yoga in 1970 through her work in fitness and health education, and has been teaching in Victoria and across Canada for nineteen years. Shirley is the founder of the Victoria Yoga Centre and director of the Iyengar Yoga programme at the Victoria "Y". She is also a writer and editor whose reflections on yoga are a regular feature of the Victoria newsletter. In 1987 Shirley edited Mr. Iyengar's autobiography/biography "IYENGAR - His Life and Work".

Derek French is a physician in general practice in Victoria, B.C. with a special interest in musculo-skeletal problems, chronic pain syndromes, stress management and hypnotherapy. As an athlete and participant in many sports, he first became interested in yoga when he injured his own back. He teaches therapeutic yoga, and seeks to integrate the ancient wisdom of yoga with the practice of modern medicine.

ACCOMMODATION

The Residence at the "Y" has a limited amount of accommodation for women. Bed and breakfast will be available with members of the local yoga community. As a popular tourist centre Victoria has a wide selection of hotels and motels. There is also accommodation on the attractive campus of the University of Victoria, a short bus ride from downtown and the "Y".

"Y" Residence

Special one-week package for seven nights: \$198.00 including tax for a single room with shared bathroom, \$297.00 including tax for a double room (\$148.50 per person). A deposit should accompany your request for accommodation: \$33.00 single, \$49.50 double. Early reservations are recommended as this is the busiest time of the year.

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\$20.00 a day

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Single room \$24.00 per night including breakfast (plus tax).

Double room \$37.00 per night (plus tax)

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Iyengar Yoga Intensive - July 27th to August 2nd 1991

Name

Address City

Province Postal Code Telephone No.

Please find me Bed and Breakfast accommodation in a private home. ☐ \$20.00 per day

(Pre-payment is required by June 27th when balance of course fees is due. Send a separate cheque for this amount payable to Victoria Yoga Centre.

Please reserve a room in the "Y" Women's Residence @ \$198.00 per week single or \$297.00 double including tax non-refundable deposit is enclosed. ☐ \$33.00 single ☐ \$49.50 double

TO REGISTER

A deposit of \$125.00 will reserve a place in this special course. Payment in full is due on June 27th 1991.

Refunds, less a \$35.00 administration fee, will be given only when the space is filled by another student.

REGISTRATION FORM

Iyengar Yoga Intensive - July 27th to August 2nd 1991

Name

Address City

Province Postal Code Telephone No.

Are you a teacher?

Briefly describe your yoga experience. List major Iyengar teachers with whom you have studied.

.....

.....

.....

☐ Deposit of \$125 enclosed

☐ Full payment of \$325.00 enclosed

*Make cheques payable to the Victoria YM-YWCA and mail to
Summer Intensive c/o Victoria Yoga Centre
3918 Olympic View Drive,
R.R.1 Victoria, B.C. V8X 3W9.*

Question 18

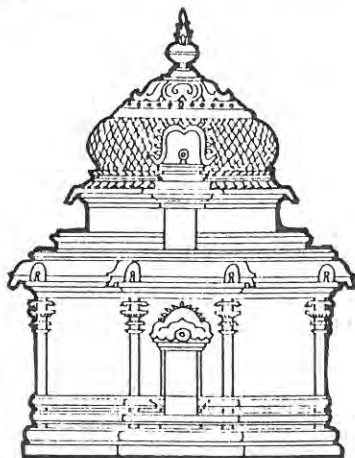
Can you comment on the asanas and the immune system?

Mr. Iyengar: Yoga keeps cells healthy and supplies blood to the cells, increasing the defensive system. With a poor defensive system, diseases will come. Yoga educates the cells. Cells live a short period. Do we make full use of them? People's cells now are like stillborn children. Stress and strain sap energy. No other system can equal Yoga, to build up the nervous system. Even food needs cells. There are many types of cells. Some are scavenger cells. Iyengar Yoga does not neglect any cells - physical or mental. By simply sitting in meditation the cells will not function well.

Question 19

What is the design of the building any significance?

Mr. Iyengar: It is all in the booklet 'Know your Institute'. The building is specially built for the air to enter. The architects wanted a low ceiling. It needs to be high but if we speak quietly people can't catch what is said so we have to raise our voices so students can hear. This is a drawback to the building. The Yoga Hall has the flavour of my practice. Here you do not want to talk. People who come here practise in silence. Downstairs they make a noise.



Question 20

What asanas are good for diabetes?

Mr. Iyengar: They are given in 'Light on Yoga'. Work from the liver. The liver is the important organ. Keep it healthy. Nobody taught me how to teach. The cause of diseases should be known, also the symptoms. Work from this - which asanas affect that part? The formula is given in 'Light on Yoga'. You work from this. Give a little thought how to work.

Many think non production of insulin is the cause of diabetes. There is no disease if the liver is healthy. The liver makes the other organs last for ever. Heart trouble and kidney trouble stem from the liver. The liver is the largest organ, the hardest to tone. It holds sugar. If the liver cannot hold the sugar it goes to the blood and urine. Think of exercises for the liver. Cycles of exercises to tone the organs should be known. People do not understand how the organs befriend each other. No book other than 'Light on Yoga' gives groups of asanas for diseases. You need a group, not a single asana. Make use of the format given in 'Light on Yoga'. Look at the person. If the liver bulges on the right work on the outside. In Bharadvajasana the inner side is pushed to the outside and made to move. In Marichyasana the outer edges are pushed and made to pump to the centre. There are cannons on every side! Nothing can escape. That is the way to do the asanas.

Question 21

After Pranayama I feel puffed up on my right side.

Mr. Iyengar: The outer edge of your shoulder blade is lifted. The lung on that side doesn't fill. You create a ditch. Water falls into a ditch. Turn the weaker lung to the outer edge of the shoulder blade. The right and left sides should be equally active. Discipline the diaphragm.

Question 22

Why can't I do Pranayama?

Mr. Iyengar: It is impossible for you to do pranayama. Your spine is caved in. There is a ditch in the middle. The breath stagnates. For one or two years don't attempt to do Pranayama. Do Setubanda Sarvangasana and Viparita Dandasana. Hit your chest forward and expand it sideways, with your head eight inches above the ground. Also do Urdhva Dhanurasana looking up at the ceiling and keep your chin well tucked into the chest.

Mr. Iyengar showed what he meant on the student - to the amazement of all watching. It was a high point on which the session ended. The student's back looked quite different in the postures.

Question 23

I have epilepsy. What should I do?

Mr. Iyengar: Do Viloma Pranayama. Even inverted poses keep it away. The brain needs oxygen. After practising Yoga people get warnings which were not there before. The warnings are an indication that the brain senses an attack. Before you did Yoga you would not have known. This time - when you sense an attack coming on - do Viloma. The attack will not be strong. You will have supplied oxygen to the brain. You can also do Viparita Dandasana but be cautious, use supports or you may get injured when the attack comes on. You must supply oxygen to the brain. All inverted poses do this. Then forward bends. Standing poses will hasten the attack.



Question 24

When we sat on a support to do Marichyasana III, when turning the trunk to the right, you told us to lengthen the left side of the waist and shorten the right side. Did I understand what you said correctly?

Mr. Iyengar: Yes...

Mr. Iyengar then went on to show us how the spine moves differently in different poses. We tried out what he said. We had to turn first to the right then to the left in Virasana, in Baddhakonasana, in Pashimottanasana, in Upavistakonasana and in Padmasana. Mr. Iyengar: In Baddhakonasana, when you turn the outer spine moves, not the inner. You also do this pose for slipped disk as the pain comes on the outer edge.

In Upavista Konasana the outer buttock bone remains on the floor. Never turn the leg with your spine. Try these poses before you do Marichyasana III. In Padmasana different parts of the spine move. In Paschimottanasana it is different again. You have to observe which works which part of the spine. Only then do you understand twists.

Question 25

The position of my shoulders on the blankets in Sarvangasana was different when one of my helpers corrected me. Can you tell me what is the correct position for my students?

Mr. Iyengar: How can I say what is correct for students? I have shown you how the neck should move. You have to find out why you were moved. You have to stretch without moving from the edge of the blanket. Did the tissues move or did you move? You, as pupil, must observe properly. Did it feel steady. (Student - it felt good.) Don't think of good. It can be wrong and feel good. What do you look for when you correct a student? The approach is always different. Look for the correct position. Do not work mechanically. Never ask a question "What do I look for?" You have to work to find out. When I practise I have to find out. If you stretch vertically you forget the geometry. If you remember the geometry

you forget to add up. Each individual case requires judgment. What you do is not correct for another person. There is no readymade pill. You build from a basis. God has given us to think. Watch the skin. Move the flesh separately to the skin. Look where life is. Before you touch anyone try it out on yourself. Say, 'I got this movement. Try.' Don't say 'I think' - oscillating in your own teaching. Go to Sarvangasana (indicating a student with a back problem) and get the feel. If you don't do yourself you can't get the feel of the problem. Teaching English is objective. In Yoga two persons are involved subjectively. You work on yourself so that nothing untoward happens. You have to work quietly. I can shout. Courage comes when you practise. A healthy mind means you can correct. 'I do better than you' is pride, unhealthy working. For example, in locking hands in Sarvangasana an inferior practitioner may do better. Learn from the inferior. Use photographs. Are the muscles and skin parallel. Which arch is open and which closed? Is the chest open? See the forearms, are both equal or is one turned out, one in?

In Indian mythology Dattatreya, the child of Siva, had 64 teachers. He learnt from everyone, including the lowliest creatures. I learnt from a dog. Even the cat was my Guru. We don't pay attention to the good. We are concerned with the bad. Correcting the bad can make the good bad. Then you must look at what you are doing. Don't ask the teacher "Am I straight? Feel for yourself. In doing Paschimottanasana, look at your arms, see what is working. Observe the direction and curvature of the muscles. In one facing up and one down? Do you lose one hand in Sirsasana correcting the other? Feel on both sides. How are the shoulders touching the blanket in Sarvangasana? Why are they touching differently? One should help the other. Self-awareness is feeling the stretch. It may take 20 or 30 years. Measure from one to another. For you people, a little relief means you think you have got it. Don't use the mirror to see yourself; use it for correction. If you work like this, the right method will come.

Question 26

When I am doing Pranayama I am tremulous.

Mr. Iyengar: You are a beginner in Pranayama. When you become tremulous it means you are unconsciously using the fibres of the chest by the force of your mind. You use will-power. As you breathe in, your intelligence has to see how your lungs expand. They should expand without hardening. When you hit the bronchial tubes fast, there is turbulence. The bronchioles are porous. The breath has to be injected like a needle. It has to go into the hole like a needle. If you use force the holes block and you cannot breathe. To stop the trembling you should do one or two breaths and then wait, breathing normally. The more you attempt, the worse the trembling will get. It is similar to contracting the gross muscles. The more you attempt, the worse the trembling will get. It is similar to contracting the gross muscles. Control those and the disturbance will cease. The intelligence should see if the breath is passing through the holes of the bronchioles. Passivity is a must! In inhalation keep the cells passive - as in Padmasana, similarly in breathing.

Question 27

What is the difference between 'teacher' and 'guru'?

Mr. Iyengar: A teacher gives out what they have been asked to instruct - like a schoolteacher. A guru works for the upliftment of the student. I use a direct path - a slap. It will enable the student to correct the mistake on the spot. Now or never is the character of the guru. I have to sharpen the student. I don't ask 'Is it pleasant?' Pleasant is no good if it doesn't come. I ask, 'Is it true?' Now or never? Perhaps is no good. It is not one day or the other. Perhaps is the terminology of power. It brings you into 'time'. Words may change but the meaning should not change.



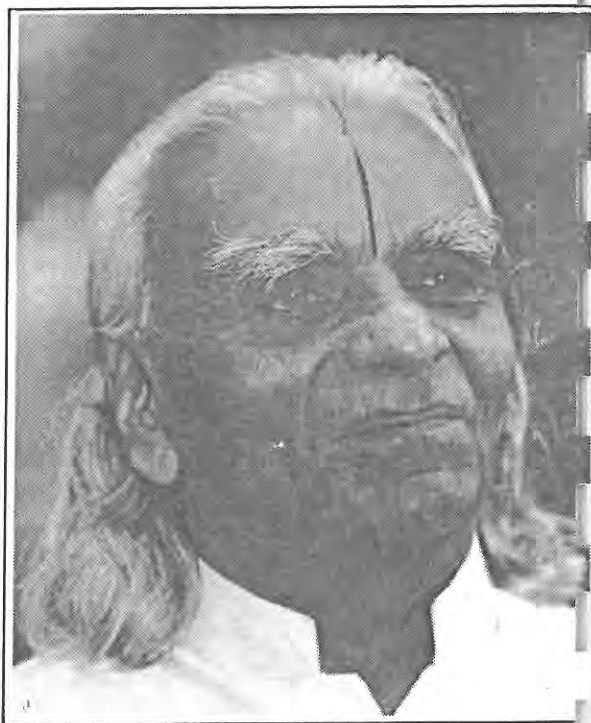
Question 28

How is Prashant? Not all here know how he is getting along.

Mr. Iyengar: Prashant is getting on well. He is passive. His cells are dead and may take a long time to recover. Whether he gets full use of his arm is in debate. We first thought he would lose his arm. The first thought was to save his arm. He lost the head of the humerus. Now the arm is saved we are trying to make the arm function. Can he get back some function in his arm? His progress is good. He can flex with pain to 85 per cent in the elbow. He has no head of the radius unless the bone grows. We have to wait. There is the possibility of another operation. After the last operation he was in a coma for four days. The operation seemed a failure. Gangrene had set in. For the operation, he had to be rushed to hospital 15 miles away. We couldn't get a good ambulance and he had to lie on the floor. The roads of Pune played a miracle. The jerks opened some arteries. They didn't need to operate on the hand when he arrived, only the bone graft from the leg. After four days he came out of the coma. He first recognised Geeta. It may take 15 - 18 months to know what his condition will be and how much use he will have. Prashant is the first case of a complete smash of the elbow coming out with some use of the arm. He lost 50% of his biceps and 60-70% of the triceps. The muscles will have to be rebuilt. The graft from his tibia has set.

The session ended with a small presentation to Mr. Iyengar as a token of thanks from students who felt that Mr. Iyengar had given with great generosity for the full duration of the course. Mr. Iyengar said that what he had received would be given to help rebuild a village that had been destroyed in the cyclone that had hit India earlier in the week. We had already learned that the fees from the course were being given to help a leper colony.

From: Dipika Supplements, No. 4, May 1990.



B.K.S. Iyengar Honoured

Mr. Iyengar is to receive the most coveted and prestigious Presidential award of India: the Padmashree Award. This award, given to only a select few, pays the highest tribute possible to Mr. Iyengar. The International Council of Arurveda has also honoured Mr. Iyengar with its Honorary Doctorate degree. These awards will be bestowed upon Mr. Iyengar in New Delhi in March.

The Victoria Yoga Centre
and the Victoria YM-YWCA
are pleased to announce an

IYENGAR YOGA INTENSIVE

to be held this summer at the Victoria "Y"
with Senior Canadian Teachers

July 27th to August 2nd, 1991

Fee: \$325.00

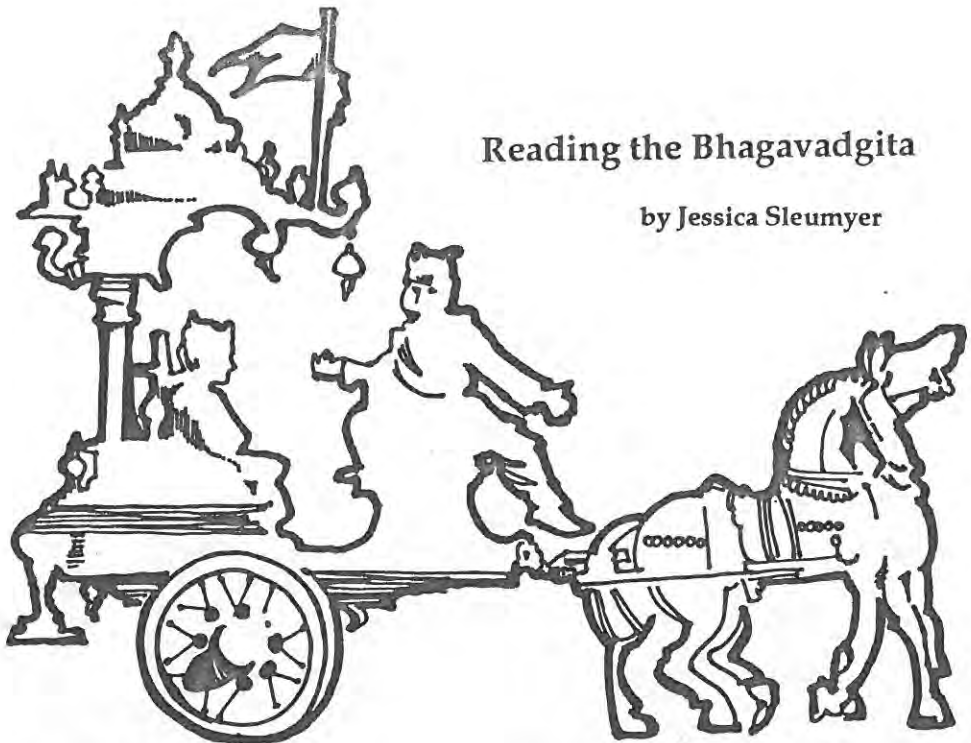


Bruce Carruthers and three other very fine yoga teachers will be leading daily classes in asana, pranayama, yoga psychology and philosophy.

For brochure or further information contact:

Victoria Yoga Centre
3918 Olympic View Drive
R.R. 1, Victoria, B.C. V8X 3W9

Telephone Enquiries: Shirley Daventry French (604) 478-3775
or Linda Benn (604) 598-8277



Reading the Bhagavadgita

by Jessica Sleumyer

In the fall of 1990, Jennifer and Jim Rischmiller and myself began getting together each weekend to spend a few hours reading the "GITA" in the hope of finding in this ancient most spiritual poem inspiration for our daily lives.

The Bhagavad Gita is a very practical handbook for daily living. Its setting is a battlefield. Isn't that what we so frequently find our lives to be; a battlefield where we need to make a living, give care to our children, tend to our own spiritual growth and answer to the needs of others. All of this puts us in a position where the general experience is of contradiction and being pulled in opposite directions by forces from within as well as from without.

Arjuna, the warrior, is to strive to regain his kingdom from his kinsmen who have taken over the realm upon his father's death. Just so are we, on our spiritual journey, trying to regain control over our destiny from our 'kinsmen', i.e. personality aspects, desires and attitudes ruled over by the imposter-king: ego. In our spiritual battle we want to put our indwelling, Higher Self back on the throne. Arjuna has as a charioteer Krishna, the Divine Incarnate. To Arjuna, Krishna is his friend and his mentor. He is his Guru, the dispeller of darkness and pointer of the way.

Just before the signal for battle is given, Arjuna asks Krishna to put his vehicle in a position from which he can survey what he is up against. Seeing the opposing vast army he loses heart, wondering if the upcoming battle is worth the suffering it will cause. The battle is the process of life, the process of Yoga.

Wise and experienced yogi though he is, Arjuna proceeds to ask Krishna - for our benefit as well - in detail what this Yoga consists of and how we may recognize this Higher Self, The "Lord Supreme". Patiently Krishna explains to Arjuna all that puzzles him and all that keeps him off balance and depressed. He tells him how to regain his courage, his will and his vision.

In Chapter 7, verses 1 and 2, Krishna says: "Hear now Arjuna how you shall have the full vision, which when known, THERE IS NOTHING ELSE FOR YOU TO KNOW." Vision implies the capacity to apply gained (inner) wisdom to daily living.

At the conclusion of his dialogue with Krishna, Arjuna says: "You have dispelled my doubts and delusions and made me ready to fight this battle. My faith is firm now and I will do your will." From this kind of surrender Arjuna can start to fulfill his god-given duty. Of persons of true wisdom Krishna says that their thoughts are on Him: "Their life is in Me and THEY GIVE LIGHT TO EACH OTHER."

That is what our little group is about; to help one another to find the Light. To talk about our fears, our doubts, our struggles and, especially, to listen to Krishna's teaching and to respond to His invitation to 'His Supreme Yoga.'

I invite you to join us. We read and reflect on a chapter during the week. On Sunday mornings we read it together using various versions and translations. We talk it over together, how it applies to ourselves and to whatever occupies our thoughts that week.

Tapas

by Christine Boyd

Reprinted from the Iyengar Yoga Institute
Review, Summer, 1990.

In the philosophy of Astanga Yoga, tapas is the third of the *niyamas*, the observances that form the ethical foundation in the practice of yoga. The literal meaning of tapas is to burn or to consume by heat. Through the burning of fire or heat, impurities are consumed and purification takes place. So tapas comes to mean the desire to purify and the process as well; it occurs on all levels of our being. However, burning causes pain. The practice of tapas means to accept this pain as a gift and also to develop self-discipline as an aid to purification.

Self-control brings pain in the beginning. In the beginning of asana practice, much more effort and pain are experienced by the untrained person with little perfection of the pose. We learn not to avoid the discomfort, but to accept it and to ask questions of it: where does it come from, when does it occur, what happens if I move this? When I first practiced Virabhadrasana 1, the ankle of the back leg hurt, the heel lifted from the floor, the bent knee of the front leg hurt, and the lower back hurt. I struggled, got angry, and then gradually worked with each thing - to align the feet better, to ground the back heel, to strengthen the back leg, to lift the torso and arms. One day, for the first time, for just a few seconds, I finally had a glimpse of the real pose. Perseverance in working through the difficulty eventually brings understanding, inner strength, and joy. Even a small effort in one aspect of one's life can effect great change. When I was quitting coffee, I reduced my intake to one cup in the morning for a while. It was hard for a few days, but then I began to experience a feeling of steadiness in the rest of my life and also a great sense of freedom that I was no longer slave to a beverage.

In Chapter 17 of the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna teaches that extreme austerities intended to mortify the body and ego are not necessary for our spiritual growth and may in fact become obstacles. So we don't intentionally inflict pain on ourselves or on others, but we accept the pain that comes and use self-discipline as an aid in overcoming it. In asana the pain teaches us that either the ego wants to force, or that we are ignorant and unmindful. We forget that the goal is to work the pose to the maximum extent and that when we go beyond, tension, weakness, and imbalance come. The pain then experienced in the body reduces the mind to unsteadiness. We get impatient, angry, frustrated, etc. Mr. Iyengar states that the acceptance of pain can move us into "proper asana," when we develop three qualities in our practice - the endurance that allows us to move into the inner asana where there is no pain, the wisdom to search, question and change, and the patience to keep trying and discovering.

For me, the endurance is slowly coming with practice. When I want to come out of a pose, I'm much more likely to say, "How about a few more seconds?" It doesn't feel so good to be lazy, and the few brief times I've been fortunate enough to glimpse the inner asana make me want to work for more.

I'm not sure if I would call it wisdom, but pain and tension definitely spur me on to question and change. Patience is much harder. I try to remember the first few Iyengar classes I took. I was very sore for four or five days after - lots of lessons there. Sometimes I still want to force, sometimes I'm frustrated because my body can't do what I want, and sometimes I'm surprised at the lack of feeling or awareness in certain areas. But I'm amazed also at how much I'm learning and in a way happy that I'll never learn it all, because the learning is in the doing not in the finishing. So I'm watching my body gradually change, but even more so, I feel that I move through the world just a little differently than before.

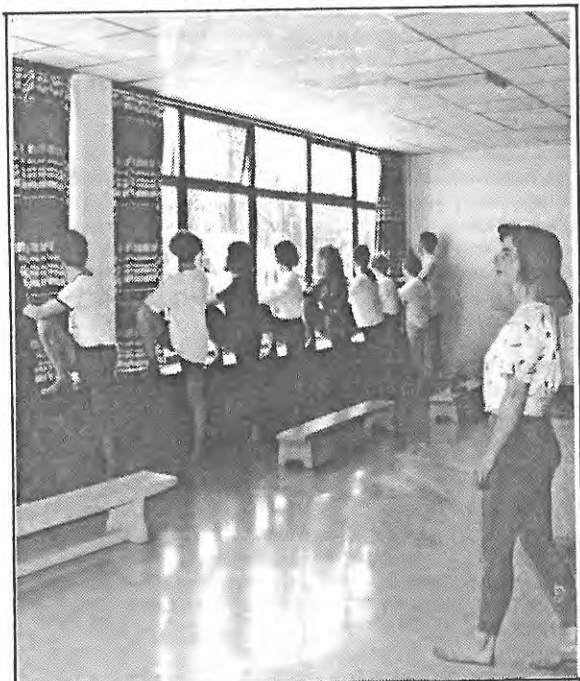
Christine Boyd is a yoga student currently enrolled in the advanced studies program at the Iyengar Yoga Institute of San Francisco.

YOGA BED & BREAKFAST

As you know, we are having a yoga intensive here, July 27th to August 2nd. We are looking for yoga people willing to act as hosts for out of town students. If you are able to provide bed and breakfast (for which you will receive \$20/day) please contact:

Linda Benn, 598-8277

Scenes from a Saturday workshop
with Ann Kilbertus



Twists at the window ledge



Ann demonstrating how to come out
of shoulderstand

YOGA CENTRE GATHERING

May 10, 1991.

6-7:30 p.m.

Join your teachers for an all levels

BIG PRACTICE

led by Shirley Daventry-French

More details to follow.....

My Spiritual Diary

by Jim Rischmüller

My room at the Patik hotel has a bed, armchair and locker. The separate bathroom has a toilet bowl that on first flush looks like it is made for yogis. My imagination soars until I realise that the footpads on the rim of the bowl are to cater for those who squat, as well as those who sit. The roomboy comes and explains that the phones do not work as I disassemble my phone to cure the crackling noise it makes. He advises me that Shirley French is out so I unpack my small haversack that is to sustain me for the next seven weeks and make a list of living stuff I need. The lock on the wardrobe doesn't work as advised in 'India A Travel Survival Kit', so my bicycle lock and chain substitute very well. I decide to sit in the chair and read whilst I wait for Shirley. A couple of hours later I am awakened by her banging on my door, she has been here a week and seems to be her usual exuberant self. I pass on a hug from Derek and some mail and then go to bed.

After I good night's sleep I am awakened early next morning by the roomboy bearing a tray of tea and biscuits. This is positively civilised, I feel, relishing the thought of a nice shower next. The shower is nice and clean but doesn't work. However there is a small plastic bucket alongside a tap and the cold water is not too bad after the first couple of bucketfuls over my head.

Shirley has procured a rickshaw and is waiting for me in the lobby. The morning air is breatheable, spiced with the perfume of exotic flowers and heaps of garbage carefully piled at intervals along the street. I notice that rickshaws place me at just the right height to get close direct blasts from bus and truck exhausts at the traffic lights. India is already on the move with the praises being sung to the god of horns as we zoom in and out of life threatening situations on our way to the Institute.

My first impression of the Institute is its nice flower garden and the interesting shape of the building. I am impressed by the number ofirkenstocks left in the lobby. The teaching room has an air of spaciousness and solidity, probably because it is made of marble and all the wall to ceiling windows are open. The top of the walls are covered with photos of Mr Iyengar doing the asanas. Not wishing to draw attention to myself I get a mat

and select a position kind of in the middle and sit down. I wonder if I will be able to handle a morning of Yoga. Shirley has been training our Monday night class for this for several weeks, but this is Head Office. Others in the class are resting in Supta Vrasana, a vain hope for me. An Indian lady in green gets up from the back of the class and calls out, "Tadasana". It appears this is Geeta, Mr Iyengar's daughter, who will be our teacher.

Geeta's voice echoes which, combined with the unfamiliar pronunciation of the asana names, means I am a fraction slower moving into the asanas as I wait for someone else to do it first. Most of the instruction is a blur but the words "Understand your standing" strike home. Later in the class we move to the ironwork by the windows for hamstring stretches. I end up next to Shirley which turns out to be a mistake since Mr Iyengar has turned up and decides to offer her some advice. As he asks questions I try to look knowledgeable but out of sight. Toward the end of class in downward dog I hear those fateful words for everyone to stop and come and look at "this fellow". It seems like eternity as Geeta helps me work deeper into the best downward dog I have ever done, my hamstrings scream for relief but it is my best.

On reflection, I can see that it took most of the first week for my body to catch up with my new circumstances. I had been working very hard for the months preceeding this trip and it took a while for me to slow down and see the world around me. Now I can see what this trip did for me was to start letting me let go and recognise myself. So far in this diary, (from my notes of the trip), I have tried to convey the extremes that India presents, (and everything in between). The streets are full of life and death and old ladies methodically sweeping their stretch of pavement. In a twinkling I moved from one new experience to another and had to book phone calls to home days in advance. In my asanas Geeta demanded I give only of my best." Why would I do anything else," she asked.



Yoga Calendar

APRIL:

5: Victoria Yoga Centre Gathering at the Y. 6.00 p.m. Asana. 7.00 p.m. Potluck supper. 8.00 p.m. Discussion on what asanas mean.
13: Teachers meeting.
12-14: Straightwalk, a workshop at Shambala House. Call 595-0177 for details.
26-28: Yoga workshop on Galliano Island with Maureen and Bruce Carruthers. Call 539-5071 for details.

MAY:

4: Day of Yoga with Shirley Daventry French. Call 478-3775 for details.
5: Hidden Language workshop at Shambala House. Call 595-0177 for details.
10: Big Big Practice at the Y.
11: Teachers meeting.
24-26: Video workshop at Shambala House. Call 595-0177 for details.
25: Pranayam Class/Asana Practice with Shirley Daventry French. Call 478-3755 for details.

JUNE:

7-9: Saltspring Island Yoga Retreat led by Shirley Daventry French. See ad this issue.

8,9: Rose Ceremony at Shambala House. Call 595-00177 for details.

22: Pranayama Class/Asana Practice with Shirley Daventry French. Call 478-3775 for details.

28-July 11: Donald Moyer workshop on Galliano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

JULY:

4-7: Iyengar Teachers Meeting in Ottawa.
12-21: Health Enhancement Workshop with Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galliano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.
27-Aug 2: Iyengar Yoga Intensive at the Victoria Y. See ad this issue.

AUGUST:

3-7: 5 day Immersion Yoga workshop given by Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galliano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

SEPTEMBER:

6-14: Workshop with Ramand Patel at the Victoria Y. Details to be announced.

The Yoga Centre of Victoria Newsletter Advertising

If you have products or services of interest to Victoria's yoga practitioners, this is your advertising vehicle.

Because our rates are so low, all advertising material must be supplied camera ready - that is, exactly as you want it to appear in the newsletter. If not, the copy will simply be typed and inserted. If you wish, we can arrange to have an advertisement prepared for you, but we must charge extra for this service.

Our policy in accepting advertising is that all advertisements must not conflict with the aims of the Centre, as stated elsewhere in the newsletter.

If you wish to buy an ad or require further information,
please contact our Advertising Manager, Carole Miller:

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RATES per ISSUE

Full Page	\$36.00
1/2 Page	\$18.00
1/4 Page	\$12.00
Business Card	\$9.00

OCTOBER:

12-13: Yoga workshop with Angela Farmer and Victor Van Kooten on Gallano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

15-27: Health Enhancement workshop given by Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Gallano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

NOVEMBER:

5-17: Yoga Workshop given by Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Gallano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE GATHERING

FRIDAY, APRIL 5th
at 6pm

in the Lounge at the 'Y'

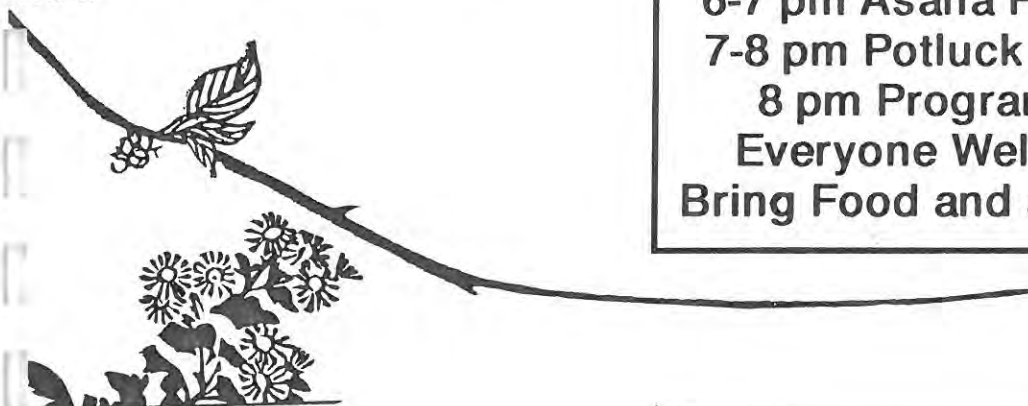
6-7 pm Asana Practice

7-8 pm Potluck Dinner

8 pm Programme

Everyone Welcome

Bring Food and a Friend



MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION FORM

It's time you joined the Yoga Centre of Victoria! As you read this newsletter, you are receiving one of the benefits of membership. As you attend your yoga classes or a workshop, you are receiving the benefits of membership. These take time and money and your membership fees and participation really help.

Please fill out this form and send it with your cheque or money order to:
YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA, 3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R. #1, Victoria, B.C. V8X 3W9

MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION FEE IS \$20.00/year.

Name: _____

Street: _____

City/Prov: _____ P.C: _____ PHONE: _____

I am enclosing a cheque or money order in the amount of: _____

☐ Please do not mail me the newsletter; during class sessions I'll pick one up at my "Y" class.

The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY is a non-profit society incorporated under the Societies' Act of the Province of British Columbia whose purpose is, *"to encourage the physical, mental and spiritual growth of its members and other interested members of society at large by the study and discipline of Yoga"*. The Society owes inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

The Society Newsletter is published regularly, providing current information on events concerning yoga in Victoria and area and at the Yasodhara Ashram. Published by the Victoria Yoga Centre Society.

Anyone wishing to contribute articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions to the newsletter may contact the Editor, Jennifer Rischmiller, 4489 Lindholm Road, R.R.#1, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8X 3W9. Telephone: (604)-474-5630.

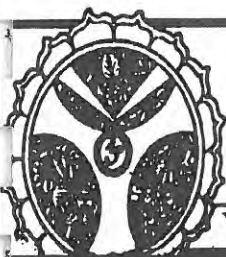
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VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY
3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R.#1, Victoria, B.C., Canada, V8X 3W9



yoga centre of victoria

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VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

May 1991





Reflections

By Shirley Daventry French

Whatever happened to leisure? In the late sixties, futurists were warning us that one of the problems we were going to have to face towards the end of the twentieth century was an abundance of leisure. We were urged to prepare ourselves for an era where it would become a privilege to work, the work available would be for the highly skilled, and advances in technology would bring prosperity for all. Those who worked would do so only because their work was so interesting that they wanted to do it. The expectation was that for the majority of people to work or not to work would be a choice and not a necessity. For some essential and perhaps less interesting jobs, the hours would be shorter because this work would be shared.

Well, they couldn't have been more wrong, could they, except for the part about it being a privilege to have a job? Where is all this leisure? I am busier than I was twenty years ago. Derek, my husband, is working as hard as ever. Everyone I know, who has a job, is working harder than they were a few years ago, and those who don't have a job don't have the resources to enjoy their enforced leisure. I do know one person whose work load has decreased - my mother-in-law; but at eighty one this is not surprising. It's not that she doesn't work: she does. Yesterday she was digging the garden for several hours; the day before she was volunteering at the Victoria General Hospital. She is glad to do this, but it is from choice and not from necessity. She has a lot of leisure, which she has justly earned, having worked and worked hard since the age of fourteen in and out of the home.

As well as being a full-time yoga teacher, I have a second part-time job as business manager for my husband's medical practice. Sometimes, like today, when I come home after teaching three classes and have to attend to correspondence or accounting, I feel resentful about all the time my mother-in-law has to herself. Then, of course, I feel guilty at my meanness of spirit, and thankful that she is healthy enough to enjoy her retirement and the new life she has made for herself in Canada.

Once upon a time, my friends and I used to sit around over leisurely (there's that word again) lunches, teas, dinners endlessly discussing the meaning and purpose of life. Now we are all busy, and communicate over the telephone and in passing. Why?

Why are we all working so hard? What can be done about it? If you consider the first question honestly, it's possible you will discover that you don't have to work so hard. You are doing it as a matter of choice. It could be because you are attached to a certain standard of living, ambitious to advance in your career, your work provides an outlet for your creativity, or you are doing it for the sake of humanity. If the valid reasons are that you need the money for survival, and not for frills, it is still your choice. You want to survive. Whether you are working for self-centered or altruistic motives, the recognition that it is from choice not only frees up a lot of energy but tends to do away with much of the resentment. You no longer feel like a victim, but an active participant in the creation of your life.

I once did a series of encounter groups with a man who said that whenever we feel trapped or resentful we should stop, notice where our buttocks are (although he used a less polite term) and notice who put them there! Who can you blame then?

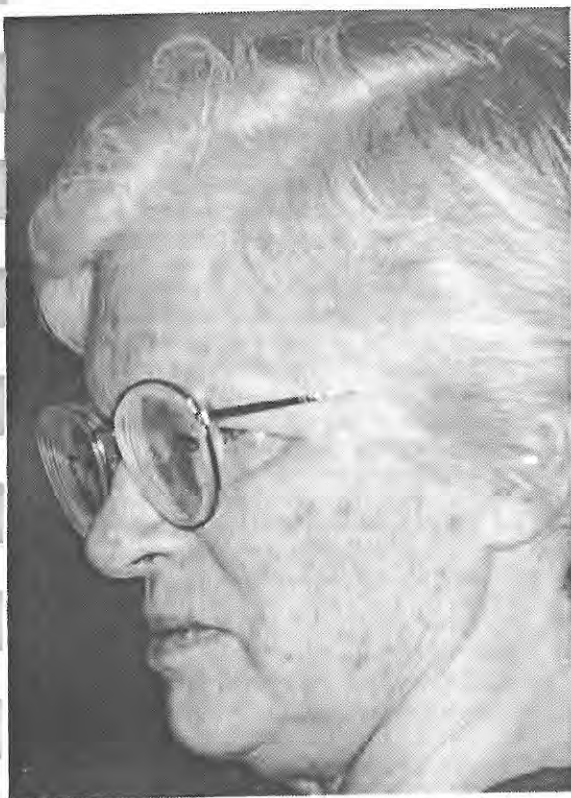
Having chosen to follow a lifestyle which is busy, sometimes too busy, what can we do to ensure our sanity and survival? What we can do is practise yoga! At a yoga course I once attended, in answer to the question "what is yoga", one student handed in a piece of paper with the words "YOGA IS MY" in bold letters and a Lifesaver candy stuck underneath. Amusing but true - at least for me.

If you practise yoga you change, your body changes, so does your state of mind. A strong, flexible body with open armpits and groins is less able to harbour draining and debilitating feelings like anger and resentment. When your chest and shoulders are open it's difficult to stay depressed. With an erect spine it's hard to feel downtrodden. When your feet are firmly planted on the ground, outside influences no longer throw you off balance. You begin to live in a different environment within and without, one where there is a connection between your actions, your attitudes, your state of body and mind and the life you live.

All this takes a little time - a lifetime, in fact. Life as a student of yoga will not necessarily become easier, more comfortable or less busy. In fact, in my experience it is challenging, difficult and demanding. What has changed is my ability to meet these challenge and see the vicissitudes of life as opportunities (although this understanding is sometimes lacking until after the event). The demarcation line between work and play begins to blur as both merge into an endeavour to evolve as fully as possible in this lifetime.

Treat yourself to a leisurely week-end at the Saltspring Centre by attending our Annual Retreat June 7-9

(see advertisement on pg. 6)



Norma Hodge

Letters to the Editor

Dear loving people of the Victoria Yoga Centre,

I am most grateful for your tangible expressions of caring, and for the atmosphere of continuing yogic community which this fosters. The money gift allowed our bursary fund to become quite generous, so that four members of our Gabriola community are enabled to take advantage of yoga workshops - two to the Straightwalk weekend at Victoria Shambhala House, and two to Iyengar Yoga workshops this summer.

May Divine Mother shower Her many blessings upon all Victoria yoga students and teachers.

Affectionately,
Norma Hodge,
Gabriola Island, B.C.



Dear Friends,

I feel fortunate to be associated with the Victoria Yoga Centre. Over the years I have enjoyed the comraderie, appreciated the support and marvelled at the work. You are unique in yoga circles. Newcomers to the group may be surprised at the frankness with which discussions take place. This comes from a long history of sharing, caring and doing our own work.

The new format to Yoga Centre meetings is a great idea and sounds like such fun. Congratulations!

I just wanted to let all of you know that I appreciate the work you do. The newsletter is my link to you - and the occasional long distance telephone call. I miss you all very much and think of you often.

Love, Donna Fornelli
Aylmer Québec



Yoga Centre Gathering
Friday, May 10th



Join Your Teachers for a

Big Big Practice

led by Shirley Daventry-French

Place: YM/YWCA Dance Studio

Time: Meet in Lounge 5:⁵⁰ pm

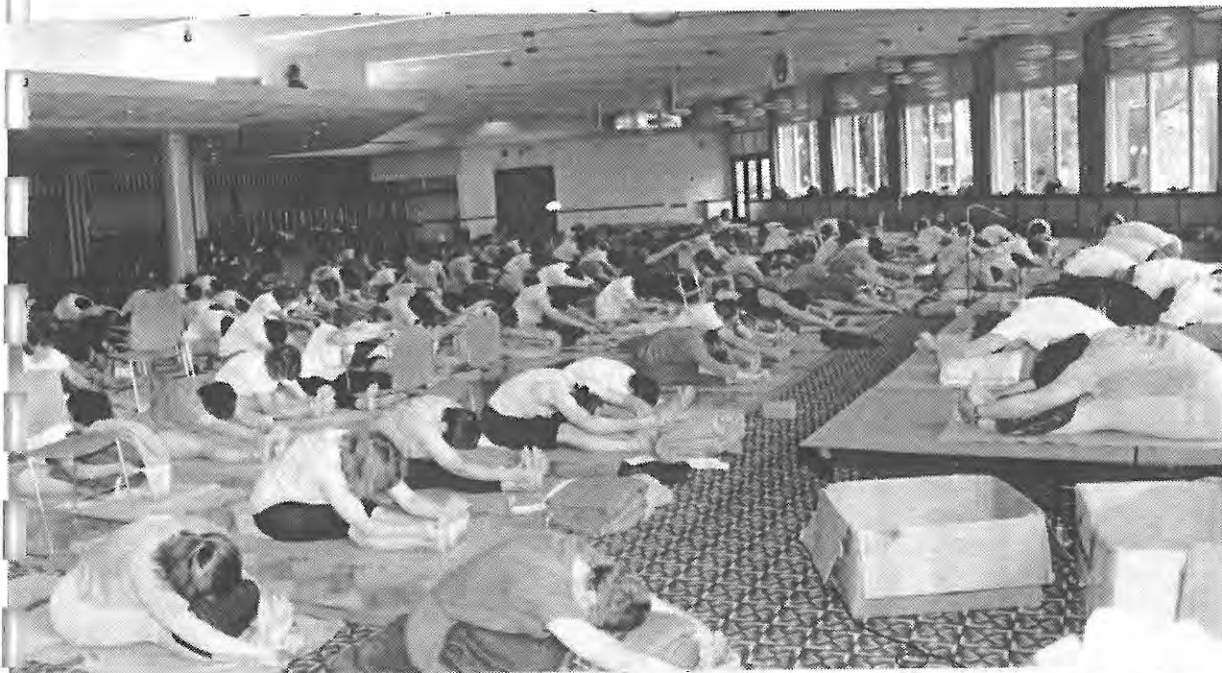
Practice 6 - 7:³⁰ pm

Followed by PotLuck dinner
and discussion in the lounge

Everyone Welcome!

No Experience Necessary

Free



BIG BIG PRACTICE In Edmonton, 1990

Yoga Centre News

FRIDAY NIGHT GATHERINGS

Towards the end of last year we came to the conclusion that the yoga centre had its priorities mixed up. Our meetings were so full of business that we had begun to lose sight of why we had formed the yoga centre in the first place. Instead of the business supporting the yoga, it had taken on a life of its own. We decided to remedy this, and when discussing what form future meetings should take, the question was posed: "What do we do best?" The answer: Asana and eating. It was decided: we would come together to practise and follow this with a pot-luck dinner and discussion. These gatherings would be held in the yoga studio at the "Y". The practices would be led by a different teacher each time and all levels of students would be welcome including absolute beginners. In fact, one month we had someone who claimed to be a pre-beginner, but he can make this claim no more since he is now enrolled in a class.

We have held four meetings which were all very well attended. There were diverse and interesting questions about yoga its practice which provoked lively discussion.

When planning our programme we decided to round out these gatherings with a very special group practice in May, and a weekend retreat in June.

The Big BIG PRACTICE - Friday, May 10th

Last summer at the close of the Canadian Iyengar Yoga Conference in Edmonton all students and teachers came together in one large space for a group practice. A practice of this nature is a powerful experience for all involved, but its value doesn't end there. Such a practice generates a lot of positive energy, which acts as a powerful force in counteracting the negative energy which is so pervasive in our world. It's not only powerful, it's heart-warming to practise together, and enjoyable too. Spiritual practice is not sombre; it's serious but also joyful, and laughter is an integral part of the spiritual path.

The "big" in this practice is the hoped for number of students who will gather in the "Y" dance studio on May 10th. As it's Mothers' Day that weekend we did think about calling it "The Mother of all Practices", but having spoken of our big, big practice for some months past, we decided to stay with that name. This practice will be led by Shirley Daventry French assisted by other teachers, and we have allowed an hour and a half to really get into the spirit. The practice will be paced for all levels of students. It's doesn't matter how experienced or inexperienced you are, you will be welcome!

Continued on page 3



THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

is pleased to present

The 1991 Weekend Retreat at The Saltspring Centre

with

Shirley Daventry French

Friday, June 7, 6:00 pm thru Sunday, June 9, 2:00 pm

ALL LEVELS

Yoga Centre Members \$185.00

Non-Members \$195.00

**Develop the body as a spiritual tool
with Asana and Pranayama in the Iyengar tradition**

Shirley Daventry French is a senior student of B.K.S. Iyengar, and one of Canada's leading teachers of the Iyengar method of Yoga. She has visited India several times to study at the Iyengar Yoga Institute in Pune, most recently in November 1988. This rich and extensive training, combined with a lively humour and articulate style is a powerful catalyst for students seeking the next step in their journey.

The retreat will provide time for spiritual renewal and reflection. In addition to daily classes in asana and pranayama, there will be chanting, satsang and periods of silence. Delicious vegetarian meals will be provided by the dedicated members of the Saltspring Centre and there will be time to swim, take a sauna, have a massage or simply enjoy the idyllic island setting. Indoor accommodation is provided. There is also space for tenting.

**Please make your cheques payable to:
Victoria Yoga Centre
and mail to:**

**Linda Shevloff, 4758 Spring Road
Victoria, B.C. V8X 3X1**

For further information, phone Linda at 479-5847 or Linda Benn at 598-8277

1990 Week-end Retreat at the Saltspring Centre



Yoga Centre News

SALTSPRING RETREAT

- June 7th to 9th

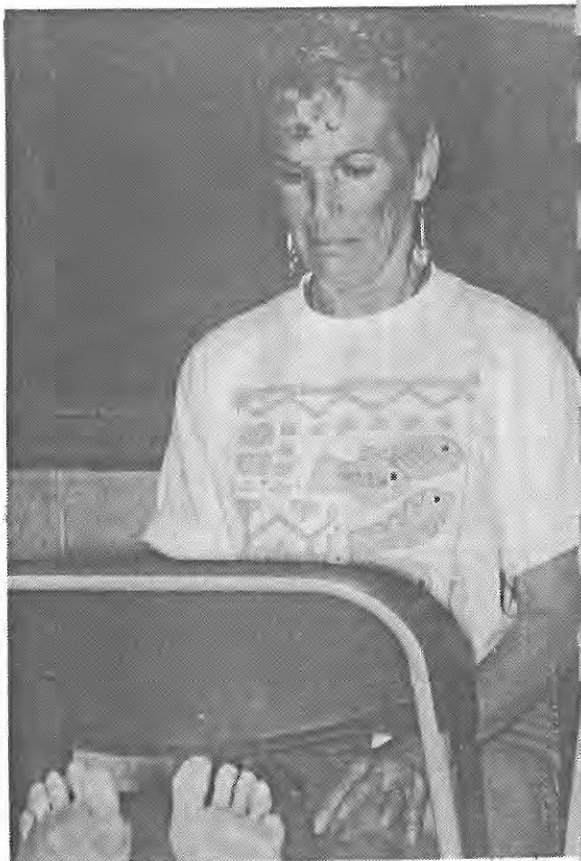
We have been holding retreats for many years at the Saltspring Centre, a spiritual community of followers of the respected teacher, Baba Hari Dass. Indoor accommodation is shared, generally two to a room, and there is plenty of space for the hardy to camp out in the meadows. We are always welcomed warmly by the residents who provide us with wonderful nourishing vegetarian meals, and lead us in a lively Satsang on Saturday evening. Chanting is one of their regular practices. Among the residents are skilled practitioners of various forms of massage and bodywork, and sessions may be booked for these services. There will be asana and pranayama classes led by Shirley assisted by Linda Shevloff, and informal discussions on aspects of yoga. There is also plenty of free time to just be there: contemplating life at a distance from the demands of work, home and family. It is a great gift to spend time in a spiritual community such as the Saltspring Centre where we can pause, refresh ourselves and practise yoga together. Make plans to be a part of this!

SUMMER INTENSIVE

- July 27th to August 2nd

We held our first summer intensive in 1988 when the idea was conceived to bring together some of Canada's finest teachers in one of Canada's finest cities, and offer training in the Iyengar tradition of yoga. It was very successful, and was repeated in 1989, again with great success. Last year there was no course because all our energies were focussed on Edmonton and Mr. Iyengar's visit. Now, in 1991, we have again brought together four fine teachers for a week of classes in asana and pranayama, seminars on yoga psychology, philosophy and therapeutic yoga. A brochure with full details is available, just ask your teacher or phone 478-3775. Liz McLeod of Edmonton is an outstanding highly skilled teacher who gives workshops and trains teachers throughout Canada as does Victoria's Shirley Daventry French: they are two of the teachers for this course. They will be joined by Bruce Carruthers and Derek French, medical doctors who also study and teach yoga. All are longtime students of B.K.S. Iyengar.

Whether it's for one evening, one weekend or one week, all the above events are a good investment.



SCHOLARSHIPS

Liz McLeod

At a recent meeting of the yoga centre executive it was decided to offer the following three scholarships:

- (1) to the Saltspring retreat
- (2) to the Summer Intensive
- (3) to Ramanand Patel's workshop in September

Anyone wishing to apply for one of these scholarship either on their own or someone else's behalf should contact Derek French at 478-3775 or Marlene Miller at 656-3183 (evenings) or 656-7271 (daytime).

RAMANAND PATEL WORKSHOP

- September 6th to 13th

Ramanand Patel, one of the world's finest yoga teachers, will return to Victoria to start off our 1991/92 season. Mark these dates on your calendar. Details will be available shortly, but he will be teaching a weekend all-levels workshop followed by two levels of classes on four consecutive evenings. The workshop will wrap up on the Friday with (wouldn't you know it?) a pot luck dinner and talk on yoga philosophy.

Hawaiian Yoga Vacation

With Richard Schachtel
and Carolyn Pine Schachtel

March 3rd to 9th, 1991; by Linda Benn

How quickly the experience of Hawaii has drifted away. On the airplane over the Pacific Ocean, I was already anticipating home life again. Often I am torn between clinging to my memories and attempting to live in the present. We have our photographs and notes to confirm our memories but I did not even acquire the requisite transitory tan.

I was uncertain about going to the workshop and simultaneously being a yoga student, tourist and loving companion. However, the nine days couldn't have been better.

The moment we stepped off the plane at Hilo, on the island of Hawaii, the soft, fragrant air enveloped our weary bodies. We picked up our rental car, the badge for our non-resident status. Tourists drive little white cars with names like Sprint, Sunbird and Firefly. We followed narrow twisty roads that wound down through the jungle and along lava cliffs and ocean vistas to our destination, Kalani Honua.



Richard Schachtel



Marillele & Pine

Kalani Honua is a retreat centre, situated on the southeast corner of the island in the area called Puna, (a significant name to Iyengar students). The dense rain forest was a fascinating tangle, much of it introduced in the last 200 years. I was delighted to find papaya, macadamia nut, avocado, mango, guava and banana trees on the retreat property. Mongooses ran about the expanse of grass. Mynah birds, red cardinals, solitary hawks and numerous little birds were always about the grounds. At dawn's light, the chorus of bird song conspired to awaken us early. The mosquitoes we were warned about were wimps compared to the northern Canadian man-eaters. Kalani Honua has a busy schedule of workshops, retreats and celebrations, accommodating up to 80 people. Since we were the only group present that week it was a quiet and relaxed time.

The facilities are simple, clean and comfortable. Along with our daily towel change we received fresh flower blossoms. The dining area was in a covered outdoor setting with tables always centred with bouquets of bougainvillea, anthuriums or brilliant hibiscus. The mainly vegetarian meals were delicious. During meals we enjoyed the opportunity to socialize with Richard, Pine, other workshop participants and the staff. One couple turned out to be from Alert Bay, off the northern end of Vancouver Island and another

woman was from Vancouver. The only complaint I heard was that the coffee could have had more punch. Fortunately, there was a unique little community nearby called Pahoia which had a good health food store and great coffee. The whole area is quite undeveloped and non-touristy. Much of the island has been cleared for agriculture but this southeastern area has a rather tenuous existence being so close to active lava flows. Last year, a nearby community, Kalapana, and a black sand beach were buried beneath the inexorable rivers of lava.

Richard Schachtel and Carolyn Pine Schachtel are Iyengar yoga teachers in Seattle. He is a full-time yoga teacher, having led classes and workshops for more than 16 years. He offers teacher-training courses, including five-day intensives, at The Center for Yoga of Seattle. Both Richard and Pine have trained with the Iyengars in India. They brought their two lively daughters, April and Marielle, with them to Hawaii and people who were doing work-study programs were pleased to babysit in exchange for yoga classes. I was envious because the young girls were fortunate to see whales migrating along the Puna coast.

Richard taught the early morning class for intermediate students as well as the late afternoon session. Pine led the other morning class for beginners. The yoga room was screened so we enjoyed the outside breeze, the rustle of palm fronds and the chatter of geckos. The view of the ocean was a pleasant distraction during the vigorous standing poses. I found Richard's teaching very stimulating and at times challenging. He had control of the group and yet made time for individual attention. As a teacher myself, I learned from his techniques and his language. Standing poses were the focus, augmented by backbends, forward bends and twists. The female participants' synchronized hormones frustrated Richard's plan to work on inversions.

It is said that children learn mostly on non-verbal levels and I think that theory also applies to myself. Richard teaches with confidence and ease. He moves in and out of the poses with controlled grace and quietness. He and Pine express their commitment to yoga without volumes of words but more in their poise, in their family, students and their successful business life. I appreciate their knowledge of Iyengar yoga techniques, but also I appreciate them as good, evolving beings. That is how I learn from all the yoga teachers I've had the good fortune to meet.



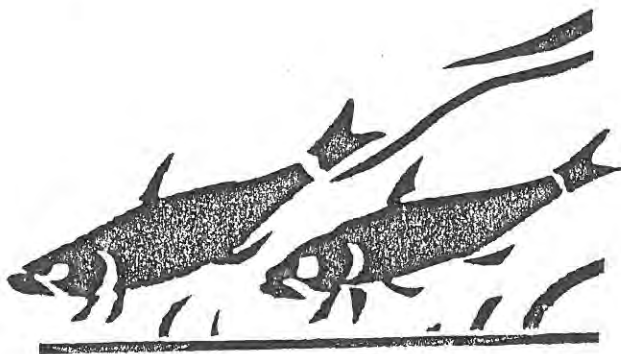
Pine leading a morning class

Don didn't attend the yoga sessions but spent his time exploring this young and exuberant land. Yoga students had plentiful spare time allowing me to frequently join him. There is much to do in the immediate area; tide pools, black sand beaches, natural steam caves as well as the pool, hot tub, huna and massages offered at Kalani Honua. Don went farther afield one day and drove to the Kona area on the west coast. This is the most developed part of the Big Island in terms of fancy hotels and resorts. It is significantly drier than the rest of the land and has its own a distinct character. Captain Cook was killed near Kona and a major restoration of a Hawaiian community is found in this vicinity. On another day, everyone in the group went to Volcanoes National Park and down to where the lava continues to flow into the ocean. It was a hot and windy hike over the lava beds to cliffs overlooking massive, rolling clouds of steam. Explosions created by molten rock hitting the blue water held us in awe. I was aware that close under my feet flowed 2000°F lava and that perhaps I was being reckless standing on the crumbling cliffs breathing the acrid air. I am glad that the humans who use our creative and destructive powers so arrogantly are still humbled by these massive and ancient forces of the planet.

Before coming home we had an extra day in Hilo where it rained so hard we bought an umbrella. This gave us an opportunity to buy macadamia nuts and tacky tourist gifts for our children. Fortunately, Canada Customs overlooked our smuggled pieces of lava and limpet shells (as if we didn't have any here!) and we happily made a late connection with the last plane to Victoria.



I understand that Richard and Pine will be doing a similar workshop next year so watch for the brochure. It was an invigorating and relaxing week, just what we both wanted. But I should mention that some of these benefits can be had by participating in shorter and more local workshops and retreats. The June Yoga retreat led by Shirley Daventry French at the bucolic Saltspring Centre has become an annual offering for yoga students. Consider treating yourself this year.



*Learn the
Sanskrit
names of
the poses
with*



101 Yoga Flashcards and Audio Tape

by Ramanand Patel and
Beatrice Briggs

Each kit contains

- complete instructions
- pronunciation guide
- 101 illustrated flashcards
- Sanskrit-English translation of the name of each posture
- audio tape keyed to the flash cards
- sturdy 3"x5" file box
- 10 dividers

To order your "Learn the Sanskrit names" kit, send \$29.95, plus \$4 shipping (in U.S. funds) to: Cittavritti Productions, 3432 N. Bosworth, Chicago, IL 60657 (312/929-5565).

Quantity discounts available.

The Victoria Yoga Centre
and the Victoria YM-YWCA
are pleased to announce an

IYENGAR YOGA INTENSIVE

to be held this summer at the Victoria "Y"
with Senior Canadian Teachers

July 27th to August 2nd, 1991

Fee: \$325.00

- daily classes in Asana and Pranayama
- seminars on Yoga Psychology and Philosophy
- therapeutic yoga

*Classes will be taught by the following senior students and
experienced teachers of the Yoga of B.K.S. Iyengar:*

Dr. Bruce Carruthers

Liz McLeod

Shirley Daventry French

Dr. Derek French

For out-of-town students: Victoria is a popular tourist centre with a wide selection of hotels and motels. The Residence at the "Y" has a limited amount of inexpensive accommodation for women. Billets will also be available with members of the local yoga community.

For brochure or further information contact:

Victoria Yoga Centre
3918 Olympic View Drive
R.R. 1, Victoria, B.C. V8X 3W9

Telephone Enquiries: Shirley Daventry French (604) 478-3775
or Linda Benn (604) 598-8277

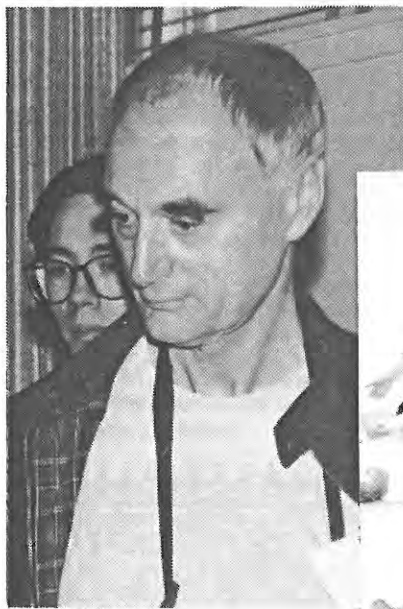
Photographs of Yoga Instructors for the 1991 Intensive



Liz McLeod



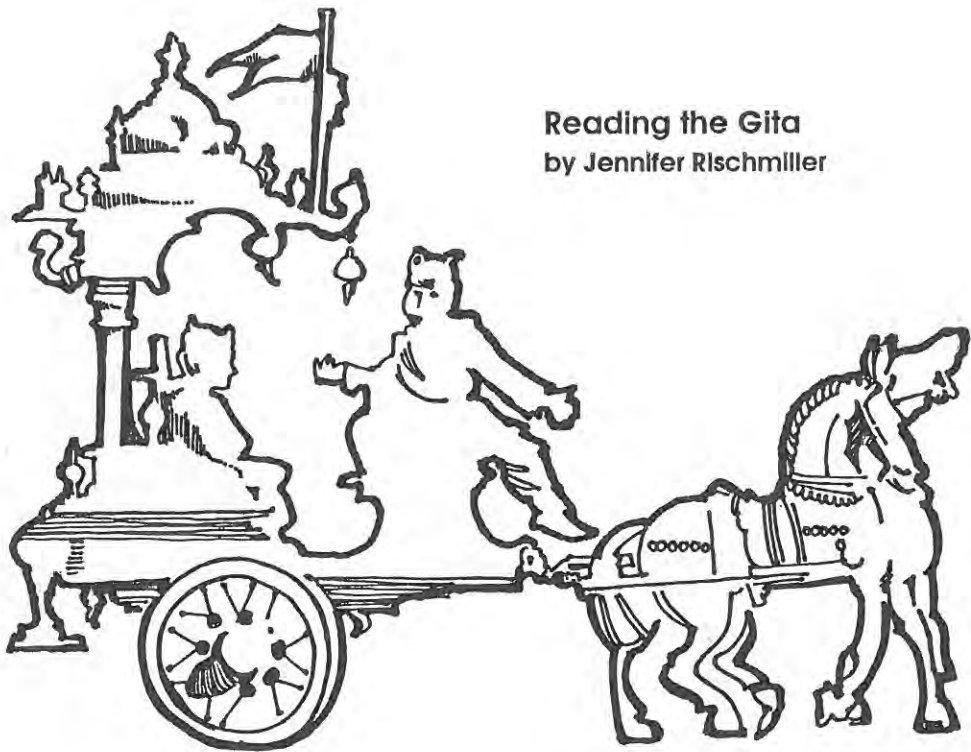
Bruce Carruthers



Derek French



Shirley & Derek French



Reading the Gita by Jennifer Rischmiller

I would like to share my reflections with you but I'm not sure how. I can reflect upon the tranquil setting in which I discuss the Gita with Jessica and Jim; I can reflect upon the words themselves (the Gita, in my opinion, is beautifully worded); I can reflect upon the inclusion of the Gita in my daily life; I can reflect upon a phrase from the Gita. I would like to share all these reflections with you but I find it difficult to write in such a general way.

My choice today is to write about how I have included the Gita in my daily life. (I'm not sure how many of you have heard about the Bhagavad Gita, much less have read it. This is not the time to discuss the book but I hope subsequent writings will unfold the story). What the regular reading and discussions of the Gita have done for me is to help me focus on the divine part of me and take it with me into my daily life. This means I try harder to focus on how I want to behave, what I want to say, what I want to do.

How does this happen and why does it happen because I read the Gita? First of all, the regularity of study helps give the words real meaning and reminds me on a weekly basis of their meaning for me. The various chapters in the story are about real life so I can take the advice of Krishna and make it work for me.

Each verse carries its own message, the power in the message is that it is new each time I read it. My divine self speaks to me through the Gita. Its purpose is to help me see the spiritual aspect of my life. An examination of the words brings a clearer understanding of how I think about matters, my ideals. Through this method I can then behave in a way I feel is appropriate for me and I can pursue the path in the direction I choose.

The discussions I have each week help me see clearly the symbols throughout the story of the Gita. Then I am able to reflect during the week on our conversations and remember what I need to know in order to handle a given situation through my higher self.



10 Reasons for Choosing a Simpler Lifestyle

Reprinted from Yoga Centre of Victoria Newsletter, June, 1983.

I was given a copy of this statement last fall when I attended a program on agribusiness, the livestock industry and world hunger at the University of Victoria. I have had it posted on my bulletin board since, and I have found that it has encouraged me to thoughtfulness on many occasions when I glanced over it. The statement grew out of discussions at a joint Churches Commission for Participation in Development/Lutheran World Federation workshop held in Rotterdam in 1975, and was written by Jorgen Lissner, I hope you find it interesting.

Bill Graham.

Today's global realities call for comfortable Christians to review their life style. Guidelines for a simpler life style cannot be laid down in universal rules; they must be developed by individuals and communities according to their own imagination and situation.

A simpler life style is not a panacea. It may be embarked upon for the wrong reasons, e.g. out of guilt, as a substitute for political action, or in a quest for moral "purity". But it can also be meaningful and significant in some or all of the following ways:

1. AS AN ACT OF FAITH performed for the sake of personal integrity and as an expression of a personal commitment to a more equitable distribution of the world's wealth.
2. AS AN ACT OF SELF-DEFENCE against the mind-polluting effects of over-consumption.
3. AS AN ACT OF WITHDRAWAL from the achievement neurosis of our high pressure materialistic societies.
4. AS AN ACT OF SOLIDARITY with the majority of humankind, which has no choice about life style.
5. AS AN ACT OF SHARING with others what has been given to us, or of returning what was usurped by us through unjust social and economic structures.

6. AS AN ACT OF CELEBRATION of the riches found in creativity, spirituality and community with others rather than in mindless materialism.

7. AS AN ACT OF PROVOCATION (ostentatious underconsumption) to arouse curiosity leading to dialogue with others about affluence, alienation, poverty and social justice.

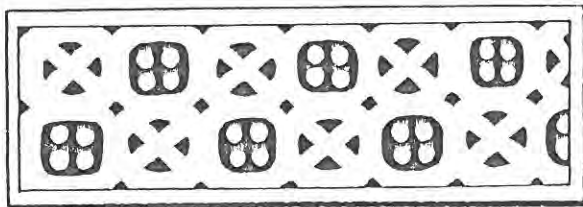
8. AS AN ACT OF ANTICIPATION of the era when the self-confidence and assertiveness of the underprivileged forces new power relationships and new patterns of resource allocation upon us.

9. AS AN ACT OF ADVOCACY of legislated changes in present patterns of production and consumption in the direction of a new international economic order.

10. AS AN EXERCISE OF PURCHASING POWER to re-direct production away from the satisfaction of artificially created wants towards a supply of goods and services that meet genuine social needs.

The adoption of a simpler life style is meaningful and justifiable for any and all of the above reasons alone, irrespective of whether it benefits the underprivileged.

Demands for "proof of effectiveness" in helping the poor only bear witness to the myth that "they the poor" are the problem and that "we the rich" have the solution. Yet - if adopted on a large scale - a simpler life style will have significant side-effects both in the rich and in the poor parts of the world. The two most important side-effects are likely to be economic and structural adjustments and release of new resources and energies for social change.



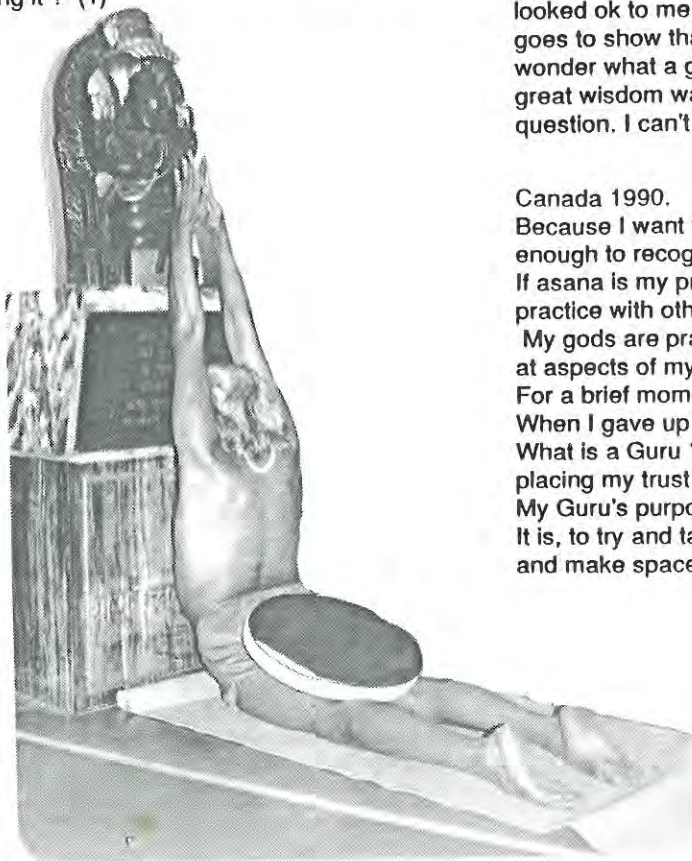
My Spiritual Diary

by Jim Rischmiller

India 1985.

Who would believe it. Here I am halfway through an intensive and I have caught the sniffles, from a Canadian who brought it from Canada no less. We did backbends in class this morning and since I was having obvious difficulty two assistants of Mr Iyengar took me to the back of the room and gave me some help. They lifted me up with straps and commented on what a stiff body I had. I could only think of the pain.

This afternoon I went for my first massage. It was given by a little lady who walked around on my back. Then she put her foot in my spine and pulled my arms behind me, it was as bad as backbends. Why do I do this, I mean why do I find something that hurts then keep on doing it ? (1)



India seems to be very religious. Temples are as frequent as pubs in England (which is to say one is always within wobbling distance). Of course the way they drive may have something to do with it. I must confess I have real trouble with religion, I wonder why people feel the need to worship ? (2)

Mr Iyengar has a deity in the yoga room which he used to help him practice today. He hung from it in upward facing dog with a huge weight on his lumbar. Practical use of God I guess. (3)

India 1988.

Half way through this intensive and it was forward bends day. In class for the first time I truly realised how much joy I was having. We were doing forward bends and my hamstrings were complaining as usual but I suddenly got beyond that and was able to start lengthening my spine. I think it was when I stopped worrying about my hamstrings. (4)

Mr Iyengar was demonstrating shoulderstand today. looked ok to me but he was not aligned properly. Just goes to show that even guru's have their off days. I wonder what a guru is ? My image is of a man of great wisdom waiting to be asked the ultimate question. I can't relate to this at all. (5)

Canada 1990.

Because I want to know myself. (1. Can my ego let go enough to recognise someone as my teacher). If asana is my prayer then I enjoy the synergy of practice with others. (2)

My gods are practical symbols helping me as I look at aspects of myself. (3.)

For a brief moment I found the nectar of yoga. (4. When I gave up control.)

What is a Guru ? Someone I call Guru. (5. I risk placing my trust in another).

My Guru's purpose is not to be perfect, nor is it mine. It is, to try and take each moment without judgement and make space for my inner Guru.



The Experience of Yoga Goes Through the Entire Body

AN INTERVIEW WITH B.K.S. IYENGAR
TRANSLATED BY ELZA LAMERLE FROM THE
FRENCH JOURNAL "LE MONDE INCONNU"

PUBLISHED IN THE IYENGAR YOGA INSTITUTE
REVIEW OF SAN FRANCISCO
SUMMER 1990 ISSUE

MR. IYENGAR WAS IN FRANCE FROM OCTOBER
TO OCTOBER 14, 1985, IN RESPONSE TO AN
INVITATION BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CITY
OF PARIS TO CELEBRATE THE YEAR OF INDIA.

Q: In the Hatha Yoga Pradipika, it is said: "Taming
lions, elephants and tigers requires a lot of time and
prudence; similarly prana should be mastered slowly
and progressively according to the capacity and limits
of the practitioner. Otherwise, it will kill him." In that
sense, would not your last book, which speaks on
practice of pranayama, represent a danger for
amateurs of yoga?

Mr. Iyengar: To subdue a lion is very difficult; to
subdue the breath is also very difficult. You have to
wait to seize the opportunity and to be in the position
to subdue a lion. As long as you have not found its
weak point, you will not be able to control it. But if
you have a lot of patience and perseverance, you will
find an opportune moment to do it.

Not everyone can find a master to learn pranayama
correctly. I had many requests regarding teaching it
and finally decided to write a book about it. It took me
twelve years to complete it. The book begins with the
basics and the most simple practices, i.e. techniques
of normal breathing, now to improve breathing, etc.

All these questions have been explained with many
details that are not found in my first book. Anyway, in
my book on Pranayama I speak, first of all, to non-
initiated. I explain how, step by step, you come to
mastering respiration without danger. As I often say,
a good book or a good manual is better than a bad
teacher.

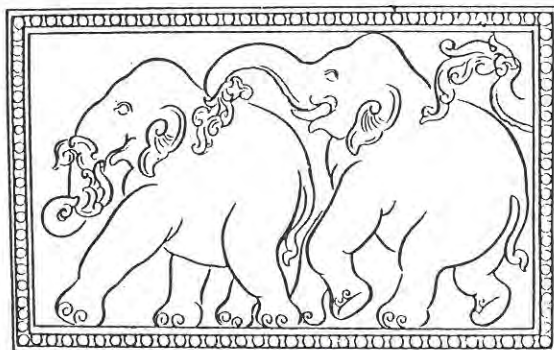
Q: What is the goal of practice of yoga postures?

Mr. Iyengar: The goal of these postures is to keep
the body in good health and not allow the mind to be
afflicted by the body; freed from all attachments, the
mind will be able to come in contact with Self.
According to tradition, there are innumerable
movements in order to achieve a posture. Also it is
often necessary to introduce intermediate postures.

I have introduced postures that I have discovered by
practising classical asanas and pushing them even
further. I demonstrate them in my book. Each
posture has an original name, and I have added a
word that describes its evolution.

Q: Do you teach techniques of mastering the mind as
you teach the postures?

Mr. Iyengar: You cannot learn postures by using only
physical force. For instance, you cannot gain
elasticity of joints by forcing them. Of course,
practice requires a tremendous power of will, and
extreme attention has to be brought to all movements
of the body - external as well as internal.
Consequently, in order to master a posture, three
conditions should be observed at the same time;
strength, will, and direction.



In the beginning stage of practice, we use a lot of physical force. The organs of perception and the mind should feel the effect of their actions, either correct or incorrect. After that, a state is revealed that is felt as an emptiness or a pause.

The understanding of the body comes from this state, and the body "sees" if the position or inner movements are in harmony. So the position is readjusted in order to reach homogeneity of the energy: this stage is a reflection on the posture. After that and when there is no more obstacle between body and mind, the posture becomes contemplative. When the state of contemplation is well established, one has mastered the posture.

At that moment, the effort which is full of effort becomes effortless. The practitioner forgets his body, his will, his intelligence and becomes "united" within.

All asanas should be practiced in this way. But in the beginning, there is no connection between body and mind. The body acts, yet the mind cannot perceive it. Body and mind have to interact in each posture in an uninterrupted and attentive manner in order to achieve a greater harmony between body and mind.

Q: So, to acquire such a level of understanding, a relationship between body and mind has to be realised. You say this relationship is a result of an uninterrupted awareness. Does classical yoga recognize existence of that awareness?

Mr. Iyengar: Yoga knows the existence of that kind of awareness. Patanjali and all scriptures speak about it. The problem is that most practitioners don't know about it.

Q: Does the process of mastering the posture imply a step-by-step progression?

Mr. Iyengar: Of course, the physical practice is "connective." Firstly, a connection must be established between the field of action and the organs of perception. In the second stage, the posture becomes cognitive: we become aware of movements and of the body's functions.

Here is the interrelationship of the 5 elements with the organs of action and organs of perception, and their functions according to Samkhya philosophy.

ELEMENTS:

Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Ether.

ORGANS OF ACTION:

Excretory, Reproductive, Lower limbs, Upper limbs, Voice.

ORGANS OF PERCEPTION:

Nose, Tongue, Eyes, Skin, Ears.

The third stage is the discernment that comes from the intervening mind.

The fourth stage is the reflection on the posture. The stage precedes the state of contemplation. If asana is practiced in that way, one reaches that state. The tensions of the body and of mind and of the will let go. At that moment Pranayama becomes very efficient. But as long as mind and will act, obstacles rise and the action of pranayama is limited.

To practice asanas, tremendous strength and will are necessary. While practicing pranayama, strength and will should be overcome and should be sublimated.



Q: What do you mean by the words "to sublime"?

Mr. Iyengar: When we act voluntarily, tensions appear in the body - in the organs of action and perception. At that moment breath cannot flow easily. It is as though while driving a car you press on speed and brake pedals at the same time. Breath is the accelerator. The fibres of the organs of action and organs of perception become tight and prevent this flowing; that causes a detrimental effect on pranayama. In order to succeed in pranayama, and not create problems, the power of the will has to be dormant.

Q: The yoga of Patanjali states that there are seven steps of yoga before reaching samadhi which is the eighth step. In your book, you present them as separate but in a certain order. Do you advise practicing them in strict order?

Mr. Iyengar: According to Patanjali, all steps of yoga should not be separated and should be practiced all together (at the same time). He did not mention that one should follow another except for pranayama. If the practitioner has not yet mastered asanas, he should not practice pranayama. That is the only point where the practitioner has to master one step before coming to the next one.

In samadhi, there are eight stages. If the first four steps of samadhi, there is no analysis, no reasoning - only still awareness which is dwelling in silence. A state of bliss is the fifth stage of samadhi. The sixth stage of samadhi is experiencing depth of being or Self. In seventh stage, there is complete suspension of movements of the brain. That is what is called "a spiritual desert." The practitioner stays on the threshold of awakening but he does not know how to cross this passage.

What essentially makes this stage of absorption different from previous ones is its independence from all kind of supports. The state of emptiness emerges. At that moment if the active and attentive practitioner maintains the strength of awareness and great faith, he reaches the last stage of samadhi where all functions of mind, unconscious or conscious, stop - inhibit themselves completely. And the very Self emerges. Intelligence reaches its peak and wisdom flows as a tempestuous river; that is the superconscious state.

Q: Let us come back to more modest levels. Which kind of condition or disposition has to be acquired before one attempts to practice Jnana Yoga?

Mr. Iyengar: The yoga of Patanjali begins with discovery, knowledge, and understanding of the body, organs of perception, and mind. But man does not always have a correct understanding of perception and of mind which are invisible and immeasurable. To reach understanding, he has to practice asanas and pranayama. So, the physical body can be developed and mind can enter into contact with it and become aware of some difficult aspects that can be only understood through direct experience.

Patanjali speaks about the evolutionary method of study of the tangible, visible body and from that point one proceeds to studies of the mind. After that one goes toward pure consciousness (soul or atman) which dwells within. Thus, yoga does not only pacify the mind in order to create an emptiness but to discover what is the source of the mind. While searching for that source, one realizes that its light and energy are not inherent to it, but mind draws it from pure consciousness. And the goal of Jnana Yoga is to realise that. That can be done only through the body that is like an envelope of the soul.



Q: What exactly is a soul, for a yogi?

Mr. Iyengar: From pure consciousness something of the same nature sprouts forth; that is mind. A true search by means of yoga is oriented toward perfect peace. The state of samadhi can be compared to a lake in the bottom of which there is an eddy. In the meantime, on the surface we see only motionless, calm, smooth water.

In samadhi, atman dwells in the confines of the body like the surface of the lake without any disturbance. In that state, there is not even space for bliss or felicity (Ananda). Everything is filled with soul: 100% pure consciousness. When you dwell in atman, pure consciousness and you are one.

Q: What happens between stages of physical attitudes and the stage when the beginning of understanding takes place?

Mr. Iyengar: To know, to reach the Infinite, finite is a means. The body has limits and is mortal while the soul has the opposite. This mortal body is only a little part of nature, built of 5 elements (earth, water, air, fire, ether). The organs of action are related to the qualities of these elements.

For Indian philosophers, the mind is the eleventh sense, a "super organ" of perception which helps other organs to function. By practicing asanas and pranayama, organs of action, organs of perception, and the mind, become poised and remain silent. In that state, the 5 elements and their functions enter in fusion, impregnated with cosmic soul which is immovable. This divine marriage between individual soul and Universal Self is the beginning and the end of Yoga..

As long as these finished instruments are not sublimated, atman will not manifest itself. The clouds in the sky don't allow the ray of sun to reach, to touch the earth. When clouds dissipate, there is no more obstacle for the light of the sun. Similarly, when the obstacles which are the elements of nature disturb mind, Self cannot manifest. Practice of asanas and pranayama removes obstacles that are images created by mind, and slowly when obstacles disappear the light of Self shines more and more. Thus, without going through finite you cannot experience Infinite. But having only finite, you cannot "see" Infinite.

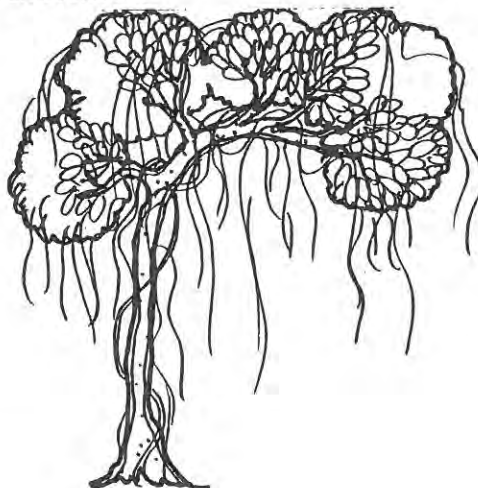
When finite is fully mastered, Infinite shines itself. But to come to that, much effort has to be made. If this light appears but the effort is not pursued, there will still be clouds between the sun and earth, between Self and consciousness. Work has to be continued, that is the essence of Karma Yoga.

Q: Do you recognize different levels of consciousness in Yoga?

Mr. Iyengar: Compared to a seed which sprouts, the intelligence of the heart rises and becomes intelligence of the head. The seed put in the earth is atman. After that it starts to open very slowly; consciousness appears. From that "something" a little stem arises. After the stem, comes sort of branches and that is intelligence of the head. That intelligence has a form called Ahamkara (ego, principle of individuation).

When you sleep, Ahamkara does not manifest; this principle of individual is completely dissolved. Nature nourishes soul: It gives an enormous amount of energy to an individual. Man can use it to entertain himself or to search for felicity and liberation. We used to say that it is necessary to tame nature through yoga. Evolution is when a little seed becomes a tree. From the top to the root the tree is one.

As fruit is in relation to the root, Self is in relation to body. Techniques of yoga give the opportunity to capture energy from the exterior as well as from the interior and to utilize that energy to accomplish such an evolution.



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If you wish to attend, please bring two roses—one for you and one for the Divine. Phone for further information. There is no fee, but you are asked to make a donation to a charity of your choice as an offering of gratitude.

Friday and Saturday, June 8 & 9, 8–9 P.M.

YOGA BED & BREAKFAST

As you know, we are having a yoga intensive here, July 27th to August 2nd. We are looking for yoga people willing to act as hosts for out of town students. If you are able to provide bed and breakfast (for which you will receive \$20/day) please contact:

Linda Benn, 598-8277

ERRATUM:

Credit for the article: "Questions & Answers with B.K.S. Iyengar---reported by Lorna Walker" which was published in our April, 1991 newsletter should have read as follows: "This article was originally published in supplement no.4 , May, 1990 of *Diplka*, The Journal of the Iyengar Yoga Institute in London, England, and is reprinted here with their permission"

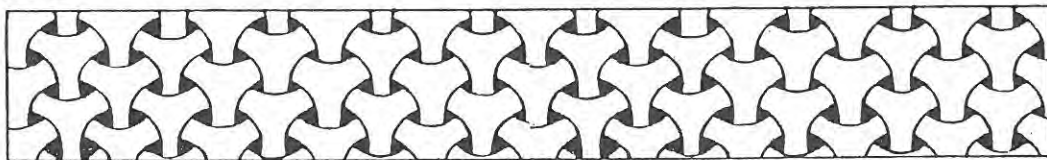
Diplka is a valuable resource of Iyengar yoga and may be obtained by writing to the Institute at: 223a Randolph Ave., London, W9 1NL, England.



Yoga teachers' meeting at Norma Hodge's studio

Omissions from April, 1991 Issue:

Spelling error of Jessica Sluymers name;
Typing credit to include Marjorie Vachell;
Photo credit to include Jim Rischmiller.



The Yoga Centre of Victoria Newsletter Advertising

If you have products or services of interest to Victoria's yoga practitioners, this is your advertising vehicle.

Because our rates are so low, all advertising material must be supplied camera ready - that is, exactly as you want it to appear in the newsletter. If not, the copy will simply be typed and inserted. If you wish, we can arrange to have an advertisement prepared for you, but we must charge extra for this service.

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Yoga Calendar

MAY:

- 4: Day of Yoga with Shirley Daventry French. Call 478-3775 for details.
- 5: Hidden Language workshop at Shambala House. Call 595-0177 for details.
- 11: Teachers meeting.
- 24-26: Video workshop at Shambala House. Call 595-0177 for details.
- 2: Pranayama Class/Asana Practice with Shirley Daventry French. Call 478-3755 for details.

JUNE:

- 7-9: Saltspring Island Yoga Retreat led by Shirley Daventry French. See ad this issue.
- 8: Rose Ceremony at Shambala House. Call 595-0177 for details.
- 22: Pranayama Class/Asana Practice with Shirley Daventry French. Call 478-3775 for details.
- 2: July 11: Donald Moyer workshop on Galliano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

JULY:

- 4: Iyengar Teachers Meeting in Ottawa.
- 12-21: Health Enhancement Workshop with Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galliano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.
- 27-Aug 2: Iyengar Yoga Intensive at the Victoria Y. See ad this issue.

AUGUST:

- 3-7: 5 day Immersion Yoga workshop given by Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galliano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

SEPTEMBER:

- 6-14: Workshop with Ramand Patel at the Victoria Y. Details to be announced.

OCTOBER:

- 12-13: Yoga workshop with Angela Farmer and Victor Van Kooten on Galliano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.
- 25-27: Health Enhancement workshop given by Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galliano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

NOVEMBER:

- 15-17: Yoga Workshop given by Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galliano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION FORM

It's time you joined the Yoga Centre of Victoria! As you read this newsletter, you are receiving one of the benefits of membership. As you attend your yoga classes or a workshop, you are receiving the benefits of membership. These take time and money and your membership fees and participation really help.

Please fill out this form and send it with your cheque or money order to:
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☐ Please do not mail me the newsletter; during class sessions I'll pick one up at my "Y" class.

The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY is a non-profit society incorporated under the Societies' Act of the Province of British Columbia whose purpose is, *"to encourage the physical, mental and spiritual growth of its members and other interested members of society at large by the study and discipline of Yoga"*. The Society owes inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

The Society Newsletter is published regularly, providing current information on events concerning yoga in Victoria and area and at the Yasodhara Ashram. Published by the Victoria Yoga Centre Society.

Anyone wishing to contribute articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions to the newsletter may contact the Editor, Jennifer Rischmiller, 4489 Lindholm Road, R.R.#1, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8X 3W9. Telephone: (604)-474-5630.

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VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY
3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R.#1, Victoria, B.C., Canada, V8X 3W9



yoga centre of victoria

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

June/July, 1991

PLEASE
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Yogachara B.K.S. Iyengar being presented with the Padmashree Award by the President of India, Ramaswamy Venkataraman, in New Dehli, on March 23, 1991.



Reflections

By Shirley Daventry French

India has been in the news lately: a general election is about to take place and, according to our local newspaper, it is currently going through one of the most politically turbulent periods since independence from Britain in 1947. Time magazine featured a cover story on 'India's moment of truth', and on television I watched a BBC documentary about the rise of Hindu fundamentalism and its emergence as a political force. They discussed the overwhelming problems facing anyone who attempts to govern this crisis ridden land with its uneasy democracy.

So many problems, so many people - air pollution, noise pollution, polluted land and water, open sewers, disease, poverty, natural and unnatural disasters. No amount of tourist gloss can completely obscure the day to day struggle for existence. On my second day there in 1979, while riding in a taxi from my comfortable hotel to the railway station, an emaciated woman thrust her baby through the open window into my arms. I quickly thrust it back, wound up the window despite the heat, and tried to ignore the teeming masses on the street. But I could no longer claim to be ignorant.

Life in India is fraught with difficulties for native and visitor alike. Yet I am planning to return there this fall. Why? Why am I going to spend all this time and money? Why not lie on a beach in Hawaii or take the longed for trip to France. For many years now, time and money I would otherwise have spent on holidays have been spent on travelling to India.

Why do I go? For the yoga, and the teaching which is available only there.

Having decided to go this winter and wanting to make my trip as comfortable as possible (a desire I still cling to), I tried to find out how much it would cost to stay at a new first-class hotel. After a futile attempt to get through to the hotel itself, I gave up and phoned an English friend who has stayed there. He had been in India this winter, and told me that the quality of life in Pune had deteriorated since he and I were there together in 1988, but that staying at this particular hotel made being there a little more palatable. He added that the yoga was still wonderful.

This question: why go to India, was posed by Revenue Canada to a couple of my friends whose claim to deduct air fare and expenses had been disallowed. One of them, a full-time yoga teacher, successfully fought this disqualification, but in the process Revenue Canada told her that she didn't have to go to India to receive training in yoga, she could go down to the local recreation centre. She does: she goes to recreation and other centres all across the country - to teach and train other teachers! For her own training she goes to India!

To a limited extent, Revenue Canada is right. You don't have to go to India to study yoga. You don't even have to leave Canada. There are many good teachers here. However, India is the source of yoga, and there is a unique perspective to be gained from studying there. It's beneficial for students to have this experience if they can.

If you are a student of Iyengar Yoga, there is another reason for making this journey. B.K.S. Iyengar is a living Master and there is the chance to meet him face to face and receive direct transmission of the teachings. We are lucky, he speaks English - in fact, the main language of teaching at the Institute is English. The only interpreter required is one's self who must translate his instructions into actions.

If you are not only a student but also a teacher of Iyengar Yoga, it is vital to create a direct link to the Master and his teaching, by making the effort to go to Pune if at all possible. There are valid reasons why some teachers do not go to India: health, family and financial reasons. This does not mean that they can't teach, nor that they will be poor teachers; but if it is feasible to go to Pune, seize this opportunity - it may not come your way again! If we fail to make the most of the time and resources at our disposal, what we receive back will be limited.

In Pune you receive teaching at the Institute of a quality which is not available anywhere else - on Patanjali's eight limbs of Yoga, on yoga psychology and philosophy. Outside the Institute, India itself teaches you much more. You learn surrender and acceptance in all things, large and small.

When going to Pune, your port of entry to India is likely to be Bombay, half way round the world from Victoria. From here, it doesn't make much difference if you travel via the Orient or Europe. Having arrived in Bombay, you have to travel another 100 miles to Pune, and you have a choice: fly on Indian Airlines, take a taxi or train.

The first time I went to India was with my husband. We decided to take the train. It took us over two hours to buy a ticket: having acquired the inevitable forms and found the appropriate wicket in the mausoleum-like station, we joined a long line, at which moment the wicket closed for lunch. Like everyone else we stood there and waited for the railway employee to return, which he did one hour later. To save time on our return journey, we planned to fly from Pune to Bombay until we learned of a recent plane crash and heard about the poor safety and maintenance practices of Indian airlines. We also heard many horror stories about taxi rides. Before going through the mountains, the drivers stop and make an offering at a small shrine. When you get into the passes, you know why! If you look over the edge (and you are advised not to), you see the wrecks of many cars, trucks, buses. The safest way, we

decided, was to return by train. Having made our reservations, we bought a newspaper and read about a major train crash outside of Bombay!

I have since travelled all three ways, and make my choice to suit my mood, my companion or the demands of time. Often the choice is made for me. Last time I was forced to travel by taxi because the airlines were on strike, and the trains full of holiday travellers.

As I make my preparations for this year's visit, my comfort loving side is not looking forward to the physical inconvenience of this journey; but, at the same time, my soul yearns to make it.



Good News from India

We are happy to report that Mr. Iyengar's son, Prashant is recovering well from recent surgery to his arm, which was severely injured in a car accident two years ago. He is now able to bend his arm and sensation is returning to his fingers.



Ramanand is coming...September 6-14
See brochure

The Victoria Yoga Centre
and the Victoria YM-YWCA
are pleased to announce an

IYENGAR YOGA INTENSIVE

to be held this summer at the Victoria "Y"
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July 27th to August 2nd, 1991

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*Classes will be taught by the following senior students and
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Dr. Bruce Carruthers
Liz McLeod
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Dr. Derek French

For out-of-town students: Victoria is a popular tourist centre with a wide selection of hotels and motels. The Residence at the "Y" has a limited amount of inexpensive accommodation for women. Billets will also be available with members of the local yoga community.

For brochure or further information contact:

Victoria Yoga Centre
3918 Olympic View Drive
R.R. 1, Victoria, B.C. V8X 3W9

Telephone Enquiries: Shirley Daventry French (604) 478-3775
or Linda Benn (604) 598-8277

Meditations on B.K.S. Iyengar's

The Tree of Yoga

by Ron Burnett

B.K.S. Iyengar begins his book The Tree of Yoga with a description of the three levels which drive human beings in their day to day activities. "...yoga is the union of body with the mind and of mind with the soul." (p.3)

At first this might seem to be a simple if not clichéd statement. Yet in its simplicity there are crucial insights. In a culture devoted to mechanical descriptions of itself and of the people who inhabit its very fabric, the notion of a soul is a challenge. In order to examine that challenge to our value system let us look for a moment at what I mean by mechanical.

Cultures can be analysed from many different vantage points. Let me illustrate one classic example of mechanical thinking in our (Western) culture. It has become an almost accepted truism that the ever present violence in our films and on television has had a terrible and negative impact upon every segment of our society. Few days pass without some media commentary on this issue. If the media aren't looking at themselves through this lens then various organizations and individuals are there to remind us of a pervasive influence over which we seem to have very little control.

In the study of Communications we call this approach the "kick-the-can theory." It goes roughly like this: take an empty can and kick it: there is an instantaneous reaction: the can moves across the floor or flies into the air. Cause and effect. Yet no form of communication is as simple as that, as mechanical. Human beings are subjects not objects. The messages we watch or listen to don't transform us in a simple sense into victims. Cause and effect - it just doesn't work that way. Mechanical forms of thought collapse these crucial differences.

We are subjects and we are divided into many parts, some of which co-exist harmoniously, others which are in conflict. At no time do we simply watch or listen to a message and become that message. To believe so is to engage in the kind of mechanical thinking which ultimately absolves us of responsibility for our own actions.

Mechanical forms of thought always look to the exterior, to the outside for answers to complex questions. But these answers must be found at a deeper level within each human being. Thus the violence in the media will only be effective in those contexts where violence is already a part of everyday life. And even here I would be very hesitant about attributing too much to the media, too much to a screen, too much to an image.

The mind, the body, the soul. As Gregory Bateson put it, "a pattern which connects." The soul for Iyengar is that luminous place the source of which cannot be found in a mechanical conception of any one part of ourselves divorced from the whole.

"...when consciousness and the body are brought into union with one another, the energy of consciousness becomes still, and when the energy of consciousness is still, consciousness too is still and the soul pervades the entire body." (p. 4 in The Tree of Yoga)

The soul like consciousness pervades the body but like the unconscious, the soul is not an object. The soul can only be grasped through forms of mental and physical discipline which we cannot label in a rational manner. The paradox is that in our culture we choose a mechanical approach to explain processes which are often far less complex than we have imagined them to be. In a crucial chapter in The Tree of Yoga entitled "The Healing Art" Iyengar says:

"Yoga is a subjective medical treatment which affects the various vital centres of the body." (p. 107) He goes on in the chapter to talk about attaining the optimum in the relationship between body and mind through each asana in order to find those possible points of healing which a reductive and mechanical approach often marginalizes.

There is a moment of almost peaceful meditation in an asana which provides us with a glimpse of the physical and mental tissues which link us to a non-physical place about which we can only speak metaphorically. That place is very subjective, and it is in part the work of teaching and learning to connect different subjectivities and to recognize the importance of one soul joining with and learning from another.

In a culture devoted to the visible and to the mechanical this kind of subjective interaction is difficult to accept because although it can be felt it cannot be easily talked about. A further complication is that what we hold onto as our subjectivity, our identity can only be released if we recognize ourselves in others and others in ourselves. "The body cannot be separated from the mind, nor can the mind be separated from the soul. No-one can define the boundaries between them." (*The Tree of Yoga*, p. 46)

This crucial premise of a union between parts which are never divisible, of a whole which is never separate from the parts which make it up, is at the root of Iyengar's notion of the soul. It allows us to grasp for moments beyond the physical and to recognize that the physical, as Iyengar describes it, is merely an "anatomical sheath" which must be integrated into the soul and vice versa.

The door which asanas open up for us results in more than just physical practice, it is a movement towards higher levels of spirituality which I would not even describe as self-awareness since the process leads to points which we cannot anticipate - precisely the opposite of mechanical forms of thinking whose central organizing principle is predictability.



In further articles I will talk about how dialogue may be a crucial way of thinking about the inherent union of parts which are not divisible, and will end for the moment with a quote from David Bohm the physicist: "A dialogue doesn't mean just between two people, but rather the root meaning of 'dia' in Greek means 'through'. And the general picture it suggests is a stream running between two banks. It's the stream that counts. The two banks merely give form to the stream - the stream is common to the two banks. So there'll be a stream of thought, perception, or some sort of energy flowing between us, unfolding, and that would be the meaning of the dialogue." (*Unfolding Meaning* by David Bohm, 34)

RON BURNETT is a Professor at McGill University and Director of the graduate program in Communications. He is a student of Iyengar Yoga studying at the Tejas Centre de Yoga in Montreal.

Yoga Centre of Victoria

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IYENGAR, HIS LIFE AND WORK \$23.00

YOGA, A GEM FOR WOMEN \$20.00
by Geeta S. Iyengar

YOGA, THE IYENGAR WAY \$25.00
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70 GLORIOUS YEARS OF YOGACHARYA B.K.S. IYENGAR \$25.00
(Commemoration Volume, 1990)

Contact your yoga teacher or Linda Benn
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598-8277

The Power of Yoga

by B.K.S. Iyengar

REPRINTED FROM THE IYENGAR YOGA
INSTITUTE REVIEW OF SAN FRANCISCO
SPRING 1990

R: Would you like to tell us about your path from your young age till now. Who was your guru and how have you developed (perfected) the method of yoga that you are still practising?

BKS: I was born in Bangalore in 1918 during an epidemic of influenza. My mother was affected by that epidemic, and there was very little chance for me to survive. But by the grace of God, we both survived.

I was very weak physically as a child, with skinny arms and legs but protruding stomach and a big head. I was not attractive physically and my weakness made me feel despair. Nobody could help me establish my health, and I was a burden for myself and my family. It became even worse when tuberculosis struck me. I was close to death.

In April 1934 the husband of my sister, Sri T. Krishnamacharya, asked me to accompany him to Mysore, where he directed the school of yoga under the patronage of Sri Krishnaraja Wadiyar Bahadur 1V, Maharaja of Mysore. And there I started to practise a few asanas under his direction. My body was so stiff that I could hardly bend forward and touch my toes. But the seeds of yoga were planted within by him, and that is why I call him Guruji.

During the two years I spent in Mysore, my Guru encouraged me very little to practise, and he did not explain to me the principles or subtleness of yoga. During that period he spent no more than 40 days teaching me, and he did not explain how to avoid or eliminate the terrible pain I was suffering. Sometimes he terrified me. People started coming to me and asking me to teach them yoga, and that pushed me to practise. In the beginning, my interest was strictly determined by the necessity of making a livelihood.

In 1936, during a tour in the north of Karnataka, many people including women asked us to teach them yoga. At that time, women felt reserved toward yoga. For this reason and because I was the youngest in the group, I was told to teach the women. At that moment, another seed was planted that has become a huge tree which has grown on five continents.

In 1937, the Club Deccan Gymkhana invited me for six months to give classes in different schools in Pune. That was an enormous responsibility because, first of all, I was younger than many of my students. Besides that, they were physically stronger and more cultivated than I was. At that time my weight was only 75 pounds; my torso measured 22 inches and it was easy to count my ribs on it.

But teaching was a tremendous challenge. I did not have any skills, neither theoretical nor practical. So, in order to master what little I knew, I had to practise very hard. I questioned whether I had to learn from books, which was kind of second hand knowledge, or if I had to acquire that knowledge by practising. I chose the second alternative and began to practice 10 hours a day.

The administration of the University appreciated my work and my teaching and extended my contract for three more years. After that I continued to teach independently.

My words cannot convey the pain I went through during those years. The intensity of my work made me suffer in my body, my mind and my soul. I felt like being thrown from one extreme to another; my body and my mind refused to co-operate. My mind flickered and my most vital energy was reaching complete exhaustion. In spite of that, something within me became very impatient when I stopped and was not allowing me to take breaks. Or in other words, when I failed, I felt depressed.



Very often I was so tired that I was losing consciousness. I lost my taste for food and drinking. I was exhausted physically and mentally and I could not sleep. Even elimination and its functions became problematic. Yet even though I was exhausted by fatigue and doubts, I could find relief only in increasing my efforts. Every day I was going through terrible trial. It was only through the grace of God that after each failure I had enough strength to make another attempt. I continued like that for years. When circumstances forced me to live alone, I often would not eat for several days. Often, I had only one cup of tea a day and I persisted practising.

I did not have anybody to guide me so I made enormous mistakes, but they became a source of knowledge. Slowly, my body became firm, but even though I began practising yoga in 1934, it was only in 1946 that a true curiosity arose in me. And that happened like this: the God Venkateswara venerated by our family appeared in my dream. He smiled and he blessed me with one hand while with the other he offered me a few grains of rice. He told me that from now I would not struggle any more for survival. The very next day, students came and since then the grace of God has been flowing on me. I only regret that today I cannot express my gratitude with the intensity of vigour and strength that I tried to insult him with during those years of tremendous hardship.

Today, I would say that from 1934 to 1945 yoga was attached to my struggling body; today it is me who is attached to yoga. Yet it would be too naive to believe that from that point everything became easy. In 1958, I started to feel that I was losing control of asanas. I felt dizzy, stiff and heavy. An exchange of correspondence with other yogis and with my Guru did not bring any relief. It seemed that my age and my marriage had left an imprint of their presence. Even postures in flexion became painful. But today I feel happy in saying that after three years of very hard work, I regained all I had lost and the fruits of that work are still within me.

The discipline of yoga brought me from a subhuman, unhealthy childhood to the state of someone who is conscious and sincere. If yoga could transform me, a person whose life started so miserably, others born with higher potential should not dare to reject its teachings! The science of yoga is vast and progress seems to be cruelly slow to appear. But yoga helped me to overcome physical, mental and spiritual obstacles, so that today I can drink and savour its nectar.

Q: In the Bhagavad Gita and the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, it is said, "Yoga is the path that leads to balance of mind, to control of senses and passions, to suppression of mental agitations, to liberation of desires, and finally to communion with Brahman; it means universal spirit. One who has mastered one's mind, senses, thinking, and speech is a Raja Yogi." Generally, and even more often, Raja Yoga is opposed to Hatha Yoga; and if the former is considered a spiritual path, the latter is regarded as a path of bodily discipline. What about your opinion?

Mr. Iyengar: In the beginning there was no difference between them. There were different ways, manners to practise it. Four paths of experiencing the Self were distinguished:

- 1) Jnana Yoga, or Jnana Marga, the path of knowledge.
- 2) Karma Marga.
- 3) Bhakti Marga, the path of devotion, surrender to God.
- 4) Yoga Marga, the path of which the Bhagavad Gita and Patanjali speak.

Unfortunately, a little less than 200 years ago, people started to differentiate and speak about Jnana instead of Yoga. Yoga means union, or binding: to bind, to unite one's self with the divinity in one's self (atma). It can be shocking for someone to acknowledge Patanjali's statement that yoga is the inhibition of all fluctuations of the mind, but it is important to understand that when one reaches full control of the vibrations of mind, union with God takes place and one realises that the soul is above the mind. Patanjali never said that he had taught Raja Yoga. Some people used to call his book Raja Yoga.

Q: Do you consider that Raja Yoga is a state of yogic perfection that can be reached by all paths of yoga?

Mr. Iyengar: What does it mean, Raja Yoga? Who is the king of your body? What is the territory? Who owns the territory?

To explain the territory, let's take an example: We can consider France as a territory. In the past there was a king; nowadays, there is a president. So, all of France is the president's territory. Who is the president of the territory that is your body? It is your soul. You understand through your mind that the soul is the king of your body. As a king knows very well his country, similarly the soul knows the body in which it dwells. Hatha Yoga was not the term used by the authors of books. They used another term, Hatha Vidya, which means "knowledge."

Patanjali speaks about asanas; in books on Hatha Yoga they speak also about asanas. Patanjali speaks about pranayama; also, other authors speak about pranayama. What differentiates them is a practice called Sat Kriya, or techniques of purification - as in drinking water in order to wash and clean the stomach, or as in rinsing the nostrils with water or a piece of cloth. All these are techniques of purification.

Hatha, in the Sanskrit language, also means "will." How can you conquer your body and your self by using and sharpening your will?

Patanjali uses the term "consciousness," but not "mind" or "spirit." The pronouns "I" and "he" define an individual "me." But in reality this "me" consists of three aspects: consciousness, intelligence, and mind. Mind is only an instrument. It is inferior to

consciousness, and consciousness is inferior to soul. All these are only means of action. When you succeed in conquering a true consciousness, you are a master of everything.

In Hatha Yoga, "Yoga" means union, bound, union of body with mind, union of mind with intelligence, and union of intelligence with consciousness. The constant communication should exist between all these states. The communication between body and soul through all these instruments (consciousness, intelligence, mind) is called "yoga." If you understand that, you will be able to understand the meaning of "Hatha" and "Raja."

The word Hatha consists of "Ha," representing Sun, or energy, and "Tha," representing moon, or consciousness. In a body, there are two principal nerves: the solar nerve and the lunar nerve. The question is how to unite them. The balance or equilibrium between energy and consciousness is called Hatha Yoga. It has to be understood that this consistent balance between energy and consciousness is Hatha Yoga.

In our daily life, because of our inner state and the environment where we live, there are constant fluctuations between energy and consciousness. It is important to channel those two energies, positive and negative, and not allow their dispersion. Their unification is the purpose of Hatha Yoga.

Now, let us see what Patanjali speaks about: According to him Abhyasa (constant practice) and Vairagya (non-attachment) lead to extinction of fluctuations of the mind. In fact, Abhyasa is a practical, active, and positive method related to energy, while Vairagya is negative, in that it is the method that consists of eliminating everything that impedes practice. This corresponds to "consciousness," and when these two principles are fully realized, one masters yoga, according to Patanjali. So you see that the goal is identical in Hatha Yoga and the yoga of Patanjali. Only the expression of that goal is different.

I am going to explain it on the four chapters of the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. The first chapter concerns the people who are already very evolved spiritually and who have reached a good level of control of the mind. These people have already understood and assimilated what they practise.

In the second chapter, Patanjali addresses those who have neither spiritual development nor control of mind, those who have not yet begun their practice but are interested in doing that. This chapter shows what they should do.

So, in the first chapter, Patanjali begins with mind, while in the second one he addresses himself to the body, as matter. But nobody pays attention to what he is actually saying, "control your mind." Yet is it enough to say that? Is anybody able to do that? Can it be expected that an agitated, nervous, or overexcited person will become quiet by simply asking him to do that? No. That requires discipline and practise. So, the first chapter is addressed to people who know already; the second one to those who have difficulties but are interested in doing something about it. The second chapter teaches them how to succeed in that.

The Bhagavad Gita and Yoga Sutras of Patanjali deal with some human misery. (The first chapter of the Bhagavad Gita speaks about Vishada Yoga, which means misery, despair.) They teach humans how to get rid of those miseries and how to reach liberation. They show the path toward liberation.

It has to be understood that when Patanjali lived, the civilization of India was very highly evolved, culturally and spiritually. Only afterward, with wars, the decline came. You should not forget that the first book on Hatha Yoga was written only after 750 A.D. while the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali were a long time before the birth of Jesus Christ.

The way Patanjali treats the subject proves that civilization was highly developed spiritually and culturally, and that is probably the only reason why Patanjali began with the mind and only afterward addressed the body.

So, Patanjali begins with the mind level, from there he goes to the body level, then he comes back to the mind, then to intelligence, and from intelligence to liberation. That is the way explained by Patanjali. In Hatha Yoga, one begins with body; through breath one reaches mind level; and from mind to soul.

In the third Sutra, Patanjali says, "You dwell in yourself." How can the ordinary person understand that?

The Hatha Yoga Pradipika begins with body, going next to mind, after that to intellect, and only after that to the deepest of Self, which is beyond intuition. Here there are two different paths that lead to the same end, the same results.

Q: Swatmarama, the author of the Hatha Yoga Pradipika, says that whoever practises Yoga correctly and sincerely (even though young, very old, sick or weak) will become Siddha. How is that possible if we take into account different states of health and different levels of intellectual evolution?

Mr. Iyengar: Why will you become sick if you practise regularly? If you do not practise, you can expect aging; but it is not body that says that, it is mind.

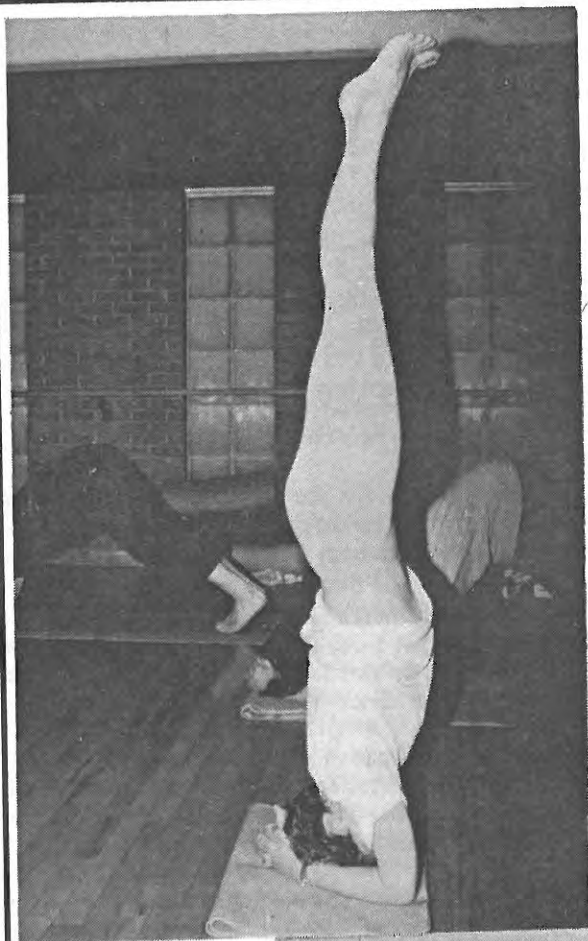
Swatmarama says that body is completely inert, and this completely inert body imposes its inertia on mind and intelligence. Body is Tamas (inert) while mind is Rajas (active, dynamic - action/reaction/emotion), and soul or self is Sattva.

To develop the body to the level of the mind, and body and mind to the level of soul (or in other words, to allow body and mind to reach purity of soul) is the quest of Swatmarama.

Have you read Patanjali's Yoga Sutras? In the second chapter, he gives explanation on organs of action, organs of perception - body, mind, intelligence - that all of them are servants of the soul.

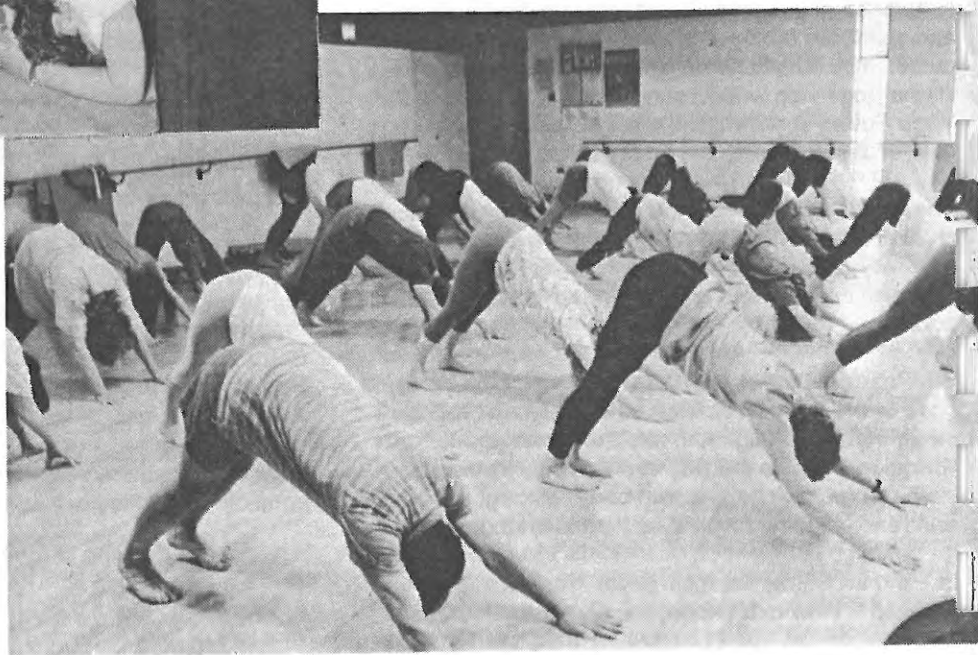
The purpose of Hatha Yoga is to realize union of Purusha and Prakriti. Mind and intelligence are part of Prakriti, and when they reach ultimate levels of development (evolution), they become Purusha. In Sutra 25/II Patanjali says, "The dissociation of Purusha and Prakriti brought by the dispersion of Avidya is the real remedy, and that is the Liberation of the Seer." In the beginning, the intelligence and mind work in opposite direction, and that is why they stay in conflict; when they are united, that is liberation.

The mind is the king of the senses, the breath is king of the mind. Those who know the art of mastering the breath (i.e. to make it rhythmic), they will become masters of their mind and their senses.



Pictures from

Big Big Practice





Yoga Centre & Y Members

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Weekend Workshop	\$110.00	\$120.00
Mid-Week Workshop		
Level I	\$ 70.00	\$ 80.00
Level II	\$ 80.00	\$ 90.00
Both Workshops	\$175.00	\$ 190.00

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Friday, September 13 at 6:00 pm

Join us for an informal pot luck dinner in the Y lounge at 6:00 pm, followed at approximately 7:00 with a talk by Ramanand on the philosophy of Yoga. Please bring some food to share; tea, coffee and juice will be provided. Fee - \$5.00 for Y and Yoga Centre Members or \$8.00 for Non-Members.

Ramanand Patel is a dedicated student of Yoga Master B.K.S. Iyengar and is one of the world's foremost teachers of Iyengar Yoga. The sensitivity, awareness and technical refinement of Ramanand's teaching come from a deep background of learning and practice. His workshops are challenging, enlightening and fun. An annual visit from Ramanand has become a Victoria tradition, eagerly anticipated by those who have worked with him before. If you have not yet experienced the work of this outstanding teacher, take the opportunity and register early this year.

REGISTER EARLY AT THE Y MAIN DESK - registration is limited. Cheques should be made payable to Victoria YM-YWCA. Please specify which level for mid-week workshop. Refunds will be made only if space can be filled from a waiting list; excluding a \$10.00 service charge.

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WEEKEND WORKSHOP - September 6 to 8

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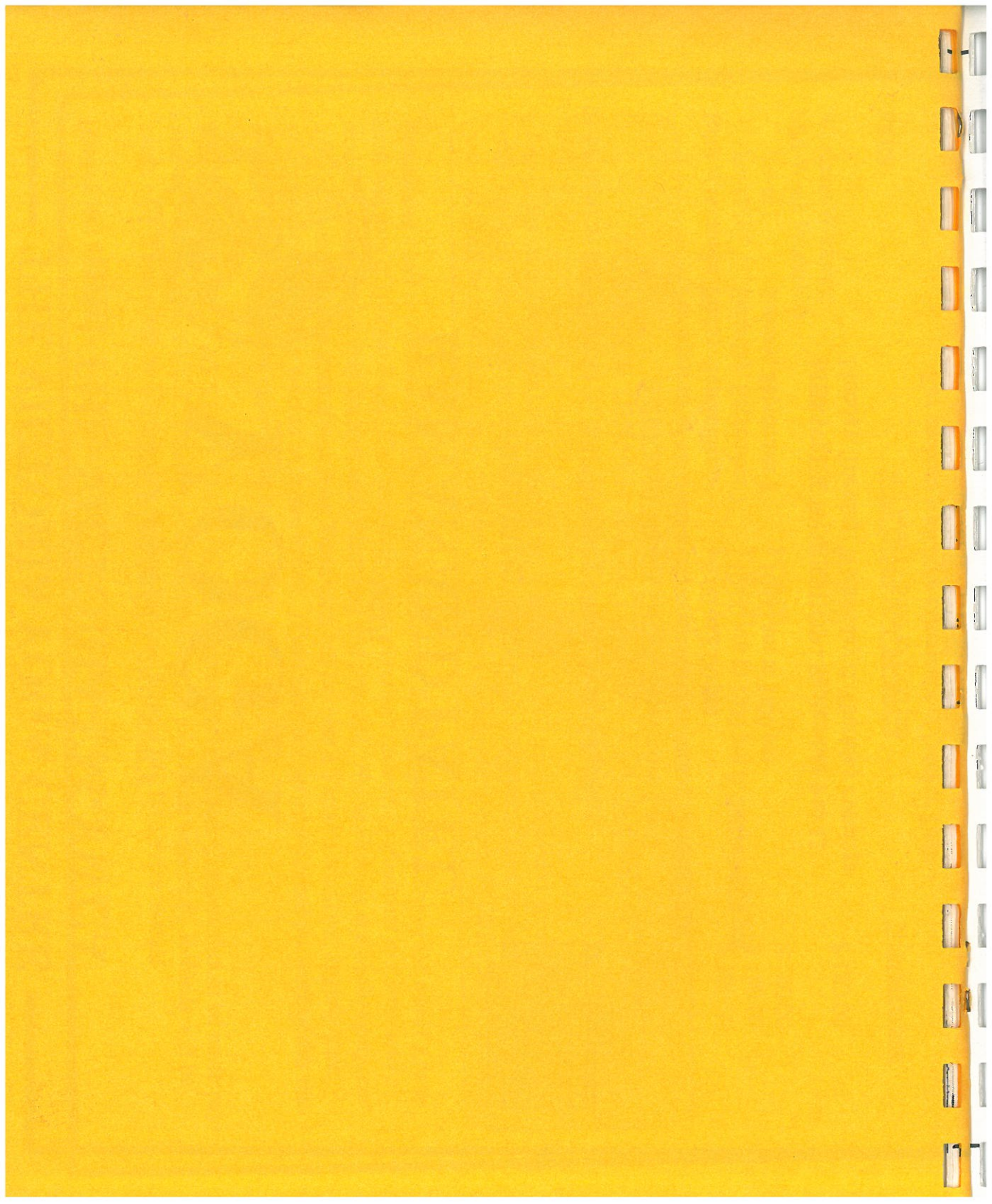
Friday, September 6	6:00 to 8:00 pm
Saturday, September 7	10:00 am to 1:00 pm & 2:00 to 4:00 pm
Sunday, September 8	10:00 am to 1:00 pm

MID-WEEK WORKSHOP - September 9 to 12

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday evenings

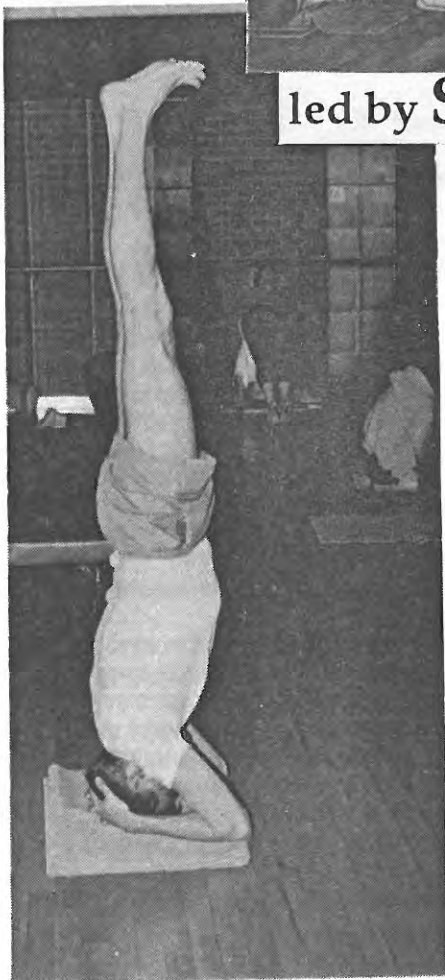
Level I - 5:00 to 7:00 pm

For students with little experience of Iyengar Yoga





led by **Shirley Daventry-French**



Hatha Yoga Pradipika deals with the body in the first chapter; in the second, it speaks on mind; in the third on intelligence. And what is said in the fourth chapter about Samadhi? It says that when salt is dissolved in water, it will be the same salt water if drunk from the top or from the bottom.

Another analogy: As burning camphor and the flame are one, similarly the body and soul are one. And another analogy; A vessel launched on water drifts, because it is empty. If we fill it up with water, it will become one with the sea. Similarly, when soul fills up the body, it becomes one with it. The sun's rays (if there are no clouds) reach the earth without interference, and these are the same rays that leave the sun and touch the earth. The rays of the soul cannot reach the pores of the skin if there are clouds, which are diseases. Hatha Yoga teaches us how to make the light of the soul reach the skin and all extremities of the body without interference.

Q: Do you practise all eight pillars of Yoga as said by Patanjali: Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, Samadhi? Or is your yoga sadhana based essentially on asanas, i.e. yoga postures?

Mr. Iyengar: I am asking myself, and I ask others, why people take only part? Eight states or pillars, whatever you call them, exist together and are inseparable.

How is Niyama interpreted? In the 32nd Sutra of Chapter II, Patanjali says, "Purity, contentment, austerity (Saucha, Santosha, Tapas), Svadhyaya, Isvara Pranidhana should be observed." Saucha is purity. What does purity mean today? What is the true meaning of this purity of which Patanjali speaks? Is he speaking about baths, washing? Is it possible to clean cells with water? And intestine with soap? At the time of Patanjali, 200 years B.C., purity meant "health." What brings health? Contentment. Good health is ethical. At that point, true Yoga begins - at the point of good health and contentment.

Patanjali is an intellectual. Also, he is very specific on the question, "Is it enough to be healthy?" No. Patanjali speaks about austerity, the importance of tremendous discipline. The translation of the term austerity usually is not very good. This term means that the practices giving you health and contentment should be followed religiously.

And now, what should be done next? Self study. To reach what? To surrender completely into God, to attain Samadhi. It can also be expressed the opposite way, one is searching for Samadhi in order to surrender completely to God. The former and the latter are correct.

Is Svadhyaya an ethical or spiritual discipline? For Patanjali, it was the ethical aspect of discipline that had importance, while in our time we speak about spiritual discipline. The statement "Know yourself" is related to the sphere of spiritual discipline.

Yama - Brings control of the organs of action: arms., legs, tongue, reproductive organs, excretory organs.

Niyama - Brings control of the organs of perception: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin.

Asanas - If one practises exercises of purification, all organs of action and perception become clean, but what about one's liver, spleen, lungs? The asanas were created in order to cleanse and make the inner organs healthy.

Pranayama - Once the organs become healthy, energy can flow through them freely. Controlling this energy flow is the purpose of pranayama.

Pratyahara - Consists of freeing the mind from constraints of memory. Imagine you come to visit me and I offer you a cup of coffee. Your memory registers the taste of coffee. Later, you go to visit another friend, and he offers you another cup of coffee. Your body and your nerves tell you not to drink it because they know it will be harmful for them. But memory, which remembers the taste of coffee, disturbs intelligence; finally, you drink the coffee. Pratyahara is the art of judging with discernment. To practise pratyahara, one has to cut the circuit of memory in such a way that space is created for intelligence and judgement with total discernment.



Besides that, do you know that if we join all nerve fibers of the human body, they will be 16,000 km in length? And if we join all arteries, veins, capillary vessels, they will be 96,000 km in length. How do you expect Prana (energy) to flow freely if the circuits are blocked? To practise only asanas or only pranayama will not bring any fruit. All of them should be practised.

Q: What is the evil that our society suffers from most?

Mr. Iyengar: Envy, lewdness, and greed are the biggest enemies of the society. I would like to mention that love is pure. Love is passive; and when it is transformed into lust, or lewdness, it becomes the greatest enemy of the soul.

Q: Considering the stage of crisis within our society now and the chaos we seem to be leading ourselves into, do you think that Yoga can be an efficient and rapid method, or way, to guide the largest number of people toward advanced levels of realisation?

Mr. Iyengar: Yoga is not a rapid method. It is a slow method. That is why tranquilisers and medicine appeared. But when Yoga starts to act, its effects are powerful. Some grains take a long time to sprout. Some grains require heat, fertilizers, all kind of conditions in order to sprout. There are some grains so hard that it is necessary to use fire to burst them out in order to sprout. Yoga is very similar to those grains.

According to Patanjali, there are three types of effort generated by the practitioner: feeble, average, and intense. He states that the final goal will be reached only by those who desire it with the greatest intensity and put the biggest energy into it. I belong to those whose nature of effort is intense. That is why I am able to penetrate, interpret, and extrapenetrates the subject. But those whose nature is mild and moderate cannot interpret.

Q: What is the difference between the method of Yoga that you practise and that of others?

Mr. Iyengar: That is a question for which I usually do not give the answer. It is a perfectly personal matter. I shall give you an example of intense practise: Open your hand and extend it. Where is your intelligence? On the bottom or on the back? Is your intelligence

Dharana - Memory functions to collect information. Intelligence has the role of judging with discernment, or selecting information. When intelligence is able to discern, it spontaneously reveals concentration, or Dharana.

Samadhi - When distinction ceases between I and me, subject and object (or in other words, when Seer and Seen become one), that is Samadhi. this state cannot be described, cannot be told, because at the moment one perceives it, by logical conclusion, one is out of that state. One can be aware of a state of simple concentration, but not of the state of Samadhi.

Q: Is it possible to reach the state of complete relaxation by practising only Pranayama?

Mr. Iyengar: What is the meaning of Pranayama practice if the pores of your skin are blocked (clogged)? How can the energy circulate if the nervous system is not purified? We speak about hypertension. What is it? When nerves become too tense, the whole energy is concentrated in the brain; and that makes the nervous system hypertense. If the nervous system is not totally purified, Pranayama has no effect at all.

penetrating and stretching the skin all over? I practise Yoga in such a way that intelligence penetrates all over. That is the difference between the Yoga I practise and other forms.

I practise in such a manner that intelligence becomes active and present in all parts of the body. I verify constantly here and there. It is necessary that the intelligence be distributed everywhere, equally, throughout the whole body. I use my head in order to verify that if it is present here, it should also be present there. And if it is not, why? By practising in that way, I progressed.

Q: What is your theory of alignment that you stress so much?

Mr. Iyengar: Perfect alignment of body, mind, and soul. If intelligence exists in a head, it should also exist in a toe. That is alignment.



Q: You say that the diaphragm is a window of the soul, or that it is a link between the physical body and psychological body or spiritual body. Can you explain?

Mr. Iyengar: It is a link between the physical and psychological body. Suppose you are afraid. What happens to your diaphragm? What about its shape? Or when you feel happy, what happens? It is lifted, isn't it? It is important to differentiate the diaphragm from the solar plexus. When the diaphragm contracts, pressure occurs on the solar plexus. What do yogis do? They remain calm in order not to harden their diaphragm. They stay relaxed. The diaphragm balances the mind, even if it is a physical organ. It is the link of equilibrium between mental and physical. Pranayama is an art that leads to control of the mind through breathing, because it is impossible to control the mind directly.

Q: Why is the skin considered so important in the method of Yoga you teach?

Mr. Iyengar: To use a medical term, the skin is an organ of perception. All muscle fibers and nerves are organs of action. While practising asanas, the organs of action get close to the organs of perception, the skin. When you open your hand, you have not extended your intelligence, but you have extended the fibers and the intelligence could flow away like a river. When the organs of action are well extended and enter into contact with the organs of perception, the message is sent to the brain, which judges whether you are ready to do something and if you are doing it correctly. This is the importance of skin. It is skin that allows us to think and act correctly. The contact between organs of action and all organs of perception allows the brain to decide whether one practices asanas correctly or not.

Q: Some modern sages in India, after having practised Hatha Yoga, criticized it because they thought that Hatha Yoga was the path leading to the development of magical powers, or Siddhis. Do you agree with these critics?

Mr. Iyengar: But what does Patanjali say on that question? In Chapter 3, he speaks about Vibhuti (power, greatness) and Siddhis (the powers that awaken by accomplishing Samyama - Samyama meaning Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi all together). Siddhis means the knowledge of past and future, knowledge of solar and lunar systems, movements of celestial bodies, cessation of hunger and thirst, etc. In fact, the Hatha Yoga Pradipika and

the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali speak about development of those powers; they appear in the sincere and honest aspirant as proof and sign that he is on the right track. And if he is not diverted by them, his practice will be improved even more in quality. But we are usually so proud of reaching those powers that instead of continuing the practice, we waste time by boasting about them, and we compromise our sadhana.

Q: Do you consider that as a shackle?

Mr. Iyengar: It is very destructive if we allow ourselves to be trapped. It is important to continue practising without being impressed by those powers which are going to manifest one day. Patanjali speaks about many of them, but not everybody reaches the same kind. It is not necessary to reach all of them in order to know that you are on the right path.

Q: Is Yoga practice compatible with modern gymnastic, aerobics, body building, etc? Usually, and in general, Westerners practise different disciplines of sport.

Mr. Iyengar: In both disciplines, will and effort intervene: you act, you pursue a goal; but in Yoga, the intelligence has to penetrate all actions to its deepest level. In Yoga, you experience extension, tension and relaxation, at the same time. That does not exist in gymnastics.

Q: Can the Yoga that you teach and practise be considered as therapy? We had proof of some spectacular healing that manifested in some of your students.

Mr. Iyengar: There are three kinds of disease which the Hatha Yoga Pradipika and the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali speak in a detailed manner. Some diseases, called Adhidaivika, manifest with natural phenomena - i.e. cyclone, famine, drought. Adhidaivika that is brought on by nature are genetic diseases.



Other kinds of diseases are called Adhibantika. Adhibantika means disease of principle of elements. We consider that man is built of five elements: fire, earth, water, air and ether. These elements should be in perfect balance. When balance is broken, different diseases start to manifest: gastric trouble, burning in the stomach (fire), constipation (earth), urinary system (water), etc. If modern medical science could admit that the balance of five elements is a condition of good health, Yoga would be recognized as a practical therapy or treatment of diseases.

The third group of diseases is called Adhitatmika. They appear with abuse, excess. These diseases could be treated by practising Pratyahara, the discipline I talked about earlier, withdrawal of the senses. The yogi who is able to overcome those three has complete health. He is the king of his body; he is the king of his mind; he is king of the universe. That is why he is called Raja Yogi, because he is a master of all. It is impossible to say that he is practising Raja Yoga if he practices Hatha Yoga. But the level to which he comes, through his practice, enables him to be a Raja Yogi.

This interview was given by B.K.S. Iyengar during his visit to France in July, 1984, and was published in the magazine *Le Monde Inconnu*.

My Spiritual Diary

Jim Rischmiller

Because of business commitments I missed the practice at our last Yoga Centre meeting, aptly named the BIG BIG practice. From all reports it was a huge success. As I opened the discussion afterwards there was the usual joking about me being president and treasurer of the Yoga Centre. Then the discussion went on around the precise amount of headstands one has to do before it becomes enjoyable.



WOW!!!

So that's what it takes to become president & treasurer

In discussion later in the week the subject of being president and treasurer came up again and how I sometimes present it as carrying twin burdens. Lots of us joke about the dark side of bureaucracy, but it is how things get done.. I am a busy person, (probably not the only one in the world), and when I get stressed out I start looking for ways to be unbusy. My first thoughts used to be to stop teaching and stop being president. Then eventually I realised how silly that would be. By being a teacher and member of the Yoga Centre I take time out of the stressful things in my life to focus on an aspect of what has become the centre of my life, namely my yoga.

Being president or a teacher I am finding a very valuable learning. It comes with a huge bonus of the support group around me. As a teacher I have to focus on listening to myself, my students and my teachers. As president I am supported by criticism and acclaim, and by others' willingness to help get things done. Best of all its a great social occasion for me. I get to go and do what I like with those I like.

So why are all you readers not rushing to join the Yoga Centre? I think its because you never thought of it, or you are too busy. That's like my back leg in triangle pose. The only way I get it straight is by getting into it and not worrying about the world around me. The rewards are wonderful, sometimes some newness but eventually that centering and opening that is divine. Come and see what you can do.





Leslie

I recently thought a lot about what it means to be a successful parent of a teenager. As my sons are 21 and 16 and I helped raise my teenaged brother-in-law and was around to support my parents with many younger siblings and foster children, I think I've had a lot of experience.

One thing I've learned is that handling teenagers begins with toddlers. When they push for new freedom I have to constantly assess boundaries and limits.

Some other things I've learned:

1. I know I must have clear boundaries but I also must expect them to be pushed, challenged and at times be ready to expand them.

2. To be loving, to be concerned, to listen and yet not to interfere with anything. I have learned to turn a blind eye occasionally and focus on the important issues by dropping some of the little ones.

3. To encourage them to follow talents and interests but not to book their lives full of lessons and activities after school. Kids need time to be, to fill their own time, to think, to be bored, to be quiet, so that they can learn to take responsibility for finding their own challenges.

4. To read aloud together for as many years as possible (up to age 14-15).

5. To not be afraid or embarrassed to seek support from parenting courses or counselling for myself as needed.

6. To try and establish natural consequences. If they don't bring dirty clothes to the laundry room, I don't wash their clothes.

7. To keep loving them even if I don't love their actions.

8. To keep laughing.

9. To fill my own life with things I like to do, not to live through my kids. When a crisis comes then I'm not running on 'empty'.

10. To keep a diary for personal reflection. How I live my life affects my children more than anything I say to them. They do not follow "do as I say, not as I do" advice.

11. To decide what I mean by successful parenting. Success because my kids look nice and are on the honor roll, win scholarships? Or is success that I have let them be who they are even if that means their hair is too long, they wear ripped jeans and play drums in a heavy metal band? What do I mean by success.

by Leslie Hogya

Yoga Calendar

JUNE:

7-9: Saltspring Island Yoga Retreat led by Shirley Daventry French. See ad this issue.
8,9: Rose Ceremony at Shambala House. Call 595-00177 for details.
22: Pranayama Class/Asana Practice with Shirley Daventry French. Call 478-3775 for details.
28-July 11: Donald Moyer workshop on Galliano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

JULY:

4-7: Iyengar Teachers Meeting In Ottawa.
12-21: Health Enhancement Workshop with Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galliano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.
27-Aug 2: Iyengar Yoga Intensive at the Victoria Y. See ad this issue.

AUGUST:

3-7: 5 day Immersion Yoga workshop given by Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galliano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

SEPTEMBER:

6-14: Workshop with Ramanand Patel at the Victoria Y. See ad this issue.
27-29: Iyengar Yoga workshop in Vancouver with Father Joseph Pereira. Call Glola Irwin at 604-734-7696 for details. Registration forms available at the Y.

OCTOBER:

12-13: Yoga workshop with Angela Farmer and Victor Van Kooten on Galliano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.
25-27: Health Enhancement workshop given by Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galliano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

NOVEMBER:

15-17: Yoga Workshop given by Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galliano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

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A few evenings ago it was already late when Swami Radha came into my room. When it's late, there is a different quality to the air. The day is complete and something is let go. Whatever it was she had come for we dealt with, but she stayed. We kept talking. And then, without quite knowing how we got there, Swami Radha began talking about the Divine in the manifest and in the unmanifest. It's an issue she has been grappling with, trying to find imagery that speaks directly.

Quite suddenly she asked me to come and put my hands on her knees. "Are you touching Sylvia?" (Swamis have the advantage of being given one name at birth and being able to take on another upon initiation - one that names the quality within them that will be their focus for the rest of their life). I thought about that one for a while.

"No, I'm touching only an aspect of Sylvia."

"Which one?"

"I'm touching her knees."

"Yes, you're touching one part of this physical body - that for the sake of convenience, to distinguish it from millions of other bodies in this world, has been given the name Sylvia. Now, can you touch Radha?"

I didn't think about that question for long, I just said "No." But her question stayed with me. The question had been put in an atmosphere almost of reverie, of easy connection with something profound. The question wouldn't leave. And now I realise my answer to her would be the opposite: "Yes, I can touch Radha." Radha means cosmic love. When that quality of cosmic love is alive in me, I touch Radha.

The four Shambala Houses were born out of Swami Radha, extensions of her, and Shambala House Victoria is quite literally an extension of her during her stays for much of each year.

With Swami Radha's eightieth birthday celebration coming this summer at the Ashram, what could the centres give her that would more clearly reflect their origin and purpose? It seemed particularly appropriate that each of the houses become Radha House.

So that is our offering to her this summer and in the years to come. We will become Radha House Victoria, Calgary, Toronto and Ottawa. Each a place where we come to touch Radha.

Ian MacKenzie.

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The Society Newsletter is published regularly, providing current information on events concerning yoga in Victoria and area and at the Yasodhara Ashram. Published by the Victoria Yoga Centre Society.

Anyone wishing to contribute articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions to the newsletter may contact the Editor, Jennifer Rischmiller, 4489 Lindholm Road, R.R.#1, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8X 3W9. Telephone: (604)-474-5630.

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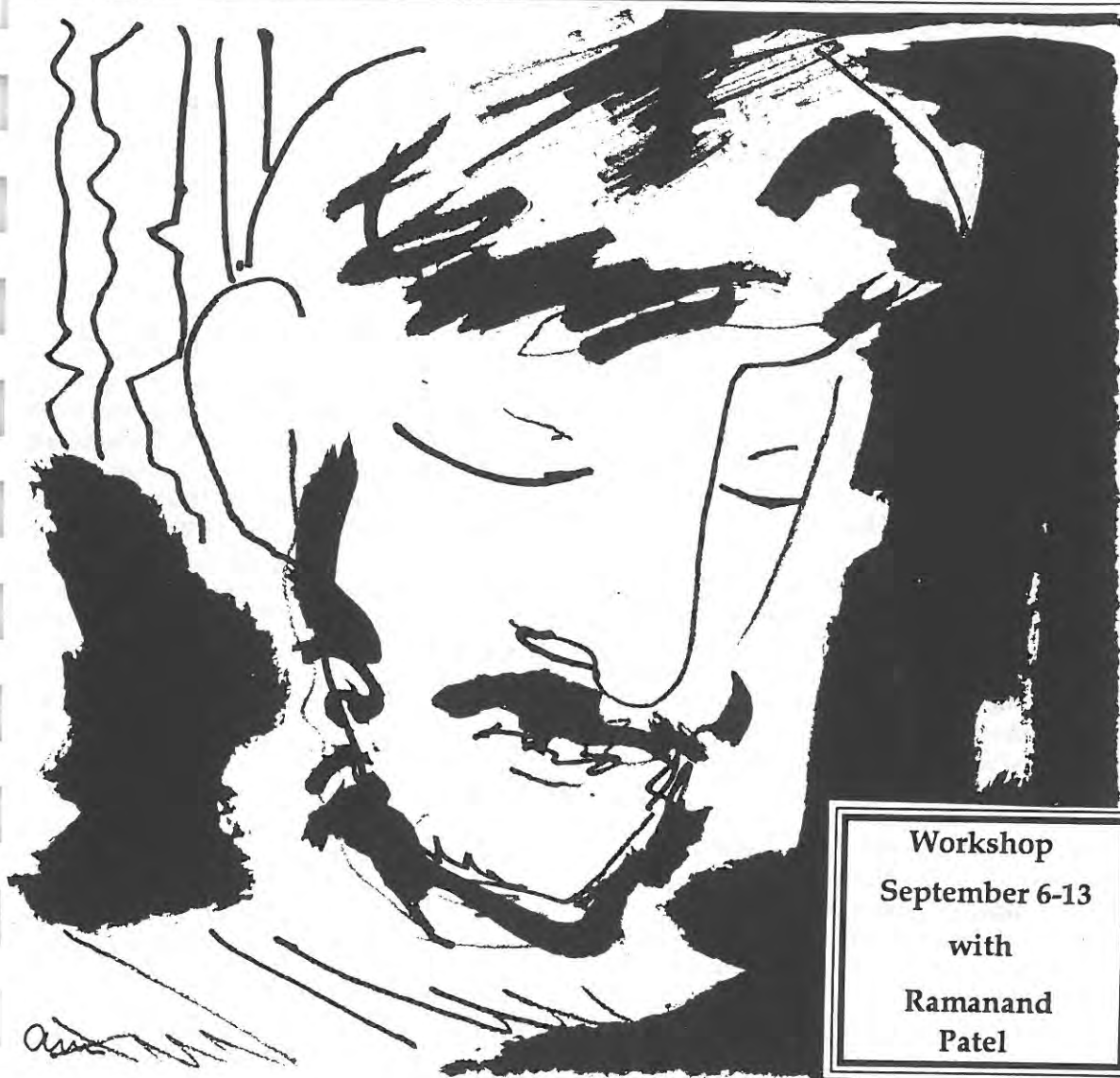
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VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY
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VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

Newsletter



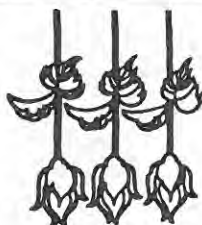
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August/September, 1991



Reflections



by
Shirley Daventry French

Derek had just finished his practice and was leaving the yoga room, and I was in Eka Pada Viparita Dandasana in the middle of the room. "Look at me," I said. He looked! "Your right leg is turning out", he said. "I know, but ..." (and the excuses began) "... that's my bad side." Then to justify myself further: "When I was in India last time I couldn't do this even at the wall; now I can do it away from the wall." "That's very good," said he.

A typical husband and wife exchange, on many levels! I was pleased with my progress, otherwise I wouldn't have drawn attention to myself. He was critical. Was this criticism negative or yogic? Was he practising satya (truth) and encouraging me to practise ahimsa (non-injury)? Interestingly enough my right knee has been giving me some problems recently.

I know how much progress I have made with this posture. I also know how much more there is to do. In a bad mood I might not have liked his response, but I was having a good practice and in a good mood, so I chuckled to myself when he eventually left the room. I reflected on the nature of progress in yoga, how slow it sometimes is, and what an up and down path.

There's no harm in recognizing one's progress, as long as it's only for a brief pause - and then you get on with things. What has already been learned must be consolidated and sustained, what is not working (that right leg) has to be trained, where support is lacking strength must be developed, what is rigid must become flexible. There's always so much more to investigate and discover, why waste time congratulating yourself?

I was given a lesson of this nature once on a skiing trip. Here again, as in so many of my life's events, Derek played a prominent role. We were in the line up for a chairlift on a busy Sunday morning when the slopes were very crowded and the lift lines long. We had arrived at the ramp leading up to the take-off platform and wearing our skis were slowly sidestepping up to take our turn. When this turn came, Derek's attention was elsewhere and he didn't step into his place quickly enough. I was about to sit down on the chair when he scrambled to get on too, grabbed the chair and pulled it out from underneath me. It was moving all of this time, of course, and he couldn't hold on to it so it swung forward and hit me in the back of the legs knocking me off the end of the platform which was quite high off the ground. As I was hurled off the end of this platform into mid air, I thought to myself "When I wake up I'll probably be in hospital!" Instead I landed softly in a pile of snow probably put there for just this contingency. I was shaken, but not hurt. The lift had to be stopped. The line of people watched and waited. I lay in the snow and congratulated myself on my good fortune. The lift operator looked over the edge of the platform and enquired if I was alright. "Yes", I said, grateful for his concern. "Well then," he said, "Get out of the way!" Life, and in this case skiing, went on.

I can't remember now whether this was before I began yoga or not, but in any case I did not respond with yogic equanimity. I thought the risk to my life and limb warranted a little more acknowledgment than this, and it was some time before I began to see the humour in the situation. That winter day I picked

myself up, dusted myself off, put back my skis, climbed once more to the top of the ramp, rode the chairlift (with Derek in silence) and skied for the rest of the day.

This is an important lesson, repeated again and again in so many ways in my life: to just get on with it. Why waste time in self-congratulation? Why waste time at all? There is so much to learn, so much to experience.

Yoga is not limited to special times when you do a formal practice like asana or pranayama, but goes on all the time in all aspects of life. The opportunities to learn are always there. It is a potent lesson to spend time with teachers like B.K.S. Iyengar and Swami Radha, who both follow a schedule that would leave most of us feeling exhausted, and yet they are seventy two and eighty respectively. Their energy is focussed, their purpose is clear. They seize opportunities and learn from all their experiences. They do not waste any time. This is how they came to be Yoga Masters.

Once, when I was fairly new to yoga, I organised an evening at my home where Swami Radha was to give an informal talk. I was a little nervous, but all went well, lots of people came, and her talk was well received. When we had had refreshments, spent a little time socialising and the evening was over, Swami Radha spoke to me. I was expecting words of praise for my organisation, but what she said was: "Next time you do this, would you remember to display my tapes and books?" In personal situations she is always gracious and grateful for what is done for her. In yogic situations she gives the student the opportunity to learn what they do not know. I knew it had gone well, and didn't need to be told so. What would I have learned from that? I had not remembered the books, but I did not forget them next time!

It's a rare and valuable opportunity to be in the presence of someone who is going to be completely honest with you. When you are teaching and Mr. Iyengar comes into the room, he doesn't waste time congratulating you on what you are doing well, he observes what it is you haven't seen, or where you could give a little more and this is where he focusses his attention. He builds on what you already know and, if you are open to him, he gives a great deal. What a gift! If he sees something potentially harmful, he acts even more quickly and decisively in putting an end to this. Outsiders and those caught up in their ego, sometimes see this as harsh and unnecessary criticism, but it is a form of ahimsa which destroys the violence to body, mind or soul and replaces this with a non-injurious practice.

What would I learn from Mr. Iyengar if he came and watched me teach and said: "Very good, Shirley" and left? Now anyone who knows him also knows that this isn't going to happen, but it doesn't stop people from seeking and longing for praise. Praise is often confused with acceptance, but when a Yoga Master accepts you as their student it is their duty to criticise as a means of helping you get rid of those encumbrances which are impeding your progress. It is your duty to learn from this criticism and not waste their or your time in self-justification. It's not even important to understand what's going on all the time, but to listen, trust and get on with your practice until the light dawns.

New Mailing Address

CANADA POST in its infinite wisdom has decided to give us a new postal code and rural route. Would you please make a note of our new mailing address which is as follows:

*Victoria Yoga Centre
3918 Olympic View Drive
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Yoga Centre News

By the time you read this, the Yoga Centre will have helped to sponsor a successful summer intensive and now we are hosting a workshop given by Ramanand Patel in September.

The Saltspring Retreat was just that for everyone who participated, we all retreated into our own world, able to focus on yoga and its importance in our lives. For me, it gets easier every time to take the experience home with me and make use of the knowledge in my daily life.

The directors held a meeting in June and discussed the future format for the Yoga Centre meetings. Because of the success of previous evenings at the Y, we decided to continue in the same way. You will find a program of events on a page in this newsletter. You will see an



Anne Hannah

Registered Massage Therapist

Nautilus Sports Clinic
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383-6412

announcement of the Annual General Meeting which is combined with a celebration of the season, so I hope you'll join us. We are looking for people to help on the Board of Directors, so please let me know if you'd like your name stand for election. In the meantime, check the Yoga Calendar so as to be sure you don't miss a single event!



Yoga Centre Directors' Meeting

Letters to the Editor

Dear Jennifer,

I am leaving for Yasodhara Ashram to take part in a three week Hatha Yoga Intensive.

I hope to receive my certification as a teacher of "The Hidden Language of Hatha Yoga", Swami Radha's special approach to the Hatha asanas. I have received many benefits from its practise in the last few years and I will be really pleased to qualify as a teacher of this method.

I have also received an invitation to spend the fall and winter at the Ashram in order to immerse myself, without distractions of home life, in practise of the Yoga teachings. My life has arranged itself so that I am free to answer this newest challenge and I have decided to 'go for it'.

With some regret, therefore, I have to let you know that I will not return to the 'Y' to teach. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Y and to the Victoria Yoga Centre, its students and teachers, for all that I have learned and was so generously given.

I hope to stay in touch through the newsletter and will keep you posted on what is happening.

Om, Om,

Jessica Sluymer



Dear Ms. Rischmiller,

In reading Ron Burnett's article in your June/July 1991 Issue, I was caught by the following passage: "Thus violence in the media will only be effective in those contexts where violence is already a part of everyday life. And even here I would be very hesitant about attributing too much to the media, too much to a screen, too much to an image." (I assume by saying violence in the media is "effective" Mr. Burnett means capable of producing violent behaviour in viewers).

Violence in the media was not the main point of Mr. Burnett's piece, but I was caught by his reference to it because of yoga's emphasis on ahimsa and Mr. Iyengar's deep connection with the sutras of Patanjali.

The most important question that arises in my mind is: why is violence in the media so popular? I think that it is because human beings have a large and complex internal frame of reference for violence. For that reason, Mr. Burnett is right in saying that the cause and effect are not simple. But they exist nevertheless. The yoga that I have done has shown me clearly that what is going on outside is a manifestation of what is going on within. When I used to watch violence on TV I became emotionally involved. Often I became excited by the action. I would experience the fear and horror of being the victim, and quite often the unholy joy of being the aggressor - because all of that is already within me and within most of us.

There are very few "contexts" today in which violence is not already a part of everyday life. Human beings have an inborn capacity for violence - it is there in all of us, embedded in our

hormones waiting for a trigger. In most of us it will be expressed, when aroused, as anger and involve little more than some shouting or silent fuming. But it is there, and escalation is its nature. That is why the first yama is "ahimsa". One of our greatest challenges on the road to becoming fully human is to make the choice against violence.

Many yoga texts advise practitioners to avoid reading about or associating with people, events or activities that involve violence, anger or other negative behaviour because they tend to raise a like response in the mind that beholds them.

A recent study estimated that by the age of ten children have seen something like ten thousand "murders" and hundreds of thousands of other violent acts committed on their television sets. As we know, children's minds are even more impressionable than the very impressionable adult mind. As we also know, violent crime is rising rapidly and especially so among youth. One of the underlying causes of this increase is the constant barrage of violent role models we provide for them (and ourselves) on TV.

Repetition has a very powerful effect on the mind, as those who practise mantra will testify, but the quality of the effect depends on the quality of what is repeated.

Studies on the effect of TV violence on children show that there is little effect ONLY in families where the parents dedicate considerable time and effort to instilling a foundation of ethics and integrity in their children. These parents are particularly aware of the dangers of the messages that surround us. In such homes, the TV is not a constant companion. However, most children do not live in such environments. And this consideration leads me to the concept of responsibility.

Whether we practise yoga or not, we each have a responsibility to society at large and to each other in more personal contexts. It is readily apparent that our activities can affect, sometimes profoundly, those around us - and often those a very long way away. Yoga makes our responsibility very clear. We are not asked to be each other's keeper; but we are asked to act in ways that will bring no harm to another. And we are asked to live as an example for the people around us to the best of our ability. Those who produce, sponsor and act in TV's thousands of violent programs fail signally to do this. We, who passively sit by and permit them to drown the public broadcast channels with it, also have much to answer for.

Although each and every one of us is responsible for our own choices, that does not absolve those of us who throw difficulties in the paths of others, particularly children. We all need all the help we can get from each other to live responsible, decent lives.

Yours sincerely,

Karl Lenman
Toronto, Ontario.



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The Iyengar Way

A LETTER FROM JOHN SCHUMACHER

Reprinted with permission from the BKS Iyengar Yoga Association of Southern California Newsletter, Winter 1991.

Namaste,

The Nov/Dec issue of Yoga Journal contains a letter to the editor from Hanne Hegstad, a neighbor to the south of us in Roanoke, Virginia. It raises a number of interesting issues and reveals several (what I consider to be) misconceptions about the practice of Iyengar yoga. Here's what she says:

I enjoy reading Yoga Journal, but I must say that all your asana descriptions are a bit biased since they are written by B.K.S. Iyengar yoga students. All Iyengar students believe that Iyengar is the most correct way to go when it comes to asanas! The truth is that we still have a lot to learn about asanas, and Mr. Iyengar is far from the perfect teacher even though we have learned a lot from him.

What I would like to see a lot more of in Yoga Journal are interviews with students of Mr. Iyengar who have been teaching Iyengar style yoga for 15 to 20 years, have then realized that their bodies couldn't take it anymore, and through their own experiences, working from the inside out rather than the outside in, have found new and "better" ways to practice asanas.

What I have found with a lot of Iyengar teachers, including Mr. Iyengar himself, is that most of them seem to have a problem with authority and power, rather than being open to new possibilities in exploring the asana and following the inner energy! Iyengar yoga is so much into

details of the asana, which isn't bad, it only tends to forget about directing the energy that flows inside.

In her first paragraph Hanne is correct, of course, in saying that the asana descriptions in the Yoga Journal are written by B.K.S. Iyengar students. The Yoga Journal was begun by students of Mr. Iyengar, and the Board of Directors is composed primarily of current and former Iyengar students. The bias is understandable. It would be interesting, however, to hear the Yoga Journal's explanation as to why they present the Iyengar method in the asana descriptions. Perhaps having several different approaches to a particular asana presented in the same issue might be a way to deal with Hanne's complaint. Then the readers could see what various methods have to offer, where they share their common ground and where they are unique.

As for her observation that "all Iyengar students believe that Iyengar yoga is the most correct way to go," while I can't speak for or about "all" Iyengar students, after ten years of practicing at least half a dozen approaches and ten more years of pursuing the Iyengar method, when it comes to asanas I DO feel that Iyengar yoga is the most "correct" (I prefer effective) way FOR ME to go. I suspect that Desikachar's students feel that their method is best for them and Swami Satchidananda's students feel that their method is best for them and so on. Why would I do Iyengar yoga if I thought some other method worked better? That doesn't mean that it's the "best" or "most correct" yoga, period. Only that I've decided that it's best FOR ME. And since as a teacher I can only teach what I practice and know, then that is also what I teach.

I couldn't agree more with Hanne that we still have a lot to learn about the asanas. In fact, that's one of the reasons I was first drawn to Iyengar yoga. With the Iyengar method, I have learned and continue to learn lots more about the asanas. Even Mr. Iyengar is quick to say that he has much more to learn about the asanas. This is one of the reasons why in the Iyengar method things are always changing (unlike in many other methods and much to the dismay of some students). It is also one of the reasons that I chose Mr. Iyengar as my teacher. Certainly not because I thought he was the perfect teacher. I've seen a lot of teachers, known and unknown, and the "perfect" one has eluded me thus far.

The worms really start to come out of the can in the second paragraph. Who are these students of Mr. Iyengar who have been teaching Iyengar-style yoga for 15 to 20 years and have realized that their bodies couldn't take it? I know three or four people who have taught that long and have moved away from formal Iyengar-style yoga, but not, at least to my knowledge, because their bodies couldn't take it. They just felt that doing things differently worked "better" FOR THEM. I'm sure one could find examples of such people in any approach.

And I know at least a dozen people personally who have taught Iyengar yoga that long, who still teach it, and whose bodies seem to be taking it just fine. Mr. Iyengar at age 72 not least among them.

And what couldn't those bodies that Hanne is referring to take? Refined alignment? Restorative poses? Balancing flexibility with strength? Passive poses during menstruation? Adapted gentle poses for pregnancy? Building endurance? Therapeutic adjustments for specific medical conditions? Reclining pranayama? These are all characteristic of and specific to Iyengar yoga. What exactly is Hanne talking about?

I'm also not sure what she means when she says that most Iyengar teachers and Mr. Iyengar himself have a problem with authority and power. I don't know what Hanne's experience with a lot of Iyengar teachers has been or whether she has studied with Mr. Iyengar himself. Personally I think that most people in general have a problem with authority and power. The story on Swami Rama in the same issue of Yoga Journal as well as numerous stories of sexual and/or financial corruption in the yoga community in particular and the world at large would seem to bear that out.

If she means, as she implies in the rest of the sentence, that Iyengar teachers and Mr. Iyengar are not open to new possibilities in exploring asana, I couldn't disagree with her more. To me one of the most significant aspects of the practice of Iyengar yoga is the willingness to experiment with new ways of working in the poses. The what-happens-if approach to moving in the asanas is essential to the method and is at the core of Mr. Iyengar's teaching, at least as I understand it. It continually promotes new ways of practicing asana, keeps the practice fresh and acts to keep the mind focussed. Willingness to explore the use of breath, props, images, attention, and to break the rules are all integral to the practice of Iyengar yoga. It was one of the reasons why Mr. Iyengar was treated as an outsider by much of the yoga community for so many years before his relatively recent rise to prominence. As far as I can see, "new and better" ways are what Iyengar yoga has always been about.

With regard to Hanne's statements about inner energy as it relates to Iyengar yoga, she and I see things quite differently. There is no question that Iyengar yoga employs the use of detailed examination of the poses. It is also true that in the beginning, the work starts on the outside and moves inward.

One has to begin somewhere. In learning to play a musical instrument, for example, one learns how to touch or hold the instrument, learns which movements produce which sounds, practices scales and exercises, analyses and dissects the music, all in order to express ultimately whatever inner beauty, whatever energy exists within. This is not the only way to begin, but it is the classical way, time-honored and proven. It is also the approach that Patanjali employs in the Yoga Sutras. First he presents the yamas, which deal primarily with one's relationship with the external world, and then he presents the niyamas, which deal with one's relationship with oneself, next. The more external practices of yama, niyama, and asana lead to the internal states of dharana, dhyana, and samadhi.

But to begin by working from the outside in and to be detailed and precise, as is the case in Iyengar yoga, does not mean that one forgets about the energy that flows inside. In fact on one level the whole approach is designed to remove blockages in the body and the mind that inhibit the flow of energy. If one is following the inner energy, as Hanne suggests, and its movement is restricted by tension, poor alignment, and/or inattention, then there isn't much to follow.

If, however, one is practicing and paying attention to what's happening in an asana, that is to the details of the asana, not as a bunch of rules to be followed and not as a litany of anatomical minutiae, but rather as a feedback system indicating where energy is flowing and where it isn't, then one is actually capable of directing the energy that flows inside clearly, effectively, and powerfully. When one is able to do this, the distinction between inside and outside, between following and directing becomes meaningless. This, anyway, is my experience of Mr. Iyengar's teaching.

What any method or teacher does, after all is guide our attention in some manner and attention is energy. I had been hearing about inner energy in books and classes for years, but not until I began practicing Iyengar yoga did I feel something that felt like what all those descriptions sounded like. I have no problem with Hanne wanting to work from the inside out or to direct/follow the inner energy. But I don't see why she wants to fault Iyengar yoga for working in a way that's different from hers. As far as I can see, whatever teacher, whatever method turns you on to that unifying, vibrant, joyful ocean of energy that we're all part of, that's the program to get with.





Leslie

In the June/July issue of the newsletter, I reflected on some things I've learned as a parent and the second point came out differently than I intended. I've read it a few times and feel compelled to try and correct my error. It was printed like this:

2. To be loving, to be concerned, to listen and yet not to interfere with anything. I have learned to turn a blind eye occasionally and focus on the important issues by dropping some of the little ones.

I meant to say: "not to interfere with everything." I do interfere in my children's behaviour when it is appropriate, that is my role under the law. I am legally responsible for their actions until they are 19.

I try to stick to issues that I feel are important and let others slide. For instance, my son drags his feet, he eats like every meal is from a fast food restaurant, puts his elbows on the table and uses his jeans for a napkin. These habits are irritating and potentially embarrassing in front of other people, such as grandparents. However, I decided that I couldn't nag him all the time about these things, I let them slide.

This may have been a wrong decision on my part. His manners may be more important than I thought, I simply don't know. There is no hot line to the Higher Authority to find out what is best in every situation. There is never a graduation from parenthood when I'll get my final marks and judgement on the job I've done. I don't know if my decisions are right, they were the best ones I could make with the information I had, they included my own failings and limitations.

Today I lost my temper with my son in front of a friend of mine. It could have been worse - it could have been in front of a friend of his. It was an old pattern he and I fall into and one I still get triggered by. I often see this in other people; the things that push my buttons are the ones he keeps doing. He is my teacher. I have a lesson here that I keep not learning and he provides the consequence, the instant feedback.

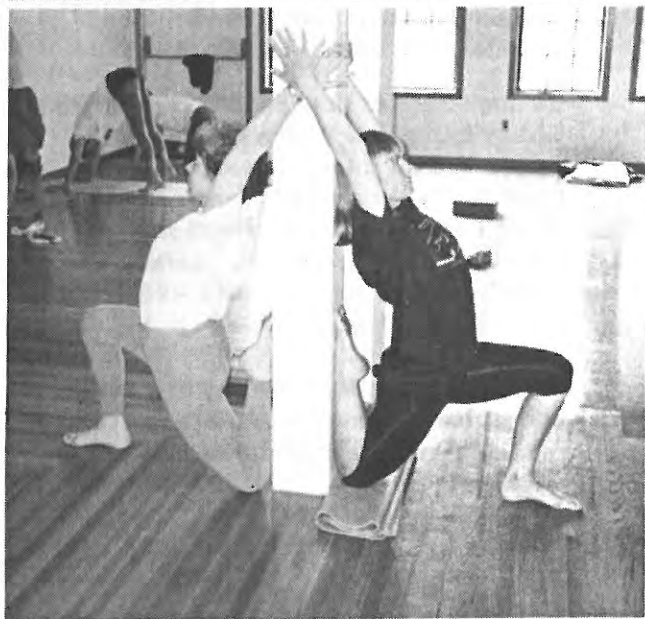
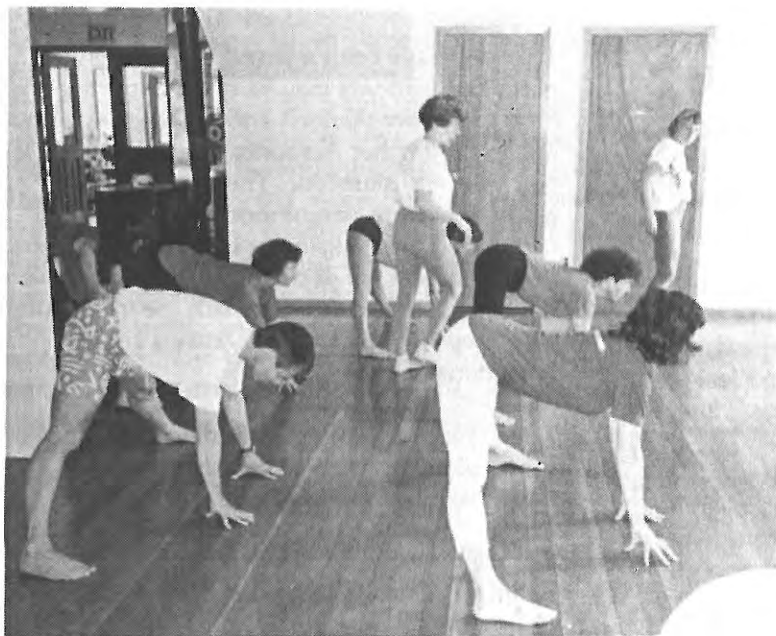
It's fine for me to sit in a quiet house in front of white paper and write about my goals as a person and parent, but quite another to be in the midst of a heating situation and not get upset. When I apologized to my friend, she said, "Well, it proves you're human." Yes, I am only human! I feel I am still in the cradle with all there is to learn.

I spent time with my son today trying to rebuild bridges between my son and I: a few seconds of my being unaware rippled through a whole day's worth of events.

I'll stop here. There is no conclusion.

by Leslie Hoggia

Photographs of the 1991 Saltspring Retreat





RAMANAND PATEL

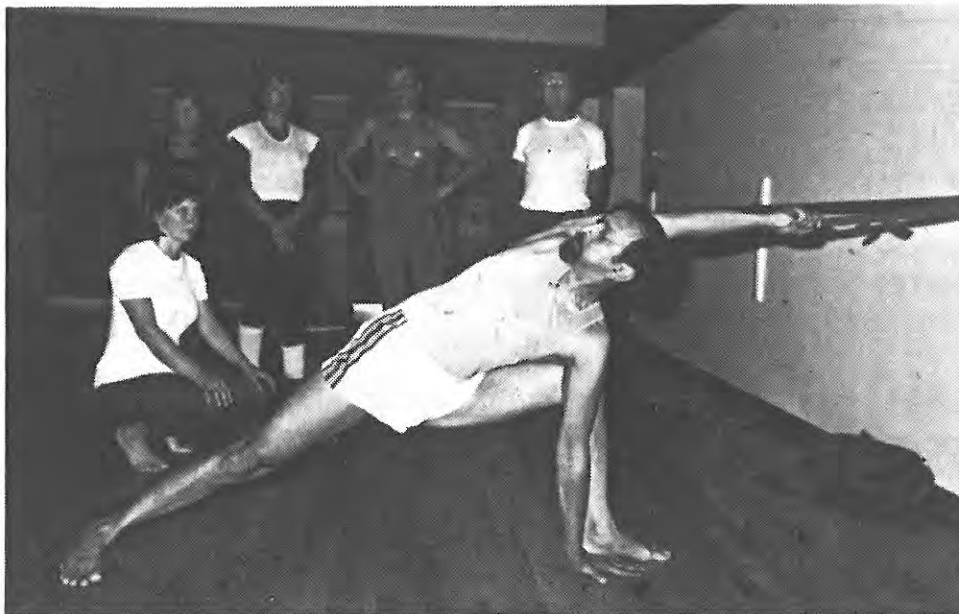
No doubt you are already signed up and eager to participate in
the Ramamand Patel workshop
which commences on September 6th.

If not, hurry down to the "Y" and register before it's too late.
Ramanand is a wonderful teacher!

There is a weekend workshop for students of all levels
followed by mid-week classes at two different levels.

And don't forget to come with your significant others to the Pot
Luck dinner and lecture by Ramanand on Friday, September 13th.

Brochures are available at the Y or
phone Linda Benn at 598-8277



Ramanand demonstrating in one of his workshops

*Ramanand is also available for private sessions during the week of his workshop
.....contact Linda Benn at 598-8277.....*



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yoga

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OUR PROGRAMME OF CLASSES IN THE IYENGAR APPROACH TO YOGA

TERM I BEGINNING THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 16th

NO.	DAY	TIME	INSTRUCTOR
INTRODUCTORY			
401	Monday	9:30 - 11:00am	Linda Benn
402	Monday	7:30 - 9:00 pm	Anne Forester
403	Tuesday	5:00 - 6:30 pm	Linda Shevloff
404	Wednesday	9:00 - 10:30am	Term I,II - Lauren Cox Term III, IV, V - Shirley Daventry French
405	Wednesday	7:00 - 8:30 pm	Jim Rischmiller
406	Thursday	4:30 - 6:00 pm	Linda Benn
GENTLE YOGA			
407	Tuesday	10:30 - 12:00pm	Linda Benn
408	Thursday	1:15 - 2:45 pm	Leslie Hoga
FIFTY - FIVE AND BETTER			
409	Wednesday	10:30 - 12:00pm	Term I,II - To Be Announced Term III,IV,V - Shirley Daventry French
410	Friday	10:30 - 12:00pm	Linda Benn
YOGA - LEVEL ONE			
411	Monday	11:00 - 12:30pm	Linda Benn
413	Tuesday	6:30 - 8:00pm	Ann Kilbertus
414	Wednesday	5:30 - 7:00pm	Jim Rischmiller
415	Friday	9:00 - 10:30am	Linda Benn
WORKSHOP SERIES - LEVEL II			
416	Thursday	10:00 - 12:00pm	Term I,II - Linda Benn Term III,IV,V - Shirley Daventry French
417	Thursday	6:00 - 8:00pm	Linda Shevloff
WORKSHOP SERIES - LEVEL III/II			
418	Monday	5:30 - 7:30pm	Term I,II - Yoga Teachers Term III,IV,V - Shirley Daventry French
TWO NOON HOUR YOGA CLASSES			
419	Tuesday	12:05 - 12:55pm	Linda Benn
420	Thursday	12:05 - 12:55pm	Lauren Cox

All classes are Co-ed and take place in the Lounge. Please see the 'Y' brochure or phone Linda Benn at 598-8277 for further information.

Yoga Calendar

SEPTEMBER:

13: Workshop with Ramanand Patel at the Victoria Y. Contact Linda Benn 598-8277 or Shirley Daventry French, 478-3775.

15: Open House at Radha House, 3-5pm.

21: Teachers Meeting. Marlene Miller will be forwarding information to teachers.

27-29: Iyengar Yoga Workshop in Vancouver with Father Joseph Perelra. Call Gioia Irwin at 604-734-7696 for details. Registration forms available at the Y.

OCTOBER:

1: Teachers Meeting.

12-13: Yoga Workshop with Angela Farmer and Victor Van Kooten on Gallano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

18: Victoria Yoga Centre Meeting at the Y. Please watch the bulletin board in the Yoga lounge for details.

25-27: Health Enhancement workshop given by Bruce and Maureen Carruthers on Gallano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

NOVEMBER:

11: Workshop at the Y with a guest teacher.

15-17: Yoga Workshop given by Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Gallano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

22: Victoria Yoga Centre meeting at the Y.

23: Teachers Meeting.

DECEMBER:

7: Annual General Meeting of the Victoria Yoga Centre. Marlene Miller will lead a yoga practise, followed by the AGM, followed by a supper in celebration of the season.

JANUARY:

17: Victoria Yoga Centre meeting at the Y.

18: Teachers Meeting.

26: A workshop led by Jim Rischmiller.

FEBRUARY:

14: Yoga Centre meeting at the Y.

16: A workshop led by Shirley Daventry French.

29: Teachers Meeting.

MARCH:

28: Victoria Yoga Centre meeting.

29: Teachers Meeting.

APRIL:

3-5: A workshop led by Donald Moyer.

24: Yoga Centre meeting.

25: Teachers Meeting.

MAY:

8: Victoria Yoga Centre meeting.

16: Teachers Meeting.

JUNE:

5-7: Iyengar Yoga Retreat on Saltspring Island.

JULY:

Canadian Teachers Meeting on the Sunshine Coast.

Iyengar Yoga Intensive Workshop in Victoria.

In the Company of the Wise, Remembering my Teachers, Reflecting the Light

A Book Review

This book will both fascinate and instruct. Swami Radha introduces us to some remarkable teachers she has met, whose powers have never before been known to the West. She also explores the realm of mind, memory and reincarnation as she pieces together the fascinating puzzle of her relationship with her personal guru, Swami Sivananda. Her interactions with other, more widely known, spiritual leaders - including Anandamayi Ma, Padre Pio, the Dalai Lama, Papa Ramdas and many more - convince us that to be in the company of the wise is to be connected with those who inspire us to go in search of our own essence and "to find our true citizenship, not of our country, our world, or even the universe, but of the Light."



In part two of the book, Swami Radha helps us discover our own way to the Light. She offers thought provoking look at what is involved in a spiritual path and challenges us to question our motivations and to see our illusions. She clarifies the difference between genuine teachers and pseudo-gurus, introduces us to some of the most common misconceptions seekers hold, and states clearly what a true teacher can offer. She entices us to intensify our own desire for the Light of Higher Consciousness.

This book presents a very rare opportunity. Swami Radha is a famous spiritual teacher yet she introduces us to those who taught her and gives us permission to use her experiences to see the continuum of enlightenment - the student encounters the Light in the teacher who has in turn seen the Light of their teacher, etc. We accompany her on this spiritual journey and are enriched by it.



Swami Radha

A Word from the Author

When it came to reprint *Gods Who Walk the Rainbow*, it seemed a perfect opportunity to expand upon it, and the result is this new edition. In the *Company of the Wise*, I have added three new chapters to Part One, including recent reflections on my personal Guru, Swami Sivananda, and the stories of my meetings with Sai Baba of Shirdi, and with the Catholic stigmatist, Padre Pio.

I have also expanded Part Two to include my current thinking on aspirants' illusions, pseudogurus, and the responsibilities of gurus and disciples in their relationship. New material and previously published work were woven together. For reference purposes, I have added a glossary, an expanded bibliography, and a directory to the centers of each teacher I write about. When all the proposed changes were assembled it seemed best to rename the book and publish it on its own merit.

My interest has recently been ignited by a new perspective on my relationship with Swami Sivananda. For the first time I have attempted to let something of our past be known, in the hope of helping others understand the possibility of dimensions beyond those we normally accept.

When I first went to India I had only an intellectual concept of space and time, with a few glimpses of a very "other" dimension. I was surprised when Swami Sivananda would introduce me to people as "my friend from Kashmir," or would sometimes call me "auntie." Only when I was leaving India did he state in his farewell address that "we had lived together and worked together in the field of spirituality in a past life."

Now in this book, I explore not only space and time - many good scientific works will do that - but also the possibility of a personal relationship between the same "consciousnesses" that once inhabited different bodies and lived in different cultures in quite another time. I pursue a thread that seems to lead into the distance, where there are only resting places but there is never an end.

Although I have felt cautious about presenting what the rational mind might find irrational, the facts of my experience will have to speak for themselves. Sometimes we have to trust in the Light so firmly that hesitations and doubts roll off like beads of water from a lotus leaf.



by Swami Radha

Swami Radha

by Ian McKenzie

The question would not be put out of my mind. The mowing of the lawn kept a simple level of my mind involved and my body had its own rhythm of moving back and forth with each swath, but behind all this was the question that would not leave me. Who is this woman? Who IS this woman?

I have spent fair stretches of time working very closely with Swami Radha. She has been here in Victoria for a year now without interruption and the question still remains for me: WHO IS SHE?

Swami Radha has turned 80. There have been birthday celebrations at the Ashram all through the month of July. The Ashram was full like it never was before. Each one of us who came to the Ashram for the birthday came because we have been touched by Swami Radha. We have come to know some part of her. In Victoria we have been preparing a booklet of people's recollections of moments in which they've been particularly affected by her. Each one's story is different though they're all stories about the same person.

When I asked Swami Radha what being a guru meant, she said, "Ninety five per cent of a guru's work is to find THE thing that will draw the students to the Divine. Sometimes it means trying again and again to find what will do it."

The group which has been drawn to the Divine through her could hardly be more diverse. It is marvellous that she has spoken the language that each of them is at home with. So each of us has our own understanding of who this woman is who has drawn us. Different understandings. Same guru.

What does an indefatigable 80 year old Guru do? Among many other things, she writes. She was taught the Light Invocation the day of her sanyas initiation thirty years ago. She told noone about it for two years, until she had practiced it sufficiently and with enough intensity to know from her own experience that it worked. Then she taught it to whoever would listen. She never encountered any writing about the Light the way she'd been taught it until thirty years later, when a student showed her a text on a Kashmiri school of yoga that thrived between the ninth and thirteenth centuries. The words they used then are the ones she uses now. Since that discovery she has been reading voraciously, preparing to write another book, to update the Kashmiri teachings and make them accessible. Two other books are in varying stages of completion; one on yoga, love, sex and marriage, and another on dreams.





While these things are important, Swami Radha continues to do something far more significant and far more difficult to define: she touches those who come to her. Often what appears to be a straightforward matter that someone has asked advice about, is used by Swami Radha to teach what needs to be learned, expanding possibilities. It is the expanding of possibilities while still anchored in the practical that is Swami Radha's hallmark. That's what keeps drawing people. At eighty she can ask the disarmingly simple question that leaves nothing the same again. Or she can talk about her way of dealing with events that suddenly illumines the magnified molehill for what it is.

Behind all these things is the quality emanating from her that transforms anyone who will receive. She lives what it means to be a channel for the Light. So the question of WHO Swami Radha is, is no longer important. It's like asking who the Light is. Finding what the Light is wrapped in has its importance but, far more important, is finding the Light itself. Then it doesn't need to be named.

Ian McKenzie

Swami Radha is sceptical of the public's attention span and willingness to persevere. She doubts that writing will hold people and she is aware of how pervasive television is. So she wants to spend what time she can in video work. A video photographer is working with her, getting whatever can be put on tape, to be assembled over time and, eventually, released as a series of videotapes of Swami Radha.

Sometimes a conversation will spark Swami Radha's interest and a small cassette recorder appears. It is apparent from the way that the words begin to come that it's to be more than ordinary conversation, so the words are recorded. The tapes that have been transcribed now form the material that many of us can draw on for writing and teaching.





Shirley French in parivrtta ardha chandrasana at retreat

The Yoga Centre of Victoria Newsletter Advertising

If you have products or services of interest to Victoria's yoga practitioners, this is your advertising vehicle.

Because our rates are so low, all advertising material must be supplied camera ready - that is, exactly as you want it to appear in the newsletter. If not, the copy will simply be typed and inserted. If you wish, we can arrange to have an advertisement prepared for you, but we must charge extra for this service.

Our policy in accepting advertising is that all advertisements must not conflict with the aims of the Centre, as stated elsewhere in the newsletter.

If you wish to buy an ad or require further information,
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RADHA HOUSE



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(604) 595-0177

Radha House Activities

SEPTEMBER, 1991

Introduction to the Kundalini System:

Explore the key challenges and characteristics of each chakra or level of consciousness in the Kundalini System of Yoga and see how these levels function in your daily life. This is an important starting point for regular weekly classes.

Friday, September 13, 7.30 to 10.00 p.m.

Saturday, September 14, 9.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.

OPEN HOUSE

We invite you to join us in this informal gathering as we start another year of activities in the same house, with our new name. This is a wonderful opportunity to greet old friends and to meet new ones. Looking forward to seeing you.

Sunday, September 15, 3.00 to 5.00 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Its time you joined the Yoga Centre of Victoria! As you read this newsletter, you are receiving one of the benefits of membership. As you attend your yoga classes or a workshop, you are receiving the benefits of membership. These take time and money and your membership fees and participation really help.

Please fill out this form and send it with your cheque or money order to:

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Please do not mail me the newsletter; during class sessions, I'll pick one up at my "Y" class. []

The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY is a non-profit society incorporated under the Societies' Act of the Province of British Columbia whose purpose is, *"to encourage the physical, mental and spiritual growth of its members and other interested members of society at large by the study and discipline of Yoga"*. The Society owes inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

The Society Newsletter is published regularly, providing current information on events concerning yoga in Victoria and area and at the Yasodhara Ashram. Published by the Victoria Yoga Centre Society.

Anyone wishing to contribute articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions to the newsletter may contact the Editor, Jennifer Rischmiller, 4489 Lindholm Road, R.R.#1, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8X 3W9. Telephone: (604)-474-5630.

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VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY

3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R.#4 Victoria, B.C., Canada, V9B 5T8



VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

Newsletter



Please Subscribe

October, 1991

B.K.S. Iyengar:

Questions & Answers at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan September 1, 1988.

Reprinted from "Dipika", published
by the Iyengar Yoga Institute, London,
England. Winter, 1990.

B.K.S. Iyengar: Friends, as time is short, I will cut my introduction short. I stand here not as a proud man who has just received a citation, but as a humble student of yoga, like yourselves. If I can convey something of what I have learned of yoga over the last fifty-two years, then that is your good luck. If I fail, then that is my weakness. The art of yoga is vast: we are still only scratching its surface. That art is our guru and our God, and we cannot be the master of that God. The more you penetrate, the more it becomes infinite.

Q: Why is not yoga taught in schools? We all take it up late and wish we had started earlier, because we find we have to work harder.

A: My friend, that shows we only become wise after the event. But why should not we as parents create an interest in yoga in our children, so that they become used to yogic movements? It can and should be done. But politicians and administrators interfere, thinking they know what is best for education. They do not come into contact with people, to know what children need. So armchair bureaucracy is the cause of not allowing children to develop disciplined physical health. You have asked a good question. Your friends who are parents should demand that yoga is taught in schools, so that body and mind can grow together, and they are ready to receive the light of the spirit when that is taught later on.

Q: What should we do to promote the fact that it is never too late to start yoga?

A: You should be happy if you begin later in life, even though you may not be able to perfect the asanas. You have implanted this seed in yourself, so you are creating the right environment if you are blessed by God to be born again. It is never too late. You are lucky to start at that age knowing so much about the world, so that your kind can begin to work in reverse, to make the return journey towards non-attachment and renunciation, to reach the pleasures of the kingdom of the soul.

Q: Mr. Iyengar, I have never come to terms with pain. How do you cope with it?

A: Life and pain, life and pleasures go together. There is no pain without pleasure, there is no pleasure without pain. Only a person who has reached bliss is free of pain. We are caught between the joys of the world and the beauty of spiritual realisation. But the art of yoga makes each individual bear pain with contentment. I have not conquered pain, it is there in my body, but I have accepted it as a natural process in my evolution.

You all call me a stern teacher, but you do not see the compassion in that strictness. When I was a child, suffering from tuberculosis with no medicines available, my guru said, "Do some yoga, you will improve". Eventually he said, "Tomorrow you will do Vrschikasana - the scorpion pose - for me."

"Sir, I do not know how to do it."

"Bend the elbows, do elbow balance, bend the knees and put your feet on your head - that is the scorpion pose."

"Sir, I have never seen it done."

"You have to do it tomorrow because we have visitors."

And I had to do it. One day some dignitaries came. My guru said, "Do Hanumanasana." I said, "What is it sir?" I had not heard of Hanumanasana. He said, "Stretch one leg forward, one leg backwards and go straight to the ground." "I have never done it, sir."

He said, "Do it."

In those days we wore very tight, stitched underwear and I told my guruji, "Sir, it's too tight, I do not think I can spread my legs to do it."

He said to one of his senior students, "Go to the office and fetch some scissors." And he cut the underwear on both sides. So you can understand what excruciating pain I felt to get into this pose. "If you had not done it," he said, "you would have spoiled my reputation."

He often did that, with all the complicated asanas - like instant coffee. "I want instant presentation, otherwise get out." That made me forget the pain in my body. To remove those excruciating pains took years: I had to find out how to do it. Sitting was a pain; standing was a pain; walking, a pain; sleeping, a pain. So if someone makes a mistake I cannot bear it, because I have suffered in the same way. I say, "Why do you want to suffer? Don't do it!" So I have minimised the pain, even though I can't eradicate it, and my pupils should be grateful.

Please bear with it: do not think it cannot be reduced. Of course, my pupils are not B.K.S. Iyengar: they lack knowledge, they lack understanding, so I have to make allowances. But if your pain is 50%, perhaps I can reduce it to 5%, which itself should be a great joy. When you have developed like that, your pain becomes a friend. If any of your asanas are done without any reaction from the body, that posture has a bad effect, not a good one. Like two stones which produce a spark, each asana produces a response in the muscles, the nerves, the mind, the intelligence. If it comes easily, something is wrong. If it produces

resistance, equal to your challenge, then the pain is soothing, not irritating. If you get a splinter in your finger, you prick your finger again to get it out. The first prick hurts, but the second one does not; it is soothing because you know you are removing the first pain.

Similarly in yoga, if you have a pain like a needle, you have to find which type of needle you need to remove it. Any pain which comes while you are doing a pose and disappears afterwards is not a real pain. If it continues for days, that is when you know you have done something wrong, and you learn discrimination. You become a better yogi like that.

Q: How soon after beginning asanas can you start learning pranayama?

A: Nowadays, pupils are corrupt - and they corrupt the teachers. "Sir, can you teach me pranayama, can you teach me meditation?" Everyone knows me as a physical yogi, as I do not teach meditation. If I say, "Yes, I will teach you," I become a spiritual teacher in your minds. You should only begin pranayama when the asanas have been perfected, when the body is under control, and when practice has been maintained over a long period.

If you cannot do sarvangasana and halasana well, you cannot do jalandharabandha, because in sarvangasana there is a natural jalandharabandha (chinlock). If you cannot do sirsasana you cannot do uddiyanabandha, because the moment you do sirsasana, there is a natural uddiyana. These bandhas are essential factors in pranayama. In order to save stress on the brain and acceleration of heartbeats as in jogging, you need to do jalandhara bandha, bringing the head down to rest on the middle of the chest. Strain should not be felt in pranayama and the heartbeats should be very rhythmic and slow. Uddiyana bandha, the gripping of the lower abdomen, is needed so that the energy does not become dissipated in an untrained body. These are examples of why asanas are said to be so important before pranayama is started.

You have read Patanjali's definition, '*sthira sukham asanam*', interpreted as 'any comfortable pose is enough'. In my experience, all comfortable poses eventually become uncomfortable. You may sit comfortably for two minutes or five minutes, but then you shake your foot or move your toes. Patanjali has defined what mastery of an asana means: firmness in the body and a pleasant feeling in the brain; in other words, when the effort becomes effortless and you feel you are pumping fresh blood to the cells. If you do not feel the pumping, that means the cells are not working at all, so the asana is no more use than a disease. So *pranayama* should only be started when the lungs have been developed through asana practice, and the intercostal muscles have gained elasticity both internally and externally. Then one can measure the slow, soft depth of inhalation and exhalation, and that is the time to begin *pranayama* in order to master it.

Q: Mr. Iyengar, I think many western businessmen like myself suffer from stress, which I regard as a mental illness. Do you think the *asanas* can provide relief from stress, or do we have to go into meditation?

A: Meditation is not going to remove stress, my friend, it is only the culture of the cells, voluntarily learning how to relax the brain, that can remove stress. How to keep the brain cells in a receptive state is the art which yoga teaches. And remember that *dhyana* - meditation - is a part of yoga, it is not separate. *Yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *dharana*, *dhyana*, *samadhi* - everything is *dhyana*. Learning postures certainly helps. If I said, "Relax your brain", you cannot do it. If I put you in a certain pose, your brain cannot function at all. That is the beauty of yoga. If you do *halasana* your brain becomes completely still. If you do *setu-bandha sarvangasana* when you are dejected, after ten minutes your depression will lift, though you do not know how.

It has been beautifully said in the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, 'Mind is the king of the senses; breath is the king of the mind; and the nerves are king of the breath.' If you know how to stretch and how to keep the nervous system elastic, it can take any load and stress disappears. Even *savasana* is a stress, but it is so minimised that you think there is none. In sleep there is also stress; you move from one position to another because of stress. You sit in meditation and there is stress because if you collapse your spine you go to sleep, so you have to keep your spine erect. Walking, eating, reading - everything is stress. There is nothing in this world free from stress except death. So the degree of stress is important rather than asking "Can I be completely free from stress?" How stress affects your nervous system - that is what matters.

If it rains heavily, the water does not necessarily penetrate the earth. If it rains for many days, then the water goes deep into the earth, and this is very good for cultivation. Similarly in ourselves, when we use our brain, the peripheral nerves act, but they do not penetrate inwards. If the peripheral nerves are made to interpenetrate the autonomous nervous system and central nervous system, you will find that the nerves appear so deep that their depth seems immeasurable. This is due to the extension and expansion given by the various *asanas*, and because stress is diffused by stretching the various parts of the body. The stress which saturated the brain is also diffused, so the brain is rested and there is a release from strain. *Dhyana* does not achieve this. The nerves can bear a tremendous load when the nervous system is healthy. There is a certain vibration, rhythmic or not, strenuous or not, of the heartbeat of your own body: if you can make the sound subtler and subtler in your postures, that means the stress is gone. You are at one with yourself and that is meditation.

A: Mr. Iyengar, what do you think about the western obsession with jogging?

A: My friend, yoga is known as a *sarvanga sadhana*, complete discipline. Jogging is not considered as a whole exercise. When I speak of *asanas*, they do not work only on your body; they work on your mind, your intelligence, your consciousness, on your very self. Does jogging do this? It is *anga bhaga sadhana* - only a certain part of the body is involved. Your heartbeat becomes accelerated. Does that mean it stimulates your heart or that it strains it? Is it an education? You have to educate yourself and judge your own capacity. When a child runs, it does not gasp for air; so why cannot others run at the same speed as a child, with ease? Jogging irritates the heart. So this question should have been put to those who jog, not to me.

Q: Why is it that different yogis prescribe different *asanas*, and sometimes even the basic posture is different? Does Patanjali in his *Yoga Sutra* describe the *asana* themselves, or are they an interpretation?

A: If Patanjali had described everything his work would not have been in *sutra* form. *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* is not in *sutra* form; it is a technical book, whereas Patanjali's is a self-culture and a philosophy. If you do not keep the *Hatha Yoga* text before you, you will never understand Patanjali's *Yoga Sutra*. They complement each other.

Now, why do different people give different basic *asanas*? Speaking for myself, I have disciplined myself and explored this field for fifty-two years. When I wrote *Light on Yoga*, I gave a six-year course and I forgot to mention that it was intended for intensive students to master in six years. But today I could add many basic stages and make the course last eighteen years. I did not think of it at the time.

Over the years I have studied not only the anatomy of human beings, but the anatomy of the *asanas*. I have observed the mobility or the rigidity of the foot, knee, hip, spinal and neck muscles, arms, elbows and fingers; studying each and every movement and the degree of movement in the *asanas*. I codified the *asanas* and showed their stages. If I had not studied the structure of each *asana* I should probably have given whatever method was easy for me.

If I found *Trikonasana* easy and *Parsvakonasana* difficult, naturally I would introduce *Trikonasana*. Today I would say to those people who cannot do *Trikonasana*, do *Parvakonasana* first and then do *Trikonasana*, and it will come. Because I am also developing, understanding, evolving. If people teach the basic *asanas* according to their own bodies, they are not proper teachers. You have to see hundreds of people, find out their reaction and listen to what they say when you are teaching them: that is how I studied.



If you go to two different doctors they may give you two different medicines for the same ailment according to their understanding. It is similar in yoga, but we could meet and iron out some of these differences and agree on a new programme. Unfortunately, many of today's yoga masters are not practitioners at all, but have become masters because they have political backgrounds.

In my country, I am known by the public but I am not liked by any officials or ministers. If I say children cannot be taught meditation they say, "Oh, this man does not know anything. Don't invite him." I once told them, "Children know only two things, to be active or to be asleep. They do not have emotional disturbances; they do not need meditation. Why make children intellectually impotent at that age? Let them be active, but in a constructive way, then teach them to focus their intelligence, so that they develop properly." But that was not liked. That is where differences have arisen. We have to strike a balance. Teachers ought to be broad-minded, but instead they say, "My system ought to be well known, I ought to become popular." But I say, "Let yoga become popular, not me." That is immortal; we are mortals.

So, if we learn to sit together and work out a system, probably we may present a syllabus that is beneficial for everyone - and I have done this.

Q: Mr. Iyengar, could you comment on how our indulgence in the pleasures of the senses affects our energy levels and our ability to pursue the domain of the spirit?

A: Patanjali made an authoritative statement, like a Veda. He said, "The contact of nature with purusa is the cause of all unhappiness in the world." So, learn to be completely detached from the world and you are liberated - a sweeping statement, but that is the objective answer he gave. Then, realising he had spoken hastily, as I do sometimes, he retreated a little. He said that nature has certain virtues

or qualities - *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Understand the virtue of *tamas*, the good qualities of *rajas* and the good qualities of *sattva*, in order to learn about the world without being part of it. In his second chapter he clearly said, "The senses are there for the evolution of the soul. Understand their purpose: as soon as they have fulfilled their purpose and you realise your position, break them off and they withdraw." So use them as instruments for your progress, but do not become part and parcel of them, or you will never achieve spiritual realisation. They are only there to serve you, not to rule over you: So yoga is the method that teaches you to draw the senses towards the soul. When you are doing *Paschimottasana*, when your head is down and your legs are straight, you cannot look at the world: you have to look within yourself. When you do *Adho mukha svanasana* (dog pose), the moment you stretch the spine and look backwards, you also learn to see inwards. You have to use these organs of perception and action and draw them towards the seer, so that the seer can benefit from these vehicles or garments of the soul.



Similarly with the nervous system. From the peripheral nervous system, which triggers the external part, let me see how far this triggering sensation reaches inwards. Is it feeding the intelligence, or is it only asking for repetition of pleasures? The mind and the memory fight each other. The memory tells the mind, do not listen to the intelligence but listen to me, because I know things from past experience. So the mind is caught up with memory, but neglects the intelligence. When the mind or the senses lose their potency, the mind says, "I should not have listened to my memory." Then judgment comes. That is *Pratyahara*, where the memory is superseded by and subjugated to the intelligence. That is the way to use our senses for understanding and solving the soul.

Q: When doing *sirsasana*, should you be balanced only on your head, or should you use strength?

A: Where are my head and shoulders, where is my neck, when I am standing? When I do *sirsasana*, do I retain this position or are my shoulders nearer my ears? You should be like this, hardening the muscles or lifting the muscles. If you can raise the inner deltoids higher or so that they are level with the outer deltoids, then there is no load on your neck. Your awareness and intelligence in head balance should produce a straight line down your body from your head to your heels; the inner intelligence should be parallel to the back body, the front body and the side body. I hope you understand because it is so hard to learn that pose. If the head goes back the legs come forward. If you take your chin back, the foot comes forward and everything goes wrong. There should be tremendous extension without strain.

When you do *sirsasana*, the upper arm should not rest on the lower arm. If it does, that is not *sirsasana*. It puts the load on the spine, which is then only being used because it has been overstretched. Also the hands are not being protective. But if you raise

the inner shoulders, you do not feel the weight of your head and body, any more than you feel the weight of your legs when you are walking.

So, in head balance the secret is that you should not feel the weight of your body on your head and that is perfect *sirsasana*.

Q: If certain *asanas* are difficult and make you dizzy and sick, should you continue or give them up?

A: If an *asana* makes you dizzy, you should ask whoever is teaching you what are the poses that remove the dizziness. Suppose your eyes are tense when you are doing standing poses, or you get dizzy after three or four poses because you are holding your breath and you feel as if you will black out: then we say, do *Uttanasana* or dog pose. With your head down you will never become dizzy. Any pose that makes you feel dizzy is not going to come easily; it is sending you a message. When you sense that message, don't continue: do a forward bend and then try again. So do a forward bend, then a standing pose, another forward bend then another standing pose, and that way you will not get dizzy. This applies particularly to people with changeable or low blood pressure, or if they hold the breath during postures, or if they have liver problems. We do not let them do poses which increase dizziness until they have learned others where it can be conquered. But these are only adjustments, nothing more. So do not stop, because if you stop you are a loser.

Experiment to find out which postures help, or ask your teachers. If they do not know, write to me, and I will answer you.

Q: What do you think of yoga for the mentally handicapped?

A: It is not a question of thinking, my friend, but of acting. I already know what to do. If I look at a handicapped or mentally retarded person - his eyes, his behaviour, his legs - straight away I can see his defects and I know what to teach. Yoga as you know works one hundred per cent on the respiratory and circulatory systems, the windows and gates of the soul. If they are trained properly then the four lobes of the brain also get sufficient energy to function. Otherwise they may remain unbalanced. Even among those who practise yoga, how many have also become unbalanced? Even wrong practice of pranayama can be fatal: recently one of my friends died. I told him he was doing it all wrong but he laughed at me. I am still here, but he is not.

Suppose I am standing in Tadasana are my lobes doing Tadasana, or does the pressure in my brain change from the front to the back? Even to float the brain on the fluid of the spine requires attention and intelligence. If we know how to balance the fluid so that the lobes of the brain do not shake, the child will learn to see. Eyes are nearest the brain: all mentally retarded children's eyes are shaky. The moment the eyes are steady, the brain becomes stable. Then we can say, look here, stand this way, can you pay a little attention there? The eyes are the index of the brain and the ears are the index of the consciousness: eyes are fire, ears are space. If there is harmony between the eyes and the ears, you can meditate without consciously saying, 'I am meditating', because one is fire and one is space, so you are always meditating.

So if you are teaching handicapped children always teach them to stabilize their eyeballs. Make them follow your finger: where are they looking?

Ask them if they can bring their eyes to look at a particular point. Stability will come, the brain will float evenly, with no extra fluid in the brain. The same with each limb.

If the feet are turning out, bring them in, one foot at a time: leave the weight on one foot and correct the other. Learn to act quickly so that the child does not lose attention.

Q: Mr. Iyengar, do you have some words of encouragement for us to remember when we are struggling with laziness and lack of discipline in our asana practise?

A: My friend, about ten years ago I had two severe accidents. But for yoga, you probably would not see me now. I lost control even in Trikonasana. I could not lift my shoulders or move them back. Even bending my knee was painful because the accident was so bad. But I did not go to a doctor - remember that - otherwise where was my faith in my own art? I said to myself, I have practised yoga for fifty-two years, let me try again. So this is the encouragement I would give you, that I began again from scratch in 1979 and I am 85% recovered: 15% still eludes me. I do not say, it won't come so living is pointless. I enjoy doing it and failing rather than not trying at all, so that is my encouragement for you.

I do vrschikasana today which was impossible for me five or six years ago. Even when I gave the demonstration at the Barbican I could not move properly at all. A friend asked me how I put up with the pain. You all know I am a stern teacher, so I am stern with myself. I said, let me finish the demonstration, I will take care of the pain later. So even in the Barbican video, which you have all seen, if you observe carefully, I was not very good - though it is a good guide for all of you!

So today I can do vrschikasana a million times better than before I was injured, without a single cell in my body being in a state of inattention. You know, it is all about the frame - can I keep this line and this line parallel? Look how this is bending, so it is not a good right angle, can you see? When you are doing asanas, every single line has to be observed

carefully. Is it straight from the source to the periphery or is it crooked? That is what I have learned from my injury, and it makes me a better teacher and a better performer. So I hope this is sufficient encouragement for you, that I have not lost heart. I say, I will do my best at this difficult practice. Do not be dissatisfied, but do not be contented either, or you will become dull. However much I have done today, can I progress one hair's breadth tomorrow? If you have that attitude I am sure you will all enjoy yoga.

: With head balance, how important is it to fall safely? How can we learn that - can we ask our teachers to help?

: All teachers are meant to help, so they must. You cannot come down slowly as a beginner, you have to flex the knees and aim to bring the back of the crown of the big toe down to touch the ground, then you will not hurt yourself. Sometimes you feel you are going to lose balance. Do not fight to keep it because you won't succeed. Let yourself come down. Even if you bring the leg down, you will be alright.

You cannot be taught to come down slowly till you can balance in *sirsasana*, and until you know how to come down you cannot learn how to go up! You jump up quickly against the wall because it gives you confidence, there is there to stop you, but on the way down, the floor is so far away that you are afraid. That is why the teacher is there to help lift you up and bring you down so that you develop the confidence to balance in *sirsasana*.

In *sirsasana* the spine becomes rigid, it is important to know how to move again to come down. In coming down, the secret is to take off the tension in the spinal muscles and flex the legs. Coming down is an art, it has to be learned, because you are going with gravity. Going up is not an art, as you are moving against gravity. You have to ask your teacher to guide you come down in three or four steps: bend your knees, let your knees touch your stomach, roll the spine slightly

and touch the toes to the ground. Rolling the spine and dropping the toes to the floor should synchronise, that is the art.

Q: What is *kundalini*?

A: My friend, why do you bother with *kundalini*? We do not know our bodies at all, we do not even know how to keep our tailbone erect and yet you think of *kundalini*, which is a divine energy or *divya shakti*. Patanjali speaks of the abundant flow of energy in a yogi. Previously it was known as *agni*, fire. Later it came to be called *kundalini*, after the seat of the central nerve, *kundala akara*, which is coiled three times. The awakening of *kundalini* comes with the divine union of body and soul; it can be awakened, but not simply with hard effort, as people would have you believe nowadays.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Lord Krishna told Arjuna, "Now I am going to show you my real form called *vishvarupa darshana*." Arjuna said, "I can't see your form with these eyes, bless me with divine eyes," which Lord Krishna did. There is no pupil like Arjuna nowadays. You will have to read it for yourself, because I cannot recount the life of Arjuna now. What an intensively intense pupil he was - that is why Krishna could grace him with that divine eye, which is *kundalini*. You and I cannot achieve that. We are still looked for the pleasure of the world - even though we are not satisfied with them - and we cannot have it both ways. So unless and until you discipline your entire inner system to such an extent that it becomes divine, you will not experience *kundalini*. It means the divinity of the body united with the divinity of the soul. We have a huge gulf between body and mind, mind and soul. Let us work to bring them closer. Then I think I shall not have to explain *kundalini*, because you will experience it for yourself.

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Letter to Linda Benn

This is an extract from a letter to Linda Benn from Laura Roberts of Ann Arbor, Michigan, who was one of the students at the Summer Intensive.

I certainly enjoyed being in Victoria and becoming acquainted with you and your Yoga Center. The in-put you are all making is producing a fine yoga community. I'm impressed and I know many are benefiting. And my week yoga vacation is just what I needed and couldn't have been in a better place. Thanks.

IYENGAR YOGA IN THE WEST

ROGERS (Victoria) CABLE TV

This is a series of 4 TV programmes based on Mr. Iyengar's visit to the Canadian Iyengar Yoga Conference in July, 1990. Filmed and produced by Rogers Cable in Calgary - Margot Kitchen. They are edited to appeal not only to yoga students but also to the general public.

*Each 30 minute programme is repeated 4 times during the week.

I IYENGAR YOGA IN THE WEST

Sunday, November 3, 9:30 pm
Wednesday, November 6, 4:00 pm
Friday, November 8, 8:30 pm
Saturday, November 9, 9:30 am

II MR. IYENGAR - THE MAN AND THE TEACHER

Sunday, November 10, 9:30 pm
Wednesday, November 13, 4:00 pm
Friday, November 15, 8:30 pm
Saturday, November 16, 9:30 am

III YOGA AND HEALTH

Sunday, November 17, 9:30 pm
Wednesday, November 20, 4:00 pm
Friday, November 22, 8:30 pm
Saturday, November 23, 9:30 am

IV BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT

Sunday, November 24, 9:30 pm
Wednesday, November 27, 4:00 pm
Friday, November 29, 8:30 pm
Saturday, November 30, 9:30 am

Victoria Yoga Centre Gathering

Friday, October 18, 1991

Place: YM/YWCA

Time: 6 pm...practice

7pm...potluck

8pm...discussion

Everyone welcome!

Free

Please bring a plate & cutlery



EACH PACKAGE CONTAINS
FRESHLY GROUND SPICES
PEPPER PACKAGED SEPARATELY
FINEST INDIAN BASMATI RICE OR RED LENTILS
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ALL NATURAL • EASY TO PREPARE

NO ADDITIVES • NO PRESERVATIVES

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Yoga Calendar

OCTOBER:

- 5: Teachers Meeting.
- 12-13: Yoga Workshop with Angela Farmer and Victor Van Kooten on Galiano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.
- 18: Victoria Yoga Centre Meeting at the Y. Please watch the bulletin board in the Yoga lounge for details.
- 25-27: Health Enhancement workshop given by Bruce and Maureen Carruthers on Galiano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

NOVEMBER:

- 11: Workshop at the Y with a guest teacher.
- 15-17: Yoga Workshop given by Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galiano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.
- 22: Victoria Yoga Centre meeting at the Y.
- 23: Teachers Meeting.

DECEMBER:

- : Annual General Meeting of the Victoria Yoga Centre. Marlene Miller will lead a yoga practise, followed by the AGM, followed by a supper in celebration of the season.

JANUARY:

- 17: Victoria Yoga Centre meeting at the Y.
- 18: Teachers Meeting.
- 26: A workshop led by Jim Rischmiller.

FEBRUARY:

- 14: Yoga Centre meeting at the Y.
- 16: A workshop led by Shirley Daventry French.
- 29: Teachers Meeting.

MARCH:

- 27: Victoria Yoga Centre meeting.
- 29: Teachers Meeting.

APRIL:

- 3-5: A workshop led by Donald Moyer.
- 24: Yoga Centre meeting.
- 25: Teachers Meeting.

MAY:

- 8: Victoria Yoga Centre meeting.
- 16: Teachers Meeting.

JUNE:

- 5-7: Iyengar Yoga Retreat on Saltspring Island.

JULY:

- Canadian Teachers Meeting on the Sunshine Coast.
- Iyengar Yoga Intensive Workshop in Victoria

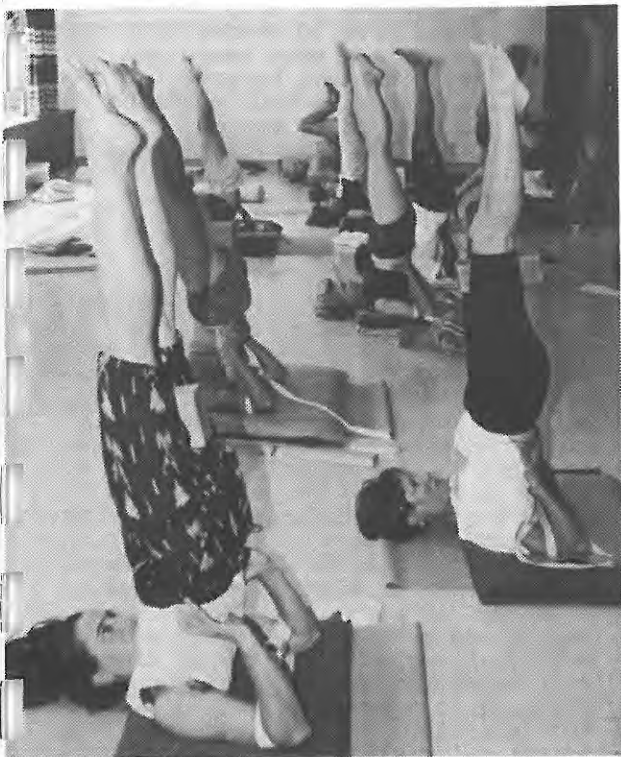
Photographs from the
1991 Yoga Intensive in
Victoria



Liz McLeod & Bruce Careythee



The group enjoying an afternoon seminar.



one of the daily asana classes



*Liz demonstrating on
Diane Hobday from
Gabriola Island*



Shirley Daventry French & Liz McLeod ...until next year!

Q: I have a question about yoga and vegetarianism. I know a number of people who are actively involved in promoting vegetarianism, the principles of non-violence and so on, but I notice that in all your writing you have never stated them as prerequisites for a yoga practitioner. In my opinion violence and eating meat are in conflict with the yamas and niyamas. What is your view on the promotion of vegetarianism?

A: My friend, the reason I have not dealt with it is this. Many of you have not read about my life at all. When I was young I suffered from tuberculosis and I practised yoga. When I grew up, there was a time when I couldn't get a meal for three or four days, so who was I to talk about nutrition? Today God has given me everything, but I have not forgotten my early life. Is yoga meant only for the well-off, or is it for the under-nourished also? I was under-nourished, but I have done a great deal in the field of yoga. So I say, if the salivary glands do not act, do not eat. When you see dry bread and it stimulates saliva, then that is the nourishing thing for you, as it has been for me sometimes.

Coming to vegetarianism, 'As you sow, so shall you reap'. The growth of the mind depends on the food you eat. If you eat animals, that is what goes into your system. At the time of slaughtering they are in great fear, and their cells are discharged as stress and strain, so that is what we eat, it goes into our system and it feeds our minds. If you do not use vegetables they go rotten, so although there is life in them, you do the minimum of harm by eating them. They are soothing to the system. Today, of course, vegetarian food is also commercialised and there is tremendous rapaciousness in growing vegetables for money - so there is also violence involved.

All I would say is that if there is no saliva when you eat, then the food is injurious, whatever it may be. I will not talk about diet because I cannot forget my early life. I have lived on water for eight days. I will die

before I surrender or stop practising yoga. So you have to choose food that refines your mind, that keeps you lighter and makes you happier. If you do not feel heavy in your alimentary system one hour after eating, then that is good food. You must judge for yourself, even with vegetarian food, what is soothing to your practice.

Q: Would you say that yoga is international?

A: We are all human beings, but we have been taught to think that we are westerners or easterners. If we were left to ourselves we would simply be individual human beings, no Africans, no Indians. People tell me I come from India so I develop certain characteristics to appear Indian. But when you and I meet together, we forget ourselves. There are no divisions and we talk mind to mind, soul to soul.

Yoga alone is universal culture as it universalises each individual from the body up to the seat of consciousness. There is no difference in the seer. The difference comes only between the 'garments' of the seer - the consciousness, the mind, the senses of perception the intelligence. Break them; do not feed them with divisive ideas. That is what yoga teaches.

Patanjali used the expression 'sarvabhauma' - universal - some 2,500 years ago, so yoga is a universal cult. It is an international art for every human being who is wanting in his emotions, his instincts, his intelligence. So if yoga can build up right knowledge, can stabilize the emotions, can transform instinct into intuition, take it from me that you and I lose all differences and we all become one. That is universality of yoga.

Despite my limited knowledge, I have tried to give clarity and not confusion. If there is any confusion, please do not ask my pupils but write to me directly and I will clear it up. God bless you.

Iyengar Monday Night

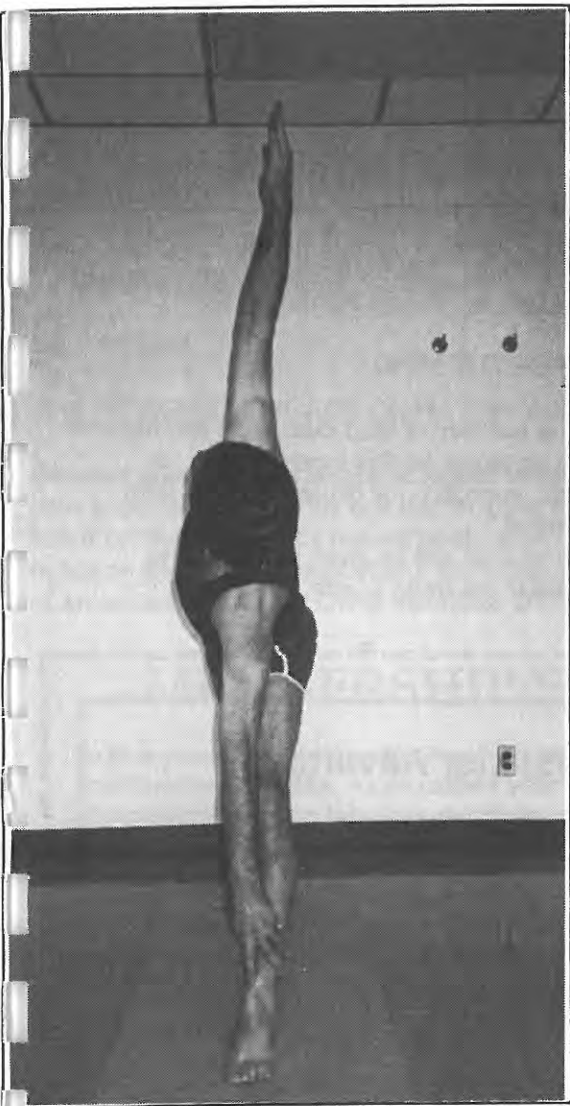


photo credit Karen Kirby

Rushing headlong from Impossibility
to Impossibility.
Hoping to become the person that's promised.

Cadence, control, contortion
Manual manual devoured,
Spiritual manual long since unread.
Rotation for release.
Integrity - to painfully pave the Path.

On the square,
In the clear, hot air of the Light.
Smiling sergeant majors,
Everywhere,
Truthfully say,
"Ah, they'll be good soldiers yet,
My Lord."

Bye for now!
Hong Kong Howie.



Anne Hannah

Registered Massage Therapist

Nautilus Sports Clinic
1821 Cook St.
Victoria, B.C. V8T 3P3

383-6412

RADHA HOUSE



1500 Shasta Place
Victoria, B.C. V8S 1X9
(604) 595-0177

Radha House Activities

PATHWAYS

Let your unconscious speak as you draw a map of your life and explore where you've been, where you are and where you want to go. Then you can take the next step, truly knowing that it's right.

Friday, October 25, 7.30-10.00pm.
Saturday, October 26, 10.00am to 6.00 pm.
Sunday, October 27, 10.00 am to 6.00 pm.
Fee: \$150.00 \$30.00 deposit.
Guest teacher: Swami Padmananda.

MAPS OF THE MIND

Map the territory of your own mind and discover hidden treasures on this inner journey. A symbolic approach for getting in touch with "pure mind."

This workshop will be given in Vancouver.
To register call Irene Scarth, 946-2628.

The Yoga Centre of Victoria Newsletter Advertising

If you have products or services of interest to Victoria's yoga practitioners, this is your advertising vehicle.

Because our rates are so low, all advertising material must be supplied camera ready - that is, exactly as you want it to appear in the newsletter. If not, the copy will simply be typed and inserted. If you wish, we can arrange to have an advertisement prepared for you, but we must charge extra for this service.

Our policy in accepting advertising is that all advertisements must not conflict with the aims of the Centre, as stated elsewhere in the newsletter.

If you wish to buy an ad or require further information,
please contact our Advertising Manager, Carole Miller:

721-3477

1807 Forest, Victoria, B.C. V8N 1H5

RATES per ISSUE

Full Page	\$36.00
1/2 Page	\$18.00
1/4 Page	\$12.00
Business Card	\$9.00

Friday, November 1, 7.30 to 10.00 pm.
Saturday, November 2, 10.00 am to 6.00 pm.
Sunday, November 3, 10.00 am to 6.00 pm.
Fee: \$115.00 deposit: \$25.00

YOGA PSYCHOLOGY

An exploration of mind, energy, consciousness, and God from a yogic perspective, with special focus upon the unconscious, conscious, and super-conscious mind.

A series of four evening classes, November 5, 12, 19 and 26 at Camosun College.

Fee: \$22.00

THE HIDDEN LANGUAGE OF HATHA YOGA

Discover your personal language hidden within your body and mind. This one-day workshop is based on Swami Radha's newest book, which builds on the classical foundations and wisdoms of an ancient tradition. Using metaphor and

symbolism, imagery and visualisation, you will unlock your own understanding of the psychological and mystical meanings of the asanas.

Saturday, November 16, 10 am to 6 pm.
Fee: \$45.00 deposit: \$10.00

ROSE CEREMONY

The Rose Ceremony is a personal dedication to the Divine, a time to re-establish your commitment to the very finest within, and to reaffirm your ideals.

If you wish to attend please bring two roses - one for you and one for the Divine. Phone for further information.

There is no fee, but you are asked to make a donation to a charity of your choice as an offering of gratitude.

Part One: Saturday, November 30, 8-9 pm
Part Two: Sunday, December 1, 8-9 pm.

MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Its time you joined the Yoga Centre of Victoria! As you read this newsletter, you are receiving one of the benefits of membership. As you attend your yoga classes or a workshop, you are receiving the benefits of membership. These take time and money and your membership fees and participation really help.

Please fill out this form and send it with your cheque or money order to:
YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA, 3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R.#4, Victoria, B.C., V9B 5T8

Membership/subscription fee is only \$20 per year.

Name: _____

Street: _____

City/Prov: _____ P.C.: _____ Phone: _____

I am enclosing a cheque or money order in the amount of: _____

Please do not mail me the newsletter; during class sessions, I'll pick one up at my "Y" class. []

The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY is a non-profit society incorporated under the Societies' Act of the Province of British Columbia whose purpose is, "*to encourage the physical, mental and spiritual growth of its members and other interested members of society at large by the study and discipline of Yoga*". The Society owes inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

The Society Newsletter is published regularly, providing current information on events concerning yoga in Victoria and area and at the Yasodhara Ashram. Published by the Victoria Yoga Centre Society.

Anyone wishing to contribute articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions to the newsletter may contact the Editor, Jennifer Rischmiller, 4489 Lindholm Road, R.R.#1, Victoria, B.C., Canada V9B 5T7. Telephone: (604)-474-5630.

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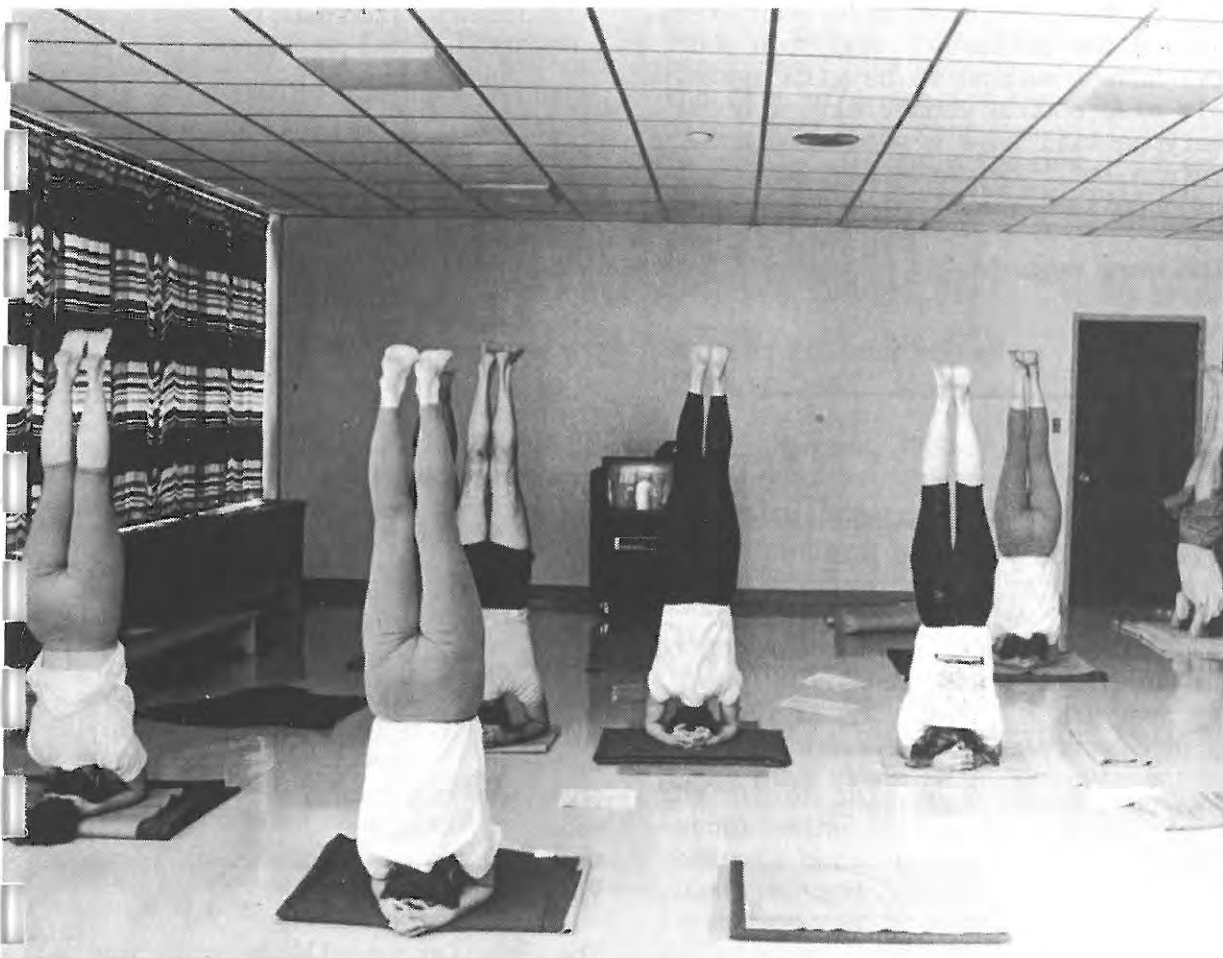
Permission is hereby granted to reprint any of our material except that copyrighted by the authors or artists. When reprinting, please credit this Newsletter and send us two copies of the publication containing our material. Copyright material is only available by written permission. **DEADLINE FOR NOVEMBER ISSUE: OCTOBER 10, 1991.**

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY
3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R.#4 Victoria, B.C., Canada, V9B 5T8



VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

Newsletter



a teacher's meeting

Letters to the Editor

Dear Shirley,

A brief 'hello' along with my belated cheque. I enjoy the newsletter so very much and it has been for a number of years! They somehow serve as a link between us and I like that. The Big Big Practice must have been great, I loved the pictures! And soon you will have Ramanand to be with again. This also sounds wonderful. I hope everyone will have a good time and learn a lot. He certainly gives us the opportunity!

With warm regards,

MARGOT.

Hi, Shirley,

It was great fun to be taking my yoga vacation with you and your group. I have a new appreciation that yoga is alive and well in Canada! Your efforts to nurture through the centre, the newsletters and just being you, are reaching so many. I can look at my own group here with a fresh perspective and also share many good observations from Victoria.

LAURA.

Balance is the state of the present -
the here and now.

If you balance in the present
you are living in Eternity.

Wisdom of the Master.
Maxims by Shri B.K.S. Iyengar

Yoga Centre News

The directors of the Victoria Yoga Centre held a dinner meeting on October 1, 1991. The surroundings were pleasant, food was good, and we enjoyed seeing each other again. Jim and Shirley are off to India shortly so we won't have the opportunity to meet again for a little while.

Jim was overjoyed to tell us that Jerrilyn Wass has volunteered for the position of treasurer and will take over his duties as treasurer whilst he is away. OUR THANKS TO JERRILYN.

Marlene Miller will be working on a new design for Yoga Centre T-shirts. The programme has been planned until the summer of 1992 and, as the calendar is full, there will not be a guest teacher in November.

The workshop given by Ramanand Patel was excellent although the attendance was not as large as expected. The proceeds covered all expenses as the airfare for Ramanand was less than was budgeted. The July Intensive went well, the teachers received very positive feedback. Both events will be arranged again for next year. Ramanand has been asked to book a date in September and the Intensive will be held from July 6-11, to follow the Iyengar Teachers meeting in Vancouver.

The Yoga Centre will be ordering a set of video tapes on the Edmonton Conference showing Mr. Iyengar in action. The videos can be rented by contacting Linda Benn, 598-8277.

Yoga Centre News

Marlene Miller will be working on a scholarship 'philosophy' which will be published in the newsletter at a later date.

Several members of the Yoga Centre have received a letter from yoga students in Russia. The letter will be published in the next newsletter along with a request for a 'Russian correspondent'. The newsletter committee is preparing a special issue for December to celebrate the fact that the newsletter has been published for ten years. If you have a story or picture about the Yoga Centre or its members please contact Jennifer Rischmiller, 474-5630.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 19, 1991, at 5.30 p.m. in the Futaba Restaurant. Everyone is welcome.



Letter from Russia

Dear Sir,

I have never met you but there is at least one thing that unites us, that is interest for yoga. I am sure that yoga must make its contributions to the course of establishing friendship among different people in the whole world. That is why we have organized the programme "Yoga for Peoples Unity", the text of which you may see below. We hope that you will get interested in our programme. If so please do not hesitate to write to us for any details.

Sincerely Yours,

Vera M. Kchachaturova
Company "MOCT"
P.O. Box 82,
103055 Moscow, USSR.

Russia Programme

Moscow yoga club headed by Sergey M. Kostikov, together with Company "MOCT" which is represented by Vera M. Kchachaturova, put forward a cardinaly new programme of co-operation, "Yoga for Peoples Unity".

The aim of this programme is establishing friendly and business contacts between people of different countries and nationalities interested in or exercising yoga. We imagine that to preserve the world's peace people should meet each other, understand different ways of thinking and share cultural and historical values of various

countries and peoples. Participation in our programme will enable you to bring into life all the mentioned above possibilities.

The programme pre-supposes visits of small groups of people taking interest in yoga to the USSR on condition of advanced warning and providing all that is necessary during their visit in accordance with the previously settled schedule.

Company "MOCT" on the basis of no-currency-pay exchanges takes the responsibility in providing all the necessary papers, housing and feeding as well as transport, guides and interpreters for the whole period of the tour.

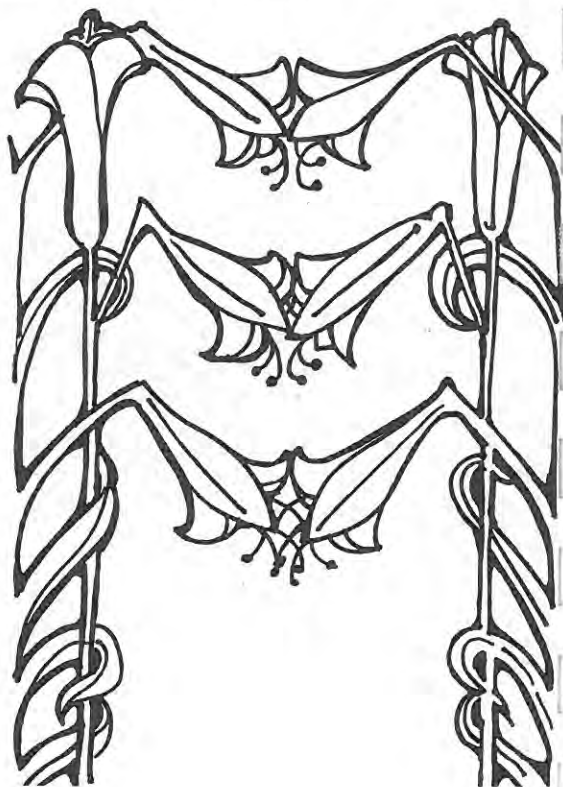
Moscow yoga club according to this programme enables its guests to attend lessons, take part in theoretic seminars, conferences and disputes on different aspects of yoga teaching, as well as meet Russian yogis in their family houses. Besides the programme, leaders can organize meetings with businessmen in any sphere representing interest for our guests.

The organizers of the programme dare hope that in the course of its realisation, people of different countries of the world, sharing an interest in yoga, will find close friends in our country, representatives of different nationalities, religions and occupations.

We would be very much obliged if, on the basis of friendly contacts, there arises a similar possibility for the members of Moscow yoga club and Company "MOCT" to visit foreign countries.

If you are interested in our programme, if you want to meet friends and people sharing your views in Russia, if you look forward to establishing spiritual contact with other people, we will be glad to receive your letters and suggestions.

COMPANY "MOCT",
P.O. Box 82,
103055 Moscow, USSR.



THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

is pleased to present

**YOGA
and the
MATURING WOMAN
with**

Maureen Carruthers and Hilda Pezarro

Sunday, November 24, 1991

10:00 am - 4:00 pm

(Lunch break will be from 1:00-2:00 pm)

**at the Victoria YM-YWCA Yoga Studio
880 Courtney St.**

Yoga Centre Members \$60.00

Non-Members \$65.00

This workshop will look at the perspective that yoga brings to the changes maturing women of all ages experience. There will be asana practice and time for discussion. Hilda and Maureen will share their collective personal experience of many years of yoga practice and teaching, and their ongoing process of maturing.

Maureen Carruthers lives on Galliano Island, B.C. where she holds classes and workshops in her studio - home space. Maureen is a long time student of B.K.S. Iyengar, a teacher of Iyengar Yoga, and a teacher of teachers. She is a founding member of the B.K.S. Iyengar Yoga Association centered in Vancouver, B.C. and is a mother and grandmother.

Hilda Pezarro is a graduate of the Yasodhara Ashram teacher training course, a student and a teacher of Iyengar Yoga. Hilda is a founding member of the Yoga Association of Alberta where she taught for many years and is presently teaching in Vancouver, B.C., and is a mother and grandmother.

**TO REGISTER: Please make your cheque payable to Victoria Yoga Centre
and mail to:**

Marlene Miller

P.O. Box 2494

Sidney, B.C. , V8L 3Z4

For further information phone Marlene at 389-4651(Pager) or 656-7271(W)

RAMANAND PATEL -

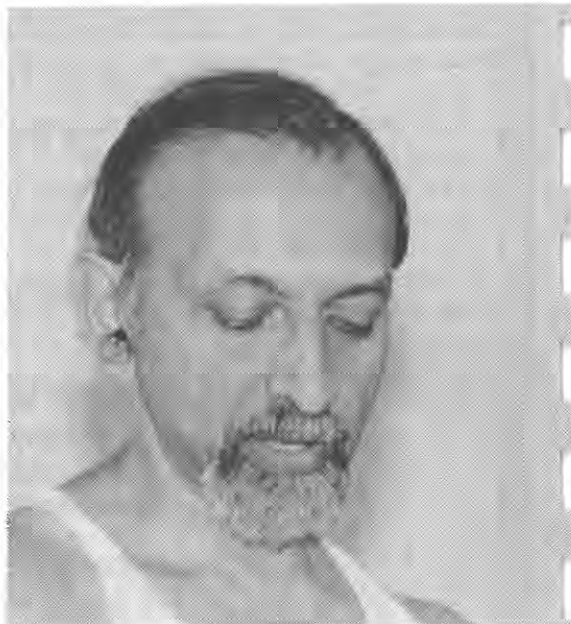
On Yoga philosophy and practice

(The following talk was given in Chicago in June 1989. It has been transcribed and edited by Shirley Daventry French)

Ramanand: I was asked if I would give a talk on the philosophy of yoga, and as always, when talking on a subject which is so vast, I am forced to consider what it is you really want to hear, because yoga is a way of life and hence almost anything I could say pertaining to how you live life would be relevant. The very meaning of the word "yoga" is to enjoin, to yoke the individual self with the universal self. From almost the beginning of time as far as we human beings are concerned, the subject has remained unfathomable. A lot has been written about it. Everyone has a personal opinion about what God is, what one is; an opinion that fortunately changes as one grows. Hence to give any sensible talk on the subject one must then restrict oneself to certain specific aspects.

Now rather than my choosing such an aspect, I would like to know first what it is that you want to discuss or hear about yoga. If there are any specific questions I could talk around that; then at least it would be relevant to what is going on in your mind, your life rather than my telling you something that may be very interesting but totally irrelevant to you. To me, because I am an engineer perhaps, unless something carries very direct relevance to my life today, it doesn't interest me particularly. Wonderful things are written in yoga, but they must have a real meaning in life.

Student: Ramanand, I'd like to hear you talk about the challenge of developing a personal practice and resistance to that as this relates to the philosophy of yoga.



Ramanand: There's a wonderful Indian proverb which says "*Aap Muva Vina Svarge Na Javaya*", meaning "unless you die you cannot go to heaven". You see, we want that thing called heaven but none of us is really quite ready to die. The word in English that we call 'practice' has a connotation of mechanical repetition. Hence, when we talk of yoga practice - there is that mechanical aspect to it. How do we find time for it, how do we organise it and if it remains mechanical, what's the point? Does it have any meaning at all? First we have to understand that by practice we don't mean only mechanical repetition, although it must include that because we are subject to chronological time. We are physical creatures who sleep every day, wake up every day, breathe every day every day if we can. All those aspects are mechanical, and yet we are not only mechanical beings, and hence our practice of yoga must not be only mechanical; but before I can make it non-mechanical, there are many things I need to understand. No matter how eager I am to practise every day, I must begin by recognising how much

time I am willing to give - realistically! It would be nice if I could practise fifteen, eighteen hours - as Mr. Yengar used to do at one time in his life. I just don't have that kind of time; or I'm not willing to pay the price that I will have to pay to find that kind of time. After all, that's what it boils down to. It's not that I can't do something, but I'm not willing to pay the price that's required. Whenever somebody says: my life is very busy and I cannot give time to practise, how do I organise that? That person must ask: what are the priorities in my life? And only you as an individual can answer that question.

I had a person come to me about four or five months ago. She was working as a realtor and was in awful shape physically, mentally, psychologically. She had just been told she needed major surgery. She happened to be a personal friend of one of the teachers in San Jose, so I said, fine I am willing to work with you provided you want to work. Do you? She said, yes. She had never taken a single yoga class, so I did what one would normally do with a person like that: taught very simple things, and gave her some idea of what relaxation is because that's what she most needed. Of course, if one has never experienced anything like that it feels totally wonderful, mindblowing. I did basically nothing. Most of you will understand that a simple relaxation is not really that big a deal. But she was very impressed by it. I have never seen anything better in my life, was her attitude; temporarily Ramanand Patel became a god. As soon as she felt better, after less than two weeks of practice, she dropped it; she was back doing her business. I feel better, I have just a couple of deals to close, let me close them. And you can imagine, five months have gone by, she is still closing a couple more deals every week - until her life is threatened once again, then she will seek help.

The question that one has to ask to oneself is: how badly do I want to practise? Until that is answered you will not have an answer to these other questions: how to organise and find time to practise. You can make yourself a promise and say, I will practise ten minutes or three hours every day and go from that

basis. Decide that first. Because I grew up in the western culture, I always want to know the reason why I am doing this or what are the various steps, even if I cannot begin the steps today. I want to know the sequence involved. In answering the question, how much time can I practise, I want to know first what am I going to get out of it? What's the point of spending three hours if I cannot not have as much fun as by drinking a cup of coffee? What is in it for me, before I give all this important time of my life to it? These yogis talk wonderful things about reincarnation, but who knows? (laughter) This may be the only life. Most of us don't know; the vast majority of us may like to believe it, but we really don't know. It has got to have some practical application. I must have a return, otherwise I am not willing to invest my time. But, before I can recognise what that investment entails, someone must explain to me what the process is. What's going to happen? And hence it is important to understand the basis of theory of yoga practice.

According to Indian authorities - and it's very difficult to talk about Indian authorities because from north to south India and east to west there are all kinds of authorities with all kinds of ideas who talk a variety of different languages and write quite confusing things. Sometimes I think that they write to confuse not to clarify. (laughter) Now this is very much Ramanand's extraction and feel very free to differ with me, but the basic extraction that to this day I have derived out of what I have read, what I have experienced, what I have discussed with people, and what I feel myself is something like this. I am going to use quite a few terminologies where I am forced to extract words out of English which may in the dictionary have a slightly different meaning, so please bear with me. Try and understand the meaning I am attempting to imply, rather than quarrel with me over words. You can quarrel - I love quarrels anyway, but you will miss the point if you keep doing that in your mind.

There are various levels of practice. They are not necessarily higher or lower levels of practice; they are simply different. Yet, each individual places a certain value on a particular level of practice. To give an example: I have a sense of hearing and I have a sense of sight; those are completely different, one is not higher than the other, and yet at the same time my mind has a very clear sense of their value. For instance, if I am to lose my hearing or my sight, I would definitely prefer not to lose my sight. Most people would agree with me, right? So I can't call my sense of sight a higher sense; it's different sense from hearing, totally different. They are not comparable; they are apples and oranges. Yet there is a value I imply in saying that this is a higher sense. When I use the word 'higher' it has a different value system in my mind, for whatever reason. The different levels of yoga practice one talks of are not necessarily higher and lower in the strict sense of the word, but have a different sense of value implied in them.



There is first and foremost a physical level of practice where, within the system, I am told that it's important that I recognise that there is this force called gravity which I cannot basically escape from while I'm on this physical plane. There is the way my bones function, my muscles function, my body functions, my mind functions, my feelings function, and it's necessary to understand that initial level of practice so that I can line myself up properly. It is a very physical alignment, but it's not as a result any higher or lower. It's certainly different from sitting down and meditating. Very different! But any sense of value I impart to it, saying this is physical, that meditative, that's higher than this, is entirely my creation. It may have some semblance of reality to it, but it is not absolute in its value judgment. Both are valid, it depends on who is doing the practice. When a beginner comes to class, that physical level of practice is a very essential level of work, without which lots of other things can go wrong. Because it is a systematic practice we begin with that which is most obvious, that which is most simple, that which has direct, obvious learning implications

I begin with the physical level of practice. I go to the class and somebody tells me which way to turn the foot, how to line up the body, and I employ information from what I have learned in high school biology and what the doctors tell me, and yet keep my mind open to saying this is not the end, and perhaps the doctors don't know everything. With an open mind, I begin a very disciplined practice. There is a sense of my losing myself in it, and yet not in a fanatical sense, not completely believing everything I am told; taking it as a good beginning, a good hypothesis and then progressing from that hypothesis. If I begin that way, then I have some chance of saying how do I create motivation for practice? What is it ultimately I am looking at, what are my possibilities, without having to believe in a lot of high philosophical ideals that I may never approach in this lifetime. I am too busy doing other things. I like my job. I like my fun in life. I am not going to give that up, and yet here are these

books saying give up everything so that you can reach this nirvana or whatever it is.

Beyond that physical practice what lies in the subject? As I develop my physical practice it becomes a stepping stone - and here I extract one word - so that I may experience what is termed "physiological" practice. What is physical practice? My simple mechanical geometrical alignment of the body. What is a physiological practice? Physiological practice is where I recognise what the function of the muscle is, what the function of the bones is, and how my other systems in the body - the digestive system, the blood circulation system, the respiratory system, the lymphatic system - are related.

I will deal with the most obvious one first. I have bones, I have muscles, and the two together function in such a way that they support the weight of the body. When I have not trained my body properly, when my discipline has not achieved a certain degree of maturity, I tend to use much more of my muscles. As I refine my practice, I learn over a period to optimise the use of the muscles in such a way that their function becomes much more to line up the bones so that they can bear the weight, rather than muscularly struggling to bear the weight. When that happens, a certain degree of maturity has come, which allows me to function very differently. Occasionally we see in a yoga class somebody who is very muscular, very strong, thinking they can do everything, and if the teacher knows how to work, very quickly they prove to that person - even without trying often - how strength is of little help in holding the position. Most of you have had that experience: whether systematically, by accident, by sheer good fortune, or what yogis like to call good karma, you have learned how to optimise the use of the muscles by making the bones take the weight rather than your muscles. How are you able to this? You are able to do this primarily through one function: you are able to work much more through opening the joints. When you work and open the joints your bones can be aligned better and the muscle takes much less of a load.

This is basic theory of how a physical practice is made a physiological practice; but what happens as a result is other physiological functions change. When you're muscularly struggling to hold a position your breath is not very free, whereas when the posture becomes physiologically more refined the breath becomes freer. Breath is very closely connected to the way the mind works, hence your mind is also free. Here I want to bring in a slight difference between mind and brain. Again, I am extracting terms out of the English language, because there are no equivalent terms to explain it.

Brain, which functions primarily in time, functions through thought, logic, deciphering, analysing, it always requires time to function. Brain has its seat in the head, in the skull, mind has its seat in the solar plexus or in your heart or somewhere in between. What is called antahakarana.. Mind functions - and I'm using mind quite separate from brain here - through feeling and does not require time. And sometimes when I talk of this in the class and people can't readily understand I have to use quite strong examples to show it, such as if I light a little candle under your coccyx you don't have to think "I am burning". (laughter) It's an immediate feeling. It does not require a time element, whereas thought and everything that thought does requires time. My approach is such that I take a posture, I think about the posture, I analyse the posture, but I work towards feeling the posture. I have to think about the posture. If somebody says turn the left foot out, the right foot in, I have to think what is left, what is right (some of us don't know that, as we know very well). I have to think, and having taken the thought to its limit, having taken my analysis to its limit, having taken my physical effort to its limit, I also want to feel the posture.

Let's go through the steps of what happens. There is a physical posture. There is a physiological posture. As the physiological posture improves, something happens. The posture becomes - and again I extract a term - an organic posture. You've seen what happens



action that happens through those organs of action is slightly different from the obvious organs of action. What I call organic posture affects the two kinds of organs. There is the effect on organs such as liver, kidneys, bladder and so on; but there is also the effect on what are called *jnanendriyas*, the organs of perception, my sense organs - eyes, ears, tongue, skin. Up until this point I may be working my eyes, ears and tongue very hard. Can I learn systematically to involve those organs of perception to a minimum degree. In the beginning, when I work at a physical level I need to line myself up, I have to turn my head and see where my feet are; but as that which is done by the brain is accepted much more by my mind and I work with the feeling of the posture as opposed to analysing the posture, by feel I am able to tell whether my foot is lined up properly or not. You see how the progression takes place. The posture changes.

Feeling is not spacing out; feeling is being in touch with what really is, as opposed to trying to figure out what is. When I feel the posture I have taken a physical posture and converted it to a better physiological posture, I have made it an organic posture, and at the organic level I see there are two kinds of organs - the functional organs and the organs of sense. The organs of sense also have two modes: there is an outer sense and there is an inner sense. The outer sense is essential for me to function outwardly and is much more related to the activity of the brain which functions through time. The inner sense is a very peculiar sense, much more related to my feeling, to my mind. It functions in a very different way. What I call the organ of the sense of sight is necessary to look outwards and see, but I also have a sense of mental seeing which is totally unrelated to my eyes. Somehow my understanding of that outer sense of seeing helps me to recognise the inner sense of seeing, which, although it is not attached physically to my eyes, has a psychological attachment to the eyes. Psychological may not be the right word, but it has some kind of vague attachment to this organ; there is an association.

when somebody is struggling in a posture, whether because they are unsure of themselves psychologically or are struggling very hard to prove that they can hold the position. You know where they work from? The stomach, the abdominal organs; they tighten everything. The ability to align my body properly makes the posture physiologically correct, so that I am optimising the use of the muscles, and yet work the bones and muscles in such a way that I am not tensing my internal organs. That gives me greater freedom to breathe more freely. When I line myself up better physically, my breath functions with greater ease. When the physiological posture improves I breathe still more freely. When the posture functions better organically, my breath is freer still. At that point I begin to pass from a normally defined physical world to a psychological world, because there are two types of organs in the body. There are what are called *karmendriyas* and what are called *jnanendriyas*.

Karmendriyas refer to organs of action. The obvious organs of action are your arms and your legs. You act with these. Stomach, liver, kidneys are also organs of action which you don't consciously control to the same degree. The kind of control, the kind of

What we as human beings have done normally in our functioning, even with feelings, is to attach the feeling to the sense organ, so that inner sense of association is still related to the eyes, something that we intellectually recognise doesn't have to be. Yoga, is a process of development where the inner sense functions through feeling in such a way that the obvious association with the sense organs begins to be still. In feeling that inner sense of sight, through discipline, through practice, I learn that this association is not necessary, and I automatically let it go.

Now, in every single sense, the posture begins to be converted from a purely physical practice; through physical effort it comes to a level where the senses become introjected as opposed to projected. A lot of people try to do this, in some systems of yoga that I have seen, by just believing in it. Whether I am right or wrong, my sense and my perception when I look at these people is that a little halo grows behind their head and they look holy without becoming holy. When I met Mr. Iyengar for the first time I met a person who was very earthly, and yet there was a real halo behind the head: not holy but with a reality that I could relate to. I saw a systematic approach, I saw there was no "spacing out", yet I saw a tremendous development of the senses: a step by step method that made, to this head, very logical sense, and I like logic because I was trained as an engineer. At last something made sense. Belief was no longer necessary.

As the posture begins to change into an inner posture, more and more realisation comes as to what the function of this whole game is. You have five senses, I have five senses, and some of us talk of six senses, but I don't want to get into the sixth sense because it's like talking about God. It is there, and yet it's not. No matter how much value judgment I place to various senses, of all the five senses, the sense that I use most and the biggest sense I have, is the sense of touch - my skin. While all parts of the skin are sensitive (one hopes), the sense of touch varies. It is different in the tips of the fingers, in my

toes, in my lips, my facial muscles, on my neck, on my chest, under my armpits, on my generative organs. It is different! In the English language we do not define those differences, but they are there. The differences we have defined are to do with roughness, smoothness, temperature, hot, cold, but there are no words for these other kinds of differences and yet all of us sitting here know that they exist. I have an inner sense of touch and outer sense of touch, and both have got these various modes. I begin to recognise that this posture which I came to initially as a very physical thing, and perhaps a nice thing to do, opens up a whole experience of life. If I can experience a posture from within with even one sense of touch in all its modes, I feel alive inside. After all, what is life? It is a series of experiences. And whether I ever come to God or not, who knows? If I can experience life completely from within, as I often experience it from without, there is a real joy in that experience. I am ignoring the whole inner world of experience if I stick only to the outward. It is not a denial of the outer world, please! It is an affirmation of that which I have perhaps unconsciously all along denied.



If I experience a posture there is - what do you call it when your hair stands up on end - horripilation. The very thought makes me tingle, but, my God, all the years of my life I have ignored something that was always there, that's part of the joy of life. Why ignore it? Instead as I experience this posture with my senses turning inwards, I begin to see much more than I had ever seen. When that posture is experienced with all my faculties, if all my inner senses are completely engrossed, this is what Patanjali calls "pratyahara" - not restraining your senses from running outwards, that is a very crude meaning, but so totally occupying my inner sense of being that I stop becoming: I am. There is no more becoming. There is simply being. In the outer world we are constantly running around trying to become. In the inner world, when you have come to that realisation, all "becoming" stops. There is only a sense of constantly being. The outer world functions through my brain and as a result it is always subject to time. My inner world may have chronological time but psychological time is totally dead.



Do you understand what psychological time is? I am standing at a bus station waiting for a bus to appear, and because I want to get somewhere badly it takes a long time even though it is only five minutes. That's psychological time. There is an inner psychological time clock which comes to a standstill. What I do not know, and what comes as a pure gift from God, is that if my psychological time comes to a standstill this way, my ability to deal with the outer chronological time improves a million percent, because it no longer controls me: I control it. At that point a particular kind of arrogance grows in the mind and in the brain, both! One has to watch out. Some knowledge comes and then begins to diminish, again it grows, again it diminishes. That's a process that continues. In the meantime more recognition comes, and I gradually begin to feel that all this stuff written by the sages that in the beginning seemed like nonsense and garbage, is not garbage. Only my ability to understand it was limited. Now this engineering mind no longer says that what I studied, this western engineering, is the only truth on the planet. There is something much truer, much more subtle, much more profound within my inner world. So I begin to look a little more closely, and see that while what has been described as an anatomical structure of my body by allopathic sciences is not incorrect, it is limited, and if I allow myself to be limited by allopathic science, I am missing out on a whole lot of things. Not that it's not true, but if I restrict myself to believing within that sphere only, I am losing out on a lot. So I begin to look at what on earth the sages have to say, and I recognise they talk of many different things.

One of the things that came to me more recently was that there are various diaphragms in the body. I have preferred to think of them as diaphragms which do not locate themselves only within the spinal nerve centres as the chakras do, but expand across the body. There is a diaphragm through the middle of my head. There is a diaphragm through the base of the throat. There is a diaphragm through the middle of the chest at the heart level, then the one we call diaphragm of the chest, then a navel diaphragm and finally a pelvic

diaphragm. My experience of working with these diaphragms teaches me a tremendous lot. All kinds of movement of energy take place; something that I used to deny completely as California jargon. There is a movement of energy, and slowly the truth dawns that it's not just that I have this physical body and I have these fixed physical diaphragms, but I have other bodies - what are called *kosas* in Indian literature. When the sages talk of each kosa, each body, they say it begins with the physical kosa, physical body, *anamayakosa*; that which is produced by *ana* meaning food. Food has produced this physical body, and then it goes on from there. The sages have said for centuries that each body is a reflection of the physical body. What I find has not been very well commented on by the scholars is that every single body has the same diaphragms, same centres, same chakras. The movement of prana is not restricted to the physical body, but there is an inter-movement between the six diaphragms of one body to all six diaphragms of every single body. Depending on which Indian authority you look at, you have anything from five to seven bodies, so there are at least thirty diaphragms among which certain movements of pranic energy takes place. It's tremendously interesting, very intricate, very subtle.

What a genius like Mr. Iyengar does, perhaps without even recognising the logic of what he is doing, is to look at the person's skin movement, skin colouration, skin temperature, and judge from that. The man is a total genius, because without going through the process of deciphering with his head, he can tell immediately through the feel that there is something wrong with this person. He takes the most important of sense organs, the skin, and judges from that. There is the wrong colouration, wrong cell projection, or a tension or a heat on the skin - and he says I must find support and change this posture so that at least it evens out around the periphery of the particular diaphragm I am looking at. Even if I can't change the colouration, if I can't change its smoothness, its flow, its projection and retraction, can I at least make it even? So he gives a little prop and says: here, lie down on this - and a



whole new vista opens up. If, in the future, anyone succeeds in doing this kind of therapeutic work with every single sense introjected, you will instantaneously cure any ailment a human being can possibly have. Physical, emotional, psychological or spiritual. That is the subject of yoga. That is the philosophy of yoga.

I went into diaphragms and chakras to a little extent, but I did not explain the bodies that we have. Again, part of the problem and reason for not explaining these is I have read many translations, and they make sense and yet they don't make sense. Where can I begin? You have a physical body, that is supported by your intake of food which is made up of a certain arrangement of chemicals, molecules, atoms, and so on. The texts explain that within the physical body is a layer, but I don't agree with this because it implies an outer and inner conditioning, and there is no such physical thing; yet just as earlier when I was talking of levels, I had to use the terms higher and lower, now I have to talk of inner and outer layers for sake of understanding alone. A physical practice, a physiological practice, an organic practice, a pranic practice, are different levels; they are not higher or lower. In the same way while the text continuously talks of kosas as being inner and outer layers, they are not in a physical sense inner and outer. They have an inward sense about them. Begin with that understanding.

Within the physical body lies the mental body. We may not be able to define it but we have a concept of it. Within the mental body, lies the *vijñanamaya kosa*, which is more like a body of knowledge as opposed to mind, mind being perhaps more mechanical, more outward. The content of mind, is the *vijnana* so that's *vijnamaya kosa*. Within that lies what is termed as *anandamaya kosa*, which is a state of blissfulness. So you have a blissful body, you have a body of knowledge, you have a body of mind or brain, you have this physical body. Each one of these is reflected back in the physical. On this plane of existence, every single one of those bodies has this physical containment, and hence every single diaphragm I have mentioned has a reflection in the mental body, a reflection in the *visnanamaya kosa*; and just as there is a physical breath flowing, there is an equivalent of breath flowing through all these other bodies. There are other bodies also, but again, it's academic - basically there is an ethereal body and a spiritual body.

There are two modes of movement of the energy; at least two that I know of today. Who knows what will come in the future? First, movement is at all these levels that I described, all five bodies, all six diaphragms, but within each one - let's take the physical mode alone - there are two modes of movement: there is a vertical movement and a lateral movement. Both those movements are again subdivided or affected by two aspects: one is an inner aspect, and the other is an outer aspect. The outer aspect relates to the breath. Every time I inhale, the diaphragm expands or contracts. Every time I exhale, the opposite happens. In general the healthy movement of the diaphragm is this: the topmost diaphragm that I talked of in the middle of the head retracts on inhalation, expands on exhalation. All other diaphragms do the opposite. They all expand on inhalation, retract on exhalation. The movement of the diaphragm, whether it is a passive or a tense movement, is observed through how the periphery of

the diaphragm functions. If I look at my head diaphragm alone, when I am relaxing or in a posture I recognise tension here, softness here. On my skin

through the sense of touch, I recognise the periphery of the diaphragm. Just feeling, recognising that it exists, gives me the ability to let go of part of it. I am conscious that my arm is tense, I can let go of that tension. When I don't even recognise that there is a tension, then I can't let go. But by good practice by turning my senses inwards, by developing that ability over a period through regular practice, I am able to sense where there is tension on various peripheral areas, and let go of it, allowing my breath to flow laterally in such a way that the expansion and contraction of the diaphragm becomes more even. That is one movement of the diaphragm.

The second movement of this energy is vertical, and that vertical movement is constant. It doesn't change with your inhalation and exhalation. It may increase with certain postures, but its direction in general doesn't change, except when I am terribly emotionally upset or in a state of shock. Then temporary reversal may take place; it doesn't last very long. Every diaphragm is dome-shaped with the crest or apex of the dome being at the top, except the pelvic floor diaphragm which is turned upside down so that the dome is a trough and has its lowest point at the bottom. A lot of the movement of pranic energy that takes place is primarily near the spine, because nerve centres are located near the spine, and they are affected more than anything else by your muscles near the spine. Every diaphragm has its anchor in the spinal muscles, or near the spinal column. That's why the working with the spine is very important, and it is by learning to release and create passivity around that area that I begin to turn the posture from one level to the other.

The movement of energy is such that in front of my spine there is a sense of space, and through the centu

of each dome the movement of energy is upwards. And yet it is flowing over every single dome; so you can visualise a series of fountains with lots of horizontal discs where there is a movement from the centre which flows out over the fountain. That flow, which basically implies a movement of the skin, should not generally change. What a beginner tends to do in the postures is lift the skin and attempt to drag the inner body with it, rather than allowing the inner frame of the body to lift up, dragging the skin with it. When you see a beginner's posture, if you understand this mechanism, that's what you basically see: a lot of tension on the skin. It takes time, practice and some understanding before he will let go of that. Skin, as I said, is a sense organ. You are first taught: don't tense your eyes, don't tense your tongue, don't tense your throat, and so on. But what you need to learn over a period and learn much more completely is how not to unnecessarily tense the skin. When you are told to stand in Tadasana, it is a lift of the inner frame of the body - I won't even talk of energy there. Simply lift the inner skeletal system in such a way that it drags you up, and the skin hangs from it. Although the skin is lifted, in relation to your inner frame of the body the skin should not move up; in no posture should it move.

Look at two people who might appear to be standing erect, holding themselves equally well. You look at one person and you see tension, you look at the other and you don't. You say: well, this looks more spiritual a pose. What on earth do you mean by that? What is it that you are picking up subconsciously? You are picking up that one person lifts the inner body and the skin hangs from it happily. The other person is struggling to hold the position. When you struggle to hold the position, because there is that upward tension of the skin, the vertical movement of energy through the diaphragm doesn't flow as freely. In a person where you see a free movement, there is a natural height to them.

Are there any questions?

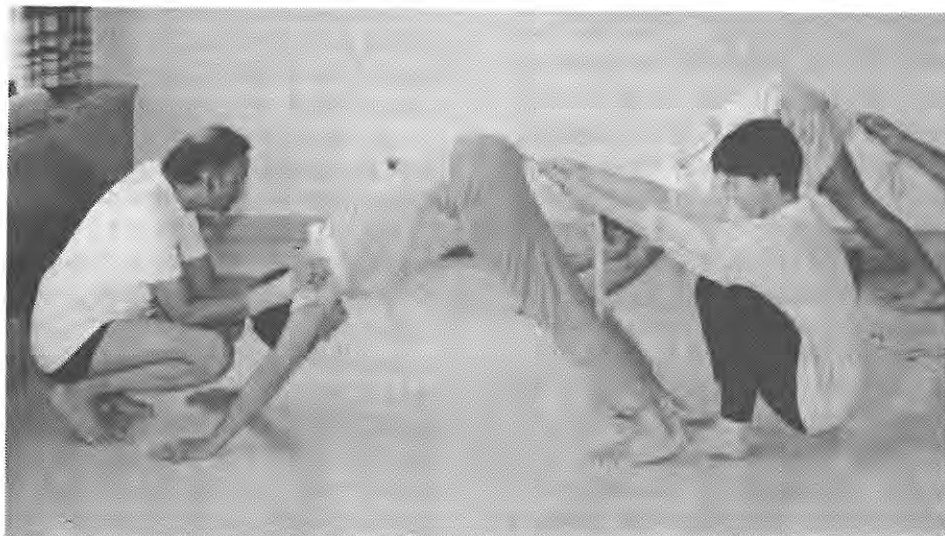
Question: What you've just said about organising this practice from a basis of physical work, helps to make it clear for me how it is that Mr. Iyengar and people who work in the tradition that he teaches, continue to place ongoing emphasis on the asanas as the primary laboratory for this process which you've described.

Ramanand: The first step is to line up your body physically, the second to produce the physiological effort, the third is an organic step, and it is definitely a learned thing, like how to work the muscles very firmly and still let go of the stomach. How to work very firmly from your arms and legs and not tense your jaws, eyes, ears, tongue, senses. That slowly begins to fall into the other realm where rather than doing, the emphasis is more and more on letting go, being receptive. But remember one thing: at any point you can only be receptive to that which you have been doing. You can let go of that. That's why the emphasis is on the physical posture. 'I will let go of all the physical effort' and 'I only want to be receptive' might work for a genius that happens to come on this planet - one in a million, one in a trillion, one in a lifetime, one in a century perhaps. It's not the mode of function of the average person; not even the mode of function of an above average person. By far the largest number of us - in other words everybody except that one person in one whole century - need to have the basis from which we can function.

There will always be an occasional genius who finds out some very intricate thing about the medical system and how to work a particular way with medicine, but most people who want to become doctors and function in medical work must go through kindergarten first, then primary school, then high school, however irrelevant this might appear later on. A doctor goes through these steps and when he gets his doctorate and becomes a medical doctor, he doesn't hang on to kindergarten. If you want to come to the top floor you begin from the steps, but when you reach the top don't hang on to the steps.

Leaving behind all philosophical jargon such as 'someday I'll be enlightened' and all that kind of stuff, but knowing the physical implication of the first level of working, can I now come back to the first step and say, how much time will I give this every day? Ten minutes! Please, I beg you, decide. It's a value judgment after all. It's a free country. It's your life. You decide, but then be true to it. This is life too, and it's important, it needs to be there. But there is much, much more beyond that. Don't miss out on it. On that basis, first ask yourself: do you like it or don't you like it? That's your choice. On that basis decide, OK, how much time do I want to spend. Don't make an impossible task for yourself. If your life is busy and you need to do other things, then accept that you need to do other things. Don't set yourself an impossible goal like: from tomorrow I'll practise three hours a day, because that will lead to failure, and there's nothing worse in life. Instead say: fine, I know I cannot do too much, can I begin with

ten minutes every day? Then practise not as a mechanical thing, not as a prayer to a guru, not as a homage paid to your teacher, but to experience life to its fullest, for your own sake, not for anybody else, and not for any particularly high flouted reasons either, for something that's very obvious, that's very tangible, that you can approach now. With that joyful feeling, can you take up the practice so that you don't develop an unnecessary halo? A halo is heavy to carry, you don't need it, you've got enough load to carry on your head already (laughter); because while this inner development goes on the outer life also has to function. Based on that decide how much time you want to put into a practice, and occasionally remind yourself why you are doing this. Once in a while, sit quietly by yourself and ask: why on earth am I doing this, and understand this as clearly as you can, so that your experience of life may be the fullest possible. If there is any other reason, that's an additional reason, a kind of bonus. With that recognition, do the yoga.



IYENGAR YOGA IN THE WEST

ROGERS (Victoria) CABLE TV

This is a series of 4 TV programmes based on Mr. Iyengar's visit to the Canadian Iyengar Yoga Conference in July, 1990. Filmed and produced by Rogers Cable in Calgary - Margot Kitchen. They are edited to appeal not only to yoga students but also to the general public.

*Each 30 minute programme is repeated 4 times during the week.

I IYENGAR YOGA IN THE WEST

Sunday, November 3, 9:30 pm
Wednesday, November 6, 4:00 pm
Friday, November 8, 8:30 pm
Saturday, November 9, 9:30 am

II MR. IYENGAR - THE MAN AND THE TEACHER

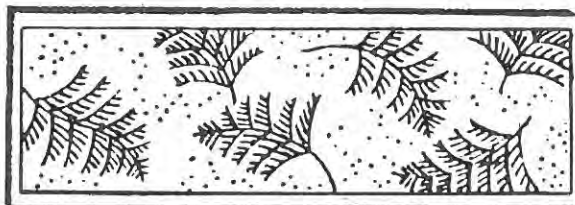
Sunday, November 10, 9:30 pm
Wednesday, November 13, 4:00 pm
Friday, November 15, 8:30 pm
Saturday, November 16, 9:30 am

III YOGA AND HEALTH

Sunday, November 17, 9:30 pm
Wednesday, November 20, 4:00 pm
Friday, November 22, 8:30 pm
Saturday, November 23, 9:30 am

IV BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT

Sunday, November 24, 9:30 pm
Wednesday, November 27, 4:00 pm
Friday, November 29, 8:30 pm
Saturday, November 30, 9:30 am

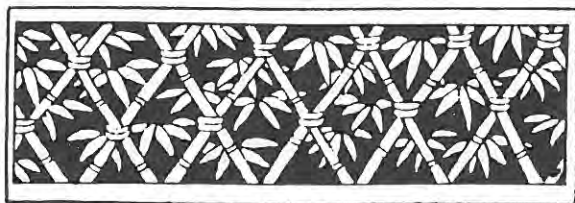


TEN YEARS

The December issue of the newsletter will commemorate the 10th anniversary of the publication of the newsletter.

Do you have a story, a picture or information that would help us include all the people that have been involved with the Centre during this time?

**Please contact:
Jennifer Rischmiller
474-5630**



On Being an Intermediate Student

Each day I contemplate not doing yoga. I resist greatly developing a practice for myself that I will maintain while not attending classes. Each day, now, I do yoga, if only in a correction to my posture, or a handclasp shoulder stretch at my desk. More than half of the days each week I do asanas as part of an exercise routine, or for all of my exercise. This is progress.

I began Iyengar Yoga in Edmonton four years ago, while teaching at the University of Alberta. There it was easy for me to attend Liz McLeod's daily noon hour classes. I loved yoga class, having finally found the bodily and spiritual exercise I need, and actually enjoy. Since moving to Victoria, I've learned much from my teachers here, but access to class has become much harder for me. I am having to rely on my inner resources, and this is the greatest challenge I have faced in yoga.

Why is it so hard? I try to do yoga at home, while my husband watches our two small boys. Once I found myself leaping dangerously out of some pose to get them out of a water-filled ditch while my husband, oblivious, mowed the lawn. I've been jumped on during Upward Dog, and had an opening door nearly flatten me during Arm Balance. I routinely fall asleep if I get as far as Savasana. (Do you know any parents of pre-school children who don't fall asleep when anywhere near a horizontal position?)

I've also turned my Forward Bends practice into a class for my 5-year old, although I know nothing about teaching yoga. He thinks tying his legs up in straps is really neat (sort of radical, or cool, you know).

Then there's yoga when I travel, as I do frequently in my work. Although I am free of the domestic work that fills my evenings and weekends at home, I lack the nerve to practice outside of my tent, camped in full view of an Arctic community - as I was last summer (not to mention that light, loose clothing leaves me at risk of hypothermia). Last winter I was surprised in Halasana when my Inuit hosts returned from a day of ice fishing. This sort of encounter does open up novel opportunities for cross-cultural communication, but I'm not sure yet if it helps or hinders my confidence.

Away, and at home, these are the obvious obstacles to doing yoga. The most subtle obstacle is finding time, for my husband and I are not so different from most people, balancing parenting, work and just living.

But they are all easy excuses. I knew during my last class ten months ago that I would not see a yoga class for some time to come. I've known for a long time that my greatest challenge is in the discipline to do yoga on my own.

A class always challenges my body more than I challenge it myself, but it is far harder for me to challenge my discipline, my will, to begin yoga on my own.

I've read many things in this newsletter that have encouraged me to continue yoga on my own. Shirley Laventry French described the slow changes one sees in the intermediate students - because the easy changes have been accomplished. Another woman wrote about moving beyond access to classes and developing her own practice. I've incorporated the guidance from another article to "do the basics, learn the basics". The fancier stuff can wait until I work with a teacher again.

I write to challenge myself, and to communicate with anyone else who can see the light in the distance, but who struggles with the darkness of each small, early, painful step.

I think of you when I pull out my mat, close my bedroom door, try to tune out the kids and tune out my worry that they will drown whilst I am engrossed in Shoulderstand (the pose I find most difficult right now).

I am a disciplined person and have brought discipline to my work, my parenting and to my marriage. One thing I love about yoga is the way it challenges me, and will challenge me, for the rest of my life. Yet I find that challenge so difficult. How do I find the discipline necessary to begin, first the physical steps of changing clothes and gathering props, finally centering myself? How do I

find the discipline to work to my ability in each pose, alone, and then to extend that ability, even if only minutely? These are, I suspect, essential questions to yoga practitioners that remain in some form as one advances in awareness. But I don't know, I'm not there yet. I'm only at the beginning of intermediate.

ELLEN BIELAWSKI
October 1991.



Victoria Yoga Centre

Annual General Meeting



Saturday, December 7, 1991

YM/YWCA Lounge

6pm...practice

7pm...meeting

8pm....potluck supper

& celebration of the season

Everyone welcome!



Victoria Yoga Centre Gathering

Friday, November 22, 1991

Practice & discussion will be led by Leslie Hogya

Place: YM/YWCA

Time: 6 pm...practice

7pm...potluck

8pm...discussion

Everyone welcome!

Free

Please bring a plate & cutlery



Yoga Calendar

NOVEMBER:

1-17: Yoga workshop given by Maureen and Bruce Carruthers on Galiano Island. Call 539-5071 for details.

Nov 16: Teachers' meeting will be held at James Traverse's studio, 304-602 Broughton Street, 11-3pm.

24: Victoria Yoga Centre meeting at the Y.

24: Maturing Women Workshop at the Y. See ad this issue.

DECEMBER:

Annual General Meeting of the Victoria Yoga Centre. See ad this issue.

JANUARY:

17: Victoria Yoga Centre meeting at the Y.

18: Teachers meeting.

26: Workshop at the Y led by Jim Schmiller.

FEBRUARY:

14: Victoria Yoga Centre meeting at the Y.

16: Workshop at the Y led by Shirley Daventry French.

29: Teachers meeting.

MARCH:

27: Victoria Yoga Centre meeting at the Y.

29: Teachers meeting.

APRIL:

3-5: Workshop at the Y led by Donald Moyer.

24: Victoria Yoga Centre meeting at the Y.

25: Teachers meeting.

MAY:

8: Victoria Yoga Centre meeting at the Y.

16: Teachers meeting.

JUNE:

5-7: Yoga Retreat on Saltspring Island led by Shirley Daventry French.

JULY:

Canadian Teachers Meeting on the Sunshine Coast.

6-11: Yoga Intensive at the Y.

24-Aug. 2: A week's teacher training with Ramanand Patel, plus a weekend workshop at the Yoga Centre in Winnipeg. Contact 204-783-8040 for details.

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE IN DATE FOR THE TEACHERS MEETING IN NOVEMBER.

RADHA HOUSE



1500 Shasta Place
Victoria, B.C. V8S 1X9
(604) 595-0177

Radha House Activities

YOGA PSYCHOLOGY

An exploration of mind, energy, consciousness, and God from a yogic perspective, with special focus upon the unconscious, conscious, and super-conscious mind.

A series of four evening classes, November 5, 12, 19 and 26 at Camosun College.

Fee: \$22.00

THE HIDDEN LANGUAGE OF HATHA YOGA

Discover your personal language hidden within your body and mind. This one-day workshop is based on Swami Radha's newest book, which builds on the classical foundations and wisdoms of an ancient tradition. Using metaphor and

The Yoga Centre of Victoria Newsletter Advertising

If you have products or services of interest to Victoria's yoga practitioners, this is your advertising vehicle.

Because our rates are so low, all advertising material must be supplied camera ready - that is, exactly as you want it to appear in the newsletter. If not, the copy will simply be typed and inserted. If you wish, we can arrange to have an advertisement prepared for you, but we must charge extra for this service.

Our policy in accepting advertising is that all advertisements must not conflict with the aims of the Centre, as stated elsewhere in the newsletter.

If you wish to buy an ad or require further information,
please contact our Advertising Manager, Carole Miller:

721-3477
1807 Forest, Victoria, B.C. V8N 1H5

RATES per ISSUE

Full Page	\$36.00
1/2 Page	\$18.00
1/4 Page	\$12.00
Business Card	\$9.00



symbolism, imagery and visualisation, you will unlock your own understanding of the psychological and mystical meanings of the asanas.

Saturday, November 16, 10 am to 6 pm.
Fee: \$45.00 deposit: \$10.00

ROSE CEREMONY

The Rose Ceremony is a personal dedication to the Divine, a time to re-establish your commitment to the very finest within, and to reaffirm your ideals.

If you wish to attend please bring two roses - one for you and one for the Divine. Phone for further information.

There is no fee, but you are asked to make a donation to a charity of your choice as an offering of gratitude.

Part One: Saturday, November 30, 8-9 pm
Part Two: Sunday, December 1, 8-9 pm.

MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Is time you joined the Yoga Centre of Victoria! As you read this newsletter, you are receiving one of the benefits of membership. As you attend your yoga classes or a workshop, you are receiving the benefits of membership. These take time and money and your membership fees and participation really help.

Please fill out this form and send it with your cheque or money order to:
YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA, 3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R.#4, Victoria, B.C., V9B 5T8

Membership/subscription fee is only \$20 per year.

Name: _____

Street: _____

City/Prov: _____ P.C.: _____ Phone: _____

I am enclosing a cheque or money order in the amount of: _____

Please do not mail me the newsletter; during class sessions, I'll pick one up at my "Y" class. []

The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY is a non-profit society incorporated under the Societies' Act of the Province of British Columbia whose purpose is, "*to encourage the physical, mental and spiritual growth of its member and other interested members of society at large by the study and discipline of Yoga*". The Society owes inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

The Society Newsletter is published regularly, providing current information on events concerning yoga in Victoria and area and at the Yasodhara Ashram. Published by the Victoria Yoga Centre Society.

Anyone wishing to contribute articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions to the newsletter may contact the Editor, Jennifer Rischmiller, 4489 Lindholm Road, R.R.#1, Victoria, B.C., Canada V9B 5T7. Telephone: (604)-474-5630.

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VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY
3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R.#4 Victoria, B.C., Canada, V9B 5T8



VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

Newsletter



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



I am often asked "Where is the Victoria Yoga Centre?" It's difficult to answer that question briefly. Sometimes it's at my home; sometimes at the Ingimundson's or the Miller's or Ann Rosemary Conway's or at the Y or any number of other places where we gather as a group to study, practice and explore the teachings of Yoga. But really it's in the hearts and minds of the people who are its members.

It's Penny Carter helping Norman McKenzie move by driving out to Metchosin after a week's work and an intensive weekend workshop and then in the rain and fog heaving a station-wagon load of heavy boxes into the house. A week later it's Bruce and Sue Ingimundson, whose occupations include engineering, nursing, teaching yoga and (last but not least) bringing up four young daughters, taking time out of their weekend respite to help another Yoga Centre member - Marlene Miller - move into her new apartment.

Marlene and Norman themselves embody the spirit of the Yoga Centre by their work in preparing and distributing newsletters, organizing, chairing and recording meetings, teaching yoga and helping out in a number of ways - all in addition to holding down full-time employment. The Yoga Centre is Lavona

Parker putting a book from the Yoga Teachers Course booklist at Yasodhara Ashram on tape for a blind man who would like to take the course. It's Karen Moreau Abel and Susen Riley (formerly Dettweiler) scrubbing out my kitchen in preparation for a visit by Swami Radha.

It's Carole Miller, experienced yoga teacher and school teacher, who brings many talents to our group and who in the midst of a busy personal and professional life always finds time to listen, to offer support to others and whose perseverance I have always admired.

The Yoga Centre is a group of us participating in an Iyengar Yoga workshop. It's doing the work necessary to bring these workshops about such as organization, putting people up in our homes and the less attractive jobs like moving a carload of blocks and sandbags from the Y to James Bay and back again. It's the sustained effort of preparing to go to India and study with Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar himself and the willingness to prepare for this experience without any guarantee that you will be one of those selected to go.

It's sixteen people staying at my house for a workshop with Swami Radha and, without my having to ask, preparing food, clearing up etc. Everything which needs to be done gets done quietly and efficiently, our combined efforts making it possible for all of us to get the most out of the visit of this great teacher.

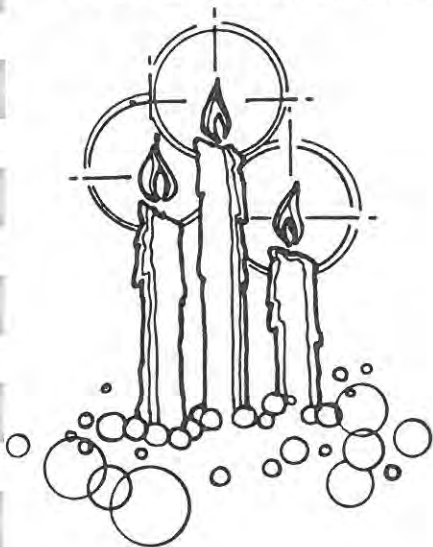
It's Derek French and Trish and Bill Graham personifying the spirit of Karma Yoga by freely offering their professional services to the Yoga Centre and Yoga community in general. Derek, a physician and longtime yoga practitioner, by teaching anatomy, physiology, care of the back and other health-related topics to yoga teachers and students. Bill and Trish, professional designers and printers, giving generously of their time and expertise to produce our newsletter. Many others too, like Frances Walsh who has poured over a typewriter for many hours on various of our endeavours; Ann Rosemary Conway, an artist who designed our lovely seal along with many brochures and posters and who, like Richard Reeves, helps us unravel the mystery of our dreams. And to unravel another mystery - that of my bookkeeping - Dennis Fafard, professional accountant, has offered his services.

It's also the students who open their bodies and minds to our efforts at teaching, the out-of-town members who invite us to give workshops or who travel long distances to participate in workshops here, who support us by their donations and the many, many others who contribute in countless ways to the shared commitment to search for truth through the study and practice of Yoga.

The Yoga Centre came into being a few years ago when I returned from taking the 1976 Yoga Teachers' Course at Yasodhara Ashram. Swami Radha encouraged me to build bridges to bring people of like mind together for spiritual growth and learning. On occasions during these past five years I have felt that I was building these bridges almost single-handed. I no longer feel like that. In Victoria we now have a team of skilful bridge-builders, who along with a number of apprentices are building and maintaining a variety of bridges. I thank you all.

I'd like to end with a prayer which I have heard often at Yasodhara Ashram and which always reawakens in me a feeling of gratitude: "May all be blessed as we are blessed!"

Om Tat Sat Shirley Daventry French



CREDITS

Cover illustration linocut by Wiener Werkstatte, ca. 1910, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

I am honored to edit the December, 1991, publication of the newsletter. The material has been collected from issues spanning the 10 year life of the newsletter in its present format. You will, I hope, get some sense of the history of the newsletter and of the Victoria Yoga Centre over the past ten years.

Shirley Daventry French was the inspiration behind the founding of the Victoria Yoga Centre and the decision to publish a newsletter. We are still inspired by Shirley and she is still closely involved with the Yoga Centre and the newsletter.

Many people have put time and energy into producing a high quality, interesting newsletter for the Yoga Centre. You will see pictures of some of them in this issue, though some faces and names are missing because of a lack of information, not a lack of respect and admiration. In fact, my respect and admiration goes to all those people who are, and have been, dedicated to publishing issues of the newsletter on a monthly basis.

My personal thanks and appreciation are extended particularly to those people I have worked with on the newsletter.

Jennifer Rischmiller
Editor, December, 1991.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Last month I wrote about people in the Yoga Centre and how they support each other and promote the teachings of Yoga in many ways. This time I'm going to write about a different, more tangible kind of support that is also necessary for any organization to continue with its work.

Recently, we held our Annual General Meeting for 1981 and passed a resolution to increase membership fees from the \$5 which has been in effect since our inception to \$15 for Full Membership and \$10 for Associate Membership. This increase is necessary to cover the increased costs of everything, and in particular, the extra costs of printing and mailing our monthly newsletter. Full Membership means that you have full voting privileges and can be part of the decision making group in the society. Associate Membership is for those who cannot or do not wish to be part of this core group but nevertheless enjoy receiving our newsletters and learning about the workshops and other functions which we organize and sponsor.

The Victoria Yoga Centre Society was incorporated as a non-profit society on October 10, 1978, and at that time a membership fee of \$5 was established with only one form of membership. Many of you who didn't want to be actively involved in the society or who live out of town have supported our work by sending us this \$5 during the past few years, and we have appreciated this very much. We haven't increased our membership fee since incorporation but inflation has forced us, like everyone else, to examine our finances.

To sponsor workshops and bring teachers here from distant places requires a substantial financial back up. To print and mail our brochures about these workshops is an escalating cost. We are attempting to produce our newsletter on a monthly basis - again at ever increasing costs. To sponsor a Yoga and Health Conference in Victoria in 1984 will require that we become a viable and financially sound organization. One of the aims of the society is to offer financial help to members to attend courses and workshops in Yoga. We have helped people attend the Yoga Teachers' Course at Yasodhara Ashram and offered subsidies for workshops and courses here and at other centres. We should like to be able to continue to do this and, in fact, to do it more often. All of the foregoing is the reason for the recent flurry of activity in selling T-shirts, eyerests, sandbags, etc.

We are a small centre and the reason we have been able to do so much so far is that a few people have invested a great deal of their time (and some of their own personal income) in the society's work, but it will take more than that for us to continue. We need your support and invite you to become either a Full or an Associate Member of our Society.

HISTORY OF THE NEWSLETTER

This is the third issue of our new and professional newsletter which has grown considerably in size, content and format since the first typewritten two sheets which were run off on a Gestetner in January 1978. It was my idea and I wrote, typed, put it together and distributed it for over a year until the Divine Committee sent Marlene Miller to us from Calgary via Yasodhara Ashram and to my great relief she put her talents and energy into the society and particularly into the newsletter. Contributions from members were few and far between - and Marlene will know what I mean when I say that at times it was 'like drawing blood from a stone', but we persevered.

What started me thinking about a newsletter at all was that very often I would meet someone who would tell me about an interesting talk or workshop they had recently attended, and I would find myself wishing I had heard about it before the event instead of after. So the newsletter initially was mainly a calendar of events with a little information on the Yoga Centre and its purpose. We began to expand on this with reports on workshops and material on various aspects of Yoga.

Originally, we had hoped to put the newsletter out monthly but that was a vain hope with one person doing most of the work, so its appearance was spasmodic. Then Marlene received the help of two other members, Sue and Bruce Ingimundson, and it began to appear a little more often and to grow in content and size. Their combined efforts kept it going for some time, and the odd article from our membership began to manifest. Then in March 1981, Norman MacKenzie produced an interview with Aadil Palkhivala, a visiting Yoga teacher from India, which was to be the first of many interviews and which brought Norman and his energies and talents into the newsletter team.

With the combined efforts of Marlene, Norman, Sue and Bruce, it actually began to appear

regularly and to invite the interest of two new members, Trish and Bill Graham, who (by another of those strange coincidences with which those in Yoga are familiar) happen to be in the printing and designing business as well as having had experience in putting out a University newspaper. With their help, we have come a long way from those first two typewritten sheets.

We are proud of our newsletter. We are still a small group and so it is a lot of work for those involved. We would like more of you to become involved so it becomes a reflection of the Yoga scene here in Victoria and in other centres across Canada. We hope to involve some of our friends in the U.S. to write articles and send us information. When I was at Feathered Pipe Ranch in Montana this summer attending a Yoga Intensive, I was amazed at the ignorance of the U.S. of what is happening in Yoga in Canada, so I find it amusing to contemplate a Canadian publication with a section from the States.

Another new step is the inclusion of advertising. At a Yoga Centre meeting on October 23, 1981, we agreed to take this step to pay because to pay for the newsletter we need financial support both through increasing our membership and from some additional source of revenue. We hope to find this through suitable advertisers whose work shares a common purpose with ours.

We have many ideas. We are enthusiastic. But because of our other commitments and the need to earn a living we are limited in how much time and energy we can spend on the newsletter. We need your help and your ideas to add to our own. We need articles, photographs, help in typing, distribution and circulation. Contact us through any member of our Executive and in particular Trish and Bill Graham at 388-6734 or myself, at 478-3775. (Norman is going to be away for the next few months taking the Yoga 'Teachers' Course at Yasodhara Ashram and we wish him well).

In the Light of Yoga, Shirley Daventry French.

WHAT IS THE YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA?

The Victoria Yoga Centre is a non-profit society incorporated under the Societies' Act whose purpose is:

"To encourage the physical, mental and spiritual growth of its members and other interested members of society at large by the study and disciplines of yoga."

The society owes its inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and is associated with the Yasodhara Ashram, Kootenay Bay, B.C.

The Centre sponsors and organizes a variety of Yoga activities in Greater Victoria at various locations. These activities include:

- regular workshops on the Iyengar approach to hatha yoga
- workshops on yoga and personal growth
- monthly meetings. After a brief business meeting the teachings of yoga are explored and experienced. Members take turns in leading these evenings, or making presentations.
- a monthly newsletter, containing articles and information on classes, workshops, and other events of interest to students of yoga.
- dream groups
- members of the Centre also teach in the excellent yoga program at the Victoria YM-YWCA.

If you are interested in any of the activities of the Centre and appreciate receiving the

information in our newsletters, we invite you to join as a Full or Associate Member.

Both classes of membership include a subscription to the newsletter, and discounts on fees for many Yoga Centre-sponsored Workshops and events. It also permits pre-registration for the very popular hatha yoga weekend workshops. The Full Memberships permits the holder to vote at Yoga Centre meetings.

Printing and mailing this information is a costly business nowadays, so even if you don't wish to become an active member at this time, your Associate Membership or donation would be appreciated to help meet these costs. Full Membership dues are \$15.00 per calendar year, Associate Membership is \$10.00.

If you would like any further information, please contact any of the Yoga Centre Directors. Their names, positions and phone numbers appear below:

Shirley French, President	478-3775
Sue Ingimundson, Vice President	385-2598
Dennis Pafard, Treasurer	382-8873
Marlene Miller, Secretary	383-8360
Bill Graham, Newsletter Editor	388-6734
Trish Graham, Director	388-6734
Richard Reeves, Director	658-8770
Norman MacKenzie, Director	c/o 478-3775
Derek French, Director	478-3775

Our money — Where does it go?

The growth of the activities of the Yoga Centre in the last year has been reflected in an expansion of our financial activities. I think it might be of interest to the Newsletter's readers to know something about the source of funds for the Centre, and the use to which the funds are put.

For the year ending October 31, 1982, the main sources of receipts have been membership dues, \$660, earnings after expenses from sponsoring yoga workshops, \$1121.77, and various fund-raising activities, \$1692.43. These activities have included the sale of T-shirts, sales of yoga props (sandbags, eye-rests, mats, etc.), and the sale of books and cassette tapes. Further funds were raised by sponsoring a garage sale in the spring of 1982, and a yoga retreat on the Labour Day weekend. It is anticipated that these types of activities will be continued in 1983.

The Centre's financial support goes to two main projects. The first is the newsletter you are reading, which, after subscription and advertising revenues, required a subsidy of \$1231.25, including the purchase of equipment for \$370.83. The second is the provision of scholarship funds to teachers and students to further their study and training in yoga. In 1982, \$820 was provided for this purpose, including \$500 for one of our members to attend the three week Yoga Intensive with Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar in Pune, India.

In order to raise funds to provide these scholarships, and to sponsor other projects to promote yoga in the Victoria area, the executive of the Yoga Centre is making application for charitable organization status with the federal government. This will allow us to provide income tax deductible receipts for any donations received.

Although the Yoga Centre finished the year with a healthy operating surplus, the executive will bring a recommendation before the Annual General Meeting that membership dues be raised. The rates, if approved will be \$18 and \$12 for Full and Associate Memberships respectively, up from the present \$15 and \$10. This is being recommended to help offset anticipated increases in the cost of producing and distributing the newsletter, but perhaps more importantly, to attempt to raise the cash reserves of the Yoga Centre so that it will be able to expand the nature and frequency of the Centre's active program.

If any member of the society would like more specific information relating to the Centre's financial affairs, detailed financial statements will be presented with the treasurer's report at the Annual General Meeting on January 15, 1983. After that time members of the Executive will be able to provide copies of the financial statement, and answer your questions.

by Denis G. Fafard, Treasurer
Victoria Yoga Centre Society

Charitable Donations

by Denis Fafard,
Yoga Centre Treasurer

During 1984, the Yoga Centre applied for and received registered status with the federal government as a charitable organization. This means that the Society is now able to issue receipts for income tax deduction purposes to those who make donations to the Society.

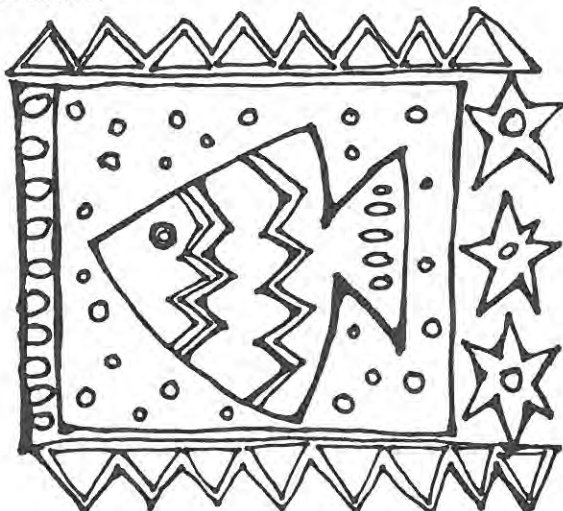
As 1984 is drawing to a close soon, I thought it would be useful to remind people of this. If you wish to make donations which will be eligible for deduction in 1984, you must do it before year's end.

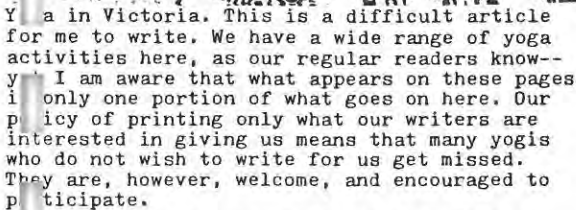
The Society must use money donated in this way to meet the general objective of "the advancement of education." Examples of projects which meet this objective are:

- providing financial support to our monthly newsletter,
- sponsoring special events, such as Mr. Iyengar's visit, and
- the provision of scholarships to deserving and needy students and/or teachers of yoga.

It is through support of projects such as these that the Society is able to bring an awareness of yoga in its various forms to a public beyond the Society's membership.

Therefore, to continue supporting projects like those above, and to be able to expand the Society's educational activities, we solicit your donations. Remember, they are now tax deductible.





Although we have no physical location, the Victoria Yoga Centre truly provides a centre for yoga activities here. The Centre is very closely connected with the program at the Y-- our president, Shirley Daventry French, is also the director of the Y Yoga Program. The centre sponsors a number of hatha yoga workshops in addition to those at the Y, again with teachers of international stature. This year, in keeping with the development of an Iyengar yoga teachers' apprenticeship program, a number of teachers workshops have been arranged, with a reduced number of general workshops. Affiliated with the Yashodhara Ashram of Kootenay Bay, B.C., the centre has sponsored four workshops led by Ashram residents in the past year.

This newsletter has become another focus for the Yoga Centre. Published eleven times a year, it provides a forum for our members and others to share their interests, experiences and concerns among themselves and with approximately 500 readers across Canada and the United States. As the editor, I can say that this is a very special publication. I find the range of topics and styles of presentation passing through my hands an ongoing inspiration, and an indication of the unity in diversity that is yoga. Each of our contributors is very much an individual, but a shared search for spiritual values connects all of our efforts. Contributions flow in freely, and the quality is something I am assured all of our readers appreciate. I feel that the life of our Centre is given concrete expression in these pages.

I feel we are very fortunate here in the breadth of opportunities available to us, and in the excellence and willingness of our teachers. The Light of Yoga truly shines brightly in Victoria, and is available to all.

CARTOONING, ILLUSTRATION & DESIGN
PORTRAITS





by Shirley Daventry French

I first wrote this column in the December 1981 issue of the newsletter under the formal title A Message from the President. That was the second issue of the newsletter in its present format. Norman McKenzie was our editor and it was he who asked for a regular contribution from me.

The message from the president appeared regularly until April 1983 when at the suggestion of the current editor - Bill Graham, the title changed to Reflections. There was one exception in December 1982 when I was in India and Derek French supplied A Message from the President's husband.

According to my calculations the newsletter has appeared in this form thirty five times and, since I have contributed to all but two of them, this must be my thirty third column.

Sometimes I've written appeals for help and support in carrying on the work of our centre. Sometimes it's been an acknowledgement of my colleagues and companions in this work. Sometimes I've allowed my anguish and uncertainty to show as I follow the twists and turns of this yogic path. Sometimes I've had insights which I felt were worth sharing with others and which might help them avoid the mistakes I have made.

Very often I've written in appreciation of the work of my teachers, B.K.S. Iyengar and Swami Radha. In fact, I believe all of my writing reflects my interpretation of their teachings which influence every aspect of my life.

We play many roles in life and my writing has reflected many of mine - woman, wife, mother, daughter, student, seeker, teacher, president, founder, administrator, organiser - to name a few. But these are only roles, of no particular value and merit in themselves which only come to life when they reflect the character of the person playing the role.

This month one of my roles is changing. On December 8th, after our Annual General Meeting, I shall no longer be president of the Victoria

Yoga Centre. Of course, I shall have exchanged this for another role - past president.

I have really enjoyed being president, and I am really looking forward to not being president. It's time for a change.

As president of a small organisation such as ours I have performed many services - typist, photographer, stapler and assembler of newsletters, delivery person, envelope stuffer, stamp licker, telephone answering service, directory enquiry, file clerk, business manager, workshop co-ordinator, public relations, advertising, accounting, sales, correspondence board and lodging, chauffeur, post office box in other words 'general factotum'.

I'm not sure I should put all this into print - maybe my successor will have second thoughts, but no doubt the new president will interpret and play this role in his own way.

In any case, the president has no monopoly on performing these services. We're a very egalitarian organisation; all the directors and any other member who wishes can participate in all aspects of the work.

If you're not a member but benefit in any way from the efforts of those who are - you still have an opportunity to participate by becoming an associate (see inside back cover) or sending us a tax deductible donation.

The Victoria Yoga Centre Society is a non-profit organisation incorporated under the Societies' Act. The work of the society falls into two main areas - program (workshops and other events) and newsletter.

Most of our programs pay for themselves and some are set up especially as fund raisers, i.e. garage sales, but we have to be sure we have sufficient funds on hand to underwrite initial expenses and to cover any loss we might incur.

Some of the costs of the newsletter are reimbursed by paid advertising and associate memberships, but each month a sizeable balance comes out of general operating funds.

It is also our policy to put money aside for yoga education. We have offered scholarships for study at Mr. Iyengar's Institute in India, at Yasodhara Ashram and to attend workshops in Victoria and elsewhere. We have recently set up a special scholarship fund to commemorate Mr. Iyengar's visit to Victoria - the B.K.S. Iyengar Scholarship Fund.

These scholarships are always a good investment because the recipients share what they have learned and enrich our yogic community.

A very hardworking core group of dedicated individuals has made it possible to carry on this work. I have enjoyed working with them and I thank them all. I'd also like to thank all those others who whilst not so closely involved have supported the work of the centre. I hope that you, like me, will continue to offer that support to our new president and executive.

As for me - what now ?

Well, there's the Intensive in India next fall to organise - and the teacher training - and directing the Y Yoga program - and liaison with the Vancouver group. But above all I hope to have more time for myself - for my practice, my teaching and my reflections.

Om Namah Sivaya,

Shirley



Victoria Yoga Centre Annual General Meeting



Saturday, Dec. 7th, 1991 YM/YWCA Lounge

* 6pm Practice

* 7pm Meeting

* 8pm Pot Luck Supper

Celebration of the Season - Everyone Welcome

Volunteers Wanted for Yoga Centre Directors

Coffee, Tea and Juice Provided

Bring a Beverage of Your Choice

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dennis Fafard

Members are beginning to feel the urge to "put down roots" and give the Yoga Centre a physical presence in the city of Victoria.

As a result of interest shown at a meeting in May, two committees were formed to explore possibilities: a finance and organization committee, and a site committee. Both of these committees met at the end of July.

Discussion in these meetings ranged widely from talk of owning a building to renting space in the downtown core, attendant with all of the fantasies of what an ideal space would be.

Critical to any plan of this type is the question, "What do members expect and hope for from such a location?" As well, because such a project is really so large and risky both financially and organizationally in comparison to anything the Centre has done to date, it is very important to have a much broader active support by members. This is said regardless of whether the Centre owns or rents, because the support is going to be necessary continuously; it will not be possible to temporarily slow down or back off when there is rent or mortgage to be paid and classes or events to be organized regularly. As with any new venture, there might be numerous set backs and difficulties. With broad, enthused support, however, such set backs can be viewed as new challenges.

At the finance organization meeting in July, a variety of issues were discussed. The core issue seemed to be, "What kind of a centre do members want?" It was concluded that more information was needed, so various people at the meeting committed themselves to exploring such areas as: how have other small organizations made their first steps into their own space; what kind of financial support are members willing to give; can donations be used as deductions for income tax purposes?

Some conclusions that were arrived at were:

1. If such a centre is to be established it should be centrally located.
2. The growth of such a centre should be slow and progressive.
3. A broad involvement and support of members is essential for success.
4. Both committees should come together as one at this time.

Interested members should contact the executive. If you know of any reasonably priced space to rent or buy, or if you know of any individuals or organizations willing to provide financial help, please let us know.

A New President

At the Annual General Meeting in December Trish Graham was elected President of the Victoria Yoga Centre for 1986. Some months earlier, Denis Ward announced that he was not going to stand as President for the following year, so members of the Centre knew that another leader had to be found. Most often when members suggested possible candidates, Trish Graham's name was put forward. Trish has been an active member of the Centre for many years. Before accepting the nomination, Trish sent a letter to all executive members, explaining her views on the Yoga Centre and the role of the president. Much of that letter is reprinted here. Ladies and Gentlemen, introducing the new president....

WHAT IS THIS ALL ABOUT?

In the beginning, Shirley was president of the Yoga Centre. When she decided to step down, the executive looked around and decided that Denis Ward would be a good person to lead the group through the transition period. Now that he has decided not to serve another year, it has been suggested to me that I should be the next president.

I felt that it would be a good idea to let people know where I stand on serious issues; that way there will be fewer disagreeable surprises if I am chosen. I also want to make it perfectly clear that I will not be at all hurt if these goals are not those of the rest of the executive, and you choose someone else to be President.

WHAT I THINK A PRESIDENT DOES.

Acts as a focal point or central clearing house for information for the Yoga Centre (how people are feeling, what they are planning to do, their expectations, angers, etc.).

Calls executive meetings.

Runs meetings as smoothly as possible by getting an agenda together, listening to what is being discussed and helping the group come to a clear and concrete decision.

Looks to the future. Plans and organizes projects and events and also helps in clarifying a general direction for the group.

Helps to connect to other groups in the larger community.

WHAT THE YOGA CENTRE IS TO ME .

The Yoga Centre is a place to further the work of yoga. This entails giving workshops with both local and other teachers so that as many people as possible can experience the work.

Also the Centre should continue to publish the Newsletter as a way for more theoretical, mental aspects of yoga to be brought to people. The newsletter lets readers know what is happening, and acts as a forum so that people (local and other) can express themselves and their feelings about their work in yoga.

The Yoga Centre is also a place where we can further our self-development by learning to work together for a common goal. We get to know ourselves and each other more fully by working and playing together, and the work helps us to see our unity. It is also a support group so that when we run into difficulties there are other people who can help in so many ways.

MY FOCUS FOR THE NEXT YEAR

To strive for openness and clarity in the day to day dealings of the Centre.

To have more meetings of the Executive to do the day to day business of the Centre, so that at general meetings there will be only short reports from committees advising people of what is happening, and asking for their ideas before the program for the night. I hope that will make our meetings more interesting to the partially-involved membership. Those who want to be more

involved in the Centre, and this should be encouraged at all times, can be steered into one of the three ongoing committees -- newsletter, program or building -- so that these can be alive viable groups. Those who want to become more involved can become part of the Executive.

At meetings the executive should receive reports on what the committees are doing to help keep a central focus so that the Centre works as one. These meetings should provide a time to air difficulties that the committees are having so that the resources of the whole can be focussed on them.

WHAT I WANT TO ACCOMPLISH

To try to get more people on the periphery involved with the Centre, and share this marvellous community with them.

To have the Centre acknowledge the debt we owe to Mr. Iyengar by amending our constitution so that it states that we owe inspiration both to Mr. Iyengar and Swami Radha. I feel that by only acknowledging the Asram we are stopping a number of people from getting more involved. In my view, a dual acknowledgement would better describe our position.

To get the general meetings to be lighter, with less business and more fun.

To have perhaps a more spiritual focus, such as chanting, to give a connectedness at the beginnings of meetings.

In the Light

Trish Graham

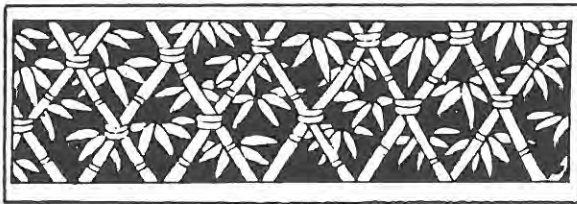
Trish Graham

Trish was elected unanimously at the General Meeting. She has expressed a desire for feedback from the general membership on her plan of action for the next year.



Trish Graham, President

I have been involved in yoga for about five years, ever since I signed up for my first noon hour class at the Y. It has been a real case of putting in a foot and getting my leg swallowed. After I attended my first meeting of the Centre I volunteered to help with the Newsletter and have been on the executive ever since. I am involved in the teaching apprenticeship program and graduated to teaching the same noon class that I started in. This spring I moved from downtown to working as a graphic artist at the university, so that my involvement with the Y program has been curtailed. However, I have continued teaching at the university. I am looking forward to my year as President and would appreciate any members' suggestions and feedback during my term of office. Thank you.



CREDITS

1981:

Publisher: Victoria Yoga Center
Society

Design: Bill and Trish Graham

Editor: Norman McKenzie

Printing: Marlene Miller

1982:

Publisher: Victoria Yoga Center
Society

Design: Bill and Trish Graham

Editor: Norman McKenzie

Distribution: Marlene Miller

1983:

Editor: Bill Graham

Asst. Editor/Layout: Trish Graham

Photography: Derek French

Shirley Daventry French

Advertising: Dianne Stillman

Printing: Monk Quick Copy Centre

Typing: Shirley Daventry French

Bill Graham

Distribution: Susan Sprinkling

Assembly: The people of Kiwanis

Pavilion, Oak Bay

Calendar: Barb Uibel, Trish Graham

1984:

Editor: Bill Graham

Asst. Editor: Trish Graham

Paste-up: Trish Graham,

Jennifer Rischmiller

Nance Thacker

Photography: Derek French

Keith McMillan

Cartoons: c 1984, Nance Thacker

Advertising: Carole Miller

Typing: Shirley Daventry French

Bill Graham

Lynette Haldorson

Distribution: Michael Shevloff

Assembly: Yoga Centre Volunteers

- Thanks!

Printing: Monk Quick Copy Centre

1985:

Editor: Linda Shevloff

Paste-up: Leslie Hogya

Jennifer Rischmiller

Nance Thacker

Cartoons: c 1985 Nance Thacker

Typing: Shirley Daventry French

Bill Graham

Jennifer Rischmiller

Linda Shevloff

Leslie Hogya

Signe Malinen

Photography: Derek French

Distribution: Michael Shevloff

Assembly: Victoria Yoga Centre

Volunteers

Printing: Monk Quick Copy Centre

1986:

Editor: Linda Shevloff

Paste-up: Trish Graham

Leslie Hogya

Jennifer Rischmiller

Cartoons: c 1985 Nance Thacker

Cover: Ann Rosemary Conway

Typing: Bill Graham

Shirley Daventry French

Michael Shevloff

Linda Shevloff

Don Gamble

Photography: Leslie Hogya, Gay Dill,

all members of the

executive

Distribution: Michael Shevloff

Assembly: Linda Benn and the

Victoria Yoga Centre

volunteers

Printing: Monk Quick Copy Centre



Reflections

By Shirley Daventry French

The yoga centre's executive consists of twelve busy professional people. Add to them another half dozen individuals, and you have the working core of our centre.

As far as I know, none of these people is independently wealthy. They all follow a path of right livelihood to provide for themselves and their families. They all maintain a personal practice of yoga and devote large portions of their time to the yoga of working as a group within the yoga centre. They take classes in asana and pranayama, and study yoga philosophy and psychology. Many of them teach yoga and train others to teach.

They finance, write, design, publish and distribute this newsletter which in its five and a half years of publication has made contact with many yoga centres and individual students all over the world. They organise yoga workshops and retreats. They make, donate, locate and purchase yoga props, and then maintain this equipment. They provide scholarships for members to attend yoga workshops, courses and seminars here and abroad. They raise funds to support and sustain all of these activities.

Of course, no-one is forcing any one to do this work. Those who do it, do so because they like the work (most of the time), learn from it and grow from it. They function with an understanding that yoga cannot be contained in a compartment of one's life but must permeate all aspects of this life. They know that we must develop and use our talents and share our gifts.

The executive endeavours to do its work in the true spirit of karma yoga - renouncing the fruits of any actions. Perhaps this is the most difficult of all life's lessons. Sometimes this spirit is in short supply, we feel unappreciated, overloaded and wish it would all go away.

At a recent executive meeting, one person posed the question, "How can we offer more support to each other?" It was a good question and prompted a valuable discussion. We discussed ways of encouraging more yoga students to become involved in the work of the centre. We also discussed the importance of offering each other personal support through dry or difficult periods along with encouragement to persevere and face our challenges.

Yoga is a spiritual practice. Spiritual practice will create changes in you and your life. That's why you do it. Nevertheless, no matter how desirable and beneficial these changes are, in the beginning they often cause disturbance, and feelings of instability and insecurity. At those times it's difficult to hold on to the belief that this work will eventually lead to harmony and peace of mind.

When I first started yoga I was greedy and wanted to change quickly. Fortunately, I found good teachers who counselled patience and perseverance, and who taught me the benefits of steady, regular practice. Such changes have to be paced so that they can be integrated with the minimum of disturbance to yourself and those around you, who may also be fearful about what is happening to you.

Sometimes we are able to take time off from our job and other responsibilities and go on a pilgrimage to India or to a spiritual centre in this country. There we receive guidance and support in making necessary changes without having to respond to the demands of society. Times like this have been very special gifts for me which have helped me over some difficult hurdles, and given me perspective on where my next steps should be. Most of the time, however, I have to do my personal work while fulfilling all my other responsibilities.

This is easier for me than for many people, because my work is in yoga and most members of my family practice yoga. Some people, like my companion on the executive who raised the question of support, are not as fortunate.

What happens when we practise yoga-asana is just the same as what happens in the rest of our lives. We are realigning and changing our body, and in particular our spine. This process involves stretching chronically tense and shortened muscles and ligaments, and bringing tone and elasticity back into others which have become dysfunctional as a result of being chronically overstretched. If we were able to

bring the spine instantly back into correct alignment and optimum flexibility, the paraspinal muscles would not be ready to support this change. Through steady practice weak muscles are strengthened, chronically contracted ones are lengthened and both are better able to support the spinal column in basic good posture and a much fuller range of movement. During that period of instability, thanks to Mr. Iyengar's genius, students of Iyengar Yoga make good use of a variety of yoga props or supports.

In a similar way we require psychological support while making these changes. Ultimately we must find that support from within ourselves, but in the meantime external support is invaluable.

In either case, whether using props for support in the practice of asana and pranayama, or seeking the support of companions while establishing roots in yoga philosophy and psychology - sooner or later we must take a risk and stand on our own. Otherwise the props become restraints which hold us back from the light and inhibit our growth rather than promote it.

One of my favourite maxims of Mr. Iyengar is: "Until you have the inner light you must use the outer light." It's so down to earth and practical; it always makes me smile. It is ridiculous to stumble around in the dark when you can turn on the electric light or open the curtains and let in the sunlight. There are times, though, when we're completely in the dark and don't even know where to find the light switch or, worse, the electricity is off. Where I live this happens quite often during a gale, when one of the many huge Douglas firs in this area falls on the power lines and brings them down with it. It's prudent to keep candles, matches and a flashlight with full battery on hand. However, if we should find ourselves in the dark with no reserves, then a glimmer of light from a friend is most welcome.

From what I have seen in India, families there have a strong spiritual foundation. This is not the case in the West. It was like a foreign language to me when on my first contact with Swami Radha, she said: "Take time to be holy".

Yoga is a quest for the divine. It is vital that you set time aside for your personal spiritual practices. This is a priority, but

alone it is not enough. We have to pursue this quest here on earth - along with millions of other human beings. We have to learn to get along with the other people in our world. We have to learn to share, to give and to receive with grace and without attachment. Working in a group such as the yoga centre gives us many opportunities for this learning. It does have its disadvantages - you don't always get your own way, but this is only a disadvantage to the ego, it is of immense benefit to the soul.

In another Maxim, Mr. Iyengar says: "We are always seeking contact with heaven, but how many of us have made any reasonable contact with Mother Earth". The earth is full of people. The survival of the human race depends on us learning to live together in peace and harmony. Personal work has to be balanced with responsibility to the community. It's a fine balancing act which each individual must perform for themselves.

Down here on earth there is work to be done. If anyone out there feels they would like to join in the work of the yoga centre, contact a member of the executive. If you have more of a need right now to recharge your batteries - come to our June retreat! In either case - you would be most welcome.



Teachers Directory. Names are being received from all across Canada to be published in the Directory. We hope to have the Directory printed in time to go to the Boston convention.

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VICTORIA YM-YWCA

HISTORY OF YOGA AT THE 'Y'

by Donna Fornelli

Yoga was first introduced to the Victoria YM/YWCA in 1968. Jessica Tucker was the first instructor and worked in close collaboration with Shirley Main, who was in charge of Women's Fitness at the time.

The program flourished and after a few years produced a group of dedicated students who became the core of the first Yoga Instructors Course in 1974.. Some of its members were Shirley French, Carole Miller, Leslie Hogya, Elaine Grif, the late Susan McGowan, and myself.

The classes were more structured then. For instance, you could go to any class at lesson four and the same poses would be taught in the same order as in any other class that week. However, the style and personality of the instructor made each class unique. We knew so little then, but yoga was new to the students as well and each of us taught the best we could from what we knew.

As yoga became more popular there was a demand for more classes. We soon realized the need for more training. In 1977, Susan McGowan co-ordinated an indepth training course run in conjunction with the 'Y' and the Yoga Fitness Institute of Vancouver, directed by Dr. Bina Nelson.

When Jessica retired, Elaine Grif organized the classes. The job was then passed on to Shirley Daventry French, who has directed the program for the past ten years.

Shirley introduced Iyengar Yoga to the 'Y' in 1978. Amid controversy, this "new" yoga caught on. Through workshops it has been the good fortune of teachers and students to be exposed to some of the best known Iyengar teachers from around the world.

Most of the instructors have studied at Mr. Iyengar's Institute in Pune, India. All continue to enhance their skills through on-going training.

Through the dedication of its instructors and the mutual co-operation with Shirley Main the Victoria 'Y' has one of the finest Yoga programs in North America.

CAROLE REMINISCES

by Carole Miller

When I moved to Victoria in 1970, one of my goals was to begin to explore leisure activities which I hadn't had time for while I was working. One of the areas which was of interest to me was Yoga. After making inquiries, I learned that the place to go was the YMCA.

Without knowing anything about this form of "exercise", but having heard interesting things about it, I signed up for my first series of classes. The teacher was a beautiful woman named Jessica Tucker and she taught all of the classes at the Y at this time. One of the very first movements we learned was called the Yoga walk and it demanded a clear focus in order to sustain a graceful flow and maintain balance. The class started with this centering exercise each week and we were surrounded by a feeling of quiet, peace, and tranquility.

At this time, the classes were composed of all women. It was here that I got to know people like Shirley French and Elaine Grif. Although we worked in silence there was always a sense of communication and enjoyment.

Jessica's classes were only one hour long and yet we learned so much! We were introduced to the Eight Limbs of Yoga, correct diet and quiet breathing. Often during the class there was a men's basketball game going on in the other gym. Jessica suggested that these moments were wonderful opportunities for us to practice sense withdrawal during our savasana.

Jessica was responsible for bringing Swami Radha and other teachers to Victoria and for encouraging us to explore various aspects of yoga.

She stimulated us to read and question. Within a few years we were meeting weekly in a discussion group called Beyond Hatha Yoga led by Elaine Griff. One of the greatest gifts that she gave me was to encourage me to explore my religion, Judaism, and make a connection with my own roots. I thank you, Jessica



A Message from the President

Hi to all Yoga Centre members and supporters. I am pleased to have been elected your President for this year. Since 1979 I have been an active member of the Centre, having filled positions of Secretary, Program Coordinator, Vice President, and Coordinator of the Iyengar Teaching Committee. Each position has been challenging, and now I have accepted the larger challenge of President. I asked myself several times the question: "What is it to be a President, and what are the responsibilities?" It is a position in which members of the organization/society have agreement that a person among them is suitable and worthy of leading and coordinating their group. It is a position of responsibility that needs to be met with enthusiasm, that continues the policies, ideals and goals of its membership and constitution with reviewing and updating as necessary.

The individual member is the important component of the Centre. Are the individual needs being met? The Victoria Yoga Centre provides an opportunity for members to explore and expand their capabilities and potentials which they may not be able to do in their many daily roles or in earning a livelihood.

There are many functions and tasks that must be 'taken care of' for the continued viability of the Centre. In this endeavour the Yoga Centre is fortunate to have a very dedicated core of members interested and willing to serve in the way that provides an inviting atmosphere for students of yoga to come together in, to develop programming, and communicate the yogic teachings.



Marlene Miller

The positions of the Executive are filled by those who integrate yogic principles into their daily life, who are sincerely committed to a spiritual focus on life, who know and respect the value of being with people of like minds, and who appreciate the need for administration of their chosen activities in a group setting.

The Executive and members must be supportive of each other, building awareness of when extra help is needed, where and how to assist, so that no one member is unnecessarily overwhelmed with responsibility. This is necessary in order that there is a balance of one's enjoyment of membership which complements their personal lifestyle, daily work, and spiritual practices and growth. Overseeing

the balance and coordination of activities is an essential part of being President. In the group atmosphere I would like to see the Yoga Centre membership expand its potential of self-nourishment; i.e. for each of us to be comfortable and available to each other for support, guidance and companionship as we travel along the path of yoga.

The membership is very diverse and talented, with people having varying amounts of time available in which to come together and to serve in the many tasks needing to be done. It is for this reason a larger active group of members is desirable, to share in the administration of the present activities needed to keep the Centre functioning, as well as to 'lighten the load' of present members or provide breaks for those who have been so unselfishly giving of their time. With this in mind I look to exploring, with the present

membership and students, what makes the Yoga Centre inviting to join, how to maintain a membership, how to actively serve or assist in the work.

Along with 'taking care of business' and realizing a sense of achievement and accomplishment, is there enjoyment in our membership activities that enhance, holistically, the lives of the Yoga Centre members and supporters in their personal growth? This is another question I would like to consider.

This year's term of office promises to be challenging and exciting. I invite all members, students and newsletter enthusiasts to let me know what you are feeling and thinking in order to see if your needs may be somewhat fulfilled through your Yoga Centre membership.

May the Light of Yoga guide us in all we do.

o



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Marlene Linda Miller

Several years ago the members of the Yoga Centre agreed that the position of President would be held for a period of two years. The purpose being that it took one year to "know the ropes" and then one year of "work". Well this is the end of my second year.

When I first took the chair I was filled with enthusiasm to try to insight three areas of change: that the Yoga Centre membership be self-nourishing (i.e. support for each other come from within the group); increase the number of participants in the administrative functions that keep a centre such as ours going; and meetings be not only for business functions but include programs of interest allowing for social interactions.

Some of the foregoing was relatively easy to accomplish. One area was the implementation of meetings that included a program of interest followed by discussion (e.g. the viewing of the Joseph Campbell interviews by Bill Moyer). Generating the self-nourishing concept and increasing the participation of other members was a larger challenge. At our meetings I attempted to have areas of concern and/or conflict, both personal and Centre related, aired in the group setting in order to avert and eliminate "post-meetings". The purpose was to enhance the group harmony. Another step taken was to have a "Retreat" to brainstorm ideas for growth of the Yoga Centre and to refresh and revitalize the individual members. The retreat was held September 1989 at Salt Spring Island. It certainly did not go as I imagined - smooth, fun and invigorating. Instead it was a volatile time in which all of us explored areas of concern. The time was incomplete; therefore, a follow-up get-together was held the next Sunday. This occasion brought out the value of the Yoga Centre, the part each of those present played in its functioning, and how we would like to see the Centre continue.



As I write, reflecting upon my role as President, I am filled with both disappointment and encouragement. The disappointment is that I would have enjoyed seeing an increase in the number of members harmoniously involved in the administrative function, there had been more program oriented meetings, and more time for socializing. The encouragement results from the "Retreat" and the following Sunday get-together which time there was a fresh acknowledgement of the Centre's value, of the personal satisfaction one gains from being involved, and the commitment and desire for the growth and increasing strength of the Victoria Yoga Centre. There are definite plans in the "cog wheels" to inspire participation in this vital organization.

It has not been two years of ease, but certainly personally growth producing. I am very grateful for the support received from each of you during the past two years. I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you for being able to serve as your President. To the incoming President, I extend my support and best wishes as the Yoga Centre and its members enter a time of change and enhancement.

Om Namaha Sivaya

Marlene Linda Miller

CREDITS

1987:

Editor: Linda Shevloff

Assistant Editor:

Shirley Daventry French

Paste-up: Linda Benn, Lauren Cox

Leslie Hogya

Typing: Shirley Daventry French

Jennifer Rischmiller

Donna Fornelli

Linda Shevloff

Michael Shevloff

Assembly: Judith White

Drawings: Lauren Cox

Distribution: Dave Rocklyn

Printing: Monk Quick Copy Centre

Photographs: Linda Benn

1988:

Editor: Jennifer Rischmiller

Assistant Editor:

Shirley Daventry French

Paste-up and Design: Linda Benn

Typing: Jennifer Rischmiller

Shirley Daventry French

Cartoon: Lauren Y. Cox

Drawing: Donna Fornelli

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Distribution: Dave Rocklyn

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Assistant Editor:

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Paste-up and Design: Linda Benn

Typing: Jennifer Rischmiller

Shirley Daventry French

Advertising: Carole Miller

Assembly: Yoga Centre volunteers

Distribution: Dave Rocklyn

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Editor: Jennifer Rischmiller

Assistant Editor:

Shirley Daventry French

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Distribution: Dave Rocklyn

Compugraphics: Don Benn

1991:

Editor: Jennifer Rischmiller

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Paste-up and Design: Lauren Cox

Ann Kilbertus

Typing: Jennifer Rischmiller

Shirley Daventry French

Photography: Ian McKenzie

Jim Rischmiller

Advertising: Carole Miller

Printing: Monk Quick Copy Centre

Distribution: Dave Rocklyn

Drawings: Lauren Cox

Compugraphics: Ian Kilbertus



yoga centre of victoria

PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR 1990

The newsletter is produced by members of the Victoria Yoga Centre Society. I want to thank all the members of the society for their support in making production of our newsletter possible. Particularly Linda Benn, Jennifer Rischmiller and Shirley Daventry French for the pasteup and editing respectively. Linda has decided to phase out her direct involvement over the next few months and is training her replacements now.

-In 1990 we held meetings and workshops as well as carrying our part in bringing Gurujī to our annual Canadian Teachers meeting in Edmonton. We produced a newsletter which is favourably received around the world. We finished the year in reasonable financial shape and generally held to our budget.

-We looked at our meetings format and decided to change to that which we are best at. This was felt to be practice, eat and talk. So this year's meetings will be a practice followed by some eats and then some talk. Business will be attended to at separate meetings entirely.

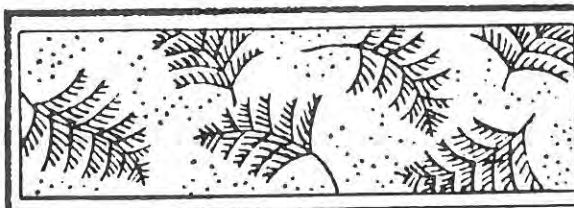
-I will be President and treasurer of the Victoria Yoga Centre Society until someone else volunteers. Jennifer Rischmiller and Shirley Daventry French with help from Linda Benn and others will be the newsletter team. Derek French will be the Vice Chairman and Marlene Miller will help where possible. Linda Shevloff and James Traverse want to help with our program and Michael Shevloff is guardian of our mailing list.



-Yoga has many more dimensions than either only physical or mental involvement. Many of us like to have a nice secure environment where changes come at a pace we can absorb. However we are being faced with vitally important questions and we need all the tools we can find to help us understand our part in them. Yoga helps us understand how we stand, and the Victoria Yoga Centre stands as an important focus of our work. It provides us with an opportunity to grow through selfless service. To be part of our yoga family and to nurture one another through good and bad times along the path. We are lucky to have this opportunity.

Namaste

Jim Rischmiller





SHIRLEY DAVENTRY FRENCH

by Linda Benn

Shirley French has been an important person in my life for eight years. It is difficult to put into words an appropriate introduction and description of this remarkable woman.

Shirley attended her first yoga class in 1970. After that year she was introduced to Swami Sivananda Radha, and began studies which would eventually lead to Yasodhara Ashram where she had her first experience of the yoga of B.K.S. Iyengar. Since then she has studied with both these demanding teachers. In 1976 she completed the Yoga Teachers course at Yasodhara Ashram. In 1979 she went to her first intensive with Mr. Iyengar at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute in Pune. She returned three years later accompanied by eight Victoria teachers, and again in 1985 taking a group of thirty teachers and students from across Canada. She plans another trip to India this Fall. 1987 was devoted to editing the book, "IYENGAR: His Life and Work". Shirley has played an important role in the growth of Iyengar Yoga in Western Canada, and particularly in Victoria. The Yoga Centre of Victoria is the result of her work and dedication to the teachings.

Shirley has also introduced many fine international teachers by organizing innumerable workshops. Her efforts have created the excellent yoga program and facilities that we have at the Victoria 'Y'. We reluctantly have to share her with students across Canada and the U.S.A. when she is invited to teach elsewhere.

Like many of the Victoria yoga teachers have done, I am apprenticing under Shirley's guidance. The July Intensive is a logical extension of the teacher training program that has been evolving here.

I don't want to give the impression that Shirley has achieved all of the above in isolation. One of her admirable qualities is that her study of yoga has only increased her involvement with people and the work of sharing the teaching. She readily acknowledges the wisdom, knowledge and help she has received from Mr. Iyengar, Swami Radha, her family, other teachers, her colleagues in Victoria and her students.

Her greatest influence on me has been not only in imparting the technical details of hatha yoga but the example she is as a fully human being. I have never met anyone with such commitment to self-study, disciplined practice, compassion and selfless service. We students can be certain that she never asks us to do anything that she has not courageously explored herself. Her teaching may bring me face to face with physical obstacles and the causes of my own suffering but her sensitivity and support is always available to the sincere seeker. I would be remiss if I did not mention Shirley's irrepressible sense of humour which balances her intelligence, determination and decisiveness.

For many years Shirley has been the driving force behind our Newsletter. Through her 'Reflections' column we receive our deserved admonishments, reminders and encouragement. But we also follow Shirley's own evolution, her very human struggle to achieve wisdom and peace.

I believe that by accepting and respecting Shirley as our teacher we are also honouring the wisdom of her teachers and so on back through the ages.

The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY is a non-profit society incorporated under the Societies' Act of the Province of British Columbia whose purpose is, "*to encourage the physical, mental and spiritual growth of its members and other interested members of society at large by the study and discipline of Yoga*". The Society owes inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

The Society Newsletter is published regularly, providing current information on events concerning yoga in Victoria and area and at the Yasodhara Ashram. Published by the Victoria Yoga Centre Society.

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