



# VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

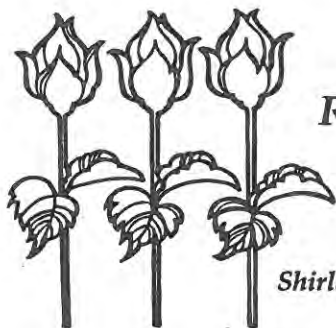
## *Newsletter*

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*Please Subscribe*

*December, 1993 & January, 1994*



## Reflections

by  
*Shirley Daventry French*

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On my way home from our monthly teachers' meeting, I stopped in at my local health food store. In the window, was an advertisement for a day of yoga and self-awareness, promising among other things - to open your chakras. It triggered off a series of thoughts about the nature of teachers and teaching.

I recognised the name of the teacher. Several years ago she had approached me about teacher training. I told her that first she had to attend classes and become proficient in the practice of Iyengar Yoga. Then, if she still wished to pursue the idea of teaching this method, and if she were a suitable candidate, she could embark on our two-year teacher training apprenticeship. Not every one is suited to become a teacher - as Mr. Iyengar has said, "some can do but not teach." I didn't hear from this person again, and as I looked at her brochure I wondered if she did in fact take any teacher training; she did not acknowledge anyone.

The second thing which struck me, was that she was charging considerably more for her day of yoga than I charge for mine. Her credentials? None were mentioned, except that she would be drawing from twelve years of practice of various forms of yoga. Of course, we have to draw from our experience, this is really all we have to go on; but to draw out that which will be of value in teaching others, requires skill and discrimination. How can those skills be acquired?

The Iyengar Yoga teachers and apprentices from Victoria, meet once a month for special teacher training sessions, together with colleagues from other communities on Vancouver Island. Last Saturday, one of them had driven for several hours through patches of snow, ice and fog to be with us. We have an active and busy fellowship. Most teachers participate in an advanced class each week, take workshops regularly with senior Iyengar teachers, travel to India to study at the Iyengar Yoga Institute in Pune with Mr. Iyengar and his daughter, Geeta. At the recent Toronto conference where Mr. Iyengar was the Guest of Honour, although we had the furthest to travel, we were the second largest contingent (not surprisingly, Toronto was the largest).

First and foremost, teachers of yoga have to be students of yoga. In addition to maintaining a personal practice of asana and pranayama, they must study yoga philosophy and psychology and endeavour to apply these teachings to all aspects of their lives. A teacher of Iyengar Yoga functions under the scrutiny of B.K.S. Iyengar - directly or indirectly. We are fully aware of his dedication, and his considerable expectations of his students - in particular those students who are also teachers. In a recent letter he stated his wish that Canadian teachers "come together in a humanitarian way to guide budding teachers to become good teachers". He constantly urges us to practise with sincerity, dedication, humility and honesty "to the maximum".

Not only my workshops, but those of other teachers in Victoria are also cheaper than the one whose advertisement caught my eye. Do we undervalue ourselves? What are our skills worth in the marketplace? How does a yoga teacher balance the need to follow a path of right livelihood, with the need to practise karma yoga or selfless service. These questions ran around in my mind, as they often do, as I seek this balance in my own life. I remember a comment by Mr. Iyengar that some of his pupils charge more than he does. And this is true! A

three-week intensive in Pune costs less than the majority of retreats and intensives in North America. Of course, we have a different economy where the cost of living is much higher than in India; nevertheless this is an odd situation.

How do you decide what to charge - or if to charge at all? My first yoga teacher did not believe anyone should be paid for teaching yoga! Once, in India, Mr. Iyengar talked about this, saying that there is nothing wrong with charging a reasonable fee provided you give more than you take.

If you are going to teach, you have to promote your classes in some way, and decide what are you going to say about yourself that, hopefully, will make people want to come and study with you? It's a lot easier to make grandiose claims about your teaching when you don't have the example of a master before you. After studying with Mr. Iyengar, most of us find ourselves questioning our right to teach at all as we compare our knowledge and experience with his, and realise how little we really know. But, having been given so much, we have a responsibility to pass on what we have been given for the good of all, while at the same time endeavouring to upgrade our skills and increase our understanding. When you see what Mr. Iyengar demands of himself, you can do no less.

What does it take to become a yoga teacher? In Canada there are no federal or provincial regulations regarding this profession; in fact, few people would even consider teaching yoga to be a profession. Yet to become a good teacher demands a rigorous lifelong apprenticeship. For most of us in Victoria, our training has cost us thousands of dollars for journeys to and from India, and to attend classes, conferences and workshops here and abroad. In addition, we devote a lot of time to raising money to support yoga and propagate the work of Mr. Iyengar in Victoria, throughout Canada, and worldwide.

The work of my doctor husband is subjected to appraisal by the B.C. College of Physicians and Surgeons, and various hospital committees. Like most professionals, he has to be accountable. To attain registration he had to work very hard, and to maintain it he must spend a certain number of hours each year updating his skills through post-graduate work. In Yoga, the lack of a regulatory body means that anyone can set themselves up as a teacher, and those teachers can make all kinds of exaggerated claims and promises.

One of the promises on the brochure in the health food store was to open up your chakras, presumably to anyone who walked in off the street having done no previous yoga. Supposing you could open up all someone's chakras in a day of yoga, what would happen to them? What are they going to do with all this energy, if they have not done the ground work to prepare their body and mind for this surge of power. Gopi Krishna's book *Kundalini Yoga* should be required reading before attending a workshop such as this. He was very nearly destroyed by his zealous, unguided and unwise pursuit of the release of kundalini energy. This is one of the reasons Swami Radha published her sensible and remarkable book *Kundalini Yoga for the West*, which elaborates the necessary steps to lay down a firm foundation for the spiritual journey - a journey fraught with cul-de-sacs, hazards and temptations. You would not voluntarily climb a mountain, cross a desert, or venture into the jungle without training, preparation and an experienced guide.

The yogic journey is a difficult one on which we often need guidance. We can find this in the writing and teaching of saints and sages of old along with present day Masters such as B.K.S. Iyengar and Swami Radha. Their knowledge and experience encourages us to persevere and keep going when the going is rough. Sometimes, when we are stuck, they give us a big push. At others, they try to restrain us and say: wait a minute, you're not ready

to take that next step. A good teacher will help us to open and establish our own channel to our Higher Self or the Light, but we still have to interpret these messages which, like our dreams, are often ambiguous, and the ego is always on hand, only too eager to interpose its own interpretation.

At one time during his recent workshop, Ramanand Patel announced: "you have good teachers here." He did not say this to flatter us or build our egos (that is definitely not his style), but qualified his statement by pointing out Victoria teachers are willing to work together with their students and accept criticism in front of their peers. We do this because we want to learn, and because we know very well that our teacher, B.K.S. Iyengar, would expect no less of us. Ramanand added that in many places where he goes to teach, the teachers either don't attend his workshop or want to assist him rather than simply be a student in the class. This has been my experience as well, when teaching out-

of-town, that in some centres teachers do not participate in workshops where they will be observed and, possibly, corrected in front of their students and peers. Fortunately, this is not the case here.

We are already accountable to Mr. Iyengar and to our own Higher Self. We are also becoming more professional in our whole approach to teaching. As we explore the next steps to take in this direction, we are attempting to mature as a profession while holding on to the fragrance and freshness of yoga.

Perhaps it is fitting that most of my reflection this month is about teachers and teaching, when we are about to celebrate on December 14th the 75th birthday of Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar, a consummate teacher. There is not a day which passes without my being grateful to Guruji for the Light of Yoga he has brought into my life. Thank you Guruji, and Happy Birthday!



## YOGA IN METCHOSIN

with Shirley Daventry French

### **Ongoing Asana Classes**

*morning and evening classes  
plus an afternoon class for  
people with special problems*  
Classes commence January 11th  
\$80.00 for eight-week session

### **Pranayama**

*for experienced students*  
*Saturday mornings*  
January 15th, February 12th,  
March 19th  
\$22 per class (\$56 for 3 classes)

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





THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE  
and THE VICTORIA YM-YWCA



*present*

## PRANAYAMA

*with*

Shirley Daventry French

During the Christmas/New Year break, we are pleased to offer two special classes in Pranayama. Traditionally the Christmas season is a time of peace, joy and light on earth. Nowadays for many people, it has become a time of heightened stress; its true meaning and purpose obscured or forgotten.

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. The first class will take place on the Winter Solstice, the day of the year with the least hours of daylight. What better time than to focus on the Light within and find the real spirit of Christmas?

**Where:** The Yoga Studio of the YM-YWCA, 880 Courtney Street

**When:** Tuesday, December 21, 1993  
Tuesday, December 28, 1993

**Time:** 5:30 to 7:00 pm

|              |               |                           |         |
|--------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------|
| <b>Fees:</b> | Two classes:  | Y and Yoga Centre Members | \$25.00 |
|              |               | Non-Members               | \$30.00 |
|              | Single class: | Y and Yoga Centre Members | \$15.00 |
|              |               | Non-Members               | \$18.00 |

*Please pre-register at the Y's Main Desk - Registration is limited  
Wear warm, loose clothing*

Information: Shirley Daventry French at 478-3775 or Victoria Y at 386-7511

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

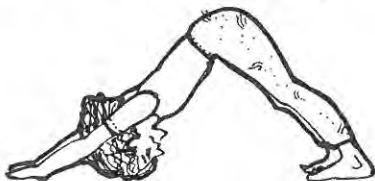
Dear Editor:

I have a very serious question for you and your readers. I just spent half an hour again picking and brushing lint off my black yoga tights. I've been watching tights in yoga classes lately. With our dark and cold winter there seems to be more black tights than any other colour. I'm sure no one in California wears black. But what I really notice is that everyone else's black tights always look immaculate. Do they buy a new pair for every class? Do they have a special washing machine? soap? Do they have an elf that does the picking and brushing? Perhaps they have a skin that never flakes, hair that never falls out. I know they don't have cats or fuzzy sweaters. They obviously never accidentally get a kleenex in the wash. It is embarrassing. There I am in front of the class, demonstrating downward dog and all I can think is that, "Darn, the cat slept on my tights again." They aren't noticing that I'm working my thighs, instead these observant students are counting the cat hairs and wondering if their teacher is competent enough to teach yoga. I doubt that I will ever buy another pair of black tights again and white is even harder for me to keep clean. How do you do it, friends?

Merry Christmas.

Linda Benn  
Victoria.

P.S. It is mat washing time again and Don is getting worried, especially since we are moving over the holidays. Are there any volunteers?



Shirley was leading a yoga class and stated that "mature" students can hold a pose and be "still" for a longer period than beginners. Later on during the same class someone asked (perhaps out of desperation) "how long do we hold this?" and I quipped, "Depends on how 'mature' you are!"

Most of us "mature" students have been studying under Shirley's guidance for many years. Some of us are not that keen on admitting exactly how many years. How do we explain struggling and refining the same poses for ten years to fellow students who have just begun? We all have a favourite pose that we love to avoid in our own practice, but Shirley does not allow avoidance in her classes. We're guided into working to our maximum in every pose. And she does it in such a way that we all continue to come back for more. I've been coming back for so long now that I think acknowledgement is due. We in Victoria are fortunate to have Shirley as our senior teacher and as a dedicated member of the Victoria Yoga Centre.

As one of Shirley's students, I find again and again in her classes that "mature" students aren't any better than beginning yoga students - they just disguise their weaknesses better. So from one who has been found out, thank you Shirley for your years of devotion to spreading the Light.

Lauren Cox  
Victoria



THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE  
and THE VICTORIA YM-YWCA



*present*

# RESTORATIVE ASANAS BREATHING AWARENESS and RELAXATION

*with*

**Shirley Daventry French**

The renowned Yoga Master, B.K.S. Iyengar has devised ways of practising asanas with support, which are ideal for those times when we are lacking in energy whatever the reason. Restorative asanas are indispensable when we are ill or recuperating from illness, but they are also an ideal preventative measure to avoid being overwhelmed by the stresses and strains of modern life. Breathing awareness and deep relaxation are a fundamental part of a restorative practice. Invest in your health and well-being by attending this relaxing workshop.

**Where:** The Yoga Studio of the YM-YWCA, 880 Courtney Street

**When:** Saturday, January 29, 1994

**Time:** 1:30 - 4:00 pm

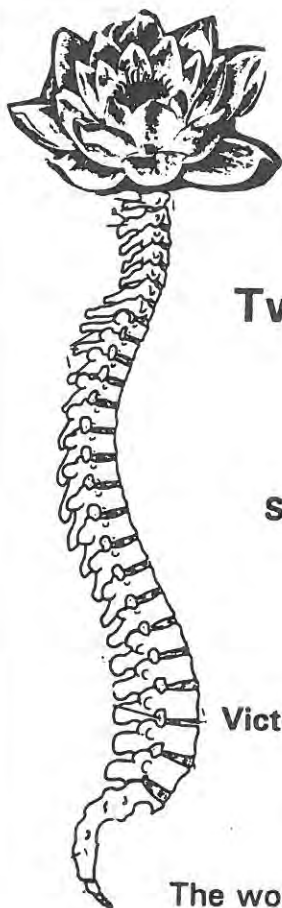
**Fees:**

|                           |         |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Y and Yoga Centre Members | \$25.00 |
| Non-Members               | \$30.00 |

**Shirley Daventry French** is a long time student of Mr. Iyengar and one of North America's most experienced teachers of his method of yoga. She has been teaching at the Victoria Y for over twenty years and gives workshops nationally and internationally.

*Please pre-register at the Y's Main Desk - Registration is limited  
Wear warm, loose clothing*

Information: Shirley Daventry French at 478-3775 or Victoria Y at 386-7511



# Yoga Workshop

## Awakening Your Spine with Twists and Foreward Bends

with

**Marlene Miller**

**Sunday Morning All Levels Workshop**

**January 16, 1994  
10:00 am - 1:00 pm**

**at the  
Victoria YM-YWCA, 880 Broughton Street**

**Yoga Centre Members \$25.00  
Non-Members \$30.00**

**The workshop will be followed by a light brunch.**

Marlene has been studying and teaching yoga the Sidney/Victoria area. She has studied yoga intensively with Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar and Geeta Iyengar of Pune, India and Swami Padmananda of Yasodhara Ashram in British Columbia.

**Please make your cheques payable to:**

**Victoria Yoga Centre  
and mail to: Marlene Miller  
8570 Sentinel Place  
Sidney, B.C. V8L 4Z7**

**For further information,  
phone Marlene at 655-4306**



## UNHAPPINESS IS A BAD HABIT OF THE MIND

by Clara Buck

The art of "savoir vivre" is to extract the most joy and pleasure out of life. I am talking about the routine, everyday life, when in the evening summing up the day, we are inclined to say, "it was an ordinary day. Nothing remarkable happened."

Most people feel that way about most days. The reason for this is that they are like a horse with blinkers. They do not see the vast horizon of life but only a narrow channel directly in front of them. They are half asleep, unaware of nuances, the finer shades of the world. They meet people every day without ever having "looked" at them; they would not notice the plant on the windowsill growing a new leaf, or the clouds above them tinted pink by a setting sun.

When I came to live in England, it was from New York to a sleepy little village in Sussex. My English husband commuted daily to London, and being conscious of the difficult transition from New York to Lingfield, he bought me a black labrador puppy whom I named Congo. I had never had a pet of any description before and had never known anybody in my small Hungarian town who had one. I did not have an immediate love for that strange and bouncy little creature.

Love for Congo was something that had to be grown and cultivated like a delicate plant. At first he was only a nuisance to me and I resented the twice daily walks that I had to take with him, regardless of weather conditions. In fact, I dreaded those walks with the strong, undisciplined puppy pulling me in all directions. This went on for quite a while until one day I decided that if I had to walk Congo twice a day every day, I was going to find a way to enjoy it.

I had noticed that a few houses down the road where I lived at the edge of the village, there was a woman who daily walked a strong-minded boxer dog to whom she shouted in exasperation "stop Sally" or "come here Sally", while holding on for dear life to a thick chain and being dragged by a sniffing and bouncing Sally. One morning I rang her bell and asked if I could borrow Sally for my walks with Congo. Her face lit up and within seconds Sally's chain was in my hand. Off we went on our adventure - me and the two dogs. As soon as we passed the last house, which was in a couple of minutes, I let the dogs off their lead and watched their joyful play. One would have thought that they were blood-brothers the way they took to each other.

They were running back and forth, playing their endless games and I was free for the first time to look around, and what I saw was enchanting. The road led to a manor house belonging to the sister of Lord Astor, who propagated rhododendrons and azaleas of all descriptions in her large garden, and they just happened to be in bloom. But long before I reached her residence there were fields on both sides of the road, and in the morning there were cobwebs on the plants, exquisitely delicate lacy things with dew drops shining on them, so that ordinary weeds looked like princesses dressed for a ball. Further down on the right side of the road there was a clump of tall, slender trees which only had branches at the very top and due to a westerly wind all the branches leaned to the east so that the trees looked like a corps de ballet rehearsing their latest act. On the left there was a little stream with a fragile looking, rickety old wooden bridge that I crossed holding my breath. The dogs made a wild rush for the water, jumping into it with great enthusiasm and shaking themselves violently on the other side, until I got sprinkled from head to toe. I looked at my watch, we had been on the road for over an hour and it was pure joy from the beginning to the end.

And so it was from then on for the three of us every day! We were out in all weather, twice a day and loved it more and more, for somehow it was never the same twice running.

This is the story that changed my life. It taught me that we all possess in ourselves at every moment of our lives and under all circumstances, the power to transform the quality of our lives.

*Clara Buck, is a longtime student of B.K.S. Iyengar, living in London, England, where - now in her eighties, she is still teaching yoga. As part of her 80th birthday celebrations, last year, she gave workshops in the United States and Canada.*



## YOGA FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

a course  
for people with health problems  
or recovering from injuries  
who would have difficulty  
participating in a regular class

with  
Shirley Daventry French  
Ann Kilbertus, Occupational Therapist  
Derek French, Physician

Wednesdays  
4:00 to 5:30 pm  
at the "Y"

*New session starts January 12th*

Brochure with full details at the "Y"  
or phone Ann at 360-0916

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## For your Interest.

It is Mr. Iyengar's birthday this month.. If you'd like to send a card.

Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute.  
1107-B/1 Shivaji Nagar.  
Pune.  
India      411016

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# ODE TO SRI B.K.S. IYENGAR

by Clara Buck

We humbly come to you, Dear Guruji, Sir,  
Because deep down in us our spirit you stir.  
The good comes to surface while the bad sinks low,  
Leaving us in freedom for good seeds to sow.  
In your hands we're moulded into yogic form,  
Submitting to your moods we weather the storm.  
In stretching we moan and in bending we groan,  
But with each hour gone our knowledge has grown.  
Every day our bones screech and our bodies ache,  
Our hearts might be sincere but our smiles are fake.  
Pleading looks hit you, Sir - your armour is tough,  
We enjoy the smooth and learn to take the rough.  
You stand on our back with a glorious smile,  
We can't help but wonder; is it all worthwhile?  
But the end of three weeks finds us really strong,  
We know now for sure  
That our complaints were wrong.  
Body, Mind and Spirit welded into one,  
Lifted by your teaching, all our doubts are gone  
Your hand seems to us now like fairy's magic rod,  
We pray for your long life and blessings from God.

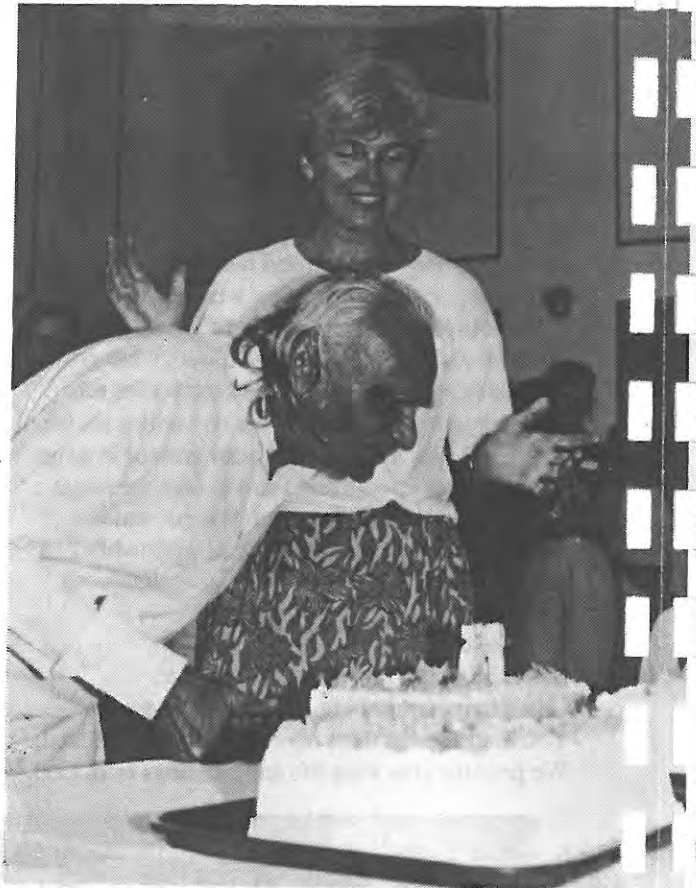
*This poem was written by Clara Buck at the end of a three-week Intensive course with Mr. Iyengar in Pune. She read it aloud to Mr. Iyengar during the recent European Yoga convention in London. With Clara's permission, we are happy to publish it here in honour of Mr. Iyengar's 75th birthday.*

## A BIRTHDAY CAKE

One of the most beautiful moments at the Canadian Iyengar Yoga conference last August, was on the last day. In honour of Mr. Iyengar's forthcoming 75th birthday, the Toronto yoga community had gone to great lengths to find an eggless ice cream birthday cake. Guruji cut the cake, and sat down on the steps leading to the podium to eat his portion. After serving themselves, one by one the students gathered around him, sitting beside him, at his feet and nearby - getting as close as they could. Happily we all sat there, informally, listening while he talked, joked and laughed - obviously enjoying himself. Here was a Master with his pupils, commanding the respect he so richly merits, but also a man with a very warm and human side.



Many blessings  
on your birthday  
Guriji!











Just as I thought things had settled down and I had adjusted fairly well to life in the regular school system, I find I'm just now coming to grips with what that really means. I'm confronting the fact that some parents of my students have quite different expectations of what should go in a kindergarten class. But it also means that in the neighborhood schools the classes can get overcrowded depending on demographics. The regulations say no more than 20 kindergarten children in a class, I now have 24% over the limit. If I was running a private daycare, the government would close me down; their limit is something like 12 five year olds to one teacher.

For the past six years I have been in an alternative school. The enrollment was limited so we didn't have such large kindergarten classes. Also the parents chose the school carefully. They had to make a commitment because the school was not a neighborhood school and many children came from across town. I had parents who wanted a less structured program, and they were usually happy with what I did. Now the only unifying reason people have their children in my class is that they live down the street. I can't meet all the expectations of these parents, especially in an overcrowded classroom. Its hard for me to be anything but unstructured, so I'm not a match for every family.



On the home front we have settled into our new house. Its a brighter, easier to care for home. Some of the irritations from the old house are gone. However, a comfortable home doesn't mean there are no old problems. Maybe I hoped some of my old issues would be discarded along with all the junk we threw out. Somewhere in my heart of hearts did I hope some of my internal junk would stay at the old address?

A new problem has manifested. Our dog is getting old. She is a well loved dog by our many friends and family. She's the kind of dog people like who usually don't like animals that much (like me). I never was much of a pet person until she came along. The dog has been sick and one day we're sure the end is near and the next the vet puts her right again. Yesterday the symptoms returned. Each time we discuss giving her the fatal shot because I don't believe in keeping old dogs and cats alive past their time. However, it's still upsetting when the decision keeps coming up. Anyone who has loved a pet understands this. I had a friend whose dog was killed by a car and she really went into mourning. She withdrew and was often teary. I thought to myself, "Good grief, it's only a dog." But an animal who is well behaved and affectionate

becomes a part of one's life. Dogs have several wonderful attributes that are very endearing. They don't hold a grudge, they're always happy to see you even if you just went out to put out the garbage, and they don't talk back. I wish some of the teenagers I have known and loved would develop these traits.



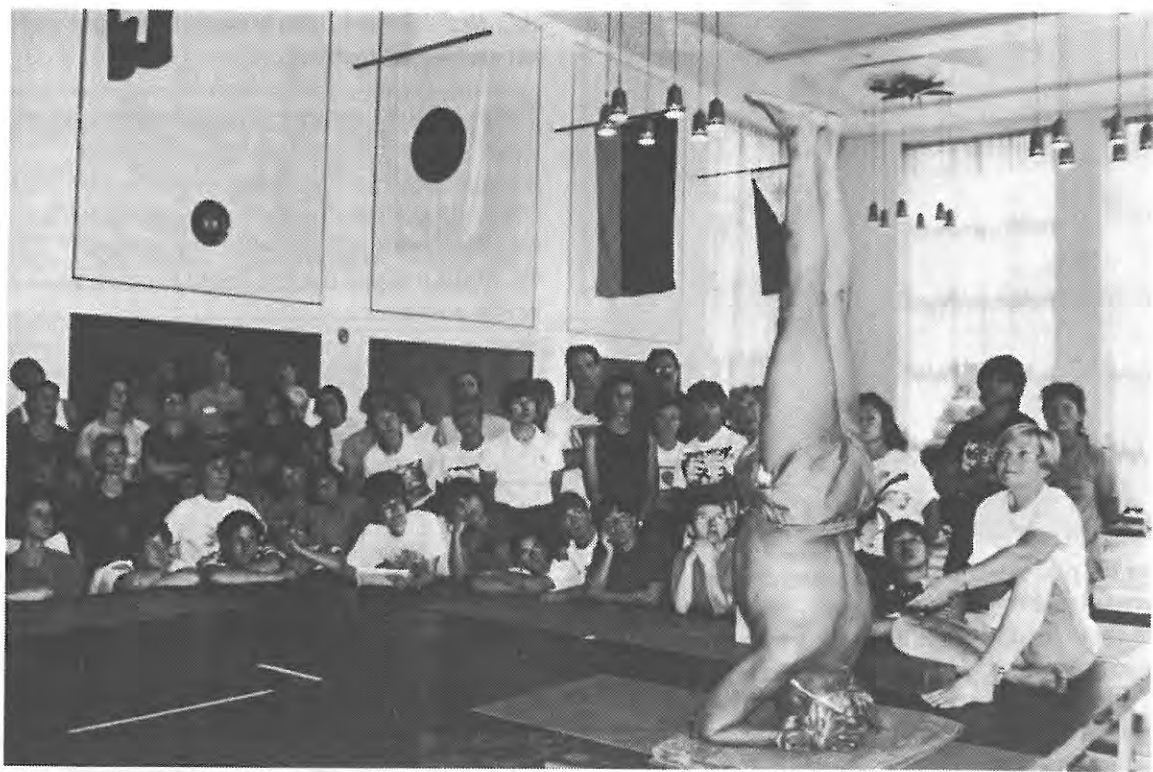
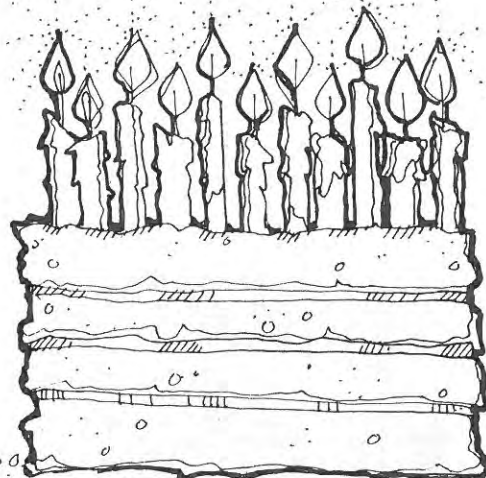
Over the past weekend, I was feeling emotionally overwhelmed by problems at work, home and with some personal health issues. I wanted to talk to my mother, who is always welcoming in her voice and attitude. As it was her birthday, it seemed an opportune time. I found out her birthday wasn't so happy, as she had had an accident the day before and was covered in bruises. Her already fragile knee was badly

sprained and she was on crutches. I had my litany of troubles to lay before her and had a hard time realizing it may not be a great time to do that. I have been very fortunate to have the mother I do. She married young and I was born shortly after her 21st birthday. Each year the age difference between us seems to be more and more insignificant. We have enjoyed a close and affectionate relationship and have enjoyed excursions and holidays even though we live 2000 miles apart and have done so for over 20 years. Just last month, we had a wonderful weekend, my dad, mother and I went to my aunt's wedding in Arizona. I still rely on her for advice and support and nurturing. There is a deep well of commitment she draws on for us all; my father, four siblings, their spouses, nine grandchildren, various nephews, foster children, etc., etc. All news, both good and bad, gets sent her and my father's way.

Even with her support, I must ultimately face my problems alone. As I dipped into Kundalini Yoga for the West by Swami Radha looking for inspiration, I read about the Anahata cakra (heart cakra). It is also called the Abode of Mercy. Just the words touched me and I need to center myself in that abode.



I went to church for Remembrance Day and the Minister spoke of the difficulties we all face living in the '90's. He gave a reference from the Bible and said it was like facing the lion, getting things under control then turning around to discover a bear. This analogy has seemed apt in recent days as I seem to jump back and forth between lion and bear. Yet I'm not in Somalia or Bosnia, where ordinary life is no longer possible, where my problems would likely seem trivial. I try and step back and reflect to gain perspective.





# ***THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE***

***PRESENTS***



***with***

***LESLIE HOGYA***

***SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1994***

***10.00 a.m to 1.00 p.m.***

***In the Yoga Studio - Victoria YM-YWCA***

***Refreshments til 2.00 p.m.***

***Yoga Centre members \$25.00***

***Non-members \$30.00***

***Releasing the neck and shoulders will help to open the chest.***

***The Anahata Chakra***

***Register Early***

***Mail cheques to Leslie Hogya***

***50 Cambridge Street, Victoria, B.C. V8V 4A8***

***Phone: 383-6301***

**THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE  
AND THE Y.M.Y.W.C.A.**

**WELCOME YOU TO A FRIDAY  
NIGHT GATHERING**

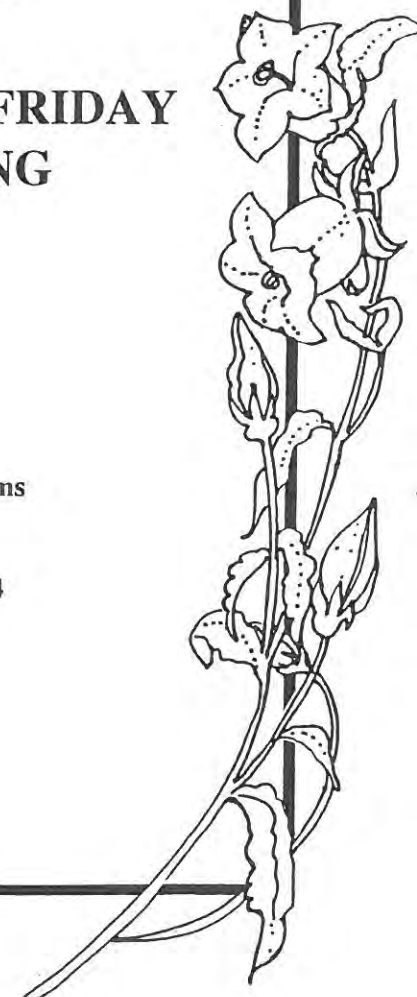
**Hatha Practice at 6 p.m.  
in the Dance Studio**

**Potluck dinner at 7 p.m.  
in the Yoga Lounge**

**followed by a discussion on Dreams**

**Date: Friday, January 28, 1994**

**Everyone is welcome  
Please join us**







# THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

## Workshop with Felicity Green

**Friday, March 11, 12, and 13, 1994**

Friday: 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Saturday: 10:00 am - 1:00 pm

3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Sunday: 10:00 am - 1:00 pm

**Victoria YM-YWCA, 880 Broughton Street**

**Yoga Centre Members \$120.00**

**Non-Members \$130.00**

**All registrants should have attended  
at least one full session of Iyengar Yoga Classes.**

Felicity is an inspiring internationally known yoga instructor. She has studied yoga intensively with Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar of Pune, India and Swami Sivananada Radha of Yasodhara Ashram in British Columbia.

Register early to assure your place. Don't miss this opportunity to work with this special teacher.

**Please make your cheques payable to:**

**Victoria Yoga Centre**

**and mail to: Leslie Hogya**

**50 Cambridge Street**

**Victoria, B.C. V8V 4A8**

**For further information,  
phone Marlene Miller at 655-4306 or Lesley Hogya at 383-6301**

# Gentle Yoga

for the

## Physically Challenged

with Margot Kitchen

If you are a senior, coping with or recovering  
from an illness, in a wheelchair, or  
just plain tired,

these two gentle stretching and breathing  
videotape routines are for you!

**Call Margot (403) 243-1078**

**Video:**

Can: \$19.95

US: \$15.95

**Shipping:**

Can: \$4.50

US: \$3.70

---

Please send me \_\_\_\_ copies of Gentle Yoga for the Physically Challenged.

Enclosed in my cheque or International Money Order for \$\_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Prov/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

M. Kitchen, 4607 Coronation Dr. S.W. Calgary, AB, Canada T2S 1M5

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# *RADHA HOUSE*

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## Victoria

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



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### *Open House*

*Sunday, January 16, 3-5 p.m.*

We invite you to join us in this informal gathering as we start a new year. This is a wonderful opportunity to greet old friends and to meet new ones. Looking forward to seeing you then.

---

### *Saturday Morning on the Mountain*

*Saturday, January 29, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.*

This is a Hidden Language® Hatha Yoga exploration of Tadasana, mountain pose. This three-hour workshop is followed by a potluck lunch.

Fee: \$25

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### *Guru Puja*

*Sunday, February 6, 8-9 p.m.*

A special Satsang of gratitude to honour our teachers who have dedicated their lives selflessly to help others find their inner strength and life's purpose.

---

### *Radha House Victoria's 10th anniversary*

*Friday evening, February 18 and Saturday, February 19*

Celebration details to be announced. For information call 595-0177. All are invited.

# YOGA CALENDAR

## DECEMBER:

- 21: Pranayama at the Y with Shirley Daventry French.
- 28: Pranayama at the Y with Shirley Daventry French.

## JANUARY:

- 3: Yoga class at the Y. 5.30 to 7.00 p.m.  
Led by Ann Kilbertus and Leslie Hogya
- 5: Yoga class at the Y. 5.30 to 7.00 p.m.  
Led by Jim Rischmiller and Wendy Boyer.
- 6: Yoga class at the Y. 10 am to 11.30 am.  
Led by Linda Benn and Lauren Cox
- 8: Special teachers meeting in Metchosin.  
Practise at 8 am, meeting at 10 am.
- 15: Pranayama in Metchosin led by Shirley Daventry French
- 16: Sunday workshop at the Y.  
Led by Marlene Miller
- 28: Yoga Centre Gathering  
Discussion on Dreams

- 29: Teachers Meeting at the Y.  
Followed by restorative asanas, breathing and relaxation workshop at the Y with Shirley Daventry French. 1.30-4.30pm

## FEBRUARY:

- 12: Pranayama in Metchosin led by Shirley Daventry French
- 13: Sunday workshop at the Y  
Led by Leslie Hogya.
- 25: Yoga Centre Gathering  
Discussion on Stress
- 26: Teachers Meeting at the Y.  
Workshop at the Y 1.30 to 4.30p.m.  
TBA

## MARCH:

- 11-13: Felicity Green Workshop at the Y.
- 19: Pranayama in Metchosin led by Shirley Daventry French
- 25: Yoga Centre Gathering
- 26: Teachers meeting at the Y.  
Workshop at the Y 1.30 to 4.30 p.m.  
TBA

## 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  |

## APRIL:

- 17: Sunday Workshop at the Y  
Led by Celia Ward.
- 22: Yoga Centre Gathering
- 23: Teachers Meeting at the Y.

## MAY:

- 28: Teachers meeting at the Y.

## JUNE:

- 3,4,5: Saltspring Retreat led  
by Shirley Daventry French
- 18: Pranayama in Metchosin  
led by Shirley Daventry French.
- 25: Teachers meeting at the Y.

## JULY:

- 1-4: Canadian Iyengar Yoga Teachers  
Meeting in Montreal.
- 25-30: Iyengar Yoga Intensive in Victoria  
led by Shirley Daventry French.

## INTERIM YOGA CLASSES

Monday, January 3, 5:30-7:30pm  
Ann Kilbertus & Leslie Hogya  
Level II/III, Fee: \$6:00

Wednesday, January 5, 5:30-7:00pm  
Jim Rischmiller & Wendy Boyer  
All Levels, Fee: \$5:00

Thursday, January 6, 10:00-11:30am  
Lauren Cox & Linda Benn  
All Levels, Fee: \$5:00

Fund Raisers for Yoga Equipment  
& Scholarships - 'Y'-Lounge

Pranayama Classes with Shirley Daventry French  
see Brochure  
Term III Classes Start Week of January 10th

## 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. [ ]



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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 its inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

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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, V9B 5T7. Telephone: (604) 474-5630.

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## CREDITS

EDITOR: Jennifer Rischmiller

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PRINTING: *Monk Quick Copy Centre*

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COLLATING: *Jennifer Rischmiller and  
Margaret Feehan*

PASTE-UP & DESIGN: *Lauren Cox*

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DEADLINE FOR FEBRUARY ISSUE: JANUARY 15th, 1994.

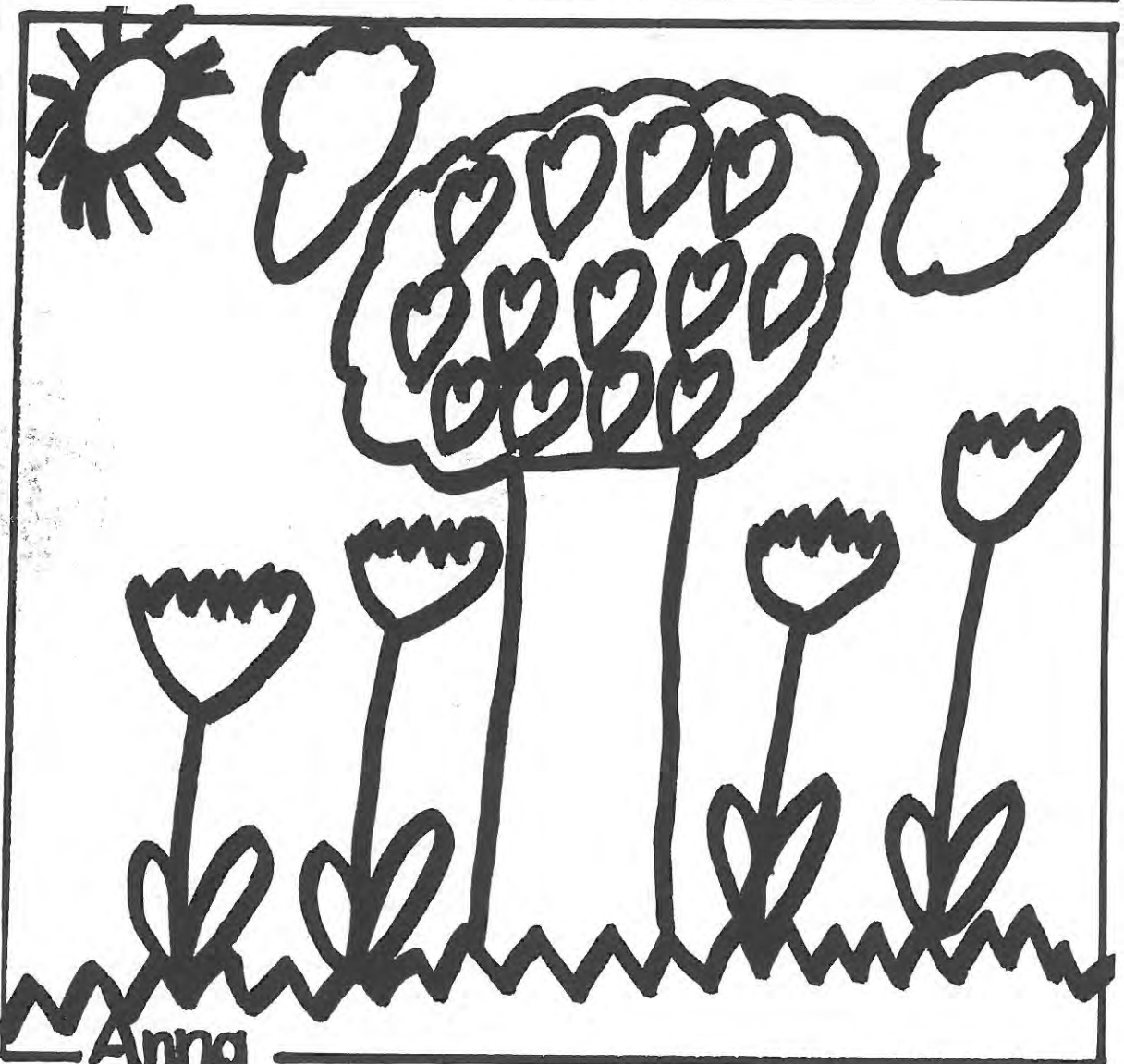
**VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY**

3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R. #4, Victoria, B.C., Canada, V9B 5T8

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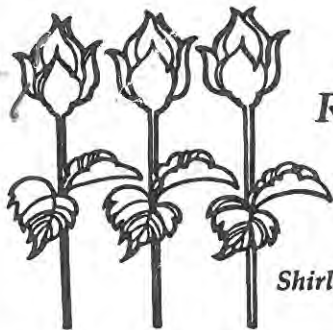


VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE  
*Newsletter*



*Please subscribe*

*February, 1994*



## Reflections

by  
*Shirley Daventry French*

"You are nobody!" This statement leapt out from some notes on a pranayama class taught by Geeta Iyengar in India which had been given to me by a colleague who had attended this class. Like her father, B.K.S. Iyengar, Geeta doesn't mince words: "You are nobody—a very small part of a vast universe."

Once, when my husband was going through a difficult period in his life, our daughter Stephanie sent him a postcard of the Milky Way galaxy, and somewhere in the midst of billions upon billions of stars was an arrow pointing to one of them accompanied by the statement: "You are here!" Somehow it put everything into perspective, at the same time making us laugh at our trumped up sense of self-importance and the trouble it gets us into. Where does this inflated sense of importance come from, and what does all this have to do with yoga?

What was Geeta's purpose in uttering these statements. Was it to belittle the students? Or is there the possibility that these are the words of a caring spiritual teacher whose concern is to remove the obstructions or obstacles which prevent us from discovering our true Self.

The teaching of all great spiritual teachers nurtures our innate desire to know who we really are, beyond our personality, the roles we play in life and all the other paraphernalia with which we surround and bury our true Self. What Christ called "the peace which passeth all understanding", doesn't come

from simply breathing with a little more awareness and letting go of some muscular tension, although this will certainly help rather than hinder the process. To achieve deep and lasting peace requires vigilance, discrimination, and concentrated effort every day of our life—ideally every moment of every day of our life. This is a tall task, and yoga practice is a form of basic training preparing us for the task of resisting and destroying those tendencies which create obstacles to enlightenment.

"You are nobody." Contrast this statement with those which are to be found in many brochures by Western teachers offering courses in yoga and personal development, who promise to show you that you are indeed somebody—somebody who, if you take their classes, is going to feel relaxed, peaceful, happy, healthy, in tune with nature and all mankind - and all of this will be achieved by a few gentle stretches along with some positive affirmation and visualisation while venturing only as far as is comfortable. Naturally this will take place in a nurturing, caring, non-threatening atmosphere. Nurturing what? Caring for what? Not threatening what? These questions always spring to mind.

There have been times when I have found yoga classes and workshops very threatening. In the presence of teachers of the stature of B.K.S. Iyengar, Geeta Iyengar and Swami Radha, with their very direct teaching methods, my defences were frequently breached. At first, this left me feeling naked, vulnerable and exposed—states I had gone to great lengths to avoid. However, at the same time they showed me how to practise yoga in a way that put me in touch with my real inner strength and gave me the courage to continue to dismantle these defences on my own. There have been many times when I have become tired of the effort and longed for (and sometimes searched for) an easier way. Yet even as I procrastinated, I knew I had found a path towards the truth. Once that door has opened a crack to let in some light, it's not an appealing option to return to the darkness. Even at the most difficult and challenging moments I could see beyond the

seeming harshness of the actions or words of these teachers, to their true compassion in helping me get in touch with my Higher Self. I began to understand their impatience for me to stop wasting time and realise my potential in this lifetime; and, feeling some of that impatience myself, I began to make an effort and made some significant changes in my life.

Has my practice of yoga brought me peace of mind?

Yes, to a greater extent than I had before. Have I become more relaxed? Certainly—again, much more than before. Was this a comfortable process? No, not as a rule. Just about all my cherished beliefs have been threatened, my ego has been assaulted from all directions, and my mind assailed with challenges. Often I have been supremely uncomfortable, but at the same time fully alive and engaged in the moment as I attempt to focus on reality and to dismantle rather than sustain the framework of my fantasies. It's been a struggle, and continues to be so, because the ego does not surrender willingly. I have fought back, resisting change, reluctant to take a good clear look at myself and how I function, preferring instead to complain about and find fault with the world and its inhabitants. If only *they* would change! However, this aspect of self which resists change co-exists with another which aspires to know who I really am and what on earth I am doing here in this body? How could such a quest be easy?

If you take time to read any of the yogic scriptures, such as *The Bhagavad Gita* or Patanjali's *Yoga-sutras*, or, turning to Christianity, *The Holy Bible*, you will be left in no doubt that life is a battlefield where we are torn between our human self with its futile attempt to cling to life and the pull of the transcendent. Until we can accept death there is no possibility of living life fully, and Yoga is a means of prising open our grip.

My personal struggle took an interesting twist this Christmas when my usually robust state of health was weakened by a nasty dose of the 'flu, and we were faced with the death, the day after Christmas,

of my husband's younger brother. It was not unexpected, but naturally distressing to his elderly mother, who lives with us, to Derek and to the rest of the family as we mourned him and inevitably came face to face with our own mortality. We planted a tree in our garden in his memory and held a ceremony of farewell, tearful but restrained in true Anglo-Saxon fashion. Death as much as life, must be dealt with in our own way.

In this somewhat sombre atmosphere and still under the influence of the current 'flu bug, I observed some wild fluctuations of my mind. It was like a roller coaster with its highs and lows. The lows included sadness at Rob's death, frustration with the lack of communication from Derek and his mother, an unbridled imagination, lack of energy, feelings of isolation, anxiety, uncertainty, fed up with everything. Got to get groceries, bills to pay, income tax to sort out, classes and workshops to organise—obstacle after obstacle, all self-inflicted. All I could see was the black side, and my mind was twisting everything into the negative.

As I indulged in this melodrama, which I was enjoying to some extent, I continued with my practice and noticed that at the same time my restless mind was also planning for the new year, and thinking about classes, workshops and teacher training. Positive ideas kept flowing into the post-influenzal environment of my body-mind. What do I want to hold on to, I asked myself, these or my negativity?

My practice over, I sat at my dining table looking out of the window seeing the ocean, mountains, trees, birds, such a beautiful view. How fortunate I am! I have a generally healthy constitution, space, a good husband, lovely children and grandchildren. I live in a pleasant temperate climate, while the rest of Canada is dealing with a deep freeze and blizzards. In my garden snowdrops and primroses have appeared, and in more sheltered parts of town rhododendrons and some of the fruit trees are in bloom. The air is fresh and full of negative ions from the ocean. A couple of hundred yards from my

home I can walk on the beach, or take the park trail around a lagoon to a scenic waterfall. I have plenty of food, which I am lucky to be able to afford. I am fortunate to have work, and especially work that I like and which I think is valuable in society.

As the positive begins to penetrate deeper and overwhelm my negativity, I find I am looking forward to teaching again whereas last night at dinner I told Derek I thought I should give it up for a year, because I was fed up with students who feel they know better, who want to be entertained.

This is the third time in six months that I've been unwell. Up until now in my life, I have rarely been sick—most 'flu bugs passed me by, and I have not had any serious illnesses. What's the message from these recent episodes of indisposition? Does my life need a drastic change or simply a change of attitude—or perhaps a little of both.

On New Year's Eve I asked my eighty four year old mother-in-law, what her wish was for 1994. She replied that she would like to discover her purpose in life. As I continue to define and redefine my purpose, I wish her well. From experience, I know that embarking on this search does not make life easy, but opens the way for the next challenge and the next and the next. I also know that when I persevere, I become stronger, clearer and better prepared for the future, whatever it holds for me.

This is a struggle which will go on until my spirit and body face their inevitable final parting at my death, or, in yogic terms, when my spirit leaves this body and continues the journey in another form. When this happens, will I be able to say I made the most of my life? Did I make the best use of the gifts I was given or abuse them, or did they atrophy from lack of use? The practice of yoga encourages a constant re-examination of these questions—that is its purpose, not to make me more comfortable, but rather to stimulate enough discontent so that I will keep going.

While continuing to play the central role in the tragicomedy of my life, I must try to keep a perspective on the greater scheme of things. Penetrating inward, I must also reach outward into the vastness. And as I pursue my personal practice, I get glimpses now and then of what Geeta Iyengar means when she says:

"Go to that place where you are nobody and see what you can from there; pranayama comes from that place. Feel your self very small and insignificant as the whole vastness of the universe surrounds you and touches you; then within that insignificance, feel your own self, your own energy within. When the vast universe and self come together, there is union."

*Thank you to Ann Kilbertus for sharing her pranayama notes with me, and to Geeta Iyengar for the inspiration behind these reflections.*



Ann Kilbertus & Leslie Hoqya





# ***THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE***

***PRESENTS***



***THE HEART CENTER***

***with***

***LESLIE HOGYA***

***SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1994***

***10.00 a.m to 1.00 p.m.***

***In the Yoga Studio - Victoria YM-YWCA***

***Refreshments til 2.00 p.m.***

***Yoga Centre members \$25.00***

***Non-members \$30.00***

***Releasing the neck and shoulders will help to open the chest.  
The Anahata Chakra***

***Register Early***

***Mail cheques to Leslie Hogya  
50 Cambridge Street, Victoria, B.C. V8V 4A8  
Phone: 383-6301***

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Shirley,

Regretfully, I am unable to attend your special benefit workshop, "In the Light of Yoga", on December 12, 1993. Nevertheless, to support the dedicated ongoing work of the Victoria Yoga Centre Society, I am donating the workshop fee of \$25.00. A tax receipt for same would be appreciated.

Residing near Parksville does not allow me regular attendance of all the yoga classes and workshops offered in Victoria. When I am able to attend, it is with greater appreciation each time for the ideal yoga space provided, together with every imaginable yoga prop available to aid and support one to surrender with grace into a yoga pose. Now that I have the great privilege of teaching Iyengar Yoga in Nanaimo and Parksville, it is with ever increasing awareness of how very difficult and costly it is to locate such a yoga space and provide such a variety of beneficial yoga props.

I would hope that all your yoga students realize and appreciate all that The Victoria Yoga Centre Society provides and that they will support your endeavours either by attending the workshop or donating the workshop fee.

May the ongoing classes and workshops of the Victoria Yoga Centre Society prosper. Wishing you and your family, all the Victoria Iyengar Yoga Teachers and members, a most beautiful, joyful and peaceful holiday season.

Namaste

Tricia Arpino  
Nanoose Bay, B.C.

Dear Editor:

On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of Radha House Victoria, I would like to thank the Victoria Yoga Centre and all members of our yoga community for their sustained support of, and participation in, Radha House activities.

Your help in the setting up period of Radha House, then called Shambala House, and the subsequent co-operation between us comes to mind with pleasure and gratitude.

I am looking forward to the next decade of our relationship and the service to all who seek the Light.

In light and love,

Jessica  
Director of Radha House Victoria

**Martin de Valk**  
**Creative Concepts Photography**

**383-9987**

weddings  
environmental portraits  
child portraits  
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**THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE  
AND THE Y.M.Y.W.C.A.**

## **WELCOME YOU TO A FRIDAY NIGHT GATHERING**

**Hatha Practice at 6 p.m.  
in the Dance Studio**

**Potluck dinner at 7 p.m.  
in the Yoga Lounge**

**followed by a discussion on Stress**

**Date: Friday, February 25, 1994**

**Everyone is welcome  
Please join us**



# Victoria Yoga Centre AGM

December 4th 1993

## Presidents report.

Our successful formula of fewer business meetings was continued this year and our monthly members (practice, eat, talk) meetings were well attended. However I feel that with the increased level of yoga centre activity I see, we may have to add another business meeting or two next year. (That is go from one per quarter to bi monthly).

Workshops generally did well this year with our weekend at Saltspring and Ramand Patels workshop oversubscribed. We still need to find more help organizing the workshops and it will be a continuing focus for me in the coming year.

I think newsletter production, at least by yoga centres anyway, share some common bonds. I was amused to read recently in the 'Auroville Today' newsletter (from Auroville in India) of some of the difficulties they have experienced in producing their newsletters over the years. Their story sounded very familiar. However our newsletter has appeared every month by hard work and some magic from Jennifer, Shirley and Lauren despite the loss of some of the key players in the production team who moved on.

In this regard I would like to thank Dave Rocklyn for mailing our newsletter over the past many years and Mike Shevloff for keeping the mailing list in order. I welcome the assistance of Jill Roberts and the Eric Grunsky/Jean Hubay team who have taken over those functions.

With the lowering of interest rates we have not received as much interest in our scholarship fund as in past years. We did manage to offer some assistance to members who are committed to the

yogic path and plan to continue when we are able. Interested parties should make enquiries through the scholarship committee or your teacher for more information, particularly if you wish to donate.

Jerrilyn Wass did a marvelous job of keeping our books in order this year. Jerrilyn is vacating the treasurers chair to focus on her daughters wedding next year and I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her efforts.

My thanks also to our secretary Wendy Boyer for keeping the executive informed of what we decided to do at our meetings. Without someone managing the communications within our organization we would be in trouble. I repeat my last years comment that in themselves most of the jobs in the yoga centre are not a great deal of work but they really contribute to keeping our organization running as well as being fun or a learning experience. I encourage anyone to step forward and see what you can do to help.

Thanks to Linda Benn who kept our library and book sales in shape and profitable. My thanks and commiseration's to Margaret Feehan who is doing something with Tee shirts. Hopefully Margaret will not end up with a surplus pile of yellow ultra small like I did.

I would also like to put on record my thanks and appreciation for the extra support and work done by my fellow members of the executive, and those others who did find time to put in some of themselves.

The overshadowing events of the year for me personally were Gurujis presence at the Toronto intensive and my transition from corporate worker to full time yoga teacher. Both are learning experiences sometimes fun and sometimes not but always very rewarding. My thanks to the divine committee for allowing me the privilege of finding this out.

Jim Rischmiller

## Newsletter Report - December, 1993.

During the past year we have produced 10 issues of the newsletter. Lauren Cox is still doing a superb job of layout (and many other tasks!) and Shirley Daventry French has submitted her regular Reflections column as well as researching articles for publication. This year saw some changes in volunteers: Michael Shevloff passed on the mailing list/labels to Jim Rischmiller who quickly passed the task to Eric Grunsky and Jean Hubay. Dave Rocklyn has been mailing the newsletters for the past 10 years and decided it was time for a break. Jill Roberts took on this task. Don and Linda Benn are still hard at work producing computerized ads and headings, Leslie Hogya writes regularly, Margaret Feehan has been a help with the collating. Wendy Boyer has been our workshop photographer. My thanks to everyone who has helped to produce the newsletter and a warm welcome is waiting for anyone who would like to help. It is particularly difficult to find content, pictures, poems, articles, etc., so if you have any suggestions, please let me know.

Respectfully submitted

Jennifer Rischmiller  
Editor.

Several committees were struck at the meeting of the directors on January 9, 1994, as follows:

Newsletter Committee:

Program Committee:

Fundraising Committee:

Membership Committee:

If you are interested in helping with any of these committees please contact Jim or Jennifer Rischmiller, 474-5630. We would appreciate your help and input. Thank you.

## Program Report - December, 1993.

The program committee met several times in the early part of 1993 to plan events through to June, 1994. Those involved in the planning were Leslie Hogya, Celia Ward, Eric Grunsky, Jean Hubay, Marlene Miller, Shirley Daventry French, Jennifer Rischmiller, Jim Rischmiller. We have continued the Friday night Yoga Centre gatherings which have been fairly successful during the fall session. Attendance at the Sunday workshops has been good and Ramanand Patel's workshop was full with a waiting list which signals that people are interested in the offerings. The calendar is full again, as it was last year and Marlene is planning for the arrival of Felicity Green, our guest teacher for Spring, 1994. The Saltspring Retreat weekend is booked and the dates have been set for the 1994 Victoria Iyengar Yoga Intensive. Help is still needed for brochures, workshop flyers, etc., and the Yoga Centre Executive welcomes ideas for programs.

Respectfully submitted

Jennifer Rischmiller  
on behalf of the program committee

---

### THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE DIRECTORS 1994

LINDA BENN  
WENDY BOYER  
MARGARET FEEHAN  
SHIRLEY DAVENTRY FRENCH  
DEREK FRENCH  
RENATE GRINFELDS  
PAUL LESCARMURE  
KARYN LOCKEN  
JENNIFER RISCHMILLER  
JIM RISCHMILLER

PRESIDENT: Jim Rischmiller  
VICE PRESIDENT: Derek French  
TREASURER: Karyn Locken  
SECRETARY: Wendy Boyer



3 Dec 93

**Victoria Yoga Centre Society**

**Income Statement**

October 1, 1993

|                    | <b>Revenue</b>      | <b>Expense</b>      | <b>Profit</b>    |
|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Mr Iyengar's Visit | \$ 2,649.40         | \$ 2,656.04         | \$ - 6.64        |
| Interest           | 325.97              |                     | + 325.97         |
| Short Workshops    | 2,736.65            | 2,298.83            | + 437.82         |
| Long Workshops     | 6,141.22            | 4,868.93            | + 1,272.29       |
| Newsletters        | 1,609.00            | 5,419.31            | - 3,810.31       |
| Insurance          | 496.00              | 1,150.00            | - 654.00         |
| Membership Dues    | 3,055.35            |                     | + 3,055.35       |
| Books              | 2,548.00            | 1,748.97            | + 799.03         |
| Mats               | 918.32              | 675.17              | + 243.15         |
| T - Shirts         | 256.29              |                     | + 256.29         |
| Gatherings         | 242.38              | 510.59              | - 268.21         |
| Office Expenses    |                     | 417.55              | - 417.55         |
| Bank Charges       |                     | 171.11              | - 171.11         |
| Scholarships       |                     | 800.00              | - 800.00         |
| Donations          | 1,288.68            |                     | + 1,288.68       |
| Miscellaneous      | 515.70              | 1,365.10            | - 849.40         |
| <b>Net Surplus</b> | <b>\$ 22,782.96</b> | <b>\$ 22,081.60</b> | <b>\$ 701.36</b> |

**Unaudited - For Internal Purposes**



# THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

## Workshop with Felicity Green

**Friday, March 11, 12, and 13, 1994**

Friday: 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Saturday: 10:00 am - 1:00 pm

3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Sunday: 10:00 am - 1:00 pm

**Victoria YM-YWCA, 880 Broughton Street**

**Yoga Centre Members \$120.00**

**Non-Members \$130.00**

**All registrants should have attended  
at least one full session of Iyengar Yoga Classes.**

Felicity is an inspiring internationally known yoga instructor. She has studied yoga intensively with Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar of Pune, India and Swami Sivananada Radha of Yasodhara Ashram in British Columbia.

Register early to assure your place. Don't miss this opportunity to work with this special teacher.

**Please make your cheques payable to:**

**Victoria Yoga Centre  
and mail to: Leslie Hogya  
50 Cambridge Street  
Victoria, B.C. V8V 4A8**

**For further information,  
phone Marlene Miller at 655-4306 or Lesley Hogya at 383-6301**

# The Path of Yoga

by Joseph Rodin

Felicity Green is an internationally recognized teacher of yoga. she has studied many times in India with Mr. Iyengar and is a founding teacher at the Iyengar Institute in San Francisco. She is known for the clarity of her teaching and the depth of her knowledge about Hatha Yoga. In addition, Felicity integrates devotion and all aspects of yoga into her practice and into her teaching.

She is one of five teachers involved in the Community Yoga Circle in Seattle. In this interview, Felicity reflects upon what she has learned teaching yoga for the past 25 years and the principles of yoga inherent in the running of a co-operative, community oriented yoga center. The author would like to thank Felicity Green and Bob Smith as teachers, and to acknowledge with devotion, Paramhansa Yogananda.

**Joseph:** What has your teaching over the last 18 years taught you about people?

**Felicity:** What I have truly understood about people during the years of teaching is how true the saying is that we are whole people. You can't separate the physical and the mental and the emotional. It doesn't matter which way you come into yoga - whether the devotional aspect, or the "jnana" (wisdom aspect) or the "hatha" (physical aspect). Eventually, you have to work on all these aspects if you are going to reach your highest potential as a person - which I see as the whole purpose of yoga.

All these three aspects are intertwined. If we work on one we already do a certain amount of work on the other. But it increases the speed of change if we can work on all of them at the same time. If we can take the broad approach to yoga and not

separate the different aspects, we see that all of it helps us to go in the direction we want to go more efficiently.

**Joseph:** In the evolution of students what kind of changes do you see taking place?

**Felicity:** Most beginning students come in for various superficial reasons. A lot of people come to hatha yoga because of a physical problem, and this is a way of physically helping this problem. A few will come in for cosmetic reasons. I feel that it doesn't really matter what reason brings people to their yoga class because it shows they have made a choice to take responsibility for themselves. They don't have to be victims to whatever their problem is. They've taken the first step of saying: "I can do something about this."

When a student starts they may only practice in one or two classes a week. When they get really serious about it is when they start doing daily practice. From the very first class I try to encourage people to start a daily practice even if it is only for ten minutes. It is in your daily practice when you are working on your own, where you don't have outside authority, that you truly become self-responsible.

This is not to say that all the practice should be on your own. Classes are very important, especially in the beginning, because you have to learn. But it's your own practice where you have to really be aware of what you are doing. If you always have an outside authority telling you to do this and to do that you can go on being automatic. But your own practice can't be that automatic. So this is a very important aspect of helping a student to move from being a beginning student to a more advanced student.

**Joseph:** That's the next step in taking responsibility for oneself?

**Felicity:** That's right.



*Felicity Green*

**Joseph:** I understand you are one of five teachers involved in starting a new yoga center in Seattle called The Community Yoga Circle. I'm struck by the word "community" because most of us think of yoga as an individual pursuit. What is the significance of this title?

**Felicity:** Let me answer this in a couple of different ways. We are calling ourselves The Community Yoga Circle because we are here to serve the community. We hope eventually to have classes for children and teenagers. We already have classes for adults, seniors and pregnant women. Because yoga is non-competitive it is suitable for everybody, even those with handicaps can come and practice yoga.

Another aspect is that we are interested in being community-oriented. We would like to offer workshops that are fundraisers for various things in the community. We also encourage people to bring food donations because we are a collection site for Northwest Harvest.

In your question you called yoga an individual pursuit. I would rather call yoga an inner pursuit. It is a way to get in touch with our inner selves. Our society teaches us how to be in touch with external things but it doesn't help us understand who we are or what our bodies are or anything about ourselves inside. So I think of yoga as an inner pursuit.

However, part of that inner pursuit includes - because we are people living in the world - the external as well. In the traditional sutras of Patanjali the very first thing he suggests must be developed if someone is going to reach their highest potential, is the relationship to the external. Then the next is your relationship to yourself and the next is the relationship to your body - or asana - hatha yoga. The next is pranayama, the relationship to your breath, and so on.

But the first is our relationship to other people and to the world. To quote the 33rd sutra: "Around us we find individuals both happy and unhappy, doing both laudable actions as well as creating trouble. Depending on these conditions one might be jealous of others' happiness, pleased at yet another's suffering, critical of another's benevolent act, or even angry at yet another's failure. As we relate to others we must be comfortable with their happiness, compassionate at their sorrow, show good will towards their laudable works and not be concerned over their errors."

This is where I see the whole thing of community coming in: to have a group of teachers who can work together and not be competitive but supportive of each other and be tolerant of each other's human quirks, realizing we all have our own human quirks. I see having a yoga community as a very important aspect of yoga because it helps us to bring our yoga out into the world and not just keep your practice as an internal thing. It is an internal thing but it has to involve the external as well. It is your actions in the external world that will change, hopefully, through your internal development.

**Joseph:** Can you share some guidance for teachers and students, not just of yoga but whatever their spiritual path.

**Felicity:** I think the most important thing is to be genuine and come from your heart. Often beginning teachers say "Maybe I shouldn't be teaching". It is really just relative. As long as you are sharing who you are and what you know, you will do fine. It is only if people are pretending to know more than they know or are just repeating something that they heard from some other teacher that it doesn't work. If you are a teacher, particularly, your own practice is essential.

In the Eastern understanding, the word knowledge means something that you have actually experienced. It's not something you simply have intellectual data about - which means you are repeating as a parrot. So to be a teacher you must always be a student. You may be a teacher of yoga, but you will only be a good teacher if you are also a student of yoga. You are always developing and changing in your practice and therefore in your teaching.

Now we come back to the point we made earlier about your own practice: that never stops. You never get to the point where you say, "I don't need to practice anymore." In the whole development of a human being it is a direction you are going, not a goal you reach. My advice to teachers and students is to develop your own practice and have a strong daily practice.

**Joseph:** For people who are looking for a personal growth avenue, what does yoga offer that other forms don't?

**Felicity:** I follow the path of yoga but I don't feel that yoga is the only system. I think there are many systems, many wisdoms of the world that have been around a long time. And each individual has to find out for themselves what particular path is right for them. I don't think there are any new teachings. I think all the so-

called new teachings are based on the ancient teachings.

Yoga to me is a system for developing the whole being. It is not just a physical discipline, it's not just a psychological discipline, it's not just a devotional discipline; that is what appeals to me the most about yoga, it is a whole discipline for the whole or holy person.

One profoundly important principle is to focus. There is a traditional Indian story about two men who go digging for water. At the end of the first day one man hasn't found water so he digs at another place. At the end of seven days he hasn't found water and has seven shallow holes whereas the other person who kept digging for seven days at the same place had found water.

This is a very important principle. If we jump around from this to that we will probably never find the water. Maybe in the beginning when you are hunting around it is okay to look around. Then it's vital to make a commitment to one system and stick with it until you find the water.

For me, yoga has been the path but I don't think it is the only way. It is the focusing that is important, time and energy and years of work. There is no quick overnight system which is what most Westerners are looking for; instant gratification.

## ACUPUNCTURE

Jennifer Trost, D.T.C.M.

598-4784

Member of AABC

#301-1005 Langley Street, Victoria, B.C., V8W 1V7



**Joseph:** How do we balance using the head and body in yoga?

**Felicity:** I think we have to use the intellect; that is part of a human being. We don't want to become mindless. On the other hand in Western society we've tended to emphasize that far too much and we've lost the balance between the inner messages and the intellectual understanding of things.

I think in yoga what we are trying to do is to have both at the same time; to create a feedback loop between what one is feeling and what one is intellectually seeing or understanding, creating a feedback loop between the head and the body. The body has its own kind of intelligence and often what we do is ignore the intelligence of the body and only go along with the intelligence of the head, but they are both present within us and we want to have a free flow of understanding between them.

*Reprinted with permission from THE NEW TIMES, Seattle, Washington, July, 1992.*



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## **VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION**

***The Yoga Centre accumulates money from workshops for the Scholarship Fund. When you attend a Sunday workshop, the Saltspring Retreat, the Intensive and other events, or make a donation to the Victoria Yoga Centre, part of the proceeds are designated to the Scholarship Fund. Through our Scholarship Committee we offer a number of scholarships during the year to yoga students and teachers.***

***A recipient can be nominated or apply to the Scholarship Committee for funds. Our hope is that scholarships provide encouragement to a student of yoga to help in her/his personal growth.***

***Please contact your yoga teacher for information***

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## **RADHA HOUSE VICTORIA**

### **10TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS**

#### **INVITATION**

Radha House Victoria announces with joy its 10th anniversary and invites you to join us in our celebrations from Friday, February 18, through Sunday, February 20, 1994.

We celebrate, with gratitude, the dedication and work of Swami Padmananda who was the first director of Radha House Victoria from 1984 through 1990. Swami Padmananda is now establishing the 10th Radha House in Merida, Mexico.

Norman McKenzie, who has taken the name Sarada, and who is now a resident at Yasodhara Ashram, has agreed to return to Victoria to help us celebrate with his music and enthusiasm. Sarada was a resident at Radha House Victoria for many years, and taught at the House from its beginning.

#### **PROGRAM**

**Friday, February 18 at 8.00 p.m.:** Bhajan party followed by refreshments.

**Saturday, February 19 at 6.00 p.m.:** Potluck Supper, Prayer Dance, reminiscing, recalling our blessings and meeting old friends.

**Sunday, February 20 at 8.00 p.m.:** Special Satsang to honour Swami Radha's work in this community.

## An Unusual Event

The opening of Shambala House Victoria on Friday and Saturday, February 16th and 17th, was an unusual event... and an auspicious one for Victoria. The new house, at 1500 Shasta Place, is the fourth Shambala House to open in the last year and a half. It was filled with well-wishers on each of the two evenings.

On Friday night, when I was there, people began to arrive early and the house was soon a busy scene. The house offers a new point of convergence to the Victoria yoga Community, and many old friends who travel different paths in their daily lives found themselves reunited through their interest in the teachings of Swami Radha. Swami Radha and several others from Yasodhara Ashram were present for the occasion.

A period of socializing began the evening, and Norman McKenzie led several tours through his and Swami Padmananda's new home.

A chant to Tara drew everyone to the living room where Swami Radha welcomed us to Shambala House. After telling us about the development of these centres, she invited everyone present to speak about the opening and their feelings about the house. I found this a delightful and unusual opportunity to hear experiences, explanations, and above all expressions of hope and good wishes for the opening of this new facility. In addition to the many attending from Victoria, many others had travelled some distance for the vent. Susan and Russell Oughtred had come from Shambala House Calgary, and Kathy Maynard had come from Shambala House Redwood City. They spoke about their lives in these established centres, and brought greetings to us here. Many people spoke of their experiences with the teachings of Yasodhara Ashram and Swami Radha. The opportunity for each of us to share his or her feelings with everyone there brought a strongly personal aspect



*Radha House Victoria  
1984*

to the gathering and generated a real feeling of community. It seems typical of Swami Radha's work to emphasize the unity that is yoga by allowing each to bring his or her individual expression to the group. It made the opening a very special event.

Swami Radha made a special point of drawing attention to the many hours of service which Shirley Daventry French and Derek French have devoted to yoga in Victoria, and thanked them for their support.

Another chant to Tara ended the formal part of the evening.

Saturday night brought an even larger group together. Swami Radha's address on that night - on the subject of Tara, a special symbol for the Shambala Houses - appears elsewhere in this special issue.

Welcome to Victoria, Shambala House. May the feelings of openness, hope and joy which characterized your opening permeate your work here for many years to come!

Bill Graham  
February, 1984

### **A Clear Channel for the Light**

*written by Swami Padmananda  
February 14, 1984*

Shambala is defined as the source of happiness, that elusive quality all human beings try in one way or another to attain. Most of our usual methods end in failure or, at best, in only half-measures. It does seem that the results are not in proportion to the expenditure of effort and when we really think about it, for every pleasure or bit of happiness, there is an equal or greater amount of pain and frustration.



Eastern philosophies point to a different kind of happiness, one that is not dependent on outer conditions and the caprices of life. This is our own personal Shambala, the only permanent source of joy, and we find it only when we have freed ourselves from the corrupting influences of selfishness, greed and their painful side effects.

Since Swami Radha returned to the West in 1956, she has worked tirelessly to help people peel off those layers of self-interest and self-centredness, guiding them and showing them the "Way to Shambala". Her Guru, Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh, had instructed her to establish ashrams and centres in the West, thus spreading the yogic teachings. In his farewell address he told her "to be good, to do good" and

to share what she had with others. That she has faithfully obeyed his orders is evident in the quality of the Ashram today and the calibre of the people who live there. It is because of her perseverance and dedication to God and Guru that it has become possible now for Shambala Houses to come into existence. It has taken more than 25 years of constant application of Gurudev Sivananda's motto, "Serve, love, give..." by Swami Radha for the Ashram to come of age and attain the maturity to be the strong centre of Light necessary to support and sustain these little sparks.

At the present time Shambala House Victoria is undergoing the process of birth. In the two weeks that I have been in attendance I have had time to think about these new developments in my life and in the work of Swami Radha and the Ashram generally. This has been a valuable opportunity for reflection on, and gratitude for, Swami Radha's strength of commitment. And, although I feel somewhat like a little boat that has just put out to sea from a safe harbour, I realize that this is also an opportunity for me to practice faith in the training Swami Radha has given me, and in the Divine Plan that appears to be unfolding so surely. It is my prayer that I can join the residents of the other Shambala Houses across the country in being a clear enough channel for the Light, so that I may serve Divine Mother here in Her house and all those who come for her blessings.

It is said that at some point on the Way to Shambala a female deity is needed to help the seeker. This reminds me of Swami Radha's statement that the child (the aspirant) must be taken to the Father by the Mother. We are fortunate indeed to have the guidance of an earthly Divine Mother, as well as the protection of Tara, the Mother of Compassion, to help us on our journey.

I am delighted to have this opportunity to serve Shambala House Victoria, and look forward to renewing old friendships and making new ones.

May Tara's blessing be on all who enter the doors of Shambala House Victoria.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

## Like A Mother and Her Children

Most of us here in the West are familiar only with the masculine aspect of the Divine - the male Guru, or God the Father. Seldom do we come in contact with Divine Mother. And yet, in our Christian teachings we say that Mary is the mother of God. If she is the mother of God, then she was first. In India, while the woman does not take first place in the family, in the arrangement of names the female comes first. For example, you may be familiar with the name of Dr. Radhakrishna. It is not Krishnaradha, it is Radakrishna.

The creative aspect is feminine. It is the female who gives birth to the offspring; first there is the mother. Many Christian churches have been started by women. Unity Church, for instance, was started by a woman and has today some two hundred and fifty chapters. It is the woman everywhere who keeps the spiritual aspects alive in the home. In our culture she makes sure that all the children go to church and in India it is the woman who will do the Arati, even though she cannot receive the Brahmin thread, which means being initiated into Brahminhood. She can only enjoy being the wife of a Brahmin, or the daughter in a Brahmin family. Nevertheless, it is due to this female power that religions still exist. Women's role has always been motherhood - to love, nurture, look after the babies, and also to look after spiritual babies.



# AGELESS YOGA

with

**Shirley Daventry French  
and Dr. Derek French**

**Saturday, March 26th  
1:30 to 4:30 P.M. at the Y  
880 Courtney Street**

**Y & Yoga Centre Members:  
\$25.00  
Non-Members \$30.00**

The essence of life is change—one of these changes is that we gradually grow older. Our body ages, but what about our self, our spirit?

The philosophy and practice of yoga have a valuable role to play in all stages of life. This workshop will explore the benefits it has to offer as we grow older, in energising and strengthening body and mind, and freeing the spirit.

Ensure yourself a place in this special workshop by registering early at the Y Main Desk.

For further information  
phone Shirley at 478-3775

At some point in the history of the human race there may have been abuse by women of their powers. There are indications that this may have been the case. Now we see that slowly the reverse is taking place, women are gaining more power and perhaps may recover all that they had at one time. This means that every woman should be very careful how she uses that power and not repeat the mistakes from which she herself has suffered.

At the time of Lord Buddha, women were not in a position of power. As you may know from the history of the Buddha, he left his life as a royal prince, having grown up in great wealth, with servants and many conveniences, his beautiful young wife and his only son, to seek the spiritual life. When he left the palace compound, riding his famous white horse, for the first time he saw starving people, dying people, all the things that had been withheld from him. This touched his heart. He wanted to do something about it, and so he pursued the spiritual life, eventually developing the eight-fold path, according to his own insights and his own attainments.

When the Buddha's father died, as the only son, he had to return to the palace to light the funeral pyre. That was the sacred duty of the son of a Brahmin. At this time he met his wife Yasodhara again very briefly. But she sent word to him that she would like to have a word with him, so the Buddha's cousin, Ananda, arranged for them to talk. She asked the Buddha if she could have an initiation into spiritual life too. The Buddha at first shook his head and said, women are not human, they cannot have this initiation. Yasodhara went back and pondered this. Then she asked for another meeting and this time she challenged him. She said, then, the Enlightened One was born of man - and what? If women were not human, then Buddha himself would only be half human. This really hit the heart of the matter, and the Buddha decided that women too could be initiated.

However, we must remember that Buddhism started in the tradition of Hinduism, and so women were still under the guidance of the monks, or males. However, it was the first opening of the door. Later on, things deteriorated once more. There are many problems when men and women are together, so there was again a division. But it seemed that with that division the women lost what they had gained. They did not pursue the spiritual life for themselves, for their own sakes, for their own liberation, for their own enlightenment.

Yet Hinduism had Saraswati, the goddess of beauty, learning, music, also Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth - material wealth and the wealth of wisdom. And there was Radha, the Cosmic Lover of Krishna in that Divine Union. But in daily living the spiritual goal got lost among women. Woman had not yet learned to make herself emotionally independent, so she lost hold of her inner being and lost sight of the divinity within herself.

Then, about 1500 years ago, a Chinese princess was married to one of the great Gurus in Tibet where Buddhism was established. She became the replica of Quan Yin, the Chinese Mother of Mercy. Buddhism had entered China, went into Japan and was then reflected back into Tibet. That princess became Tara, the Tibetan Buddhist's Mother of Mercy and of long life. In fact, she has twenty one aspects - major characteristics - such as courage, forgiveness, compassion and so on.

Some time after I had moved to Kootenay Bay, someone sent me a card which said that a tear of Tara fell to earth when She saw how her children, human beings, were not loving, and were very unkind to each other. It was a divine tear that was shed. I decided that, for myself, I would take to that aspect of Divine Mother, since Fathers don't seem to bother very much. Even my Guru did not answer the letters I wrote to him, and of the few I did receive, none answered my questions. And when Sivananda came back from India recently, he

told me he realized that most of the male Gurus push their disciples out once they have their initiation. He was grateful to have met Indira Devi and seen how she cares for her "children", and grateful to have a woman as a teacher; he said, you look after your spiritual babies.

That is what for us, as women, is our duty. Don't think of just the human children that you put into the world. Be a spiritual mother to anybody you can help. It is also a woman's job in a marriage not to domesticate a husband like some women think, but to help him to allow the finer forces come into play and become truly human. These are sacred duties for every woman. But before you can truly do this, you must realize the divinity within yourself.

Whatever aspect of Divine Mother you choose - Saraswati or Lakshmi, Radha or Tara - it doesn't matter. From the Indian point of view, Divine Mother has 108 names.

When I wanted to put Tara into my mind, I decided to do an embroidery and with each stitch, I would remember her name. Soon there will be embroidered Taras in all Shambala Houses. Others accepted Tara also when I started to put her into my rooms at the Ashram. Once this happened, Shambala House came into existence, and I decided there would not be a single one without a Tara.

Bring the divinity out in yourself; find your own method. An may all of you become little Taras.

OM OM

Swami Radha  
February, 1984

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

## **IYENGAR YOGA INTENSIVE**

**July 25 to 30, 1994**

with

**Shirley Daventry French  
Dr. Derek French  
Linda Benn  
Leslie Hogya  
Ann Kilbertus  
Jim Rischmiller**

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

**Fee: \$350.00**

Victoria is an active centre of Iyengar Yoga, whose teachers maintain a close contact with Mr. Iyengar through regular trips to India and participation in conferences such as the one he attended in Toronto last summer. Our 1994 Summer Intensive will combine the skills of one of Canada's leading yoga teachers Shirley Daventry French with physician Derek French, occupational therapist Ann Kilbertus, and experienced yoga teachers Linda Benn, Leslie Hogya and Jim Rischmiller.

The residence at the Y has a limited amount of inexpensive accommodation for women, billets are available with members of the local yoga community, and, as a popular tourist centre, Victoria has wide selection of hotels and motels.

*For further information contact:*  
Victoria Yoga Centre  
3918 Olympic View Drive  
R.R.4 Victoria, B.C.V9B 5T8

*Telephone enquiries:*  
Shirley Daventry French (604) 478-3775  
or Linda Benn (604) 478-0757

# YOGA CALENDAR

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## FEBRUARY:

- 12: **Pranayama in Metchosin led by Shirley Daventry French**
- 13 **Sunday workshop at the Y**  
**Led by Leslie Hogya.**
- 18-20: **10th Anniversary Celebration at Radha House Victoria**
- 25: **Yoga Centre Gathering**  
**Discussion on Stress**
- 26: **Teachers Meeting at the Y.**  
**Workshop at the Y 1.30 to 4.00p.m.**  
**See ad this issue.**

## MARCH:

- 11-13: **Fellicity Green Workshop at the Y.**
- 19: **Pranayama in Metchosin led by Shirley Daventry French**
- 25: **Yoga Centre Gathering**
- 26: **Teachers meeting at the Y.**  
**Workshop at the Y 1.30 to 4.30 p.m.**  
**TBA**

## APRIL:

- 17: **Sunday Workshop at the Y**  
**Led by Celia Ward.**
- 22: **Yoga Centre Gathering**
- 23: **Teachers Meeting at the Y.**

## MAY:

- 28: **Teachers meeting at the Y.**

## JUNE:

- 3,4,5: **Saltspring Retreat led by Shirley Daventry French**
- 18: **Pranayama in Metchosin led by Shirley Daventry French.**
- 25: **Teachers meeting at the Y.**

## JULY:

- 1-4: **Canadian Iyengar Yoga Teachers Meeting in Montreal.**
- 25-30: **Iyengar Yoga Intensive in Victoria led by Shirley Daventry French.**

## 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/subsorption fee is only \$20 per year.**

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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. [ ]



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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 its inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

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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, V9B 5T7. Telephone: (604) 474-5630.

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*cover by Anna Cox*

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**DEADLINE FOR MARCH ISSUE: FEBRUARY 15, 1994**

Ted Mather  
2738 Graham St.  
Victoria, BC  
V8T 3Z2

Nov 93



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**VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY**

3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R. #4, Victoria, B.C., Canada, V9B 5T8

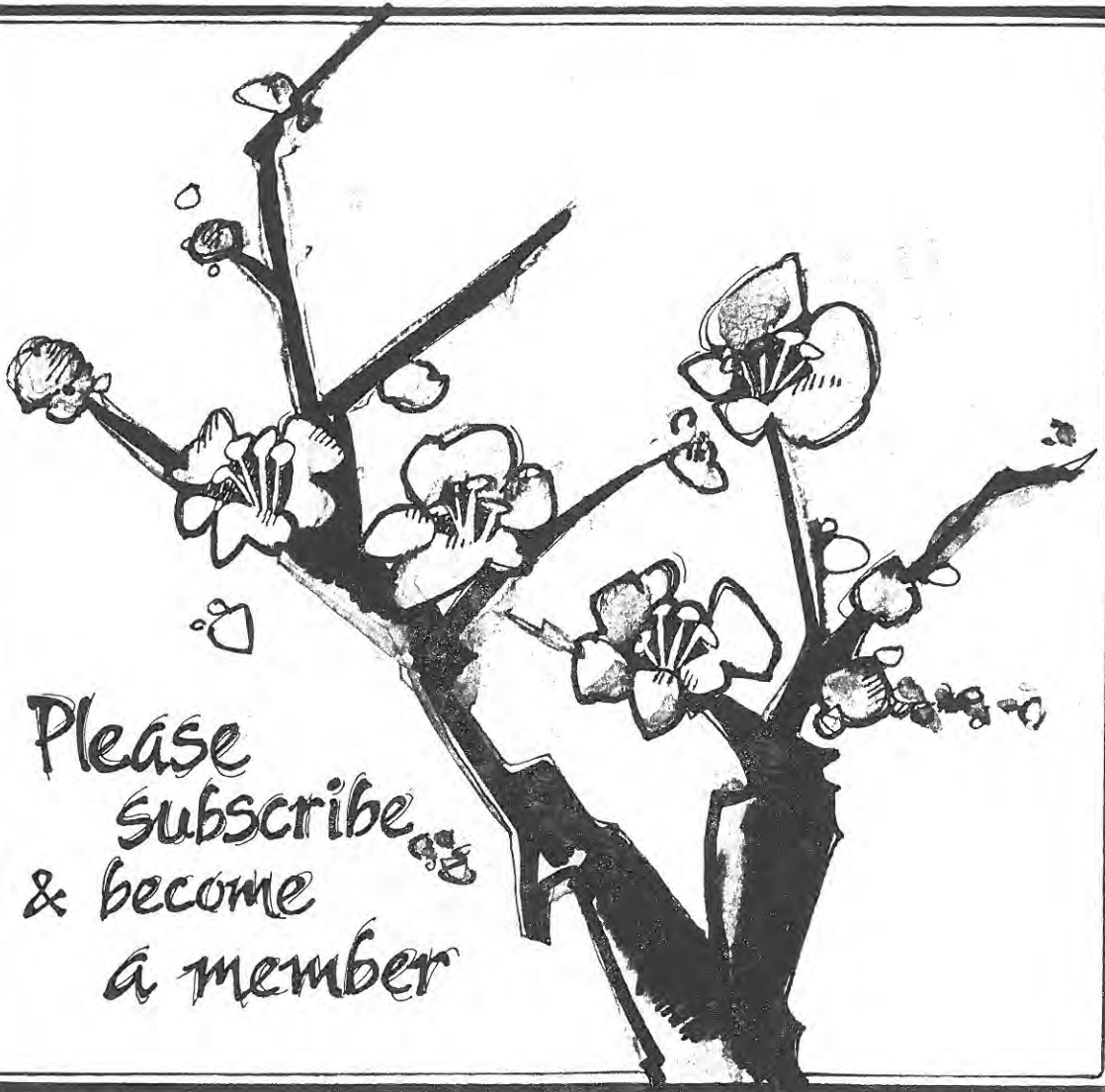
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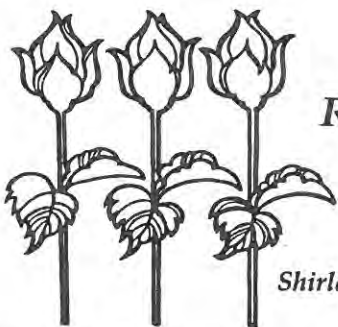


# VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

## *Newsletter*



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a member



## Reflections

by  
Shirley Daventry French

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I have just returned from Alaska. As I waited for the small connector flight to Seattle, I observed that many of my fellow travellers were off to warmer climes: Hawaii, Mexico or the Caribbean. In Seattle, preparing to board my evening flight, I could not help but hear the buzz of conversation about the hundred mile an hour winds which were being forecast for Juneau, my final destination. A woman sitting next to me told me there is a phenomenon called the Taku, when the wind is blowing from the south and funnels through the narrow Gastineau channel between downtown Juneau and neighbouring Douglas Island. Once upon a time this would happen at least once each winter but had not occurred for the past four years. Apparently gusts of a hundred miles an hour are not unusual during a Taku, which is known to be so powerful as to suck windows out of buildings. Wasn't it our just too bad that they had chosen to make their reappearance this evening, said my companion?

Nervous chatter filled the waiting room. I had already put my journey into the light, but I sat very still and silently repeated the Divine Light Invocation followed by *Om Namah Shivaya* - a prayer to Lord Siva the destroyer of obstacles.

This was my fourth or fifth teaching trip to Alaska, the last two in mid-winter. Am I crazy? Now I am back after seven flights and ten take-offs and landings, some of them pretty bumpy. And the answer is no, I am not crazy! I do it because in the communities which I visit there is a nucleus of

teachers and students eager to learn and attempting to build a community of Iyengar Yoga. Although the outside temperatures are cold, the people there are warm, welcoming, open and grateful for the work.

From time to time the newsletter receives letters from subscribers in isolated areas telling us how fortunate we are in Victoria to have a core of well-trained teachers, daily classes in and around the city, well-equipped facilities and a steady flow of students. But this has been building over twenty five years, and we had a lot of help along the way. I see this clearly when I go away and observe the obstacles which others face to get to classes compared to the accessibility and abundance we have here. Several students in the workshop flew in to Juneau and Ketchikan from even more remote areas in very small planes through very bad weather. There are no roads connecting the towns and villages of south east Alaska.

When flying, who doesn't give a passing thought on entering the aircraft to the shared destiny of crew and passengers until we come down to earth again? There is no better opportunity to practise the art of surrender. I have my rituals, such as putting the plane and crew in the light; and I have some superstitions, such as carrying certain things with me. Then I get on the plane, relax and read a book pausing to repeat the Light Invocation or mantra when we encounter severe turbulence or I hear strange inexplicable noises.

The pilot warned us about possible problems on landing at Juneau, but it was uneventful. The day I left, the winds were still fierce and the pilot was good enough to tell us that because of them, immediately after takeoff he would have to make a sharp turn to the left followed by another to the right. The landing strip is surrounded by mountains, and as we banked steeply to avoid them, I was glad he had forewarned us.

After a couple of days in Ketchikan which was having an unusually heavy snowfall, I stepped off

the plane in Seattle to the familiar feel of rain and thought the worst of the weather was behind me. But it was not so. Vancouver was fogged in, causing another delay, and when we were able to land there the plane which was supposed to take me on to Victoria had mechanical trouble and I was rerouted to another smaller plane which flew beneath the heavy cloud cover so close to the water than the thought occurred to me that a strong gust could ditch us in the sea. The winds which had dogged me throughout my journey followed me all the way home.

Would I go again? Yes. First, because I would rather face my fears than allow them to constrict my life; secondly, because of the enthusiasm of the students in these remote communities. It is a unique opportunity to share with them some of the teaching I have been blessed to receive and to play a role in propagating Mr. Iyengar's work. Most important, I must use what I have been given to make my own inner journey, but it is not enough

simply to practise and keep it for myself. In addition to my personal work, there is the work of participating in a worldwide community. When he is teaching, Mr. Iyengar often talks about interpenetration—going within and expanding without at the same time. This applies not only to our practice of yoga-asana but to all of our life.

Mr. Iyengar sets the example himself. He has certainly earned the right to stay at home in India, and have us come to him at the Institute in Pune. But last summer, in his seventy fifth year, he came to our country, so that many more pupils could have first hand experience of working with a Master and learn from him directly. The opportunity to go to India is not available to everyone. Time and space at the Institute are limited; they can only accept a certain number of foreign pupils each year. For this reason, as well as family and other considerations, many sincere students are unable to travel to India. So our teacher came to us, and for that I am truly grateful.



*The Entourage Committee escorting Mr. Iyengar to Pearson Airport at the end of the 1993 Toronto Conference.*

*From L to R: Shirley Daventry French (Victoria), B.K.S. Iyengar, Andy Orr (Toronto), Hilda Pezzaro (Vancouver)*

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

**Ramāmani Iyengar**  
**Memorial**  
**Yoga Institute**

1107-B/1, SHIVAJINAGAR,  
PUNE-411 016, INDIA.  
GRAMS "YOGADIPIKA"  
PHONE 346134

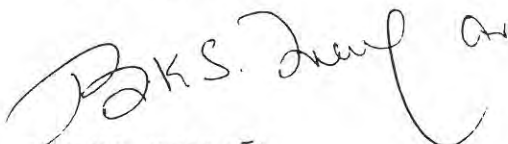
REP33/94

DATE 15/1

My dear Jim,

I recieved your letter as well as the cheque of 500 dollars from Vicotria Yoga Centre Society for which I am grateful to you all. This gift will be used by me as and when the ocassion arises. recently, I donated nearly more than Rs.20,000 (One lakh twenty thousand) for the earth-quake victims and also gave help for the Leper Colony. I am pleased to note that the work is going on very well and new memebbers are having opportunities to learn, to do selfless service to one and all. It is a good sign and wish you all the best.

Yours affectionately,

  
(B.K.S. IYENGAR)

THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE  
and THE VICTORIA YM-YWCA  
*present*

# AGELESS YOGA

*with*

**Shirley Daventry French  
and Dr. Derek French**

The essence of life is change  
— one of these changes is that we gradually grow older.  
Our body ages, but what about our self, our spirit?

The philosophy and practice of yoga have a valuable role to play in all stages of life. This workshop will explore the benefits it has to offer as we grow older, in energising and strengthening body and mind, and freeing the spirit.

|               |                                                       |         |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| <b>Where:</b> | The Yoga Studio of the YM-YWCA<br>880 Courtney Street |         |
| <b>When:</b>  | Saturday, March 26th 1994                             |         |
| <b>Time:</b>  | 1:30 to 4:30 P.M. at the Y                            |         |
| <b>Fees:</b>  | Y & Yoga Centre Members:                              | \$25.00 |
|               | Non-Members:                                          | \$30.00 |

Shirley is a student of the Yoga Master B.K.S. Iyengar and an experienced teacher of his method of yoga. Derek is a physician in general practice in Victoria and a longtime student of yoga.

*Please pre-register at the Y's Main Desk - Registration is limited.*

Information: Shirley Daventry French at 478-3775  
or Victoria Y 386-7511



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Hi Shirley,

My brother Doug has become very involved in the Kelowna Yoga community since moving there one year ago. He often phones me asking "What's going on?", so I decided that a subscription to the Victoria newsletter would be a great birthday gift for him.

I love receiving my copy of the newsletter and read it from cover to cover often re-reading, highlighting and reflecting on different things. I've found that sharing the information in your articles a wonderful way to open a discussion.

Your newsletter reflects the dedication and hard work of the Victoria team - Thank You!

Sincerely,  
Marlene Enns  
Vancouver

## SUMMER OF '94 IYENGAR YOGA INTENSIVE

July 25 to 30, 1994  
in Victoria

*with*

Shirley Daventry French  
Dr. Derek French  
Linda Benn  
Leslie Hogya  
Ann Kilbertus  
Jim Rischmiller

For full details see brochure  
enclosed with this issue.  
Information: 604-478-3775



MARLENE MILLER WORKSHOP



# YOGA RETREAT

7 Days in  
Puerto Vallarta, México  
with

David McAmmond and  
Margot Kitchen

March 18 to March 25, 1995  
\$700 cdn plus airfare

Price includes great accommodation,  
food, all instruction  
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For more information please call  
David (403) 289-3194  
Margot (403) 243-1078

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# THE EIGHT LIMBS OR STAGES OF YOGA - A PERSONAL VIEW

By Jane Perryman

In the sixth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita which is the most important authority on Yoga philosophy, Sri Krishna explains to Arjuna the meaning of Yoga as a deliverance from contact with pain and sorrow. It is said, "When the restlessness of the mind, intellect and self is stilled through the practice of Yoga, the yogi by the grace of the spirit within himself finds fulfilment." The right means for this fulfilment are just as important as the end in view. Patanjali enumerates these means as the eight limbs or stages of Yoga for the quest of the soul. They are: *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Asana*, *Pranayama*, *Pratyahara*, *Dharana*, *Dhyana* and *Samadhi*.

*Yama* and *Niyama* can be likened to rules of moral values and codes of behaviour relating towards others in society as social discipline, and to oneself as individual discipline.

All cultures and societies need rules, to allow both the individual and the group to survive, develop and make progress. Civilization could not exist without the concepts of *Yama* and *Niyama*. These ethics are also embraced by other great religions Islam and Buddhism as well as Christianity (with which we are familiar). So many of the aspects of *Yama* and *Niyama* are morals and values we have grown up with and been taught. As BKS Iyengar says in "Light on Yoga"; "These commandments are the rules of morality for society and the individual, which if not obeyed, bring chaos, violence, untruth, stealing, dissipation and covetousness. The roots of these evils are the emotions of greed, desire

and attachment, which may be mild, medium or excessive. They only bring pain and ignorance."

One is only too aware of the enormous mess man has made of our planet; destruction of the environment, war; famine; deliberate hoarding of food and resources while nations in other parts of the world starve. The rules of *Yama* and *Niyama* have been ignored and this is the result.

The five *Yamas* are the great universal commandments which are not limited by birthplace, time and occasion, and are applicable at all times.

Non-violence or *Ahimsa* is to do with the concept of total love, as with it no act of violence can occur. The unloved child can grow into a disturbed, even violent adult because of a lack of this most basic nurturing we all need. Just as violence is the outcome of lack of *Ahimsa*, so violence can sometimes be conquered by love.

Truthfulness or *Satya* is an important rule; we are taught from childhood that lying is wrong, but then as awareness comes we see untruthfulness everywhere; advertising and the behaviour of politicians are just two examples. Lying is also a sign of self denial and disrespect to oneself.

Non-stealing or *Asteya* is another *Yama* we are familiar with from the Ten Commandments. This can be seen on a global scale of stealing land and resources from whole nations by more powerful nations to petty shop-lifting and coveting another's possessions. The Marxist principle of "To each according to his need" is reflected in only accepting that which is necessary for one's maintenance.

Moderation in sex or *Brahmacharya* is a *Yama* which is sadly lacking in our society. Rapes

and sexual crimes can be linked to the ever-growing porn industry.

Non-hoarding or *Aparigraha* means not amassing wealth out of greed. As Geeta says in her book "Yoga a Gem for Women," "One who is free from hankering after unnecessary objects and undue sensual pleasures is free from the mental disease of acquisitiveness."

We can compare the immense wealth tied up in vast properties, art collections etc., compared to the beggar living with nothing. "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven" is a familiar and comparable quotation from the Bible.

These five *Yamas* are all interlinked; lack of *Brahmacharya* can be as a result of lack of *Ahimsa*; promotion of indulgence in sex can be linked to greed and profiteering (lack of *Asteya*). People who do not practice *Aparigraha* (non-hoarding) have often accumulated their unnecessary wealth through lack of *Satya* and lack of *Asteya*. These examples could go on and on but it seems clear that most evils in the world are caused by not following these rules of *Yama*.

The five *Niyamas* are rules of conduct towards oneself; both physical and mental. It is true to say that most people in our society which worships materialism are not happy or contented, depression, stress and physical illness abounds. Adopting these five ethics would help people to find contentment and harmony in their lives.

Purity or *Saucha* embraces both purity of body and mind; cleansing of the mind of its disturbing emotions like hatred, passion, anger, lust, greed, delusion and pride would eradicate a great deal of human misery. Purity of body is essential for well being; bathing purifies the body externally; asana and pranayama cleanse

it internally. Practice of asanas tones the entire body and removes toxins and impurities caused by over-indulgence. *Pranayama* cleanses and aerates the lungs, oxygenates the blood and purifies the nerves. *Saucha* also deals with cleansing the intellect of impure thoughts; this internal cleansing gives radiance and joy; it brings benevolence and banishes mental pain, dejection, sorrow and despair. When one is benevolent, one sees the virtues in others and not merely their faults. The respect which one shows for another's virtues makes him self-respecting as well and helps him to fight his own sorrows and difficulties.

The purity and cleanliness of food is something we are all aware of; processed and junk food is not nourishing and eating this can lead to indulgence and addiction. The expression "You are what you eat" is relevant in this *Niyama* - food should be taken to promote health, strength, energy and life. Because the body is the rest-house of the spirit, we should treat it with respect.

Contentment or *Santosha* is a state of mind which is essential for the wellbeing and development of the body and mind. Discontentment leads to greed and envy which are insatiable. We know and have experienced how lack of acceptance and discontentment are not recipes for happiness.

Austerity or *Tapas* involves a burning effort under all circumstances to achieve a definite goal in life. As students of Yoga, we have to apply *Tapas* to make progress and gain strength in body, mind and character. We hope to gain courage, wisdom, integrity, straight-forwardness and simplicity; *Tapas* can be applied to any work or task we have to do. By giving it our total commitments we can be rewarded with these qualities.

Self study or *Svadhyaya* can help us gain self knowledge or awareness, by concentrating all



the forces of the body, mind or intellect on self realization we can solve the difficult problems of life when they arise.

Devotion to God or *Isvara pranidhana* is to do with remaining aloof and performing all actions as an offering to God.

These *Niyamas* are all interlinked; the practice of *Saucha* will help *Santosha* and also be complementary to *Tapas* which will in turn lead to *Svadhyaya*.

The *Niyamas* are linked with the *Yamas* so that the practice of one helps to achieve another and so on. It is possible to follow these rules of ethics in a modest way, gradually building up one by following another until they all begin to link up as a whole, in the same way that we build up our strength and flexibility in asana practice gradually and learn that all the postures are inter-related and linked. By adopting them as a code of behaviour it is possible to lead a stress-free, contented life of benefit to other and to the world as a whole.

## Asana

In mastering the *asanas* lies the secret of the conquest of the body and by this essential step the student is carried to a spiritual plane and towards self realization.

*Asana* brings steadiness, health and lightness of limb, and by practising them one develops agility, balance, endurance and great vitality. *Asanas* have been developed over the centuries so as to exercise every muscle, nerve and gland in the body. They secure a fine physique which is strong and elastic without being muscle-bound, and they keep the body free from disease. They reduce fatigue and soothe the nerves - but the real importance lies in the way they train and discipline the mind.

*Asanas* take one from the physical to the spiritual plane.

## Pranayama

*Pranayama* can only be attempted when the body, nervous system and lungs have been strengthened through asana practice.

*Pranayama* is breath control, the end product being mental calm and tranquility of the nervous system - it is dangerous to attempt *pranayama* before steadiness of the mind has been achieved in preparation. "As lions, elephants and tigers are tamed very slowly and cautiously, so should *prana* be brought under control very slowly in graduation measured by one's own capacity and physical limitations. Otherwise it will harm or kill the practitioner," warns the Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Ch. 2, verse 16.

## Pratyahara

The process of drawing the senses inwards or putting the senses under restraint is *Pratyahara*. It is a common experience that if the mind is engrossed elsewhere, things happening in front of our eyes do not make any impression; this is called absent-mindedness or a dreamy state; such a state is not *pratyahara*. In a dreamy state the mind is engrossed in some thought and the sense organs are disconnected from their sense objects, whereas in *pratyahara* the mind is purposefully withdrawn from the sense organs so that they lose contact with the sense objects. This mastery of the mind which prevents it from becoming dispersed in the external world, is called *pratyahara*.

*Pranayama* teaches one to quieten the senses in preparation for this next stage of drawing the senses to a standstill.



### *Dharana*

The mind wanders in different directions due to the influence of the five subtle qualities of smell, taste, vision, touch and sound. These subtle qualities are felt through the sense organs of nose, tongue, eyes, skin and ears. The Yogi has to learn to restrain the mind from wandering and to turn it inwards towards the self. When the mind, the intellect, and the ego are totally focused on the self, this is *Dharana* or Concentration.

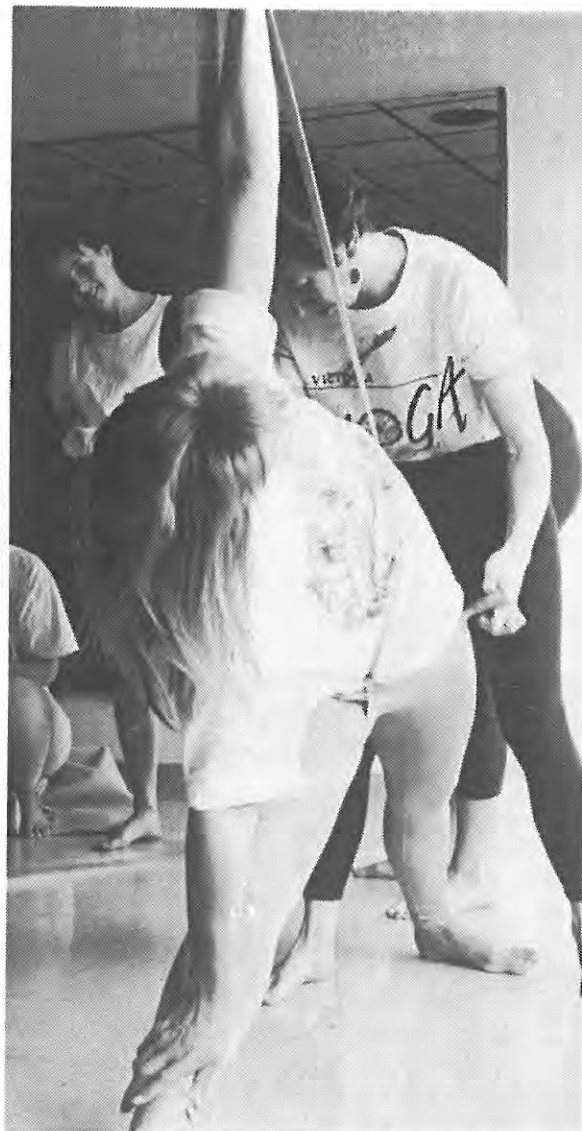
### *Dhyana*

When the Yogi sustains and maintains the focus of attention throughout the above concentration unbounded by time and space, it becomes *Dhyana* or Meditation. In such a state of deep concentration and steady undisturbed flow of meditation, the body, the breath, the mind, the intellect and the ego all lose their individual existence and merge into one single state of being. The merging of the individual soul with the universal soul is meditation.

### *Samadhi*

The eighth and final stage of Yoga is *Samadhi*, self-realization. As a river merges into the ocean, losing its identity, so the individual soul merges with the supreme. At this stage the identity of the Yogi becomes both externally and internally immersed in meditation. The meditator, the act of meditation, and the object meditated upon all shed their individual characteristics and merge into one single vision of the entire cosmos. Supreme happiness, free from pleasure, pain or misery is experienced.

*Reprinted from the May 1993 issue of the newsletter of the Iyengar Yoga Institute of London, England.*

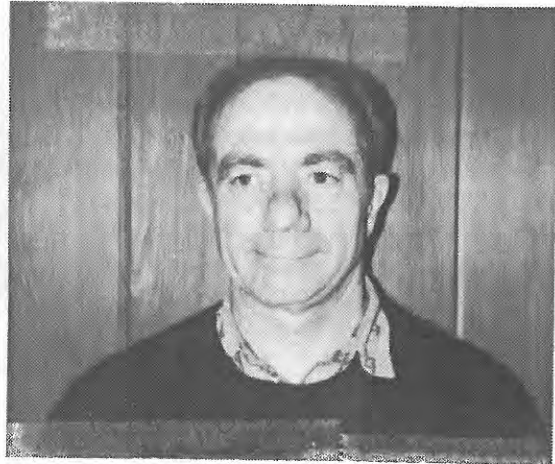


MARLENE ADJUSTING LINDA SHEVLOFF

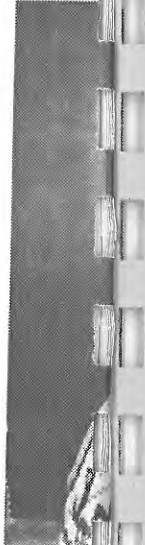
# DIRECTORS OF CENTR



**WENDY BOYER**



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**SHIRLEY DAVENTRY FRENCH**



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



# IYENGAR YOGA INTENSIVE

**July 25 to 30, 1994**

*with*

**Shirley Daventry French**

**Dr. Derek French**

**Linda Benn**

**Leslie Hogya**

**Ann Kilbertus**

**Jim Rischmiller**

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

**Fee: \$350.00**

*For further information contact:*

**Victoria Yoga Centre  
3918 Olympic View Drive  
RR#4, Victoria, BC V9B 5T8**

*Telephone Enquiries:*

**Shirley Daventry French (604) 478-3775  
or Linda Benn (604) 478-0757**





# SUMMER OF '94

## Iyengar Yoga Intensive in Victoria

### July 25 to 30, 1994

The Victoria Yoga Centre, in association with the Victoria YM-YWCA, is pleased to present its sixth annual summer yoga intensive. Victoria is an active centre of Iyengar Yoga, whose teachers maintain a close contact with Mr. Iyengar through regular trips to India and participation in conferences such as the one he attended in Toronto last summer. Our 1994 intensive will combine the skills of one of Canada's leading yoga teachers, Shirley Daventry French with physician Derek French, occupational therapist Ann Kilbertus and experienced yoga teachers Linda Benn, Leslie Hogya and Jim Rischmiller. Shirley will be the principal teacher for the asana and pranayama classes, assisted by the other teachers who will also present afternoon seminars.

This course is intended for teachers and students with experience in Iyengar Yoga, who wish to deepen their practice of asana and broaden their understanding of yoga philosophy and psychology. There will be daily classes in asana and pranayama, discussions on how to practice, how to teach and teacher/student relationships. Seminars will include: Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*, *The Bhagavad Gita*, Symbolism of the Body and Looking at Musculo-Skeletal and Back Problems with the perspective of Yoga. Classes will be held in the well-equipped Yoga Studio of the Victoria YM-YWCA which is centrally situated in one of North America's most beautiful cities.

#### PROGRAMME

**Monday, July 25 to Friday, July 29 inclusive**

|                       |           |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| 9:00 am to 12:00 noon | Asana*    |
| 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm | Lunch     |
| 2:00 to 4:00 pm       | Seminar   |
| 4:00 to 5:00 pm       | Pranayama |

\*There will be a brief introduction and orientation at the start of the Monday class.

**Saturday, July 30**

|                       |                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9:00 am to 12:00 noon | Asana                                                                                                                |
| 2:30 pm               | Picnic lunch and afternoon of rest and relaxation at the French's residence and nearby Witty's Lagoon Beach and Park |



## THE TEACHERS



**Shirley Daventry French** is a longtime student of the Yoga Master B.K.S. Iyengar and a respected teacher of his method of Yoga. She has been teaching in Victoria for over twenty years, and gives workshops nationally and internationally. Shirley has studied in India many times with Mr. Iyengar. She has also studied extensively with Swami Radha of Yasodhara Ashram. Shirley's teaching is clear, precise, insightful and integrates the philosophy and psychology of yoga with the practical work of asana and breathing.

**Derek French** is a physician in general practice in Victoria, BC with a special interest in musculo-skeletal problems, chronic pain syndromes, stress management and hypnotherapy. 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. He has studied yoga intensively with B.K.S. Iyengar and Swami Radha.

**Linda Benn** has been studying Iyengar yoga for fifteen years and teaching for eight. She is the coordinator of the Iyengar Yoga programme at the Victoria Y, one of the most comprehensive in North America, and has been a director of the Victoria Yoga Centre for many years. In 1992, Linda travelled to India for intensive study with B.K.S. Iyengar and his daughter, Geeta.

**Leslie Hoga** has been teaching yoga in Victoria for twenty years. She has travelled twice to Pune to study with B.K.S. Iyengar and his daughter Geeta. Leslie has also studied extensively with Swami Radha and Swami Padmananda at Yasodhara Ashram and Radha House, Victoria. She has been a director and active member of the Victoria Yoga Centre since its inception.

**Ann Kilbertus** is an occupational therapist presently working for Capital Regional District Community Rehabilitation. She is also an experienced yoga teacher who, in her classes, draws from both her health care training and extensive study of Iyengar Yoga. In 1992, Ann travelled to India to study intensively with B.K.S. Iyengar and his daughter Geeta.

**Jim Rischmiller** has been a student of Iyengar Yoga since 1981 and a teacher since 1986. He has studied three times in India with B.K.S. Iyengar and Geeta Iyengar, most recently in 1991. Jim is the President of the Victoria Yoga Centre. He is also studying Kundalini Yoga at Radha House, Victoria and has a special interest in integrating the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita with daily living.



## 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: \$217.62 for a single room with shared bathroom, \$322.92 for a double room. Prices include tax. A deposit should accompany your request for accommodation (\$36.27 single; \$53.82 double). Early reservations are recommended.

**Bed and Breakfast** - \$20.00 a day

**University of Victoria Residence** - Single rooms and double rooms are available; \$34.60 and \$45.80 per night. Write to: House & Conference Services, University of Victoria, PO Box 1700, Victoria, BC V8W 2Y2, Phone: (604) 721-8395

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### REQUEST FOR HOUSING IN VICTORIA - IYENGAR YOGA INTENSIVE - JULY 25 TO 30, 1994

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Province \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Please find me Bed and Breakfast accommodation in a private home. ☐ \$20.00 per day  
(Pre-payment is required by June 25 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

July 24 to 30: ☐ \$217.62 single ☐ \$322.92 double

Non-refundable deposit is enclosed ☐ \$36.27 single ☐ \$53.82 double

---

**TO REGISTER** A deposit of \$150.00 will reserve a place in this course. Payment in full is due on June 25, 1994. Refunds, less a \$50.00 cancellation fee, will be given if notice of cancellation is received by June 25. After June 25 refunds will be given only when the space is filled by another student.

## REGISTRATION FORM

Iyengar Yoga Intensive - July 25 to 30, 1994

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Province \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a teacher? \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly describe your yoga experience.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Deposit of \$150.00 enclosed  
☐ Full payment of \$350.00 enclosed

Make cheques payable to the Victoria YM-YWCA and mail to:  
Iyengar Yoga Intensive, c/o Victoria Yoga Centre  
3918 Olympic View Drive, RR#4 Victoria, BC V9B 5T8

# **CTORIA YOGA**

**, 1994**



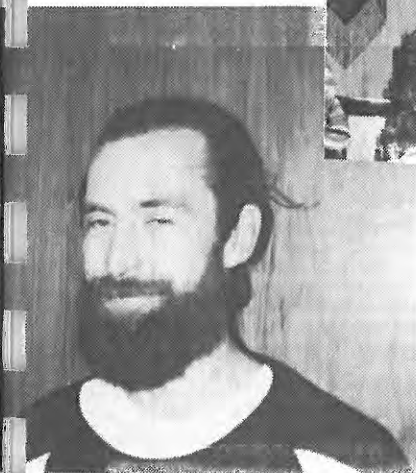
**ISCHMILLER**



**RENATE GRINFELDS**



**LINDA BENN**



**PAUL LESCARMURE**



**MARGARET FEEHAN**

## MAKE YOUR OWN YOGA PROPS

by Donna Fornelli

At a recent yoga gathering we were discussing where we could acquire additional yoga props, as most of us had had inquiries from students. After deciding the possibilities we would explore, the conversation turned to what some of us were using as props in our practice. We thought you might be interested in some of the ideas.

In place of a Setu Bandha bench, volumes one through twelve of a set of encyclopedias works very well, stacked three or four high. These books of knowledge can also be made into a platform to practise Sarvangasana.

Make your own sandbags using the legs of old jeans. Sew up one end, pour in dry sand and sew up the other end. You might consider putting the sand in a ziplock type freezer bag first. Use some glue along the zip for a good seal.

Legs of old jeans also come in handy for making a bolster. If you happen to have some camping foamies that are no longer useful, simply cut the desired length from jeans and sew up one end. Then, roll up foam and stuff into cover made from the jeans and sew up the end. If the only old jeans you have happen to be the ones you are still wearing, following are instructions to make a bolster using store-bought fabric.

### For Bolster and Cover:

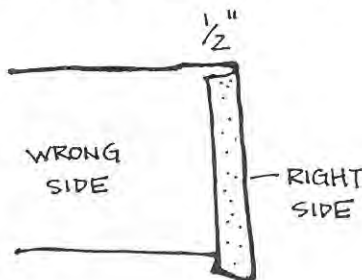
You will need 1.3 metres of 150 cm (60 in.) or 1.5 metres of 115 cm (45 in.) fabric, .5 metres of interfacing, 1 spool of thread, one 22 inch zipper (optional for those who don't get along with zippers), cotton stuffing ( 3 to 4 meters of cotton batting or stuffing available at upholstery shops. Some futon shops sells scraps by the garbage bag at a reasonable price.)

### Method.

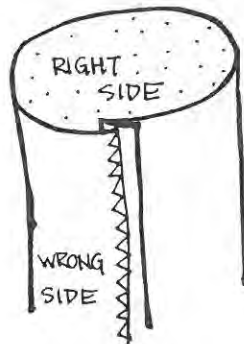
Cut 2 squares 67 cm x 74 cm (26 1/2 x 29 inches) and four circles 9 1/2 in. or 23.5 cm in diameter. Cut 2 9 1/2 inch circles from the interfacing. Zigzag or straight stitch all the raw edges on the squares and circles of fabric.

### For the bolster.

Make a fold 1/2 in. deep along one of the short sides of the squares, making sure the fabric is folded onto the wrong side of the fabric.



With the right side of the fabric facing you, take the zigzag edge and lap it over the folded edge and pin.





Place two interfacing circles on the wrong side of the two of the fabric circles. Pin one of these to each end of the body of the bolster, making sure that right sides of fabric are together. Sew around 1/4 inch seams, then sew another row of stitching close to the first row. Stuff with cotton (or other) material until it is the desired firmness. Slip stitch bolster closed.

Cover.

Using the other square of fabric make a 1/2 inch fold along both of the 26 1/2 inch edges. Make fold toward the wrong side of fabric. If you suffer from zipperphobia proceed with the sewing instructions for the bolster. Slip stitch to close. If using zipper, stitch 2 inches of seam at each end of closing. Insert zipper and stitch in place. Then sew the two ends in place, right sides together.

## The Victoria Yoga Centre

announces its Annual

### SALTSPRING ISLAND WEEKEND RETREAT

June 3, 4, and 5, 1994

with

Shirley Daventry French

Circle these dates on your calendar  
and watch for full details  
in next month's newsletter  
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## BABAJI'S KRIYA YOGA

Initiations with M. Govindan

Author of the book

"Babaji and the 18 Siddha Kriya Yoga Tradition"

in Victoria, B.C. (April 1-3)

M. Govindan will be giving  
an initiation seminar  
Saturday and Sunday,  
April 2-3, 1994,  
9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.,  
at the Victoria Regent Hotel,  
1234 Wharf Street, Victoria.  
Suggested contribution is \$200.00.

This will be preceded by :  
an introductory conference  
and meditation.  
Friday April 1, from 7 to 9 p.m.  
at the same location.  
Suggested contribution is \$7.00.

For more information or to enroll telephone Pat at (604) 386-8754  
or contact:

Marshall Govindan  
165 de La Gauchetière West, #608  
Montreal, Quebec H2Z 1X6  
Telephone (514) 284-3551





**THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE  
AND THE Y.M.Y.W.C.A.**

## **WELCOME YOU TO A FRIDAY NIGHT GATHERING**

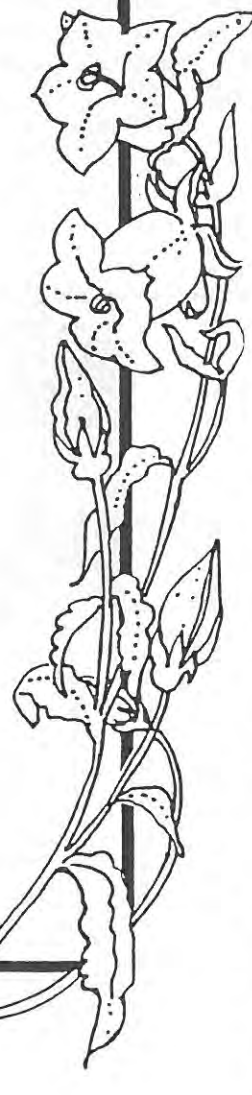
**Hatha Practice at 6 p.m.  
in the Dance Studio**

**Potluck dinner at 7 p.m.  
in the Yoga Lounge**

**followed by a discussion  
topic to be announced**

**Date: Friday, March 25, 1994**

**Everyone is welcome  
Please join us**



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with

### Celia Ward

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- poses to practice during menstruation
- relaxation and breathing.

#### **Sunday, April 17**

Victoria YM-YWCA, Yoga Studio  
10 - 1 p.m.

#### **Fees**

Yoga Centre Members - \$25.00

Non - members - \$30.00

#### **Registration**

Phone Celia at 388-7839

Refreshments / Beginners welcome

**Celia Ward** has been teaching yoga for 10 years and teaches at the University of Victoria. She is a student of B.K.S. Iyengar and has on three occasions studied at the Iyengar Institute in Pune, India.



# Chakras, Bandhas, and Kriyas

## A lecture by Guruji

*This lecture was given by Guruji during the week long celebrations of his 70th birthday in Pune, December, 1988, and published in the Iyengar Yoga Institute Review, San Francisco, 1989.*

With my prostrations to Lord Patanjali, and master of all masters, Lord Narayana, and to my beloved Guru who induced me to take this path, I send my salutations to these three, and pay my respects to them before I can begin this subject. You know, the organizers asked me to sit on the platform while speaking. But I have chosen this corner because of my timidity in this subject. In case something happens, I can hide my face in the corner.

This is the most mysterious subject, yoga physiology. You have all heard so much about physiology that I have very little to add to it. The seed is very small, but from it sprouts a gigantic tree. But we, unfortunately, have not gone beyond that seed and seedling and hence our intelligence is in that very slow growth. Whereas the subject has reached the extreme limit of the growth of that seed and hence it is the most difficult subject to cover.

What is physiology? It is a science dealing with organic processes or the functions of living organisms. As it is a dynamic, invisible living force within, which keeps each and every individual alive, kicking, being subjective, this science of physiology is very difficult to express. Before going into the physiological aspect of man, however, we should know that we as human beings are made up of three elements. Not the elements of nature, but three principles. Sharira, the body, manas, the mind ( and you all know when I speak mind I mean not only the outer most layer which you all know, but also the innermost levels which are very difficult to

interpenetrate)), and then atman, the soul, the seer. So this man has these three apparatus, three instruments, which comprise a mandala - body, mind and soul - like a universe mutating within man. And our sages spoke of three bodily frames or shariras enveloping the soul, which are further divided into five sheaths or koshas.

The first sharira, the sthula-sharira, is the gross or anatomical body, consisting of one sheath, the anamya-kosha or sheath of nourishment. The sthula-sharira is destroyed at death. The third frame, the karana-sharira or causal body is also composed of one sheath, the anandamaya-kosha or the spiritual sheath of joy. It is the most interior, the most ethereal of the bodies. The middle frame, the sukshma-sharira or subtle body, is the bridge or connecting link between the spiritual and physical bodies. It contains three sheaths; the pranamaya-kosha is the physiological sheath including the respiratory, circulatory, digestive, endocrine, excretory, and genital systems; the manomaya-kosha or psychological sheath involves awareness, feeling and judgement not derived from subjective experience; the vijnanamaya-kosha is the intellectual sheath involving the processes of reasoning and judgement which are derived from subjective experience.

Patanjali gave tremendous importance to this middle body. As he describes in Chapter 1, sutras 5-11, all actions are created by vrttis. There are five kinds of these vrttis, causing mixed pains and pleasures, which may or may not be cognizable. When pleasure is visible, the pain is hidden. When the pain is visible, the pleasure is hidden. These trigger the causal body and the gross body to react. And physiologically, knowing that this middle body is the bridge, because in this middle body we do not know the actions and reactions taking place in the pranamaya-kosha and the manomaya-kosha, the physiological and the psychological sheaths, we see that this middle body is both a troublemaker and a trouble

shooter. If it could be brought under control, and I am not only speaking of mind, as the life force and consciousness are intermingled together. Where there is consciousness, there is life force. Where there is life force, there is consciousness. They cannot be separated at all. Hence, any reactions on these two, on life force or on the

consciousness, act and react on themselves are expressed in the inner body and the outer body through facial expressions, etc. That is why Patanjali begins with "cittavrtti nirodha". So yogic physiology has a tremendous bearing on the psychology of each individual. Patanjali only uses physiological terminology once, in the first chapter when he says, "Pracchardana vidharanabhyam va pranasya". Restrain the outflow of breath which is the controlled art of releasing. (1-34). When you are in the state of releasing the breath which is a physiological action, if you are steady at that moment, the reaction of this physiological action on your mind and on your citta is tranquilizing, appeasing. Can you bring to that living process, readjusting while you are breathing, physiologically and psychologically, that appeasement which takes place in the process of the movement, retaining it a little longer. Patanjali later develops this in the second chapter in discussing asana and pranayama, training each individual to maintain that nirodha or restrained state in the flow of the energy or in the waves of the consciousness.

If the mutations take place in the consciousness, the reactions are felt immediately in the entire vagus system, the respiratory system, the circulatory system, the digestive system, the nervine system, the glandular system, excretory system, generative system. All get boiled up. And this reaction or boiling up of these systems affects the causal body or the karana-sharira. Patanjali says, "vrtti sarupyam itarata." (1-4). The karana-sharira or the atma-sharira gets enmeshed according to the dictates and

mutations of the consciousness of the mind. So these two sutras of Patanjali cover the entire domain of human development. If the "vrtti sarupyam itaratra" which disturbs the physiological body, is made not to mutate at all, then the psychological silence takes one to the other side of the coin, abhyasa and vairagyam (1, 12-16). Abhyasa is an evolutionary method (pravrttimarga), and vairagya is the involuntary method (nirvrtti marga). This abhyasa and vairagya is also a mandala, two in one, as the mind, body and soul are three in one, trinity in unity. Abhyasa and vairagya, united as one, bring a poise, tranquility. When there is tranquility, energy is stored in the system. It is not wasted, dissipated at all. So the entire aim of yoga is to develop that jnana, that knowledge which can take us in that right path of abhyasa and vairagya, the pravrtti marga or the nirvrtti marga. Nirvrtti means moving from the peripheral areas, from the external body, towards the inner body, the karana-sharira. The pravrtti marga means coming back from the karana-sharira towards the sthula-sharira, from the causal body to the external body. To understand the inner intricacies and to explore the inner channels by the external means conveys the meaning of abhyassa and vairagya.

Now abhyassa and vairagya are both connected to jnana. That jnana, according to Patanjali, is savitarka jnana, savichara jnana, sananda jnana, and sasmita jnana (1, 17). And that jnana is samprajnana. Not just jnana, but prajnana. Savitarka, savichara, sananda, sasmita means prajnana not just jnana. What is the difference between jnana and prajnana? Jnana is an acquired knowledge while prajnana is an experiencing knowledge. So abhyassa and vairagya helps to develop that subjective knowledge. Through acquirement, through external means, we find out the pros and cons of the objective knowledge, to come to a final judgement in savitarka and savichara, so that



we may begin the subjective method in the form of *sananda* and *sasmita*. Now unless and until this *jnana* is developed, our *jnana* is like a seed that cannot sprout at all.

So, the eight aspects of yoga, *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *dharana*, *dhyana*, *samadhi*, are meant to break this hard seed which is not sprouting. Some seeds may sprout very soon, some may take years according to our inner strength. It took me 50 years to be able to give a talk like this, to open the seed of *jnana*. But this development comes only through *astanga* yoga. *Yama* and *niyama* are meant to transform one's character. They try to subjugate or sublimate the *tamoguna* and the *rajoguna*. *Guna vrtti nirodha* comes from *yama* and *niyama*. *Snayu* (cells) *vrtti nirodha*, the physiological mutations, are controlled or restrained by the *asanas*. *Prana vrtti nirodha*, to restrain the dissipation of the energy, and to accumulate the energy for better living, is *pranayama*. *Indriya* and *mano vrtti nirodha* is *pratyahara*. *Jnana vrtti nirodha*, or as we say, concentration, is *dharana*. Even the *jnana*, the intellect, oscillates. One day you might come to a judgement, I think I am right. The next day you say no, I don't think I agree. So stopping these *jnana vrttis* is *dharana*. When the *jnana vrttis* are stopped, that is not the end of it. Then comes *citta vrtti nirodha*. When *jnana* becomes quiet, then *citta* has to become quiet. This is the quieting of the intelligence. The intelligence belongs to the heart, the intellect to the head. In this state, the *buddhi* does not shake at all. *Buddhi* is *eka*, is one. As *buddhi* is one, *atman* is one. So yoga takes us from the outer body, step by step, towards the middle body. I speak of the middle so that you may become mature in your terminology, because *atman* is only in the centre. In the centre of the body is the *karana-sharira*. Hence *madhyama sharira* is the right word. Yoga begins with the external body, the *anamayakosha*, the structural or muscular body. From here the *pravrtti marga* breaks the barriers so we can enter the

*antara-sharira*, the *suksma-sharira*, which is called in the medical terminology the organic body or vital areas. The yogis called it the *pranava-sharira*. After penetrating the physical-psychological body, it penetrates further towards the *vijnana maya-kosha* which the western science has never thought of at all. To them, everything is mind. Mind (*Manas*) is a gatherer. Mind cannot judge.

The inner instrument of the mind alone judges. And that inner mind is *vijnana*. That is why the yogic scientists have used a better terminology for us to tread this path without any confusion. To develop *jnana* into *prajnana* and for this *prajnana* to lead us to the *Atman*, the divine source, this is the path of yoga. The science and philosophy of yoga come to an end when an ordinary human being becomes a divine being. This is yoga.

Now we have come to *bandhas*, *mudras*, *chakras*, and *kriyas*. The word *kriya* is very misunderstood in modern times. The *kriyas* of the *hatha* yoga texts are very different from the *kriyas* of the *Patanjali Yoga Sutras*. The *shat kriyas*, *neti*, *nauli*, *basti*, *dhauti*, *tratak* and *kapalabhati*, are on the physiological level, used in yogic texts to keep the vital organs healthy, provided they cannot be cured by any other means. Hence, they are never used for the growth of spiritual knowledge. They have medical value when used to vanquish certain incurable diseases, but should not be brought at all into the picture of *Patanjali's kriyas*.

"*Tapah svadhyaya ishvarapranidhanani kriyayogah*" (II, 1). *Patanjali's kriyas* are practical. *Tapas*, *svadhyaya*, *ishvara pranidhana*, and *abhyasa*, *vairagya* connects all these three. Because if you do not know the outer body, the middle body, the inner body, is there any way to sanctify, to purify, to make holy, the outer, middle or inner bodies? Hence, all actions are meant to follow *abhyasa* and *vairagya* with the various terminologies. *Mudra* means a seal,

bandha means a lock. Why are these words used? You know today banks have lockers. Why? So that your precious things may be kept safe, is it not? And all are not allowed to go into the lockers, you and I cannot go. Only those who have booked the lockers can go to open them. So these mudras and bandhas are the interior lockers of the human. They cannot be opened easily. You cannot open the lockers in the bank without the permission of the manager, is it not? He has to come with you to open the main door, to the main locker. Then another man comes to open the inner door and then goes away. Then you open your locker yourself. So the madhya sharira and the antara sharira are the agents to unlock before you yourself unlock your door. The doors of the atman have to be opened by your own atman. And that is why these lockers have been introduced into the logic system. Because you are the only one who knows the number of that key. You should know at what time exactly you should unlock these gates.

Why did they come into existence? Because there is a precious energy, a precious jewel, hidden in your system known as kundalini. Kundala kara means coiled. Each individual, any individual, cannot do savasana for 8 hours. Even after half an hour, even if the savasana is very good, we still get up. As we explained to you yesterday, it is the grace of God which brings the energy back into your body. That is why it is called kundala kara. And because this energy was coiled, a new word, kundalini, came into existence. It is a divine force. Each individual has several divine forces. Probably, Indians are well aware that even in Madhya Pradesh there are numerous murderers, dacoits, thieves. But when the dacoits have some restraint of the gunas, even though they are dacoits. Many have never molested a woman. And some would only steal from the rich and give away to the poor. There are some very interesting stories you should read, to see that there is also a bright side to these people. And we

should look at ourselves, to see what types of dacoitism goes on in our own system, to see where there is violence and thievery, and where there is divine light. The term shakti is also used to indicate this divine force or power. To awaken this shakti, your purusha has to be developed, your character has to be developed. But today what is happening? Every Tom, Dick and Harry on the street is going around saying "my kundalini has awakened!"

You ask anybody, they say, "Oh, he touched me, my kundalini has awakened." Only in the fourth chapter does Patanjali speak of kundalini in the name of prakriti. The original term was purusha-prakriti samyogah. The divine union of the purusha with the prakriti makes the man divine. An abundant flow of shakti runs in him.

Now what is this union? Lord Vishnu has a consort, Lakshmi. Lord Shiva has a consort, Parvati. Lord Brahma has a consort, Saraswati. Similarly, this jivatman has a consort which is prakriti and the five elements of nature which are attributes. So it is nothing new. The science of yoga and the practice of yoga teach us to see how this person, the purusha, the jiva, can live with this consort, the prakriti, with poise and peace. So the prakriti in each individual is in an unpolluted state. So also the purusha. But the middle body unfortunately, the bridge, through the vrttis of the citta, creates all these problems and pollutes the prakriti, pollutes the purusha. When the middle body becomes clear, there can be direct contact, prakriti with purusha and purusha with prakriti, without interference. Then there is purity, cleanliness, sanctity, within and without. And that is the real action of kundalini.

This sleeping energy cannot be awakened by any means except fire. If you have to burn something, you need fire, is it not? So this fire is nothing but the fire of yoga. The fire of yoga alone flames and burns the lockers

inside and brings back the balance inside for the shakti to rush or gush to reach its lover, the purusha. This divine force has six chambers. These chambers are known as the vessels of shakti. As electrical energies are stored in the power houses, we have power houses in our system. And these power houses are known as shakti koshas or chakras. They are: muladhara, svadhisthana, manipuraka, ananahata, visuddhi, and ajna. These are six chambers from which the sleeping energy is made to get up, so that it is ever awake and at one with the sahasrara, the seat of the purusha, the seat of the individual. So that there is absolutely no polarity at all between prakriti and purusha.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT MONTH.

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### *Divine Light Invocation*

*Saturday, April 23, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.*

The Divine Light Invocation is a powerful yogic practise for healing oneself and others, and for realising the Light within.

Fee: \$50, \$15 deposit

# YOGA CALENDAR

## MARCH:

- 11-13: Felicity Green Workshop at the Y.
- 19: Pranayama in Metchosin led by Shirley Daventry French
- 5: Yoga Centre Gathering
- 26: Teachers meeting at the Y.  
Workshop at the Y 1.30 to 4.30 p.m.  
See ad this issue.

## APRIL:

- 7: Sunday Workshop at the Y  
Led by Cella Ward. See ad this issue.
- 22: Yoga Centre Gathering BIG BIG PRACTISE led by Shirley Daventry French.
- 23: Teachers Meeting at the Y.

## MAY:

- 28: Teachers meeting at the Y.

## JUNE:

- 3,4,5: Saltspring Retreat led by Shirley Daventry French
- 18: Pranayama in Metchosin led by Shirley Daventry French.
- 25: Teachers meeting at the Y.

## JULY:

- 1-4: Canadian Iyengar Yoga Teachers Meeting in Montreal.
- 25-30: Iyengar Yoga Intensive in Victoria led by Shirley Daventry French.

## 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.

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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 its inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

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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, V9B 5T7. Telephone: (604) 474-5630.

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**DEADLINE FOR APRIL ISSUE: MARCH 15, 1994**

**VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY**

3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R. #4, Victoria, B.C., Canada, V9B 5T8

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# VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

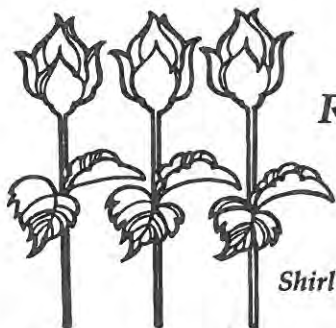
## *Newsletter*

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***April, 1994***



## Reflections

by  
*Shirley Daventry French*

The other day I sought some help for a chronic shoulder problem. Most of the time practising yoga asana brings relief; but if not, I am fortunate because I have other options. One is to turn to my husband Derek, a physician who has taken a great deal of post-graduate training in osteopathic manipulation and other hands on methods which can release jammed up joints and acute muscle spasms.

This winter I have had a persistent painful trigger point around one of my costo-vertebral joints in the upper thorax with pain radiating up into my neck. Or does the pain emanate from my neck and radiate down into my thorax? I don't know. All I do know is that although I always feel freer after my asana practice or when Derek has helped me, so far the pain has always returned before long. The other day, after he had worked on this area for the umpteenth time, Derek said me: "Why don't you go and see, Michael?" So I went.

Michael is a physiotherapist— an intuitive sensitive man with solid credentials who, like Derek, has built on his conventional medical training by studying various mobilisation techniques and other methods which facilitate the body's own healing energy and tap into the mind and it's interference or co-operation with this process. As he works he also acknowledges a spiritual dimension and what he describes as "the hidden agenda for which we incarnate." Always, there are many forces at work beyond the obvious mechanical dysfunctions.

Why, I have been asking myself, do I keep recreating this problem? And to help find an answer to this question I have made an appointment with another body work specialist whom I respect; a Rolfer with whom I have worked before when confronted with some deep holding patterns.

Michael has some rituals which he goes through to let go of his ego involvement, and get his ambition out of the way so that the work which the individual client needs to do can proceed according to their spiritual needs. It is a tremendous temptation for all those in the "helping" professions, including yoga teachers, to insert their own agendas. Too many people meddle in others' affairs without any consideration of their ignorance of that individual's destiny and the demons they must wrestle before moving on. At the end of each session, Michael acknowledges the source from which he draws inspiration, seeing it as a privilege to be able to help others free up energy to be used in their own healing process. He always expresses gratitude for the opportunity to do this work, and asks that the energy may be used positively.

He knows I am a yoga teacher and, at the end of our session, he asked me what was the difference between Iyengar Yoga and Hatha Yoga. "Discipline!" I answered. On entering his office that day, I had noticed a poster on the door advertising classes in Hatha Yoga with a local teacher. This may have stimulated his question. I went on to talk about the depth of training which Mr. Iyengar expects his students to undergo before becoming

teachers and how there is form and structure to his work drawing on thousands of years of tradition. I added that, while Mr. Iyengar's work is incredibly creative and innovative, it's important - before tinkering with this structure to thoroughly understand the forces involved. Too many inexperienced teachers mess around with Mr. Iyengar's work before having even an elementary understanding of its structure and—even more important—what is the purpose of this structure.

Hatha Yoga, of course, is also a discipline, but in the West is often taught in an undisciplined way without proper training or supervision.

I talked about teaching yoga and the differences between those classes which really flowed easily, which I felt really good about, and others where the flow was not there. Fortunately, at those times I am able to draw on my training and systematically put together what I think of as a "journeyman" class—not inspired but competent. I really appreciate the structure and discipline of my training; it has helped me lay down a deposit from which I can draw when necessary, and which offers a protection for teacher and student alike.

Michael agreed about the value of structure and discipline, and talked about how, when he was working well, he was able to tap into a source of energy or light with client after client. On those occasions he did not feel tired at the end of the day, and felt truly blessed to be able to do this work—and earn a living to boot! For him also, there are times when this flow doesn't happen and it is hard work; at such times he too relies on his training and experience. We talked about the importance in any work of this kind in first following a disciplined course of study. This may serve as a springboard from which to explore other creative avenues, but also serves as a foundation on which to build when that creative energy is not readily available and it's necessary to proceed systematically.

This incident was followed a few days later by another conversation about creativity and discipline with one of Derek's friends who is the director of the local music conservatory. I was asking him about the cadenza, a passage of music where a soloist would improvise on the theme of the work being played. Apparently these days classical musicians rarely venture into improvisations because the audiences for which they are playing expect the piece to be played exactly according to the way it was written by the composer note by note. He felt the art of improvisation was being lost, and would like to see a return to the tradition of improvisational cadenzas. However, he emphasised that before improvising on a work a musician would be expected to know it inside out and be thoroughly accomplished in its performance.

Mr. Iyengar expects no less of those who teach in his name. First learn the basics, become proficient in practising and teaching these, before moving on. Teachers want to move on too soon. It upsets him to see this and he wisely attempts to restrain them. Many people see this as inhibiting their creativity. In my experience, and that of most of those who stay with Mr. Iyengar and his work, this restraint and discipline allows us to lay down a firm foundation which protects our students as well as ourselves, and when the time is right allows our creative energy to flow from a reliable source.

Discipline is a word which has fallen into disrepute in our society, but in most worthwhile endeavours it is both the underpinning and the means of sustenance. It is fundamental to spiritual practice and growth. Recently in the *Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, I read that in Tibetan the term for discipline, *tsul trim*, means to do what is appropriate or just - not a bad maxim to follow!





PHOTO OF CANADIAN INTENSIVE , PUNE  
1993 .



**THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE  
AND THE Y.M.Y.W.C.A.**

## **WELCOME YOU TO A FRIDAY NIGHT GATHERING**

**The last in this series until the fall term**

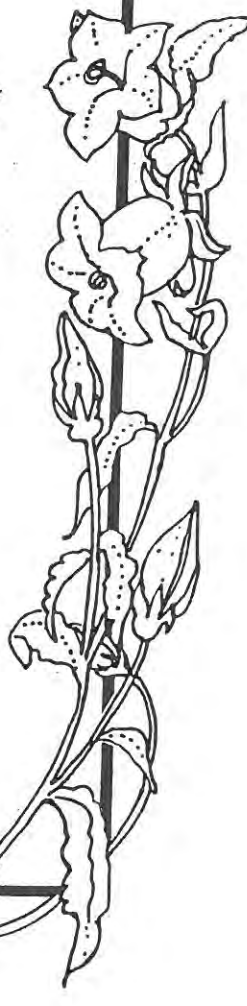
**Big Big** Practice at 6 p.m. in the Dance Studio  
led by Shirley Daventry French

**Potluck dinner at 7 p.m. in the Yoga Lounge**

**followed by a discussion on Karma Yoga**

**Date: Friday, April 22, 1994**

**Everyone is welcome  
Please join us**



Yoga Centre Members:

The Centre is pleased to offer the following scholarships:

**Yoga Retreat at the Saltspring Centre,  
June 3,4,5, 1994**

One \$100.00 scholarship

and

**Iyengar Yoga Intensive  
July 25 to 30, 1994**

Three individual \$100.00 scholarships

If you would like to apply for a scholarship or know of someone you wish to nominate to receive this assistance, please contact Margaret Feehan, 383-9987, or your yoga teacher.

**Deadline for applications is April 22, 1994**

The money which the Victoria Yoga Centre sets aside each year for scholarships is generated by the revenue from the workshops which we sponsor and by the interest on money which was donated and which we hold in a term deposit.

# VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

presents

## YOGA FOR WOMEN

with

### Celia Ward

**Invite your strength and nurture your  
beauty in this special workshop for women**

Through the practice of yoga asanas, breathing and relaxation, women have the means to take charge of their physical and emotional health and well-being.

This workshop will include:-

- poses to strengthen body and mind
- poses to release stress, bringing calmness and equanimity
- poses to practice during menstruation
- relaxation and breathing.

**Sunday, April 17**

Victoria YM-YWCA, Yoga Studio  
10 - 1 p.m.

**Fees**

Yoga Centre Members - \$25.00

Non - members - \$30.00

**Registration**

Phone Celia at 388-7839

Refreshments / Beginners welcome

**Celia Ward** has been teaching yoga for 10 years and teaches at the University of Victoria. She is a student of B.K.S. Iyengar and has on three occasions studied at the Iyengar Institute in Pune, India.





# **The Victoria Yoga Centre**

**Is pleased to present**

**The 1994 Weekend Retreat  
at The Saltspring Centre**

**with**

**Shirley Daventry French**

**Friday, June 3, 6:00 pm through Sunday, June 5, 2:00 pm**

## **ALL LEVELS**

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

**Yoga Centre Members \$205.00**

**Non-Members \$225.00**

**(includes membership fee)**

**Refunds are given only in the event that the space is filled.**

**All refunds are subject to a 15% administration fee.**

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 many times to study at the Iyengar Yoga Institute in Pune. 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 pranyama, 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 accomodation is provided. There is also space for tenting.

**Please make your cheques payable to:**

**Victoria Yoga Centre**

**and mail to: Jim Rischmiller**

**4489 Lindholm Rd RR1 Victoria V9B 5T7**

**For further information phone Jim at 474-5630, or Leslie at 383-6301**

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

## IYENGAR YOGA INTENSIVE

July 25 to 30, 1994

with

**Shirley Daventry French**  
**Dr. Derek French**  
**Linda Benn**  
**Leslie Hogya**  
**Ann Kilbertus**  
**Jim Rischmiller**

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

Fee: \$350.00

Victoria is an active centre of Iyengar Yoga, whose teachers maintain a close contact with Mr. Iyengar through regular trips to India and participation in conferences such as the one he attended in Toronto last summer. Our 1994 Summer Intensive will combine the skills of one of Canada's leading yoga teachers Shirley Daventry French with physician Derek French, occupational therapist Ann Kilbertus, and experienced yoga teachers Linda Benn, Leslie Hogya and Jim Rischmiller.

The residence at the Y has a limited amount of inexpensive accommodation for women, billets are available with members of the local yoga community, and, as a popular tourist centre, Victoria has wide selection of hotels and motels.

*For further information contact:*  
Victoria Yoga Centre  
3918 Olympic View Drive  
R.R.4 Victoria, B.C.V9B 5T8

*Telephone enquiries:*  
Shirley Daventry French (604) 478-3775  
or Linda Benn (604) 478-0757



When preparing for the Heart Center workshop, I looked up heart in the encyclopedia, there was nothing but the physical heart. In the dictionary are lists of words, the figurative definition. It is the seat of emotion, of our innermost thoughts and feelings.

Some of the phrases from the dictionary: heavy heart, stout heart, kind heart, broken heart, learn by heart, hearts content, heartiness.

I also thought about my work in Kundalini and re-read the papers I had written while studying the heart chakra, the Anahata chakra. The heart center is related to the sense of touch. It's where we are touched. Touched by others to compassion. The heart center is the Abode of Mercy. If we think of our body as our temple, the inner door of the temple is to the Abode of Mercy.

As I began the workshop I talked about the foundation that has to be laid in working through the first three chakras. The heart cannot open without a strong base or we end up being swallowed up by emotion.

The same principle is true in the poses. The firm foundation of legs and trunk must be there to open the chest. The chest doesn't really open, it's the shoulders and neck that must release. The poses concentrated on the area of the shoulder girdle and neck.

I want to thank all those who came and participated in the workshop - without you there would be no workshops! I also want to thank Renate for the food and Ann Kilbertus for assisting. With a mixed level class and students unknown to me, it was a tremendous help to have another set of eyes and hands at work, especially ones so skilful - thank you, Ann.

March in Victoria brought the blossoms, spring winds and Felicity.

Felicity's workshop was entitled Love, Knowledge and Action. When I was preparing a thank you letter to her before the end of the workshop, I thought of how she brought those three words to life during our time together.

Her love of life and respect for each for us was a foundation of her teaching. Her love of yoga and its many gifts was evident as she instructed us in the meaning of AUM on the first evening together.

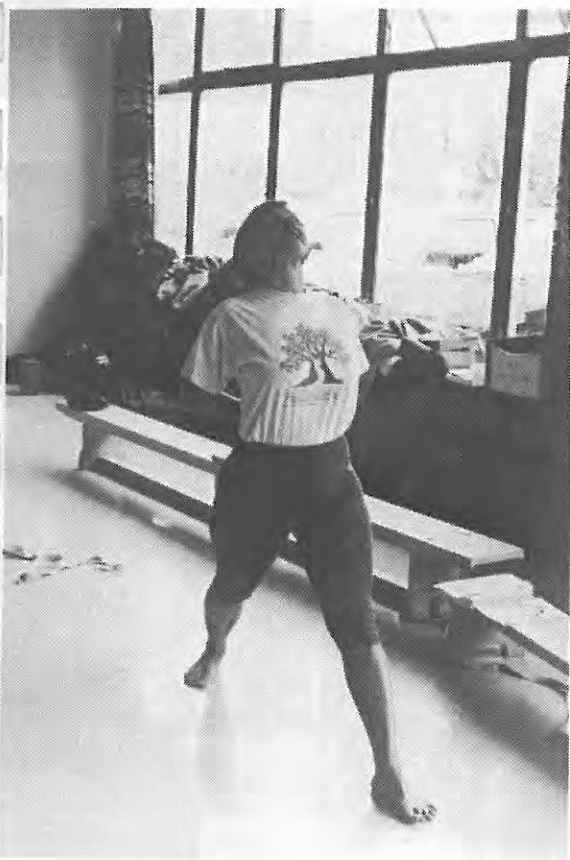
Her knowledge of yoga was evident in every move and instruction. Each instruction was given clearly and succinctly. There was no extraneous word. Her knowledge comes from her own practice and work and study of the art of yoga. She brought her keen vision to our bodies and worked with each of us.

Her words, knowledge and love spurred us all to action. This action was changed from a physical action, athletic action, to a yogic action. The static poses changed to ones alive, dynamic and with energy flowing.

During the workshop she talked about yoga and yoga philosophy. The three levels of doing a pose were explained. First getting the physical pose. The muscles work. For some people who have supple bodies, this stage is not too difficult. For others with stiffer bodies, this stage is the challenge. Next comes the more subtle alignment. The bones must begin to come into more parallel lines. For example, a person with a carrying angle

in the elbow must begin to focus on getting that alignment, to correct the misalignment. This is subtle and more difficult work. But she showed us how it can change. Then there is the inner work. This is the level when the muscles are no longer working hard, when there is release, when the energy begins to flow. Where the true union of body, mind and soul happen. This is what Mr. Iyengar says when he proclaims he does not do physical yoga. So no matter how the pose looks externally, how the supple person may go into a pose and be there, if the third stage does not come, then it is just a physical pose, a gymnastic trick.

These talks, interspersed in the workshop helped bring the Love and Knowledge into the Action. Thank you, Felicity!



## **PRANAYAMA**

**in Metchosin**

with

**Shirley Daventry French**

**Saturday, April 30th and  
Saturday, June 18th**

**Pranayama Class  
and Asana Practice**

|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| 8:00 to 9:15 am  | Pranayama      |
| 9:15 to 10:15 am | Refreshment    |
| 10:15 to 12 noon | Asana Practice |
| 12 noon          | Brunch         |

**Fee: \$22.00 per class  
or \$40.00 for two classes**

**Information and registration: 478-3775**





PHOTOS FROM LESLIE'S  
WORKSHOP, FEBRUARY 1994.





# Chakras, Bandhas, and Kriyas

## A lecture by Guruji

*This lecture was given by Guruji during the week long celebrations of his 70th birthday in Pune, December, 1988, and published in the Iyengar Yoga Institute Review, San Francisco, 1989.*

These chakras are possessing the elements of tattva, the elements of nature, which is why kundalini is also called prakriti shakti. Because it has the power of all the universe. They also have their own shape, their own form or mandala. Muladhara has prithvi tattva or the element of earth. Its form or shape has four petals. You may laugh at these ideas because they are not seen by the naked eye nor by the sophisticated instruments invented by the modern scientists. But the yogis had a much deeper awareness than we have today. What knowledge they had! The heart has four chambers, which we know today. Did they know it had four chambers previously? Only after dissection was practiced did they find the four chambers. So also if we go on dissecting, one day we may also come to the thoughts of the ancients about the various divisions of these inner chambers.

The second is the svadhisthana chakra which has the element water and six petals or six mandalas. These two chakras, I am using the word chakras alone, have the qualities of the gunatamas. Why is the energy coiled? Because it is in the tamasic state in those two chakras.

Then comes the manipuraka, the element of fire, the agni or tejas tattva, with 10 petals. You all know the solar plexus. The manipuraka chakra has the character of rajas. So all mutations take place here, in the navel area. Anahata, the fourth chakra, is of the

element air, vayu, (if the air is gone, a man is dead) and has 12 petals. It is also rajasic, because our citta, our way of thinking, our way of acting, is full of rajasic nature. Citta vrtti nirodha, control the rajasic nature. See the connections. Vishuddhi, the fifth, has the tattva of ether, akasa, with 16 petals. The element akasa is full of sattva nature. The sixth chakra, ajna, which is the third eye which you have all heard of, has the tattva of buddhi and two petals, symbolizing the mind, functioning in the two regions, purusha and prakriti.

These chakras are all turning. Chakra means wheel. Even in the modern industrial world, all instruments are connected to one wheel or the other. There is no single wheel. All the multiple wheels are dependent on a central wheel or base wheel. And as soon as that wheel begins moving, it triggers the others to start moving as well. So chakra means a wheel. So it makes the energy to roll one over the other through the six chambers or six chakras. And this shakti, which is a prakriti shakti, having all the elements of nature through the visuddhi chakra, ascends a little higher to become a buddhi chakra, a gunatita. Which is why the terminology says this is the third eye. The intuitive eye is the third eye. So when you reach that third eye, you have conquered the three gunas of nature. And as the three gunas of nature have come to an end, this buddhi tattva, through this ascending shakti of prakriti, reaches the culminating area

known as the sahasrara chakra, the thousand petalled lotus, or the chakra of the thousand petals.

Now people, even from Vivekananda on down, all have criticized that these chakras have nothing to do with the growth of Raja yoga. They all say it is nothing but a hatha yogic, tantric method which has nothing to do with yogic method. So I thought that you as students of yoga should know that. Sage Patanjali, even though people say he has not used the word chakra, has used them.

"Nabhicakrekayavyuha jnanam". (III-30). What is nabhichakra? Navel chakra. What is navel chakra? In the Hatha Yoga Pradipika, it is the manipuraka chakra. Because the places do not differ at all. Is this not interesting to know? You may call it one word, I may call it another, a third may call it something different again. It is just the fancy of the person giving different names. In (III-33) Patanjali refers to another chakra, "Murdhjayotisi siddhadarsanam."

Murdhjayotisi refers to the ajna chakra, the third eye (the coronal light under the crown of the head). Sutra III-35, "Hrdaye citta samvit", refers to the anahata chakra. Then "kanthakupeksutpipasanivrtti" (III-31).

Kanthakupe - kantha means neck. Thirst and hunger are controlled, restrained, according to Patanjali. Visuddhi chakra belongs to the element of ether, the subtlest element of nature. You can see the connection to the akasa tattva when you conquer hunger and thirst. That means that your jnana has developed to such an extent that you do not thirst for ordinary things. Now kantha means the entire portion of the inner throat, the inner part of the neck. Kupe means a well, you should know, a vessel. So that means it stores energy. In our ordinary walk of life we talk so much, we criticize others, we do this and that. So naturally the well gets dried up. So the yogis say don't dry the well.

Now do you understand the reasons for the bandhas: jalandhara bandha, uddiyana bandha, and mula bandha; so that the energy may not dissipate at all. They get saturated and seek outlets. Talking is an outlet. Ejection of the sex is an outlet. Excretion is an outlet. When these mudhras and bandhas are practiced, these seals (and asanas are also seals, remember that; pascimottanasana, sarvangasana, sirsasana, mulabandhasana, you know all the names, they are also seals). Do not get carried away and think that bandhas are superior to asanas. It is only stupid yogis who say these things. And they express their stupidity even further by calling themselves yogis. But we have to understand the literal meaning - what is a bandha, what is a lock. Follow? What is a seal? So when you are in setu bandha sarvangasana what do you do? You seal the entire back portion of the body. When lying on the edge of the bench, think it over. Then you will get lots of ideas.

So we dissipate. If we do not allow this energy to go out, the nadis get saturated. When they get saturated, they have to find an inlet. If there is an outlet, there also has to be an inlet. This inlet is known as urdhva retam. I hope you understand the meaning of urdhva retam. Ascending of kundalini is nothing but urdhva retam where all these energies (you know energy is divided into several categories, which you have all read in Light on Pranayama) are brought as a single unit. Heat is produced. On account of these seals and locks, it cannot escape by any means. It must turn inwards, to the inlet. That inlet is nothing but the susumna. The moment it enters one becomes an urdhva retam, or in the true sense, a brahmachari. The prakti has moved toward Purusha or Atman, so he or she is a brahmachari or a bramacharini. That is kundalini shakti.



Now comes the most intricate point. We hear talk about seven plexi or seven glands and how they correspond to seven chakras. Maybe right and maybe wrong. Maybe right and maybe wrong as long as we do not know the subject. Now listen carefully. You are all sitting here. You have all heard of the thermometer, which measures the temperature. The mercury rises and falls as the weather changes. In eastern countries it gets very hot and it shoots up very high, to 45 or 46 centigrade. And in the night it cools to 4 centigrade. You know about this. If you have a fever, again the mercury will rise, and if you are well, it will be stable, as the medical people call it, 98.6.

Now, like that, there is a thermometer in our system. Not the hypothalamus thermometer, remember that. I am not coming to this knowledge of the hypothalamus which controls the temperature of the body. I am not at all concerned with that. You are all seated. Do not disturb yourselves. If you disturb, you will not know what I am saying. You are all sitting here. Be as you are. I will give a small instance which you can feel yourselves. The fluid in your central spine is lower than your spine. You can feel it yourselves. Don't disturb. The yogis have penetrated the inner spinal cord, which the medical science has not done so far. That is why I want to clue you, so you can understand practically that when we are all sitting the outer spine is slightly warm, but the central spine is not warm. The mercury in your central spine has dropped down. Do you feel it or not? A little louder please. All of you are feeling? Now stretch your spine. What happened to the fluid? It went up or it went down? When you stretch the spine you should not look into the spine, but look into the fluid. Just again try. The outer spine went up, or the fluid went up? What? Nobody knows. Everybody is quiet. Only a few of you

are saying. Now do you understand your gunas? We are dull, we are stupid. That is why Vyassa was perfectly right when he said "Yoga is not meant for all". But Patanjali, being a compassionate man, said let us start somewhere.

Now, you all sat straight, is it not? Some of you are sinking, some of you are yawning. That means the energy has gone down. At least some of you are still sitting. Is the fluid in the same height or has it dropped down? Fluid only. The spine is straight. What happened to the fluid? It dropped, is it not. Now you understand, you don't know these things. And yet you come to me and say, "the guru touched me and my kundalini has awakened". Can you see now? I have awakened your kundalini and it went straight down. Do you understand now? Sarcastically I am explaining that the moment I made you, the fluid went up. And though you are sitting straight, the fluid dipped down. And why do you say that Guruji touched me and my kundalini is awakened if you don't retain. The moment is awakened, it again dips down. So you are all unfit my friends. Do you understand why I am bringing this up. The chakras, plexi and glands, the ductless glands, the medical people can tell you which plexus controls which gland and which glands secrete for what purposes. I am not a medical man, that is not my subject, but these are all on the physiological level. Ductless glands, plexi, are anatomical structures of the physical body, hormones are of the physiological body. Chakras have nothing to do with the physical body or the physiological body. They are of the spiritual body. That is the beauty of our India yoga. These chambers are hidden inside the spinal cord itself. And that is why they cannot be traced. You understand now?

And now comes the nervous system. Modern science speaks of the peripheral, the autonomous and the central nervous systems. Our yogis too have spoken about the autonomous system. That from the manipuraka chakra sprout about 72,000 nadis, 72,000 nerves sprout from one seed. And each one of the 72,000 branches off into 72,000. So this amounts to several billions or more. And 101 nerves sprout from the heart. The yogis have not forgotten the physiological level. And from each of these 101 branch 72,000 more, and only one is untouched, unpolluted, single, called the citthra nadi, according to the upanishads. According to western terminology it is called the vagus nerve. Many westerners laugh at the Indians when they say citthra nadi, as if vagus nerve is real, citthranadi is not. So we have to rethink and come together with the Indian and western terminologies, where each can understand each other. Even here in India, many have taken on the western way of thinking, and do not know the depth of their own heritage.

This one nerve is unpolluted, virginal. You all know about susumna. And this single nerve is the bridge which connects the prakriti and the purusha. That is why it has no branches. All the other branches, the other intermediaries, do not allow the one single nerve to come into contact, immediately, with the purusha. Because the moment that it comes into contact with purusha then they cannot play as chiefs. And that is samadhi, because they cannot play. Because they want to play in the world of happiness, we cannot experience samadhi, or moksha, or kaivalya. This is the only nerve which brings us samadhi, moksha or kaivalya. This single nerve is the central nervous system. I don't know, I may be wrong, because the modern scientists speak of the influences of the peripheral nerves, with drugs and the reactions of various drugs on

the peripheral nerves. The autonomous nervous system is studied also. And the central nervous system is beyond one's control. Autonomous nervous system is very well dealt with in the Hatha Yoga Pradipika as ida nadi and pingala nadi. Solar plexus as pingala nadi and lunar plexus as ida nadi. So the autonomous nervous system in the western science is dependent upon these two, according to our yogic science, ida and pingala. And these 72,000 branches are the peripheral nervous system connected to the autonomous system, working under the guidance of the autonomous system, ida and pingala.

What is the central nervous system? The word central is madhyama, the middle of the spinal column. From the centre of the tail to the apex of the cranium is that central nerve. The electrical impulses of the nervous system have been explained. But the nature of this central nerve has yet to be explained by the modern science. But the words are used, electrical impulses. From where do they shoot out? Then they say that the fusion of the sympathetic and parasympathetic, the parts of the autonomous system, brings this electrical fusion. That is susumna. Our yogis say that ida and pingala control the peripheral nerves, and this ida and pingala feeds the susumna, the central nervous system to store energy and keep it in reserve. Or the electrical nerve impulses are in between ida and pingala. So all actions and reactions of the peripheral on the autonomous nervous system touches the central nervous system, the susumna. So susumna also spreads, although it is in the madhyama sharira, it spreads everywhere, in order to get the feed from the autonomous system through the peripheral channels, so that it stores energy.

Yogic practices help what I just now said, to increase or retain that fluid which you just now felt, to keep up. The fluid ascended, and even though it was in the state of ascendance, the fluid started dipping. It wants to be in the tamasic nature, so it dips down immediately. So the practice of yoga makes this fluid to remain and retain that position, so that it can climb the other chamber, the chamber of that chamber, to see that it climbs up, it ascends. So yogic sadhanas of various asanas are prescribed. Tomorrow when you go to practice, whether *tadasana* or *trikonasana*, see when you extend the spine, did you move the spine or did you move the fluid. Do you follow? When I do *urdhva dhanurasana*, do I extend the spine or do I extend the fluid of the spine? Then you will know what you have learned today.

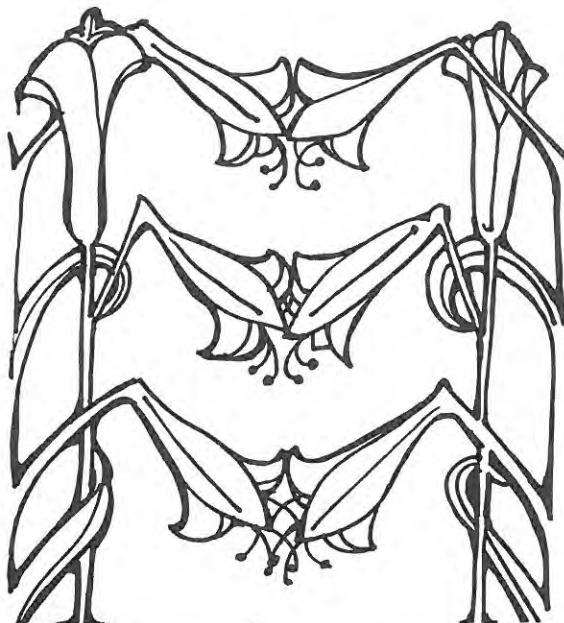
This is a very very difficult subject, to understand this *shakti* which is here. When you attain, because this is a new lesson which I am giving you, the moment you observe the fluid moving but not the spine, there is no *rajo guna*, there is no *tamo guna* in your practice. You are in a pure *sattvic guna*. The moment you stretch your spine but not your fluid, greed comes, you understand. You want to do better, you want to stretch more than the other person. Can you understand the inner qualities? When you do asanas, nobody knows. Everyone's asanas are physical. Even the yogis do not know. Are you-ripe to come to this state of feeling this fluid rising. When that fluid moves, when this fluid makes you stretch more, you are a *gunatita* in that moment. The moment the fluid falls in a pose, you have come back to the *prakriti guna*. So to retain in your practices, that is known as *bandha* and *mudra* in *asana*. When you are doing *viparita dandasana*, as an example, the fluids tend to be on your *lumbosacral* and *cervical spine*. For me I do not move my energy to fight with the *cervical*

and *sacral areas*. I say, can I keep the temperature of the mercurial rise of my fluids, in my *thoracic dorsal spine* without allowing it to hit towards the *cervical* or the *lumbar*.

See my way of thinking and your way of thinking. Because I am more subtle in my practices. My practices are inside. All my *asanas* are inner. For you they are outer. Stretch your hand. You say, "Oh, I feel my finger has gotten longer." But when I stretch, I see how much my energy has come back nearer to me. In my stretching I don't look at the length of my hand. I look at the length of my energy which comes from the peripheral areas through the autonomous nervous system which gives me the electrical impulses on my mind. That is *vairagya*. In my practice, although it appears to you external. I am a *vairagyi* inside, which nobody knows. So if you learn this, at that moment, you lose the characters of the principles of *tattva*, and you see at that moment that your fluid, the fluid of the *prakriti* and the fluid of the *purusha*, these fluids intermingle. So *purusha* does not fall as it is one with the *prakriti*. If the *shakti* goes down, the *purusha* says you are going away from me. Come near me. If the *purusha* descends, *prakriti* says where are you. Come here. I am here. That is what the *asanas* will do if you work this way. You have to bring the instruments, the *mandala*, the body, the mind, and the very self, *sasmitam*, to be free from the *gunas*. Come what may, none can shake me in my practices. Nothing frightens me in my practices, I just laugh. So that state you have to cultivate by practicing yoga so that your inner body, your outer body, and your middle body, everything becomes divine. Then divinity flows. An abundance of energy, according to *Patanjali*, flows in your system without the influence of the *gunas*.

As Prashant says, courage is required. I have given the background for you to develop yourself. You have to study your gunas, you have to study the gunas of your body, the gunas of your nerves, all the time and even your blood circulation, so you can change your dull circulation, the dullness in your body, the dullness in your inner frame. Can I transform them into yoga, into vibrancy, and with vibrancy, can I illumine them so that they also can throw light. So that each and every cell in our body becomes divine, as the divinity or the dweller within. And this unification is kundalini shakti.

Thank you for your attention.





# RADHA HOUSE

## Victoria

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



### *Divine Light Invocation*

*Saturday, April 23, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.*

The Divine Light Invocation is a powerful yogic practise for healing oneself and others, and for realising the Light within.

Fee: \$50, \$15 deposit

### *Saturday Morning with Plough Pose*

*Saturday, May 14, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.*

This is a Hidden Language® Hatha Yoga exploration of Halasana. What am I ploughing through? What do I want to plant in my ground? This is a three-hour workshop followed by a potluck lunch.

Fee: \$25



## YOGA PROPS

**Blue Sticky Mats**  
*from Germany*

**Bolsters**

**Hardwood Blocks**

**Bandages**  
*from India*

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Shirley Daventry French  
478-3775

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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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721-3477

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

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**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL CHANGE OF POLICY**

**NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS**

**EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**

**MEMBERSHIPS RENEWED DURING 1994 WILL BE  
RENEWABLE AT THE BEGINNING OF 1995 AND AT  
THE BEGINNING OF EACH YEAR THEREAFTER.  
THE COST OF MEMBERSHIP WILL BE \$20.00 NO  
MATTER IN WHICH MONTH THE MEMBERSHIP IS  
PURCHASED.**

# YOGA CALENDAR

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## APRIL:

- 1 Sunday Workshop at the Y  
Led by Cella Ward. See ad this issue.
- 27 Yoga Centre Gathering BIG BIG  
PRACTISE led by Shirley Daventry  
French.
- 23: Teachers Meeting at the Y.

## MAY:

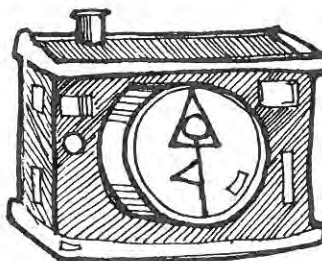
- 2 Teachers meeting at the Y.

## JUNE:

- 3,5: Saltspring Retreat led  
by Shirley Daventry French
- 18: Pranayama in Metchosin  
led by Shirley Daventry French.
- 2 Teachers meeting at the Y.

## JULY:

- 1-4: Canadian Iyengar Yoga Teachers  
Meeting in Montreal.
- 25-30: Iyengar Yoga Intensive in Victoria  
led by Shirley Daventry French.



## 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 and renewable each January.

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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. [ ]



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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 its inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

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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, V9B 5T7. Telephone: (604) 474-5630.

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**DEADLINE FOR MAY ISSUE: APRIL 15, 1994**

**VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY**

3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R. #4, Victoria, B.C., Canada, V9B 5T8

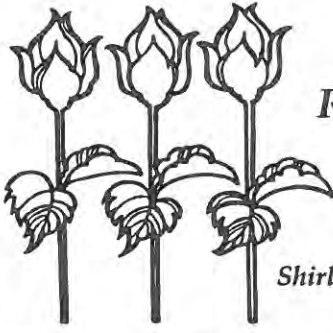
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VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE  
*Newsletter*



**OUR PRESIDENT**  
Victoria Yoga Centre



## Reflections

by  
Shirley Daventry French

---

A dozen or more years ago, I had a conversation with Swami Radha at Yasodhara Ashram in which she talked about the difficulties of following the spiritual path within the bonds of holy matrimony. The trend of her talk was not surprising because Derek and I were going through some difficult times and were at a sticking point. Like all great spiritual teachers, Swami Radha is very good at showing you how you can get unstuck. In any situation, her innovative mind can offer many alternatives to the status quo about which you are complaining. She proffers help to put an end to your whining or blaming of others. Sometimes, when you see that you are not really stuck and have several options, your present predicament seems less confining and you decide to carry on without external changes but with a change of heart and mind.

This is what happened to me after my interview with Swami Radha—but not immediately! I still had a lot to work through. While I was listening to her, I was excited at some of the ideas she put forth. I left with what I thought was an open mind, assuring her that I would reflect on what she had said. She talked about the difficulties of making the spiritual journey as a householder and some of the hazards of a sexual relationship, and suggested that perhaps a little distance between Derek and I might help us overcome the obstacles we were experiencing. Later, when I left the Ashram, I became angry at her suggestion that something was wrong with my relationship with Derek (although it was pretty obvious to me that this was the

truth). Then I became indignant at her effrontery in suggesting that we needed to make significant changes, forgetting that before saying anything to me she had asked if I were willing to listen to some brainstorming ideas and gave me an assurance that she would respect and support my decision, whatever it was.

Hearing what I interpreted to be a very low opinion of marriage (or similar sexual relationship) as a vehicle for the spiritual journey and the suggestion that one can progress more quickly along the path of renunciation, I protested to Swami Radha that I didn't see it that way. I told her I believed that the path of the householder within a married relationship was as high a path as any other. She replied to me that although she didn't think so, she would be very happy to be proved wrong.

This month Derek and I will celebrate our fortieth wedding anniversary. Are we proving her wrong? I don't know! What I do know is that it has been an incredible journey and continues to be so. During these forty years of marriage, and the on again, off again period which preceded it, we have gone through many phases and made many changes before coming to terms with the fact that whether you are in a relationship or not, this is an individual journey. There is really no such thing as a couple in yoga, only two individuals who may help or hinder each other's progress on the spiritual path. Very often, husband and wife will impede each other's way because of possessiveness, jealousy and other emotional entanglements—any progress their partner makes will be a threat to their hitherto mutual dependency.

Many marriages end in separation or divorce when one person becomes involved in yoga. Yoga is often blamed for this, but the practice of yoga merely reveals the shaky ground on which this relationship has been founded. If both individuals make a commitment to their own journey, then there is a hope for a spiritual marriage. But even then you won't progress at the same rate, and it can be very threatening when your partner is moving

ahead, full of insights and discoveries while you are stuck, miserable and, probably, fearful. Fear, arising from ignorance, is one of the biggest obstacles any of us have to face. When your nearest and dearest is going full speed ahead and you are not, it's hard not to be resentful; at the same time it is a wonderful opportunity to deal with the deadly sin of envy.

Sometimes you are the one who is moving and your partner is stuck, and you might be tempted to feel holy and superior and see them as wanting, when what you need to do is step back and give them the space to get on with their work at their pace while you get on with your own.

Sometimes a marriage will end even when both partners are practising yoga because it has become clear that having worked through certain of their karmic connections, they now need to take different forks of the path. If you end a relationship before working through your overlapping karma, according to Eastern thought, you will have to come together for that purpose in some other lifetime—although this time it may not be as husband and wife.

In situations such as the above, it is helpful to remember this sutra of Patanjali (chapter one, verse 33) :-

“Undisturbed calmness of mind is attained by cultivating friendliness toward the happy compassion for the unhappy, delight in the virtuous, and indifference towards misery.”

After my interview with Swami Radha, once my anger and emotion had abated and I was able to take an uncoloured look at my situation, I began to feel grateful for the choices put before me. My spirit was freed from some encumbrances. Slowly, I began to understand that her suggestions arose from concern for my Self. I decided that my preference was to continue in this relationship and stay here in Victoria. By some fortuitous circumstance, Derek and I had already made separate plans for the time

immediately after our visit to the Ashram. I arrived at my decision by myself with no assurance that Derek, who was doing his own reflection elsewhere, would come to the same conclusion. I was not afraid because even if his decision were different from mine, I knew I had the strength to continue on my own, without him. However, this was not my preference, and neither, as it turned out, was it his. We decided to invest in and refine our relationship.

Did we live happily ever after? I'm afraid not! We are not characters in a fairy story. There have been a lot of ups and downs. It has been and continues to be a fascinating journey to this fortieth anniversary and a place where, as two relatively self-sufficient individuals, we have learned to give each other plenty of space for our own personal work and our own spiritual practice. I would not dare to say that we have unloaded all the encumbrances of our long association (in this life and who knows how many others), but we have let go of a lot. These days, most of the resentments which arise are to do with the present rather than what he or I did or didn't do, or said or didn't say, twenty, thirty or forty years ago. Carrying all this stuff around is such a burden, which slows you down and exhausts you.

I cannot know what Derek's karma is and the lessons he has to face now and in the future—although I can (and sometimes do) speculate about this. But that is merely a diversion; I have more than enough to do in this lifetime exploring and working with my own karma. As I do this, it is a tremendous support to have a companion who encourages me in my aspirations and my work, who is sympathetic to my struggles, who is willing to lend an ear and an open mind when I seek advice, and who is an immeasurable help in brainstorming and developing creative ideas.

On the way home from one of our visits to the Ashram, Derek and I stopped to consult an astrologer whom Swami Radha had recommended. When he produced our charts, it was pretty obvious



that they were almost exact opposites. He looked at us soberly and said: "It will be very difficult for you, but if you could learn to complement each other it could be exciting and very productive." It has been very difficult, but thanks to yoga and our teachers, Swami Radha and B.K.S. Iyengar, who have constantly guided us towards the light, we have learned to complement each other in many ways. It has also been exciting, fulfilling and entirely worthwhile! Thank you Derek, for being my teacher in so many ways, and for the years of adventure on this life's journey.

## PRANAYAMA

in Metchosin

with

Shirley Daventry French

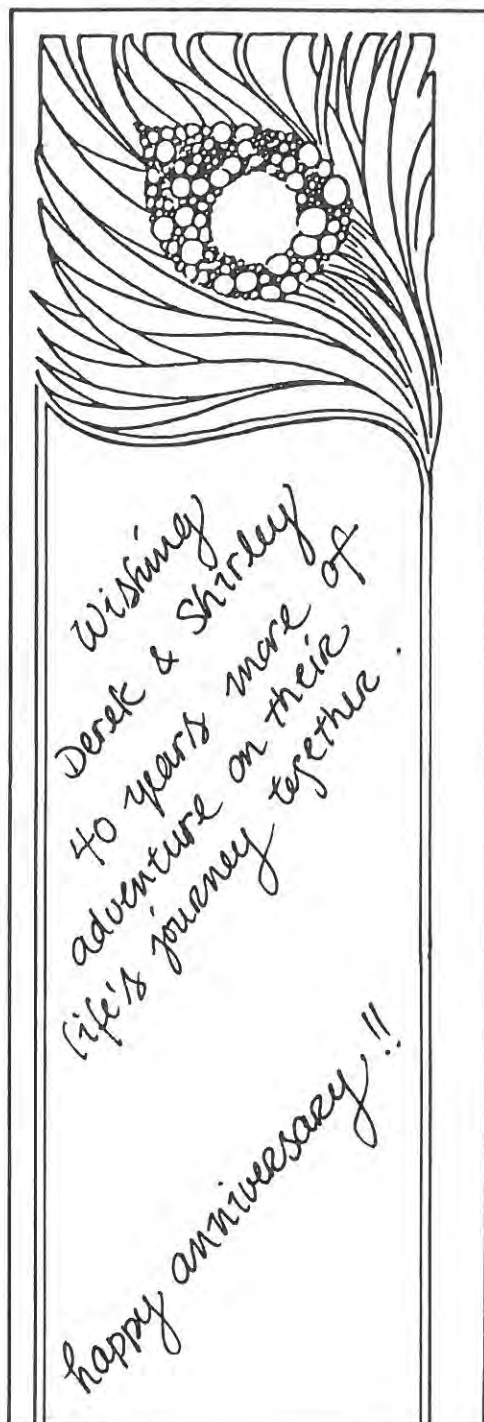
Saturday, June 18th

Pranayama Class  
and Asana Practice

|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| 8:00 to 9:15 AM  | Pranayama      |
| 9:15 to 10:15 AM | Refreshment    |
| 10:15 to 12 noon | Asana Practice |
| 12 noon          | Brunch         |

Fee: \$22.00

Information and registration: 478-3775



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

## **IYENGAR YOGA INTENSIVE**

**July 25 to 30, 1994**

with

**Shirley Daventry French**

**Dr. Derek French**

**Linda Benn**

**Leslie Hogya**

**Ann Kilbertus**

**Jim Rischmiller**

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

**Fee: \$350.00**

Victoria is an active centre of Iyengar Yoga, whose teachers maintain a close contact with Mr. Iyengar through regular trips to India and participation in conferences such as the one he attended in Toronto last summer. Our 1994 Summer Intensive will combine the skills of one of Canada's leading yoga teachers Shirley Daventry French with physician Derek French, occupational therapist Ann Kilbertus, and experienced yoga teachers Linda Benn, Leslie Hogya and Jim Rischmiller.

The residence at the Y has a limited amount of inexpensive accommodation for women, billets are available with members of the local yoga community, and, as a popular tourist centre, Victoria has wide selection of hotels and motels.

*For further information contact:*

Victoria Yoga Centre  
3918 Olympic View Drive  
R.R.4 Victoria, B.C.V9B 5T8

*Telephone enquiries:*

Shirley Daventry French (604) 478-3775  
or Linda Benn (604) 478-0757

# BOOK REVIEW

## "A Message For Us All"

by Leslie Hogg

### Mutant Message Downunder

by Marlo Morgan  
M.M. C.P.O. Box 100,  
Lees Summit Missouri 64063 U.S.A. \$16.95

A book sometimes comes along that seems to speak to me in a very deep and powerful way. Mutant Message is such a book.

The author went on a walkabout in Australia with a group of aboriginals. They honored her by sharing their wisdom and ways of being in the world. The messages she was given are universal truths that appear in Eastern philosophy and our own Native teachings. The power of the message comes through even though the author is not a brilliant writer, nor a philosopher. She wasn't even necessarily on a spiritual quest any more than perhaps is anyone who may be filled with undefined yearnings or unanswered questions about the why of our existence.

The people she walked with truly lived in the here and now. The back jacket of the book has a road sign quote: Warning, nothing available next 1000 kilometres.

They left on a three month walk into the desert with bare feet, no food supplies and barely any water. Each morning they would stand and face the direction they meant to travel, all sixty three of them, and send a message to the plants and animals that they were coming.

In a recent Yoga Centre gathering I read a section of the book in relation to work as the topic for the evening was Karma Yoga. All sixty three of the Real People, as they call themselves, have a purpose. Each one lives out his or her destiny. Each is talented in some way and they give that skill in service to the others as it is needed.

There are no meaningless jobs or people who have nothing to contribute, no wasted talents or abilities. There are musicians, tool makers, hunters, ones who commune with plants, healers, dream catchers, listeners.

In the evening as they sit in a circle together they believe the person opposite each one is a spirit reflection of themselves. The things that are admired are qualities of things needed in the observer to be increased; negative attributes are reflections of things the observer must work on. This is very much what Swami Radha teaches. Morgan goes on to say that "the only true influence you have on anyone else is by the way you live your own life, how you act, what you do." She wonders if instead of being called the "Outback, they should consider it the Center of Human Concern."

The messages in the book are what is powerful, not necessarily Morgan's skill with words. What are the messages? Non-attachment, acceptance, non-greed, non-injury, contentment, self-knowledge, all of these are also the foundation of the yamas and niyamas, the first two limbs in yoga philosophy.

Synchronicity was at work as I read the book. My mother who lives several thousand miles away and had no knowledge of what I was reading sent me a beautiful card that arrived in the mail the day I finished reading the book. The inside was blank except for her initials and the words: Rejoice! Rejoice! To me that was the real message of the book. The underlying communication to me is to rejoice in today, in who I am, in the gifts I have been given.

## HOW TO TOUCH THE MASSES

**Dr. Athul K. Shah interviews Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar**

**Q.** *Could you briefly explain the meaning of Yoga?*

**A.** Yoga is an art, a science and a philosophy. It touches the life of man at every level: physical, mental and spiritual. It is a practical method for making one's life purposeful, useful and noble. Yoga alone enables the practitioner to perceive and experience the world within and around himself, to touch the divine joy of all creation, and then to share that nectar of divine wealth and happiness with fellow human beings. Yoga lifts its practitioners from the clutches of pain and sorrow, and enables them to live fully, taking a delight in life. The practice of yoga helps the lazy body to become active and vibrant. It transforms the mind, making it harmonious. Yoga helps to keep one's body and mind in tune with the essence, the soul, so that all three are blended into one.

**Q.** *How do you relate Yoga to Western exercises like jogging, aerobics, and other sports?*

**A.** Western exercise is generally physical. Yoga is a psycho-physiological and a psycho-spiritual subject. Yoga is an organic exercise - not a physical exercise. In non-yogic exercises, people can flex their muscles, but they cannot flex their liver, they cannot flex their stomach. Yoga makes even the inner organs to flex, expand and rotate.

**Q.** *To what extent would you say is Yoga a scientific philosophy?*

**A.** Without doubt Yoga is a scientific philosophy. In fact, it is much more than scientific. It is a philosophy, an art and a science. For example, if I am teaching, I cannot do so without technique. When one has to teach yoga, he has to be a scientist. When one has to practise, he has to be an artist, and when one has to live day to day life, he

has to take the essence of Yoga and apply it. Hence Yoga is a combination of science, art and philosophy. We are made up of anatomy, physiology, psychology and spirituality. We have to interpenetrate these various levels so that the inner cleanliness is developed not only in the physical body, but in the mental and spiritual body also. That is why it is scientific.

**Q.** *Western medicine has still not accepted Yoga as a way of healthy living and curing illness. Do you agree?*

**A.** The support for Yoga is not there at all. A few individuals like us fought to make it popular. Hence it may take some time to be accepted - medicine did not become accepted immediately. One thousand people attended my Euro Yoga Convention in London - this shows that the public is now becoming aware of its benefits and is keen to learn. I believe that Yoga is going to grow because it is a natural cure. We are fighting with our own body to combat the inner diseases and for that Yoga is the only method.

**Q.** *Can you give examples of illnesses cured through Yoga?*

**A.** I have cured constipation, cardiac diseases, kidney problems, polio, diabetes, spinal injuries - how many more examples do you need? All emotional and physiological diseases I have cured through Yoga. Iyengar Yoga is particularly popular as a health cure because it provides much quicker relief than allopathy. This is why it is touching the masses and we have a long waiting list at our headquarters in Pune, India.

**Q.** *There are many different types of Yoga like Sivananda Yoga, British Wheel of Yoga, etc. How would you suggest a newcomer to Yoga should choose the best system?*

**A.** There are no different types of Yoga - only different branches. Yoga is one - but people call it in different names. The pupil has to discriminate



by himself/herself who is a good teacher - this is not for me to say. For example, my first book 'Light on Yoga' has sold more than a million copies - this shows that my method appeals to many pupils and teachers.

*Q. Do Yoga practitioners have to believe in Hinduism?*

A. Not at all. Whatever they practise is enough. Yoga takes people to the right way of living. In my opinion, the right way of living is religion. It has no demarcations. One which supports and sustains is religion.

*Q. You have been very successful in transporting one of India's greatest contributions to civilisation to the West. How do you think you have changed the approach to the context of the time that we live in? To what extent is your approach rooted in history and tradition?*

A. Although Yoga is a spiritual subject, I started and learn t through practising it. I know the weakness of my pupils and have focused my science to remove them - to that extent, I have reformed Yoga. I have adapted the emphasis to suit the times that we live in.

*Q. At present, many people are turning 'green' by trying to minimise waste, by recycling, and generally reducing pollution. Would you say that the practice of Yoga helps them to turn 'green'?*

A. Yes, that is correct. In Yoga, if there is an imbalance of our five elements, there will be disease. Hence internal pollution takes place when there is an imbalance between the elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether. The practice of Yoga makes the blood circulate in such a way that certain postures cleanse the system. The blood is directed to diseased or imbalanced parts and is constantly filtering and refiltering the toxins. This continues throughout the practice of Yoga and thus we free ourselves from what I call 'internal pollution'. This will automatically change our outer actions and hence we will turn 'green'. What is the use of spending all the attention on the outside if

nobody is thinking of the inside? Toxins form in the system so as we think of cleansing the outer environment, we must also cleanse our own inner system. This can be achieved through Yoga.

*Q. We live in a world where our lives have become detached from nature. We live and work in urban, polluted areas and spend most of our time behind desks or in factories. How does Yoga help in weaving our life back into the fabric of nature?*

A. We are all made up of five elements - earth, water, fire, air and ether. These five elements have their own qualities - smell, taste, fire, shape, touch and expansion. Nature is divided into several principles. Sense of actions, senses of perception - mind, intelligence, ego, etc. The soul is separate from nature - the union of nature with the soul is yoga. Thus yoga is a very natural form of living.

*Q. We live in a world of greed, violence and crime. The politicians in power seem to be doing little to improve our position. What are your thoughts on this?*

A. Politicians have become demi-gods. That is our failure. We have tried to adjust ourselves according to the dictates of politicians. I think politicians have to learn the humane lifestyle and broaden their intellectual base. They are only concerned with staying in power and are often corrupted by it. We should not be the victims of such political pressure. We have to judge ourselves - God has given us the power to discriminate. We should use this in the way we live - only then can we bring about everlasting change in the world.

*Q. Do you have any plans to take Yoga into these corridors of power and change the world?*

A. No. I am not an ambitious man. If the task comes, then I will do it. However, I do not think that I can change the politicians through my own efforts

*Reprinted from LOYA NEWS, the magazine of the Light on Yoga Association (UK). Issue 15, Spring, 1994.*

## TEACHING AND LEARNING YOGA

by

Ron Burnett

My reflections on Yoga and its impact on my life have deepened considerably since I arrived in Victoria last September. Ten months here witnessing and participating in the rich diversity and strength of the Yoga community, has also strengthened me immeasurably. But what does it mean to say that? Part of the strength has come from my own transition towards teaching Yoga. And in this short piece it is teaching which I would like to discuss.

I have been a teacher for 25 years. Every time I say that to myself I am shocked by the length of time during which I have been struggling with the pedagogical complexities of responding to the needs of students of varying ages. Early on in my career I wrote a long monograph entitled, *Towards a New Pedagogy for the Teaching of Film*. It was translated into French and subsequently became a focal point for debate among cultural studies and humanities teachers in colleges and universities. In that monograph I talked about my need to respond to students from a deeper understanding of *their* position. I spoke of my own alienation as a student, of the professors and teachers who had hardly paid any attention to my struggle to learn. I pointed out that learning was not about the assimilation of information, not about the mechanics of memorizing and most certainly not about sitting in a classroom and listening to someone for whom you had developed no feelings. Let me focus on this point for a moment because I believe it to be very important for Yoga teaching.

Classrooms are places of intense emotion. Even the most cynical of students has an effect on this constellation of feelings. Yet more often than not ideas and knowledge are presented as if emotions have to be controlled. The premise is that we need rational debate if we are to understand and learn. Of course this is only partially correct. How can

students divorce their private lives from the experience of learning? If they are being abused at home or by their fellow students, how can they divorce their thoughts and feelings — how can they turn into learners when their minds are preoccupied? In the same vein, teachers are not superstars. They are not above all of the weaknesses and strengths of their students. They are not beyond the conflicts within their own lives, not outside the joys and suffering of everyday life.

I rarely start a class without some comments about the daydreams of the listener. Even the best of lecturers cannot prevent the way we drift when we listen, the many images which filter through our minds, the mixture of thoughts and fantasies which we have as we try to understand what is being said. This is a rich universe and one which needs to be acknowledged rather than repressed. Yet within this cornucopia of emotions and thoughts and fantasies and daydreams, it is more often than not the case, that we talk about many things *except* the above. In so doing we lessen our capacity to articulate and work upon the emotions we are experiencing. In the rush to learn and acquire accreditation we forget the subtleties, the beauty, the utter simplicity of *insight*. We forget that the most important learning is only possible if we surrender to the process. Surrendering doesn't mean giving in. It doesn't mean accepting the viewpoints of someone with whom one has fundamental disagreements. It means allowing ourselves to learn from the disagreements and thus to be open to change. But we cannot do that if we haven't developed the capacity to question who we are. And how can that questioning gain the necessary depth if classrooms are the last place in which we talk about our identities, struggles and feelings?

The first Yoga class which I taught was an eye-opener. I had assumed I could apply my experience to the process. To some degree, I was right. I quickly clued into the feelings in the class, to the people who were insecure about their bodies and the students who were going to pursue their own

paths irrespective of the instructions given to them. I may have unnerved some of the students because I looked straight at them (as is my custom) and very quickly tried to sense where they were at. I felt at ease talking to them about Yoga because I am so passionate about it. But then a wonderful thing began to happen. Working with their bodies and mine, *doing* Yoga, changed the teaching I had been accustomed to. They responded to my energy and tried to work on themselves. We were trying to do asanas *together*. We were learning from each other. And as the energy increased, they began to draw upon my still limited knowledge in a very positive way. There were of course many details which I missed and in retrospect many errors which I made. But at the same time, I felt as if my own practice of Yoga was being enhanced and that I would now be more capable of recognizing the work which I needed to do on my own body. The teaching was like an epiphany. It allowed me to join the spiritual with the physical, to perhaps offer insight as a path without the pressure to follow. All of the wonderful feelings which one has when an Asana feels right, when the details fall into place, all of that surged through my mind as I taught.

My thoughts after the class were that I wished I could apply those lessons to the university courses I teach. How wonderful it would be to start off a class with a practice! How much more would be released! I have taught classes with five hundred people in them and so this is probably a lovely fantasy, but completely unrealizable. The ultimate problem is that pedagogy as such is rarely if ever discussed by my colleagues. In fact the crisis we are witnessing in the educational system has much to do with the fact that teaching (and, I would argue, learning) has been marginalized in the university system. During one of my more intense classes I once had a student stand up and say that she wanted to get her money's worth — she was tired of the discussions we were having. Those discussions centred on education, learning and how to make the ideas of the class more relevant to the personal lives of the students.

That student wanted something which cannot be quantified. She wanted knowledge packaged, pre-digested — she wanted all the answers before she had learned to ask even one question.

For me the discovery of Yoga has been that I will die still trying to do Trikonasana with my neck relaxed, my legs balanced, my pelvis turned and my mind at peace. The challenge for me is whether this learning can be brought to my teaching at all levels.

*Ron Burnett is a professor at McGill University who has spent a sabbatical year in Victoria writing a book and practising yoga*



## ***The Victoria Yoga Centre***

***Fr. Joe Pereira  
of Mt. Carmel Church  
Bombay, India  
will present an  
Iyengar Yoga Workshop  
Evenings: Oct. 4, 5, & 6, 1994  
Contact: Marlene Miller at 655-4306  
for further information.  
Watch the Newsletter for  
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# My Spiritual Diary.

John Rischmiller May 1994

November 8th 1991. The Pune intensive is over and I am on my way Auroville. I am in shock at the moment. The last time I was here in Pune Airport it was a concrete bunker that looked and felt as if it had seen service in the first world war. Now it is a nice big building with little shops inside (all shut, its siesta time), a marble floor and benches (full of sleeping people). A sign over the Indian Airlines counter says they will be open 1 hour before the next flight arrival which seems OK. I find space on a bench and take a moments rest since it is nearly 3 hours before my flight leaves. I wake up in a panic to find the airport full of bustle. However it is the late arrival of an earlier flight and I have only been asleep for half an hour. Phew! Magically all the little shops have opened so I take a tour but, just like home, an airport is not always very price competitive and my feeble attempt at bargaining doesn't work. So I retire to sulk with a coffee and write my diary.

As I wander outside later listening to the soft sounds of evening arrive so does my Boeing 737. I rush back to check-in which was a mistake, since once in the departure lounge I am stuck and it is an hour before we leave. I sit waiting and ponder my human need to be early for my flight and my spiritual need to be in the flowers. I keep my luggage amount to that which I can take on board with me, though as my travels progress I tend to get a bit awkward with a growing backpack, various cameras, little bags with books etc. (Just like my life). The check-in clerk doesn't seem to worry about me being overweight and when I finally get on the plane I can see why, there are only about 15 people in the cabin. We head off down to the start of the runway and I notice this is one of the squeaky airplanes, everything squeaks. Oh well, it's too late now. There is no waiting to get on to the runway, after a five minute taxi and a sharp left turn the pilot opens the throttles and we are off. As we speed along it occurs to me that they must have run out of money before

they got round to leveling the runway, since the aircraft is shaking so much that the overhead bin doors start to fly open and everybody's stuff falls out. I look out of the window in an effort to take my mind out of the moment and eventually we leave mother earth and peace returns.

As we put our bags back in the racks I remember the last time I did this trip. It was with Jennifer, in the afternoon, in a little twin piston engine plane and we had a lovely trip. Low enough to see the hills and valleys of India, and great personal service. Bangalore eventually arrives and as soon as they open the cabin doors I am aware that I am now in the tropics in monsoon season. Its hot and sticky. After a couple hours delay the plane fills up and we head off for Madras. We have taken on a few extra passengers in the shape of mosquitoes and I spend this leg trying to consign some to the great void. What with delays etc. it is now pretty late at night when we reach Madras and I am a little concerned because the taxi from Auroville is supposed to be waiting for me. Well it would not be the first time I spent the night in the airport lounge. The taxi is waiting and I send thanks to the divine mother as I jump in and we head out on our four hour drive. This was one of the more interesting drives I have been on. I had expected that the roads would be less crowded at night but its the same old mayhem as we race trucks to Pondicherry. Thank God the taxi driver knows where to deposit me when we reach Auroville and I crawl under the mosquito net of a lovely little room in Central guest house.

In the morning I am up with the birds on account of the fact that they are right outside my room making all sorts of noise. After a warm shower (led by a solar heater) I unpack. My room is one half of a beautifully made duplex with tile roofs and teak supports on polished granite floors. It has a nice granite desk and a nice granite closet, different to home where everything is made of wood.



Meandering outside to look the place over I can see on my left is the dining room, and straight ahead a open dining area built under the canopy of one or more Banyan trees. Tineke, my hostess, is at breakfast with host Ivano and as I join them I am made to feel very welcome as we sit for couple of hours in the morning sun getting to know one another. As a fellow motorcyclist Ivano is of great interest to me. He used to work in a engine factory in Italy and now rides a diesel engined motorbike here in India. Since he has work to do I go back for an often desired but rarely taken nap. Maybe something is changing in my life? As I think about our conversation over breakfast I note the connection by interest we humans have. It crosses cultures and spaces and I wonder about crossing the cultures and spaces within me. What connection am I making with my spiritual self?

When I turn up for dinner I find we have another couple of guests. Two talented young men who have been involved in a Christian movement is the USA. They have AIDS and I sense they are looking hard at life. Our talk goes on into the evening as they test my view of death. As a yoga teacher I am expected to know something. Eventually we hug and go to bed. I read from 'He' about mans journey and in the quiet hours that follow ponder the diagnosis of possible heart trouble that I received earlier this year.

Next day I borrow a bike and go to find Nollie, a fellow yoga teacher who was on the Intensive with me. She lives in a lovely marble and brick house in another part of Auroville and she takes me for a tour of Auroville on her scooter. Auroville seems to be an number of very different communities spread out with lots of space between them. There is much variety in architectural styles and I am enchanted. We see the bakery, motor shop, the electronics depot, the craft store and eventually return to Central guest house Nollie is going into Pondi tomorrow to refill her cooking gas tank and offers me a ride, which I accept. For now Tineke is leading a party to the Matri Mandir for the afternoon and I tag along. We chatter as we wend our way along the lanes until eventually the foliage clears and I am stunned. This is it. Ahead of me in a very large

clearing is a huge geodesic ball of concrete rising from below ground level. People are working in and on it at every level, this has to be one of the wonders of the world. Our party troops down a ramp to the base and then up a winding corridor until we come to the meditation hall. This is a marble room that occupies the top half of the structure. As I enter I feel connected, something is here for me.

Nollie turns up the next day on her scooter and we set off for 'Pondi'. As I ride I realize this is really the country part of India. The earth is a rich red colour fresh after the nights rains with the occasional puddle we splash through. We eventually hit the tarmac of the coast road which is relatively free of traffic and on arriving in Pondi leave the gas container at the store to be filled. After lunch Nollie is going to attend to her errands whilst I tour the town and Sri Aurobindo's ashram. However the scooter wont start. We decide to try a push start so Nollie jumps on and I push. Good grief, what a way to work my lunch off!. The scooter starts, then stops. I push, it starts, then stops. The local towns people stare agape as I fly down the road sometimes chasin and sometimes pushing. My heart rate feels like it hits 2000 as we arrive at scooter repair shop where it of course starts and runs every time. I leave to tour starting with a long Mango drink in the rooftop cafe of the nearest hotel.

Pondicherry used to belong to the French which is evidenced by the street names and the architecture. The sea front has a grand monument to Ghandi, now surrounded by schoolgirls also on a tour. This is another connection for me, Ghandi worked with non violence which is another way of saying love. Before yoga, non violence was external to myself. Now I wonder how am I aggressive within. Judgment and expectations are two areas that come up for me.

Later in the week I move to another guest house because my current room is booked. I have rented a scooter for myself and have fun trying to stay upright with my pack etc on my back as I drive to my new room. This is a newly built house not far from the dance studio which includes a well equipped yoga studio, piano teaching studio and a video making studio centered around a foyer where flowers bloom in a miniature pond. Nollie teaches a fine yoga class that afternoon. I leave feeling nourished. As I wait in my room for dinner the air fills with that freshness that comes from alternating rain showers and bright sunshine and for the first time in forty years some poetry fills my soul.

Red tile roof dripping  
Green trees growing  
Wicker chairs in a white washed room.  
Drinking tea.

Cleaned open flowers  
Cooler air  
Rich red earth and gray stone.  
Newness.

Full gray skies patched white  
Yellow leaves falling  
Bird, insect, lizard and lastly man.  
Natures song.

Behind it all the deeper place  
Unknowingly known  
Our mothers womb of infinite space.  
Holding all.

A week later I left Auroville with regret recognizing that I needed to find out more about this place. Sri Aurobindo was also a poet and I found some beautiful poems he wrote about life and death in his books of poetry, which I cannot reprint since I do not have permission. What this time did for me was to put death in perspective and allow me to see it as part of life. Having passed that hurdle (at least temporally) I am able to tackle the bigger death, that of my ego. Of course I need ego to live in this world, at least to help me find out what is not, as well as what is. Sri Aurobindo's poetry helped me understand that death of any sort is not the end but the doorway to eternity. Death of my ego means that it does not rule the roost thus:

Brontosaurus, Tyrannosaurus  
Fearsome beasts of old dragged huge  
lungfuls of my breath as with great claws  
they trod the world, tearing gnawing each  
others flesh trying to avoid the cold.

But then this breath full of angst passed to  
the flowers and trees who added love so  
that in time my breath can come to me.

Can I honour in my incoming breath the  
lives that went before, can I honour in my  
outgoing breath the value of my thoughts  
and deeds as I add to this the great life-force  
my best, I hope, my pleas.

So what am I Tyrannosaurus Rex or  
Daisy on the hill or is there one who  
smiles a lot, watching all the games I play  
but knows the path ends at his feet as he  
opens the door for me.

I had one last exciting time before leaving India. The jumbo coming to pick me up in Madras had a bomb threat so I did spend most of a night in the airport waiting for a new jumbo to come, and wondering.

This whole journey in 1991 continues to give me fresh insights about how I am and perhaps what my place is. Going on an Intensive be it in India or in my home town has a whole new meaning from those earlier days of carefree nonexistence. Then I felt my main need was to remove stress. I must say it worked because now Intensives are places which help me move from my current habits to a different perspective. By owning how I really am (or at least as near as I can get to that place) I take control of my life and my stress goes away. This sounds like pretty heavy stuff and mostly I just have fun. I make a few notes in my diary or my body, (same thing really), and when the time is ripe:

Broom, Broom so pretty now in spring.  
But where has all the ground gone where  
vegies were meant to be.  
Upon a time the rabbits tunneled in the  
ground but now there is no need the  
brooms so thick.  
They are safe within those trees.

Not only that, when Autumn comes my rage  
will know no bounds as I hear the  
deafening rattle of Broom seeds raining on  
the ground.

I know. An Intensive's what I need.  
I will make the place for food to grow by  
hewing down those weeds.  
But if I had paid attention to my space as  
the moments drifted by, its vegies that  
would fill my heart, it makes me want to  
cry.

Thank God for Broom it keeps me honest.  
I can choose the path I take.  
And if I let my attention wander it will  
stand there in its golden glory, a monument  
in my wake,

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## A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY WITH GURUJEE

*Geeta S. Iyengar reveals her personal reflections on the Intensive Course at Panchgani spanning November and December, 1993. This article was originally delivered as a speech at Yogacharya P.K.S. Iyengar's 75th Birthday Celebrations in Pune on 14th December.*

Dear Guruji and Friends of Yoga,

It is very difficult for me as a daughter to speak about my father but when it comes to Yoga then my father is no more my father but he is my guru.

Recently we had an intensive course at Panchgani and fortunately I also happened to be there. It was the happiest event for me in my life since I had to be a pupil and not a teacher. On one hand I was feeling completely relieved since I had to keep my teacher's gown aside and empty out myself and merely be a pupil, and on the other hand it reminded me of the ancient ashram life, with the vast range of mountains on one side along with the wonderful teaching of Guruji. All the time the atmosphere, charged with spirituality, was echoing with the words of wisdom of Guruji and we were engulfed with the cosmic intelligence. We were the moons around him, drawing power from the sun. Guruji was discharging the light of knowledge to enlighten us. He was emitting the ever bright solar energy and we were all receiving it.

Twelve days flew just like a moment, but each moment was sanctified by Guruji with his religious and spiritual touch. The Moral Re-armament Centre became *tapobhumi* for us. These twelve days were very significant for me. You all know that twelve years of practice is recognised as a *tapa*. The other day during the picnic to Shivthanghadi I told about Swami

Randas who did *tapas* for twelve years, then wandered visiting places for another twelve years and established his philosophy staying in the cave for the next twelve years.

Guruji's teaching in these twelve days were of a similar type to me. First he made us burn our impurities and took us to visit each place within ourselves, consecrating each cell and made this body a sacred place where the river of consciousness was flowing, touching each bank of the cell within.

Guruji's teaching in these twelve days can be divided into three tiers as *tapas*, *svadhyaya* and *ishvarapranidhana* which is akin to his very approach to spiritual life. Guruji in his early years of life did Yoga as *tapas*. Thereafter it was a period of *svadhyaya* and finally the *tapas* and *svadhyaya* in the form of *karma* and *jnana* got terminated into *ishvarapranidhana*, i.e. *bhakti*. How true it is when he says that he is a *bhaktan* of Yoga, a devotee of Yoga!

At Panchgani, while teaching us, the first four days, Guruji went on showing us in details, each asana and pranayama performing himself repeatedly. I don't think that you will find any other Yogi at the age of 75 years showing repeatedly all the precision and perfection on himself untiringly. Guruji performed the asanas very gracefully (*rupa*). The positioning of each cell and each part of the body was so graceful that there was *lavanya* (ability to attract) in his performance. The energy was flowing in each part of the body strengthening it (*bala*) and there was a perfect balance of energy everywhere. The body was held in an adamant firmness and compactness (*vajra samhananatva*). The asana, rather he himself, was shining with brilliance, in fact he did more than us. He was doing and we were seeing. It was like a *shravana* for us. We had to just see him, observe him without a blink and read the asana and pranayama on his body. He made us do less but asked us to observe more



to see whether we were catching exactly what he was conveying. He was performing *yajna* and we were the witnesses. Obviously we had to keep our eyes fully opened to see, the ears fully receptive, the brain carefully observing and the organs of perception all the time alert and receptive. I learnt the meaning of *shravana* in a real and total sense since all the *jnanendriyas* were in a receptive state.

Then the next four days of teaching got converted gradually into *manana*. Now he was not sparing any one of us. He started writing the asana and pranayama on our bodies and carving them on our minds. He began to chisel us. Now he wanted us to examine ourselves. The process of seeing was converted into the process of penetrating. The abstract knowledge of Yoga gradually got converted into concrete understanding. He embellished and embossed the asana and pranayama on our hearts. In the last four days, he made us travel from the skin to the soul and the soul to the skin so that we could experience *ishvrapranidhana*. It was not the moulding or shaping merely of the body but it was the moulding and shaping of the consciousness. He shaped and refined the consciousness to shine on its own. At the peak of the performance we experienced *samapatti*. Going with each detail, he brought the perfection in us. For that moment we felt as though our body, mind and intellect were transparent for us to see ourselves. These days you get thousands and thousands of gurus who preach but don't teach. Guruji did not do just the *upadesha* (advice) but he made us experience. He never liked those pupils just nodding their heads to everything he said. He saw whether we were honestly experiencing the change that was occurring within us. He made us to witness the transformation within ourselves. In Hindi they say "*Jo na dekhe ravi so dekhe kavi*" - "The poet sees that which even the sun cannot see, though it is all above us". Guruji saw what we could not

see, reach where we could not reach, penetrate where we could not penetrate. He made the non-perceptible perceptible. He made the self-enquiring process not dry but poetic. In his accuracy of performance, the river of energy was flowing everywhere evenly. The positioning of the cells in asanas was not merely physical but tanmatric. As Lord Patanjali explains, I could see *bhutataya* (mastery over elements) in his performance. Patanjali says, "*sthula svarupa suksma anvaya arthavattva samyamat bhutatayah*"(3/45).

In each asana there was *dharana*, there was *dhyana*, there was *samadhi*, there was *samyama*. He showed in each asana how he is connecting each element with its expression as a mass or bulk converting into proper shape, to proper form with all its subtleties and details with a thorough interpenetration reaching its very purpose of purity. Each cell was crystal clear. Even in pranayama, just an adjustment of the eyes was so very clear and precise that it reminded me of the sutra on *indriyajaya* (mastery over senses) - "*grahana svarupa asmita anvaya arthavattva samyamat indriyajayah*" (3/48). The very drawing of eyes inward, the *pratyahara*, made us feel that we were reaching deep inwards toward the very core of our being. The intellectual clarity cultured the intelligence and reflected inwards to rest within, where we experienced our senses, mind and ego were at rest in the abode of the soul. At the end of the course I felt as though the very matter was getting converted into a spiritual essence. Every cell was shining with its spiritual existence.

The question and answer sessions in the afternoon reminded me of the chapters of the *prashnopanishad*. It was not merely an answer to queries just to satisfy the hunger of the intellect. The answers were reaching directly the self within. The answers were to be experimented and experienced. It is true that one can verbalize



the experience easily since language is the only medium of expression. One can write volumes on the Yoga Sutras. But here is only one person, our beloved Guruji, who not only recites the Yoga Sutras, or speaks on the Yoga Sutras but also expresses the sutras in his practice. He brings the meaning of sutras down to earth, to experience. He conveys the meaning through his practice, through his method, through his approach. He absorbs and assimilates the sutras in his system. He does not express the sutras but sutras enter in him. He need not go to the sutras, the sutras come to him.

We are really fortunate to have such a teacher. It reminds me of one of the *yogapanishads* which says that Guru is a boat which takes the pupils across the river from its worldly bank to the spiritual bank. Thank God for taking us on a safe boat to sail. Guru is making our inner journey very safe.

Thank you Guruji, we are the ones who are blessed, we are the ones who are fortunate enough to have you. You are always with us. We promise on your 75th birthday that we will always be with you. Thank You!

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**MEMBERSHIPS RENEWED DURING 1994 WILL BE RENEWABLE AT THE BEGINNING OF 1995 AND AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH YEAR THEREAFTER. THE COST OF MEMBERSHIP WILL BE \$20.00 NO MATTER IN WHICH MONTH THE MEMBERSHIP IS PURCHASED.**

# YOGA CALENDAR

**MAY:**

**23: Teachers meeting at the Y.**

**JUNE:**

**3,4,5: Saltspring Retreat led by Shirley Daventry French**  
**3: Pranayama in Metchosin led by Shirley Daventry French.**  
**25: Teachers meeting at the Y.**

**JULY:**

**14: Canadian Iyengar Yoga Teachers Meeting in Montreal.**  
**25-30: Iyengar Yoga Intensive in Victoria led by Shirley Daventry French.**

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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. [ ]

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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 its inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

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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, V9B 5T7. Telephone: (604) 474-5630.

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**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: MAY 15, 1994**

Ted Mather

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**VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY**

3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R. #4, Victoria, B.C., Canada, V9B 5T8

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MAIL POST







# VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

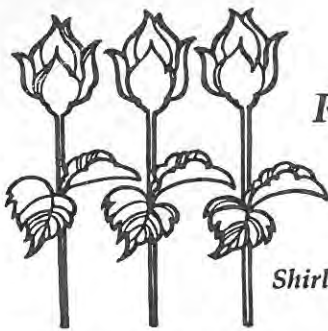
## *Newsletter*



***Please subscribe***

***June, 1994***





## Reflections

by  
Shirley Daventry French

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Last summer, Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar made his third visit to Canada as guest of honour at a Canadian Iyengar Yoga Conference held in Toronto in August. It was a resounding success, and an uplifting and inspiring experience. All who attended came away with a new enthusiasm for and appreciation of their teacher. Before leaving, Mr. Iyengar asked us to make some changes. These included the formation of a national association which would establish a syllabus for the training of teachers, hold assessments and certify teachers under his auspices. Such a system is already in place in most countries in the worldwide community of Iyengar Yoga.

At the annual Canadian Iyengar Teachers' Meeting which followed the conference, there was a spirit of cooperation and willingness to explore how we could implement what we came to call "Mr. Iyengar's directive". Teachers who had not attended the conference were informed what had happened and invited to participate in the process of implementing this directive. This generated a buzz of meetings, correspondence and telephone calls across the land. While hesitant at first to toss more words into the pot, I did decide recently to write to my Canadian colleagues about my understanding of what it means in yogic terms to call someone your teacher or master or guru. Some of the ideas expressed may be of interest to students who are not teachers, as well to teachers in other countries who receive our newsletter and who, having struggled with many of the same questions, may empathise with us. Certainly we are open to learning from their experience. With that hope, my letter is presented below.

Dear Colleagues,

I have just spent a few days at Long Beach, a wilderness area on the west coast of Vancouver Island. The prevailing sound is that of surf pounding the beach in a steady rhythm, and the air is full of negative ions and prana. Relaxing in such a tranquil and beautiful place, the last thing on my mind was to write a letter to my Canadian teaching colleagues, but my divine committee had other ideas which it communicated to me through two books and two dreams.

First was a book called *The Analyst and the Mystic* by Sudhir Kakar, a distinguished Indian psychoanalyst, which a student had given me recently, and which I popped into my bag at the last minute. The second book was one of my husband Derek's called *Peace is Every Step* by Thich Nhat Hanh, that I browsed through one morning as I was waiting for the kettle to boil to make tea. It fell open at an essay entitled 'We are all linked to each other'.

In *The Analyst and the Mystic* there is a chapter called 'The Guru as Healer' which discusses the guru-disciple interaction and how this touches deep, regressed, difficult to reach layers of the psyche, and opens up the devotee's world to new possibilities. This process is called *darshanat*, where "through the guru's look" the disciple is seen "in every detail as in a clear mirror." Everyone who has been in the presence of, and especially in a class taught by Mr. Iyengar can testify to the look with which he sees so much more than is visible on the surface. His interactions with his students are often quite inexplicable to others. The author goes on to say that: "Even gurus with thousands of disciples, whose devotees might conceivably doubt that a one-to-one recognition by the guru is taking place at regular intervals, are at pains to confirm the operation of *darshanat* in spite of the large numbers involved."

Those of us who were so fortunate as to attend the Toronto conference received Mr. Iyengar's *darshan*,

which Sudhir Kakar calls “silent looking” and “the most important form of interaction between the guru and the disciple, the chief healing technique if you will.” In Toronto, our teacher came to us in person, interacted with us directly, as individual souls but also as a community of souls, and asked something of us. Making a special effort to be with us, he gave us his blessing and guidance.

Given the generally poor response from teachers to Mr. Iyengar’s visit to our country, is there any question that our community is in need of healing?

In London, at the European Convention, I saw again the process of *darshanat* at work when Guruji taught and addressed one thousand students. It was an incredible experience: everyone I spoke to felt that the power of his teaching had touched them personally. In Toronto and London, the energy in the room was charged with his presence; doubts and limitations fell away as we immersed ourselves in yoga and, in the process of letting go, touched our true Self.

As Sudhir Kakar says: “The concrete physical and psychic manifestations of the guru’s speech and sound are immeasurably enhanced by the group setting in which a disciple normally hears his words.” And he goes on to describe his own experience: “At first there is a sense of unease as the body, the container of our individuality and the demarcator of our spatial boundaries is sharply wrenched from its habitual mode of experiencing others.” This has been my experience when I have been privileged to be in the presence of Guruji—whether this has been one on one, or one among a hundred, or one among a thousand.

A visit from our Guru or Master has a ripple effect—the Guru’s grace at work! Mr. Iyengar’s *darshan* was not only for those who were physically in Toronto, but for the entire Canadian Iyengar Yoga community. Naturally he was critical, but his criticism was constructive. He did not waste a minute of his time with us, and when he left Toronto he was satisfied with what had been built

up during the conference. In Mr. Iyengar’s own words taken from a video made by Rosalie Shapiro in whose home he was staying: “Now you have 135 members (the number of students in class that day)—this class was really the good one I have conducted in Canada for the first time. It’s the third visit? I had a lot of problems—and this time I could at least bring all together in my hands. Although I was rubbing here and there—again pricking—at the end you saw, the formal talk became informal. How they came to me. What a change! So this healthy group is enough for me to transform the world.” And he followed these words with hearty laughter!

He went on to say: “Build! There are a number of good people here.” But a little later he warned us: “I think a thorough discussion is necessary—otherwise what you people have built, a good work, will be lost faster than the time you have taken to build it.”

Although he was speaking face to face with a few of his senior pupils, he was not speaking to us alone. His words are meant for all those who consider themselves his pupils; who use his name. We were merely assigned the role of messenger.

At the teachers’ meeting which took place after his departure, the spirit of *darshanat* prevailed and there was such a willingness to get to work on what became known as “Mr. Iyengar’s directive”. A steering committee was formed with unanimous support. Teachers who were not there were not ignored and, as the minutes show, we were at pains to make sure that as many people as possible were informed about this development, asked for their ideas and suggestions, and invited to participate.

This of course had to be done, but one of my reasons for writing this letter now is the concern that in the process we may have lost sight of Guruji’s ideas and suggestions.

At Long Beach, as I contemplated the ideas which had been generated from reading *The Analyst and the Mystic*, I chanced on *Peace is Every Step* which, as

I flicked through it, fell open at a page with the heading: 'We are all linked to each other'. The author, Thich Nhat Hanh, is a Vietnamese Zen Master, and in this essay he quotes a Vietnamese saying that: "In order to fight each other, the chicks born from the same mother hen put colours on their faces." He says that we put different colours on our faces to make ourselves a stranger to our brothers and sisters, and that we can only sustain hostility when we remain as strangers. "Real efforts for reconciliation arise when we see with the eyes of compassion, and that ability comes when we see clearly the nature of interbeing and interpenetration of all beings."

Like it or not, we are all connected: as human beings on a shared planet, as fellow yoga students, as teachers of yoga. Are we also linked together as *gurubai*—spiritual children of the same Guru? Or, if we do not call Mr. Iyengar "Guruji", do we recognise him as a Master and ourselves as his pupils? Do we respect him and his teaching? Do we honour him? Do we wish to understand and propagate *his* work? If so, surely we can work together under his direction.

Last year, we painted our faces with different colours. Those of one colour went to Toronto to be with Mr. Iyengar. Others wore another colour and stayed away. There were obviously many reasons for their decision. Some had insurmountable obstacles, which in my own community of Victoria included death and illness. Finances, or lack of them obviously played a role, but scholarships were made available to every community although not all availed themselves of theirs. Others raised money and provided additional bursaries. Inexpensive billets were provided by the Toronto community, and one young man hitchhiked across Canada and took advantage of the sleeping bag space made available at the Yoga Centre Toronto.

Perhaps the decision not to go to Toronto was because you had been to Pune that past winter with the Canadian group and could not afford the time or money for another journey. Perhaps you prefer to

save for another Pune expedition. Your connection to the Mother Institute is clear. You want to learn as directly as possible.

But it is not possible for everyone to go to Pune; apart from the time and expense involved, there are simply not enough spaces for all the foreign students who wish to study there. By inviting Mr. Iyengar to Canada, and to eastern Canada for the first time, many more students were offered the opportunity to study with this great living Master. The Toronto conference was a community enterprise, and before inviting Mr. Iyengar to our country, centres across the country were contacted and asked whether they would support such an initiative. With one exception, all communities which responded, offered unconditional support for this visit. The support of one community was conditional, and one did not respond.

The conference did happen. Financially it was touch and go because of the low registration. Many teachers did not attend, and students are much more likely to go when their teacher is going and is enthusiastic about the prospect. I was also dismayed that some regional newsletters did not mention Guruji's coming visit or advertise the conference in the months leading up to this special event.

The conference was a huge success. While naturally disappointed at the low attendance, nevertheless Guruji gave as much to the one hundred people there as to the one thousand in London. Some Australian and American teachers who had previously attended the American convention in Ann Arbor and were very positive about that experience, relished the more intimate atmosphere in Canada. We were indeed fortunate.

When we saw Guruji off at the airport, it was in high spirits. He was pleased with our response to him and his work, and we were delighted he had come. On leaving he said: "Now, it's up to you people!"

These high spirits infused the 1993 teachers' meeting. Once we departed for our home communities, the questioning began—a healthy process which had to happen. Mr. Iyengar had spoken clearly and succinctly about making some changes and trying another way. He also said he knew it would take time to put these changes into place.

As the process unfolded, questions arose as to whether Mr. Iyengar did say what he said about forming an association, establishing a syllabus, holding assessments and maintaining standards. And had he been influenced by those who were with him? No, definitely not!

When he first spoke on this topic in the conference office before class one morning, those of us who were within hearing range stood there with eyes wide open in astonishment as we began to understand the implications of what he was saying.

He repeated these remarks

- walking across the campus after class
- in the car returning to his residence

— before and after lunch at the Shapiro residence

None of these were exclusive interviews; this is not Mr. Iyengar's nature. Whoever was in the room, in the car, in the group, heard him.

He knew we were having a teachers' meeting after he left. In London, the first time he saw me there (again in a room full of people), he asked: "How was your meeting?" And on another occasion when talking to a Dutch teacher about their association, he suddenly turned to Donna Fomelli and I and reiterated his wish that we initiate some changes in Canada. He was pleased to learn we had formed a committee to pursue the main points of his directive.

Although at the teachers' meeting support for the formation of this committee was unanimous, later this decision was questioned on a point of order by two teachers who did not attend the meeting, and a scheduled meeting of this committee was cancelled.

Where it stands at present, who knows? It was not a decision making committee—and this was clearly stated in the minutes—but an ad hoc committee formed as an extraordinary response to an extraordinary situation. It would have been an insult to Mr. Iyengar to have done nothing.

However, perhaps the delay was a blessing in disguise, giving us time to become clearer. For my part, a holiday, two books and two dreams about usage of time, emphasised the need for a retrospective on Mr. Iyengar's 1993 visit to Canada.

If you chose not to attend the Toronto conference and were not, therefore, present at the ensuing teachers' meeting - you obviously had a reason which you considered to be valid. In addition, there has been some strong criticism of the convention format as noisy, alienating and competitive.

My own viewpoint is quite different, growing out of my personal experience. At conventions held in San Francisco, Boston, San Diego, Edmonton, Toronto and London where Mr. Iyengar has been present, while challenged as both a student and teacher, I have also felt great love, joy and sense of community. There could not be a better spirit of co-operation than that which prevailed at the European convention when people of diverse cultures, speaking many different languages, and with a terrible history of war and aggression, united in a common purpose—to honour their teacher, to receive his blessing, to learn from him directly (in and out of class), and to celebrate this good fortune.

For many years, we have had a loosely defined community of teachers across Canada purporting to teach Iyengar Yoga. Mr. Iyengar is a living Master. Surely the first premise of any Iyengar Yoga community or association is the recognition of this fact, and what it means in terms of Master and pupil relationship within the framework of yoga.

To be or not to be the B.K.S Iyengar Yoga National Association of Canada in accordance with the wishes of B.K.S. Iyengar, that seems to be the



question! If the will is there, despite the obstacles of geography and personality, we can do it and make it work for us as has been done in virtually every other country in the worldwide Iyengar Yoga family: countries of such diversity as Australia and the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and United States, Israel and Germany, Italy and Poland - to name a few.

The ripple effect that I mentioned earlier has had a profound effect in my own community of Victoria and Vancouver Island. At our monthly teachers' meetings we have been working with Guruji's introductory syllabus, holding assessments, learning to give and receive criticism, and above all learning to put aside our egos and delve into the work. These meetings have been fully attended throughout the winter because this has proved to be such a valuable learning experience, for apprentice teachers and experienced teachers alike.

On the surface it may seem that the conference in Toronto created a rift, but perhaps it merely highlighted one that was already there. Can this rift be healed? Yes, if we *are* brothers and sisters, spiritual children of B.K.S. Iyengar, who have merely painted our faces with different colours. He has written about how, while he may treat one of his biological children differently from another, he loves them all equally. It is the same with his spiritual children. We may receive different treatment because of our differing needs, our individual karma, but if we trust him as our teacher we will accept that his interaction with us is for the good of our Self. If we recognise this, then we can work together with mutual respect in the light of yoga. Guruji's 1993 visit will have healed the rift, and his *darshan* will be with us at our July 1994 meeting in Montréal.

I am sending this letter to all the teachers listed in recent Canadian Iyengar Yoga Teachers' directories, and a copy to my teacher, Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar. It has been written in gratitude and respect for Guruji and his teaching.

Namasté,  
Shirley Daventry French

## A DAY OF YOGA

Asana and Pranayama  
in the Iyengar Tradition  
with  
**Shirley Daventry French**

**Saturday  
July 16, 1994**



10 am to 4 pm in  
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3918 Olympic View Drive  
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FEE: \$48.00

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  
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*Part 1: Saturday, June 25, 8-9 p.m.*

*Part 2: Sunday, June 26, 8-9 p.m.*

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**in Metchosin**

**with**

**Shirley Daventry French**

**Saturday, June 18th**

**Pranayama Class  
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|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| 8:00 to 9:15 AM  | Pranayama      |
| 9:15 to 10:15 AM | Refreshment    |
| 10:15 to 12 noon | Asana Practice |
| 12 noon          | Brunch         |

**Fee: \$22.00**

**Information and registration: 478-3775**

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and the Victoria YM-YWCA  
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## **IYENGAR YOGA INTENSIVE**

**July 25 to 30, 1994**

with

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Dr. Derek French  
Linda Benn  
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Ann Kilbertus  
Jim Rischmiller**

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

**Fee: \$350.00**

Victoria is an active centre of Iyengar Yoga, whose teachers maintain a close contact with Mr. Iyengar through regular trips to India and participation in conferences such as the one he attended in Toronto last summer. Our 1994 Summer Intensive will combine the skills of one of Canada's leading yoga teachers Shirley Daventry French with physician Derek French, occupational therapist Ann Kilbertus, and experienced yoga teachers Linda Benn, Leslie Hogya and Jim Rischmiller.

The residence at the Y has a limited amount of inexpensive accommodation for women, billets are available with members of the local yoga community, and, as a popular tourist centre, Victoria has wide selection of hotels and motels.

*For further information contact:*  
Victoria Yoga Centre  
3918 Olympic View Drive  
R.R.4 Victoria, B.C.V9B 5T8

*Telephone enquiries:*  
Shirley Daventry French (604) 478-3775  
or Linda Benn (604) 478-0757

# AN INTERVIEW WITH B.K.S. IYENGAR

CANADIAN IYENGAR YOGA CONFERENCE  
TORONTO, AUGUST 1993

*Mr. Iyengar recorded this interview, answering questions submitted by Margot Kitchen that were indicative of concerns across Canada. The audio tape was subsequently transcribed and edited by Margot Kitchen.*

**Q.** How do you define a balanced practice?

**A.** In his ability to expound on Yoga, Patanjali puts it aptly, meaningfully and marvelously, "sthira sukham asanam". Besides firmness and comfort, the sadhaka should experience the sense of delight in practice. It should finally lead one from simplicity to serenity while the element of relativity is inherent in it, differing from person to person. I think if you see "Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali", Chapter 2, 46, page 149, my latest title, by Harper Collins, it will clear your doubt.

**Q.** From your own experience, could you comment on how your practice has changed as you've aged?

**A.** There's a catch, though the question apparently looks simple. My practice has not changed as age has overtaken me. Daily I have the most gruelling and grilling sessions. I've seen to it that disability has not set in me, due to my age. The disability aspect may be with other practitioners or so-called gurus. I won't give up the practice and indulge in self-pity, "Oh I'm old!" It's not my age. I changed the practice for a different reason, encapsulating the asanas to gain the maximum benefit, in terms of quality; substituting quantity of my total being, my subtle innovation, introducing more variety in strength, time scheduled for higher reaches and goals - a division of what I have to do yearly. As of today, and now, I'm not forgiving my body and mind on the excuse that I'm advancing in age. I



can't say of tomorrow - I strive to live in the present moment - no space in my being to clutter up modulations and modifications tomorrow. I practice for practice' sake and, if possible, to further refine it. I know that what I can't do, I cannot, yet the inherent force induces me to make an effort.

**Q.** Do you have a method for determining the difference between mental fatigue and physical fatigue - and how do you adjust your practice accordingly?



A. You know, mind is fluid and body is solid. Mind, being fluid, fluctuates bringing fear to perform. Is it not a natural phenomenon to us all? But the purusa, the atma of the spirit in us has to be brought to the surface to keep the mind under control, to come out from the compulsion of these factors. One has to be above the mode of mind and build up positive thinking to go with practice as well as reach the ultimate in body mobility. Of the criteria in which my system tells me of the bodily and mental fatigue - when physically tired my system; limbs and nerves, etc., do not respond. The system gets dried up. I resort to rejuvenation of the system through inverted poses, full arm balance, head balance and backbends. When I am mentally tired, I feel the fatigue at the back of the brain. I resort to postures for resting the lobe of the brain and rejuvenation of the mind. The poses are rope head balance, forward bends and quick timings, backbends and shoulder balance and plough pose cycles with the help of a chair, and savasana with weights on legs and chest on hard rectangular planks.

Q. As of February, 1992, you started teaching Utthita Trikonasana and Utthita Parsvokonasana with the front leg crossed over? Can you tell us why?

A. It's annoying when you ask a question on hearsay things. Who told you so? I like questions which are of a fundamental nature and on the core and concepts of yoga practice and refinement. We might have talked of some innovations for yoga therapeutic requirements in cases of hip joint or some back troubles. It's not a regular practice and no need has arisen for deviating from the normal practice. It is to educate students to know the range of hip movements and feel the movement in legs which one has to learn and adopt during classical presentation.

The manner of standing angularly against the wall for standing asanas is not a new method introduced in 1992. I've done it myself and I introduced it a long time ago. I've treated the patients mainly with

that method. Often I find that people are more familiar with the anterior body, than with the posterior body. Adjustments are required. Corrections are done for the anterior body because one is more quickly introduced to the anterior body than the posterior body. The anterior body is seen by one and all - it's a visible side - the posterior body is invisible. Therefore, one needs the intense awareness and intelligence to look back or feel the back. Moreover, it's very difficult to adjust the spinal muscles, buttock muscles and others. What the doctor does not realize, is whether the back of the body is activated or adjusts as quickly as the frontal body. The angular standing asanas bring this sense of adjustment, to adjust the posterior body. Almost all find it very difficult to move the sacral part of the spine - movement in the lower spine, buttocks and sacroiliac areas is restricted because of heaviness, stiffness, as well as lack of awareness. Standing against the wall angularly, with the back leg backwards and the front leg forwards, releases the stiffness of the muscles of the pelvis, sacral and sacroiliac region and builds a great freedom there. This also helps the front chest to open and rotate well. This method is especially helpful for those who suffer from sciatica, pelvic lock, cracked or projecting tailbone, rheumatism and arthritis. It gives a judgment of movement to the spine, the extension of the anterior spine is increased. One becomes alert in the back body.

In fact, I have formed many methods of performing the standing poses. Even if you take the example of a single Utthita Trikonasana. There's a difference when you keep your back foot against the wall and then the front foot against the wall. Again, there's a difference when you stand with your back to the wall and do the asana. When you do it with the anterior body to the wall, it differs. I present all these several methods for you to see that you learn to find out yourself where you lack movement, where to strengthen the body or which organic part of the body has to be stimulated. In this sense, practice is part of the subject. Writing volumes on it will be of no avail.

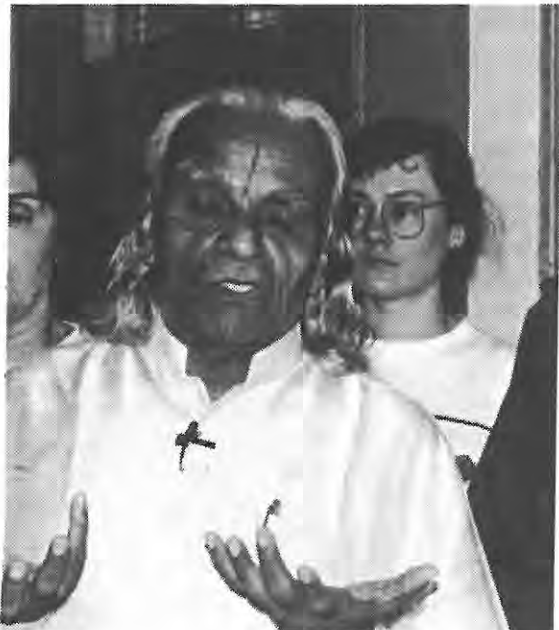
**Q.** From the perspective of your own practice in the early days, what is your advice to young people who find it easy to do backbends and who do a disproportionate number in their daily routines?

**A.** My advice is that a practitioner should learn and study a balanced state of practice by uniformly dividing the course of asanas each day, or plan to devote one day for standing poses, one day for forward bends, one day for sitting, one day for backbends, one day to take a few from each variety and one day to concentrate on variations of inverted poses. Also to do daily rejuvenating poses for maintaining freshness for the next day. This is the way to think, ponder, practice and then to determine what are soothing to adopt and drop the mixtures which introduce tensions and restlessness.

True, that backbending postures are the main attraction for young practitioners. They are agile, energetic and flexible. Since the nerves withstand the strain of backbends, obviously they like to do more. Backbendings by nature make the spine strong, and one becomes alert and active. If you ask me regarding my early days practice, I was definitely doing more backbends to attract people to take up this art. But, at the same time, I never lost my sense of judgment. My practice of overdoing or undoing was meant to find out the hidden truth of each asana. I experimented with myself a lot. I myself was a guinea pig, watching at the same time consciously, with alertness, to see what was happening. I never did just for the sake of doing. I knew everything that was happening or changing in my body and mind in detail. If I did one hundred Urdhva Dhanurasana, I could tell you exactly how I performed at the initial stage. I knew where the source of energy was, whether I was in the middle of practice. I knew what to do and from where to do it, when I came towards the end of Urdhva Dhanurasana.

So these were the ways I practiced. Whether I did the asanas, quality-wise or quantity-wise, or the asanas time-wise, I was noticing the changes of movements, moment to moment, and then went on

improving upon it. It was a kind of challenge within the judgment of my willpower. I never did asanas merely with muscle power, but a balance of energy was important for me. It was my guru who forced me to do backbends. He wanted me to do that to attract the audience in a demonstration. Secondly, I was the youngest in the group. The other members were aged and were not able to do backbends, so the load was on me. My Guruji was touring with us from place to place to propagate yoga. I realized that Guruji wanted me to more backbends for the sake of the show. I must not spoil my health by doing wrongly and overdoing it. In a sense, it opened up a new way of thinking. I accepted his force and discipline - whatever you may call it. If he asked me to do the jumpings and backbends repeatedly, I did it, because I was also a strong headed person, but I saw at the same time how to correct myself, so that my energy was not dissipated. I learned how to get rid of these injuries. In a way, it developed ways of thinking and synthesis improved in my practice. I also concentrated on my forward bends, lateral twists and balancings. I learned several ways of doing standing poses, as you asked me about Trikonasana.



Similarly, I learned the importance of inversions in daily practice.

That's why I did not lose balance of mind or become disturbed in my body. When young people want to do more backbends I won't stop them. I won't kill their enthusiasm but I advise them that they should also learn to respect the asanas and their importance. They should be able to learn to judge their energy. If energy is dissipated and the posture is wrongly performed, they may have to pay very heavily later on in life. You have to be prudent. You have to be cautious. Your program of everyday practice should be balanced.

**Q.** Based on the constitutional types and the Ayurvedic dosas, is there a difference in the approach to asana practice?

**A.** Yes, there is a distinct difference in the approach to asana practice on the basis of constitutional practice with regards to three dosas, Vata, Pitta and Kapha, etc., with slight variations and modifications and more emphasis on the duration of the posture to suit the prakrti or the nature of the person concerned. The core balance of three humours has to be established to keep the body free of disease.

My dear friends, this is a very tricky question. If I talk in this language, they will only limit themselves. Everyone will find their excuses. If you think of constitution, what has been said according to Ayurvedic dosas, and then plan your program, you are not going to make any headway, because you condition your mind before bringing any improvement to your practice. Do you judge yourself by intellectual analysis based on three dosas constitution? In that case, it would be an objective approach. On the contrary, first work yourself, so you come to understand your body and mind - a subjective experience. How do you know in what proportion Vata, Pitta and Sleshma constitute your body? The ratio of the dosas differs from person to person. People are not

manufactured in a factory to keep the same proportion. Again the three dosas change according to the seasons, night and day time, etc. The body itself expresses the constitution. You need not decide which constitution first. The very performance of asanas projects the constitution of a person. The practice speaks of constitution.

Now, if you ask me regarding my approach, it is very clear. For example, supposing I am teaching Uthita Trikonasana in the class and there are fifty students in the class. Haven't you seen me comparing two persons of altogether different constitutional categories? I don't take all the people to do the pose in a similar way. In the process of correction, I'll explain one structurally, anatomically, physiologically and so on. Is it not a constitution - the anatomical structure of the body? In the case of Vata, Pitta and Sleshma, each constitution will look quite different from the other. Do I not ask them to see how a stiff body has to do and how a supple body has to perform? Now Vata nature brings more stiffness than that of Pitta. Do I not ask them to adjust - don't I say do not overbend or overextend, which may compress your nerves and strain the nerves? What are all these techniques? In fact, all my corrections, done precisely and totally, depend on the person who is performing. Very often I'm criticized by many, including my own students. For this reason alone, my method, teaching, doing the techniques, etc., are never the same. People think that I change the techniques. It's not that I change the techniques, but people who come to me are of such constitution that makes me teach multi-faceted. Not only do I make corrections, but I also say how to check the timings and durations of staying in the asana. Even in Sirsasana I ask you to judge. If the structural position changes or diaphragmatic movement changes, I don't ask you to prolong. Why? Because this speaks of constitution. If muscles are loosely hanging and they don't support the bone structure, it means Vata is disturbed. If the nerves are shaky and the body drops, that means Vata is vitiated. If a person of Pitta constitution perspires in two or three minutes of Sirsana, I need not stop him from doing, because his constitution perspires.

To conclude, I can say this with assurance, that I certainly use prudence. But I don't condition the mind in the beginning. I'm neither an Ayurvedic doctor, nor have I studied it, but my judgment does not go wrong. I don't talk about individual constitutions theoretically. I consider individual constitutions practically. That is why, while teaching, I touch and teach. The answer to the question is then and there. I don't sit on the platform and teach. I don't use the words "Do as much as you can." If I say so, people will take advantage of their laziness and limit their movements. The practice of yoga is to discover yourself. Asanas are meant to penetrate the five sheaths of the human being. One has to learn to penetrate and find out the unknown. If you limit your practice to your known constitution, then how can you know your unknown constitution? If I say that this is your constitution and only do this much, when I will have already created fear. Then you don't conquer fear. In fact, the very reason behind touching and adjusting is to make you recognize the inner constitution. Often people criticize me that I keep on changing the method of doing it. I may ask one person to interlock in Sirsasana one way and the other, the other way. That is adjusting constitutionally. My innovation of thousands of methods of one asana and invention of props are all proofs that I have a grip on the constitutions of individuals in depth - more than anybody else. Therefore, don't be an escapist. Be rational and be humble to penetrate your self.

Regarding the previous question in which you have raised "Do you have a method for determining the difference between mental fatigue and physical fatigue - and how do you adjust your practice accordingly?"

Mental fatigue is experienced mainly when the brain and nerves get tired. Excessive use of the brain and nerves, organs of perception, mainly eyes and ears, cause mental fatigue. On the other hand, physical fatigue is felt mainly in the very structural body. When overworked, the neuromuscular system begins to get affected, causing the nerves to

suffer. Obviously, the brain does not respond, along with the motor functioning of the body, affecting mental functioning, like thinking or reasoning. Let me refer to Ayurveda here, since you raised the question regarding constitution and derangement of the three humours in the body. The derangement happens when there is either loss or excess of humor and if one humor is vitiated, the other two also get disturbed. The vayu or vata is basically the nervous system. Over exertion, shock or fear, mental disturbances cause the loss of nerve force. This can cause languor, dullness, oversleep, uneasiness, absence of happiness or hilarity, shortness or loss of speech, etc. This may happen when there is loss of vayu. On the other hand, when there's excess of vayu, one feels tremor or trembling of limbs, insomnia and decrease of bodily strength, etc. In the reverse, whenever there is a loss or excess of either Vata, Pitta and Shleshma, in the beginning it affects the body and reaches the mind. Similarly, if the body fatigue is allowed to continue, it will lead towards mental fatigue. The first indication of this ascending fatigue is felt on the nerves. Loss of Pitta impairs bodily heat and digestion is impaired. The disturbed functioning of the digestive system causes mental depression. Obviously, loss of physical strength will lead toward mental fatigue. Excess of Pitta causes weakness of the sense organs and diminishing of strength. For example, when the eyes suffer from glucomial tension, it causes brain fatigue, leading toward mental fatigue. So as a teacher, I see the reason behind fatigue. Then I know when a person is suffering from insomnia or oversleep or indigestion, the program of practice is changed. It depends upon the profession of a person. A surgeon, after performing a complicated surgical operation, may feel physical, as well as mental fatigue. Then I have to change the course of practice and give resting poses. The physical fatigue is lessened with inversions and forward extension like Janu Sirsasana, whereas the mental fatigue is lessened with inversions as well as backward extension. Fatigue causes hormonal imbalance, though it can be temporary.



The cycle comes with physical exertion and with forward extensions like Janu Sirsasana, the adrenals are quietened. Obviously, the over-stimulated adrenals are quietened, but on the other hand, if mental fatigue has caused physical dullness and laziness, then backbendings such as Viparita Dandasana are helpful. The adrenals will be stimulated. Therefore, the adjustment in the practice requires a vast discretion. Physical exhaustion done beyond one's physical capacity, like carrying a heavy weight or working, may cause breathlessness. The supine poses which bring thoracic opening, chest expansion and freedom in the diaphragmatic region will be helpful. And as the breathlessness is removed, the mental freshness is felt. As one cannot demarcate between the body and mind, one cannot demarcate between physical and mental fatigue. As I often say, where the body awareness ends, the mind awareness begins. So, also, where the body fatigue culminates, the mind fatigue begins.

**Q.** With the Ayurvedic dosas in mind, would you adjust the practice of pranayama - i.e. should the practice of Nadi Sodhana pranayama be adjusted for someone with a Pitta derangement?

**A.** As the three qualities, sattva, rajas and tamas form the constitution of the mind, the three humors also make the constitution of the body. Now this question is similar to the previous question. Obviously, the answer to it is similar. All the pranayamas help one to make progress, but one has to learn to do pranayama properly. Nadi Sodhana - cleansing of the Nadis - is the best pranayama. It is an advanced pranayama. Start with the simple ones like Ujjayi, and then you can do Nadi Sodhana. Do this daily first and the others to fit into your constitution. As far as the derangements of the three humors are concerned, how can you consider only Pitta? Any derangement in either Vata, Pitta or Sleshma, whether in lesser or greater degrees, causes the body and mind both to suffer. When there's a derangement or disturbance of humors, that means the person is already suffering

physically and mentally. Not only the symptoms have to be treated, but also the derangement affecting the seven ingredients, namely chyle, blood, flesh, muscle, bone, marrow and semen as well as the mala, the waste. The whole system needs treatment. That's why not only the adjustments in Nadi Sodhana, you need the asanas also to be adjusted.

In continuation of your question I say, Nadhi Sodhana is good for all dosas, it is true. The other pranayamas will have to be adjusted for those of Vata, Pitta and Kapha derangements. The stress, however, would be on the rooting of the malady to normalize the system to ensure that malady does not raise its head over and over again.

**Q.** Many in our culture are suffering from a condition known as "Chronic Fatigue Syndrome". Can you speak of this condition? Can we as yoga teachers help?

**A.** This fatigue syndrome is also on account of the glandular system. Yoga harmonizes the secretion of the glandular system and builds up energy. This syndrome is a disease of our civilization. For example, blood pressure comes on account of stress, speed and strain and emotional, behavioural patterns, obesity and cardiac diseases. If anything, it indicates there's a deep void within us - a kind of self alienation. You are habituated to live from one excitement to another, never allowing the mind to settle down. You are constantly keeping it on the run. You are too busy thinking what would happen to a film celebrity in a divorce suit or whether Steffi Graf loses to an opponent. Where is the time left to talk to your mind and body and ask what ails these? In the very pool of the rat race of life, full of stress and strain and speed, fatigue finds a nice niche in the void of inner self. Apparently, you have already allowed the mind to chase this or that ripple. You have spread your own dragnet or discontent, refusing to see the cup of life, which is not that empty. You allow the mind to drift, when life comes offering Divine and meaningful manifestations, that would have entered each life, casting away the perils.

**Q.** Psychoanalytical theory can be a useful tool and can lead to important insights - what seems to happen occasionally is that yoga is used as psychoanalysis. Do you see this as helpful or potentially dangerous?

**A.** Adulteration is always bad and counter productive. There's a world of difference in approach to yoga psychology, like the north and south poles. Yoga has an integrated approach to the being, unlike psychology. Yoga is a spiritual science and it goes far, far, deeper in the beginning than psychology, which is like scratching the surface. Time alone will tell whether this mixture works or not. I may not draw conclusions as I am a respecter of all science and art. Yoga is a total science of the whole of man and not on a compartmental basis. Yoga involves all the sheaths of man. Yoga is a physical, physiological, psycho-physiological, and psycho spiritual science. It penetrates far, far, deeper in the being. In the mix-up, one may not find what has led to what, the cause and effect and vice versa.

**Q.** Each culture seems, in its healing process, to make use of sound. We have Gregorian chants, mantras - there has been recent success with Gyatri in India. Could you discuss the impact of sound on the immune system?

**A.** Noise is too much with us, within and without. That is why we suffer from noise pollution. Sound is not the same cup of tea as noise. All cultures, in their healing process, stress the use of sound, one way or the other. Chants and other methods should go beyond sound. Sound and silence is the best healer and silence is the best meditation, sages have said. Mantras do help to quieten the fluctuations of the mind. The mind is diverted from the actual suffering through chants. This is a temporary relief, but the real change comes only when the cells in the body are educated and cultured. Cells are the hidden instrument which make or mark progress in man, whether on the physical, mental or spiritual level. God has presented us with various healing processes, mantras is one of them.

Whether it works to the maximum, the effect is still a question mark.

**Q.** In your book, you advocate a reasonable proficiency in asana before beginning pranayama. At the yoga centre in Calgary we have had an increasing number of beginning students who seem to need, and definitely want, to begin pranayama. Do you have a suggestion as to how to address this situation?

**A.** I wonder how you've missed out on this vital aspect? Yes, proficiency and body alignment is the soul of the asana. But who says that asanas are devoid of pranayama? Without realizing, you have started learning deep inhalations, exhalations, retentions in various postures, regulating the breath subtly. So let not your students run amok in their impatience. Let the building come up on a solid foundation - the structure of the columns - let the slab be laid later. The practice of asanas strengthens the nervous system. That's why the emphasis. After a good practice of asanas, with perfect alignment - the body to asanas - the energy flows uninterruptedly in pranayama. Need or greed is not easy to define. The students "like to begin" or "demand to begin" is not need, but greed. The students may ask you for Heaven. Can you give without asking of them purity? My advice is learn asanas and then do pranayama, to enjoy this subtler way.

**Q.** A student's relationship with his or her teacher grows, changes, and then perhaps ends. Do you encourage senior teachers and students to work on their own - find their own way?

And a continuation of this question - I know that each case is individual, but when are we, as teachers, able to be innovative and creative from our own experience, using the foundation that you have given us?

**A.** A relationship with a teacher or a guru is abiding - it does not end, provided the teacher has earned the esteem and inherent respect of the student, and really contributed to the growth of the student - not the teacher who is counting on the cash or fees that he has received. The bond of feeling between teacher and student remains forever in grateful consciousness - the trappings of social and other relations dropping automatically - or one is bent on teaching higher goals and dispensing the latter use for a period.

I've encouraged teachers and students to find their way in the uncharted ocean of yoga, which calls for creative and innovative spirit. I'm delighted that many of my students who are now teachers, have acquired fame and fortune, after grim struggle. Know that creativity and innovation come by study and experience. Without stability, creativity cannot come. What you call creativity may be intellectual fluctuation. It may be a fallacy or it may be a fact. One has to touch one's heart to be creative. I expect them to conduct themselves ethically so that no one dare raise a finger that they have compromised on the fundamentals for the sake of popularity, or money, or both.

**Q.** How do you handle students who rely and depend on you rather than on God or their own Divine spark?

**A.** My job is not to handle them. It is to provide them with the right perspective, bond, and the tools for true perception - monitor them as they are trained under me with my experience, which is rooted in my sadhana. My practice is my unseen guru, number two, next to my first and foremost

guru, Sage Patanjali. I'm not a circus manager, or a ring master, training wild animals. The students have to bear this cross and the spiritual guidance and help of God comes automatically with dedication. The Divine spark is ignited with sadhana from a small fry to a big fish - as far as I know - which kindles the light of intelligence. The teacher, too, has a Divine spark. If students seek my guidance, it is not relying or depending on me. After all, a teacher is an instrument of God to carry on the work.

**Q.** What advice do you have for teachers who fall prey to their very human egos and revel in the power given them by their students?

**A.** I see no use of power equations between the teachers and students. Intelligence and instinct guide the good teacher to do his duty. Powers are not given by students - they ignite teachers. This ignition is for growth not for power.



Q. Based on your therapeutic work, it's clear that you work on the different levels, physical, mental, psychological and spiritual. Could you talk about this?

A. Yes, I work at all levels simultaneously. It took 15 years of education and devotional practice to reach this level. The body, mind and soul are intimately linked. Yoga is holistic, the compartmental approach, demarcating one from the other, is not possible. There's no short cut to it.

Q. Sometimes the spiritual side of the work is lost or misunderstood, at the hands of other people teaching your method - in the mechanics of asana and the imitation. Can you give us, as teachers, some direction as to how we can express this spiritual aspect?

A. The spiritual work has to come from within. The mechanics or techniques of asanas can be easily adopted by spiritual ways. Those who teach my way have to learn to adopt higher aspects of life. Now it will be easy since my book on the Yoga Sutras has been published. It's possible that sometimes the spiritual side of the work is lost or misunderstood at the hands of others teaching my method - in the mechanics of asana and the imitation. However, I do not agree that "mechanics" - I prefer to call it technique - is limited because it has very little dimension.

Postures are not devoid of spiritual significance. In spiritual matters, the teacher cannot help unless he has entered higher reaches of consciousness. Similarly, the sadhaka can grow depending on whether the teacher has done his duty in lighting the spark of spiritual growth, depending upon the hidden potential of the student. Lesser gurus have helped our spiritual masters of very high calibre to surpass the guru.

Q. How, in these times of profound change, can we as individuals adjust our yoga practices to counterbalance the turmoil brought on by social and economic instability?

A. Profound changes are part of our time. Take music. Can you change the earlier composition, or use it as a base to fit into a new way of the scale? Similarly, yoga is a right science. The base cannot be changed, but adjustments may be possible. Yes, ours is an epoch of turmoil and strife, deeply injuring humanity. We have got to live with it, we cannot reform the world. But in our own way we can reform ourselves, by learning to be calm, peaceful and harmonious. You have the answer again earlier. You may feel the need to do more pranayama or meditation, but it does not mean society. So think both, you and society.

Q. How can we use our yoga practice to be of service to help others weather this change?

A. In the same manner, by helping them to be more poised, calm and in harmony with themselves - greater fellow feeling - positively helpful and with greater understanding among people and helping them to abide the virtue of tolerance, the spirit of "live and let live", respecting each other in a healthy way seeing the presentation of others, to adopt and adapt as a healthy competition and not as might is right.

Q. I believe your new book is the answer to many of these questions.

A. My latest "Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali" has been well received. I think that what I could write in the book is my divine grace and dedication to sadhana, that is practice. My effort is to live up to that, what I wrote myself. The book is filled with practical philosophy, which one can use in one's daily life. It becomes a yoga spiritual bible to those who practice yoga.



**Q.** Can you foresee a time when Geeta will be visiting our country? Do you have any plans for future visits here?

**A.** None now. I don't plan. If God wills and wants, I will be sent to promote yoga and make it popular. It is up to Geeta, Prashant and yourselves, who can decide in your own rights and propensity, though I've not become a back seat driver.

**Q.** Do you have a wish for how the Iyengar system will continue after you have passed on?

**A.** I feel that yoga is a movement for the emancipation of humanity. Movements have a creative element to discard the chaff from the grain. It is for you and others to keep this art burning. You all have a big responsibility and not me. I have done my job well and I'm happy to go when the call comes. When I took to yoga, I had no wish except to gain health. Yoga took me to heights I did not dream of and, in the same way, I feel that if God wants it, it will survive. So I have no more wish to generate things for it to survive or to live. It is now in somebody's hands and certainly not in my hands. Thank You.

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JULY 25th - 30th, 1994

**REWARD: \$20/night**

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# YOGA

## IYENGAR APPROACH TO YOGA

*Iyengar Yoga creates a dynamic balance between flexibility, strength and endurance with an emphasis on precision of movement and correct body alignment. It promotes health, vitality, conscious relaxation and general well being. Yoga is especially suitable for people who wish to explore and expand their awareness of the way they use their body and mind in daily life. The Victoria Y offers one of the most comprehensive programs of Iyengar Yoga in North America under the direction of Shirley Daventry French, a senior student of Mr. Iyengar and one of Canada's most qualified yoga teachers of his method of yoga. She is assisted by Linda Benn. All classes in the Y program are taught by experienced and well-trained yoga teachers, in a well-equipped studio.*

### Yoga for Backs

Learning skilful use of the back is fundamental in all yoga classes in the Y program. People who have experienced back problems will benefit from the teaching in any Introductory class.

### Pre-Natal Yoga

Registration is welcome in Introductory level classes. However, you are asked to inform the Instructor that you are pregnant.

### PLEASE NOTE DATES FOR SUMMER YOGA

Term A: Monday, June 27-Sunday, July 24 (4 weeks)

Term B: Tuesday, August 2-Sunday, August 28 (4 weeks)

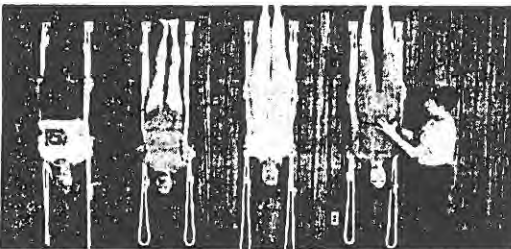
Note: No classes Monday, August 1

Iyengar Yoga Intensive: Monday, July 25 to Saturday, July 30

During the week of the Intensive there are no regular yoga classes. We may arrange a few interim classes in the evening.

All classes are co-ed. All classes are in the Lounge.

Bar feet essential in all classes.



## ADULT YOGA

### Introductory Yoga

Members: Free

Non-members: \$23

All students with no previous experience of the Iyengar method should register in this level. Co-ordination, strength, flexibility and stamina will be developed through progressive work with yoga asanas (poses).

| Class | Term | Instructor                         | Day   | Time           |
|-------|------|------------------------------------|-------|----------------|
| 401   | A    | Lauren Cox                         | Mon   | 10:00-11:30 am |
| 402   | A/B  | Linda Benn<br>Jim Rischmiller      | Mon   | 7:30-9:00 pm   |
| 403   | A/B  | TBA/Wendy Boyer                    | Tues  | 5:30-7:00 pm   |
| 404   | A/B  | Linda Benn<br>James Currie-Johnson | Thurs | 5:30-7:00 pm   |

### 60 & Better

Regular practice of yoga promotes good posture, muscle tone, bone strength and a feeling of general well-being.

Members: Free

Non-members: \$23

Seniors: \$18

| Class | Term | Instructor | Day | Time           |
|-------|------|------------|-----|----------------|
| 405   | A    | Linda Benn | Wed | 10:30-12:00 pm |

### All Levels

A summer maintenance class for all yoga students who have completed at least one session of Introductory yoga.

Members: \$16

Non-members: \$26

| Class | Term | Instructor      | Day  | Time           |
|-------|------|-----------------|------|----------------|
| 406   | A/B  | Margaret Feehan | Wed  | 5:30-7:00 pm   |
| 407   | A/B  | Leslie Hoya/TBA | Thur | 10:00-11:30 am |

### Workshop Series

Members: \$20

Non-members: \$34

An intermediate course for students with a good understanding of the Iyengar method.

| Class | Term | Instructor         | Day | Time         |
|-------|------|--------------------|-----|--------------|
| 408   | A/B  | Marlene Miller/TBA | Mon | 5:30-7:30 pm |

### Noon Hour Yoga Class

Members: Free

Non Members: \$15

Take time out at mid-day to stretch, recharge and relax.

| Class | Term | Instructor | Day  | Time          |
|-------|------|------------|------|---------------|
| 409   | A    | Lauren Cox | Tues | 12:00-1:00 pm |

## YOUTH AND YOGA

### Children's Yoga (8-12 years)

Members: \$9

Non-members: \$15

We are pleased to offer this opportunity for young people to develop body awareness in a relaxed, non-competitive atmosphere.

| Class | Term | Instructor | Day  | Time           |
|-------|------|------------|------|----------------|
| 410   | A    | Lauren Cox | Tues | 11:00-12:00 pm |

# YOGA CENTRE NEWS

Here are the highlights of the meeting of the Directors of the Victoria Yoga Centre, held on May 29, 1994.

## **Treasurer's Report:**

Karen Lockyer has been working with Jim Rischmiller to become familiar with the Yoga Centre accounts. At present the status of the funds are:

|                        |           |
|------------------------|-----------|
| Bonus Account          | \$2181.20 |
| Current Account        | \$9019.92 |
| Daily Interest Account | \$ 898.64 |
| U.S.A. funds Account   | \$ 352.80 |
| Strip Bond             | \$5000.00 |

After some discussion it was decided to amalgamate the accounts and use excess funds for purchasing interest bearing instruments.

## **Scholarship Awards:**

Saltspring: Karen Lockyer

Summer Intensive: Alison Yarwood  
(Denman Island)  
Tracey Dixon  
(Lasqueti Island)  
Cindy Schaefer  
(Victoria)

## **Newsletter:**

The July/August issues will be combined for the summer.  
Jennifer Rischmiller will be arranging a meeting for people interested in helping with the newsletter. Please watch the bulletin board at the Y for details.

## **Programme:**

33 people are registered for the Saltspring Retreat and there are 7 names on the waiting list!  
9 people are registered for the Summer Intensive and another 5 have voiced their intention of attending but we haven't seen the colour of their money yet!  
Father Joe Pereira will be here in October and Ramanand Patel will be here in November.  
There will be a Level 2 evening class at the Y in the fall.

## **News Flash:**

Jim Rischmiller will not be standing as President next year so the Yoga Centre will be looking for volunteers to serve in this position. Please consider helping in this way, or nominating someone you know to help. Thank You.

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

**RAMANAND  
WILL BE RETURNING  
for a weekend workshop**

**November 4, 5 & 6 1994**

To make sure of your place  
in this year's workshop  
circle these dates on your calendar  
and keep an eye on this newsletter  
for further details

Enquiries:  
Shirley Daventry French  
604-478-3775

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**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**

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





*The Victoria  
Yoga Centre*

*Fr. Joe Pereira  
of Mt. Carmel Church  
Bombay, India  
will present an*

*Iyengar Yoga Workshop*

*Evenings: Oct. 4, 5, & 6, 1994*

*Contact: Marlene Miller at 655-4306  
for further information.*

*Watch the Newsletter for  
Registration details*

**'Y' SUMMER YOGA**

Term A - June 27 - July 24

Iyengar Yoga Intensive  
July 25 - 30

Term B - Aug 2 - 28

SEE 'Y' BROCHURE FOR  
FULL CLASS LISTING

Plus

\* NEW CLASS - SATURDAY AM \*  
ALL LEVELS - CELIA WARD  
JULY 9th-30th 9:30-11:00am

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL CHANGE OF POLICY**

**NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS**

**EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**

**MEMBERSHIPS RENEWED DURING 1994 WILL BE  
RENEWABLE AT THE BEGINNING OF 1995 AND AT  
THE BEGINNING OF EACH YEAR THEREAFTER.  
THE COST OF MEMBERSHIP WILL BE \$20.00 NO  
MATTER IN WHICH MONTH THE MEMBERSHIP IS  
PURCHASED.**

# YOGA CALENDAR

## JUNE:

18: Pranayama in Metchosin led by Shirley Daventry French.

5: Teachers meeting at the Y.

25-26: Rose Ceremony at Radha House.

Call 595-0177 for details.

## JULY:

5: Canadian Iyengar Yoga Teachers meeting Montreal.

21: Day of Yoga in Metchosin with Shirley Daventry French. See ad this issue

25-30: Iyengar Yoga Summer Intensive led by Shirley Daventry French.

## AUGUST:

24: Teachers meeting at the Y.

## OCTOBER:

2: Sunday workshop: Meet the Teachers Extravaganza. Details in later issues.

4-6: Father Joe Pereira workshop. Contact Marlene Miller for details. 655-4306.

14: Yoga Centre Gathering at the Y.

29: Teachers meeting at the Y.

## NOVEMBER:

4-6: Ramanand Patel at the Y. See Details this issue.

18: Yoga Centre Gathering at the Y.

26: Teachers meeting at the Y.

## DECEMBER:

3: Victoria Yoga Centre Annual General Meeting.

11: Light on Yoga workshop at the Y led by Shirley Daventry French.

## 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 and renewable each January.

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. [ ]

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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 its inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

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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, V9B 5T7. Telephone: (604) 474-5630.

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*Thanks to Dave Rocklyn for compiling the index*

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**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: JULY 15, 1994**

Ted Mather

2738 Graham St.  
Victoria, BC  
V8T 3Z2



**VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY**

3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R. #4, Victoria, B.C., Canada, V9B 5T8

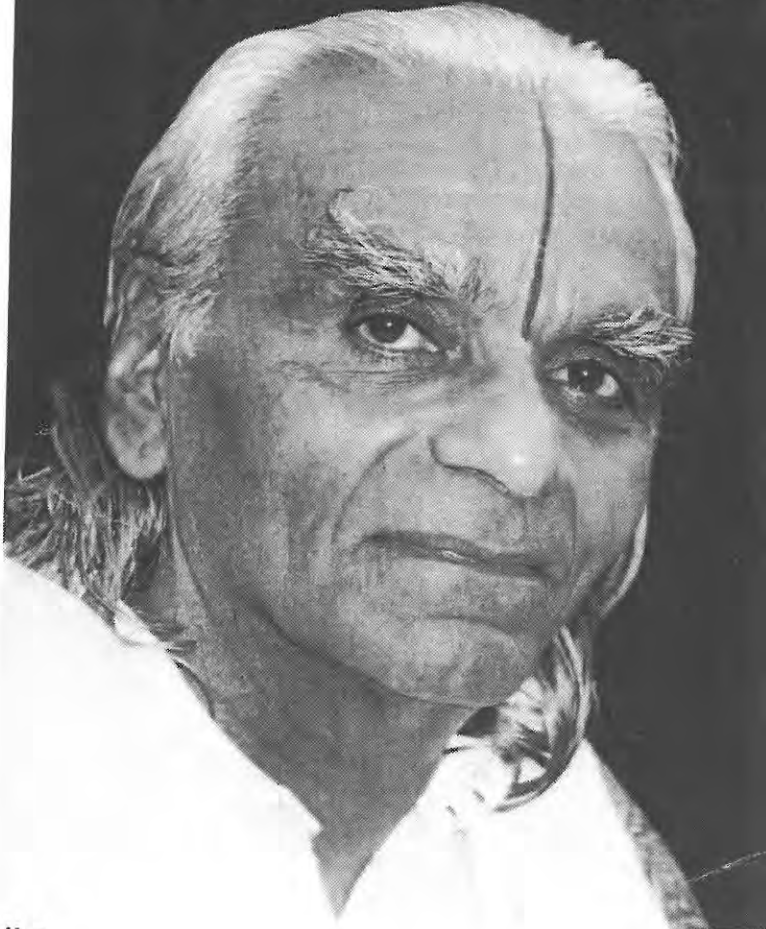
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VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE  
*Newsletter*

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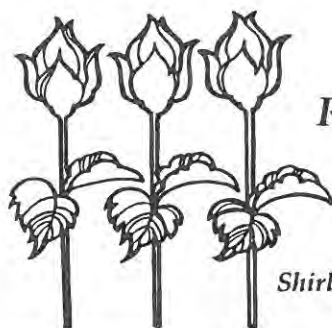
IYENGAR  
His Life and Work



*lease subscribe*

*Summer, 1994*





## Reflections

by  
Shirley Daventry French

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Several years ago, when I was the editor of a new edition of Mr. Iyengar's autobiography/biography, we were searching for a title. This book, which was being published in North America by Timeless Books, the publishing arm of Yasodhara Ashram, was a revised, updated and expanded version of another, published in India, which was out of print. Its title was *Body the Shrine, Yoga Thy Light*.

My preference was to call the new book quite simply: *IYENGAR*. What else did we need to say? It was dramatic and its brevity conveyed that this was a book about a great man, important enough to be identified by a single name. We had a dynamic, full face photograph of Mr. Iyengar taken by my husband, Derek, which we were planning to use on the cover. With the name *IYENGAR* displayed in large letters, it was sure to draw notice in a book store. However, when we discussed this matter with Mr. Iyengar, we learned that while in North America the name "Iyengar" is an uncommon one, this is not so in India, especially in the South where it quite commonplace. Eventually, the new biography was published under the title *IYENGAR—His Life and Work*.

In yoga circles, in North America and Europe, there is no question that the name "Iyengar" stands for Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar. Wherever there is yoga, this name comes up. By his students, it is spoken with love and respect, in gratitude for his lifelong dedication to the tradition of yoga and the teaching which he has painstakingly passed on to

us. Those students who are teachers themselves do not use his name lightly, but with a sense of accountability and responsibility to *their teacher*.

If you have had the good fortune to be taught directly by Mr. Iyengar, his daughter Geeta or his son Prashant, at their Institute in Pune, and maintain this connection, the link is clearly established. For those whose studies have taken place at more of a distance, it is not always so. Once, I was talking to a young woman who had just finished her apprenticeship with me and had begun to teach in our Iyengar Yoga program. She said she was hesitant to call herself an Iyengar teacher; did she have the right? My response was that if I studied with Mr. Iyengar, practised what I had learned from him, and passed this on as best I could to her, and in turn, she studied with me, practised what she had learned and passed this on as best she could—the link was there: she was an Iyengar Yoga teacher. But it was healthy that she asked the question and did not take it for granted.

As the work grows, and more and more students become teachers without having direct contact with Mr. Iyengar, it is a tremendous responsibility to maintain as direct a link as possible, uncluttered by extraneous material, and to do this without becoming doctrinaire and rigid.

Yoga is so vast a subject, and Mr. Iyengar's teaching so deep and varied, that each one of us who is his student can only grasp a small portion of this teaching. We must bear this in mind as we struggle to deepen our practice and broaden our understanding. At the same time we must also be aware that this teaching is based on a centuries' old tradition, and that there is a method, a structure which form the foundation and the backbone of the teaching.

What does it mean to call yourself an Iyengar Yoga teacher? Who is entitled to use Mr. Iyengar's name? If you do use his name, in what way are you accountable to him? It seems to me self-evident that this accountability would include

making the effort to go to India, if at all possible, and being willing to teach before him should the opportunity arise. After all, who is better equipped to decide if you are an Iyengar Yoga teacher than Mr. Iyengar himself. How could you quarrel with that? But not everyone does agree with me, and this is a frequent topic of debate.

Let's face it, It is a decidedly uncomfortable experience to have your teaching scrutinised and assessed by B.K.S. Iyengar. He is going to criticise your teaching. He will only see you for a short while, perhaps once in a lifetime. He will make the most of this opportunity—will you? He is going to focus on what you haven't done or seen, rather than what you are doing well. This is his chance to hone your skills, guide you, point you in the right direction, which in some cases demands a considerable about face. You will not be relaxed while he is in the room, but you will be alert, senses finely tuned and mind focussed.

In his second sutra, Patanjali says that Yoga is the cessation of the fluctuations of the mind. When Mr. Iyengar is in the classroom, your mind will not fluctuate, and neither will the minds of your students. It is a wonderful opportunity to practise yoga. It is a wonderful opportunity to refine your teaching. It is a wonderful opportunity to face your fears. It is a wonderful opportunity to learn.

The first time I taught in front of Mr. Iyengar was in Victoria in 1984. The week before, I had taught at the International Yoga Conference in San Francisco where he went from class to class observing teachers. Once when I was teaching I heard his voice coming close, but he went into another room and did not come to any of my classes. I was a little relieved but rather disappointed. I envied those who had faced this challenge and overcome this obstacle. After the convention, when he came to Victoria, he was staying in my home. On the morning when he was coming into the Y to observe our teachers, I went on ahead to make sure all was ready for his visit and





to prepare myself to teach before him. Derek would drive him into town a little later. I was excited and nervous, in a similar way to how I used to feel when I was younger and about to compete in an important athletic event. I knew that a certain amount of adrenaline pumping throughout the body would be helpful, but too much would interfere with my presence of mind and my presentation.

I was only one of several Victoria teachers who would be observed that day, and I put us all into the light. I also prayed that I would be able to teach that which I knew. In San Francisco, I had seen some people succumb to nervousness and teach in a totally inappropriate (and probably unusual) way. Driving the fifteen miles into town, I suddenly thought to myself: if I am on the wrong track, isn't it better to find out now rather than wasting more time? And with this thought I became very calm.

At the "Y" we had three classes running simultaneously, with the more experienced teachers taking turns to teach. When Mr. Iyengar came into

the room where I was teaching, I welcomed his presence. It was very exciting. I concentrated on hearing all he had to say and seeing all he had to show me, which was a great deal. I felt as if we were running on fast time, like a movie which had been speeded up. We moved rapidly, almost running, from student to student, from place to place in the room—and then, it was over, he left to move into another room where another teacher would have this unique experience. Whew! Together the students and I laughed delightedly at our good fortune to be in that place at that moment in time.

That was the first of many occasions when my teaching has been observed by Mr. Iyengar at various conventions throughout North America. It is never easy. Nor is it relaxing. It is challenging. It is *always* worthwhile. In these short, intense, segments of time, I have learned so much—about yoga, about teaching, about myself. What a priceless gift!



## YOGA IN METCHOSIN

with Shirley Daventry French

### **Asana Classes**

*morning and evening classes  
plus an afternoon class for  
people with special problems*  
Classes commence September 13th  
\$80.00 for eight-week session

### **Pranayama**

*for experienced students*  
*Saturday mornings*  
September 17th, October 22nd  
November 19th  
\$25 per class (\$65 for 3 classes)

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



## More about The Real People

In the May issue of the newsletter, I wrote a book review for *The Mutant Message* by Marlo Morgan. A few weeks later Ms. Morgan came to Victoria and, even though I was going to be very busy that weekend, I knew I had to go and hear her speak. The events from the book were brought to life by her sense of humour and way of speaking. She transfixed the audience, packed into a large meeting room, with further details of her adventure.

The Real People, the Aborigines in Australia, she walked with truly live in the here and now. The Real People are in every moment. As an example, Ms. Morgan told about the paddles.

The Aborigines communicate with sea mammals. Every year they spend time with the seals and the dolphins in the ocean. They described to Morgan how they would go down to the shore and make a raft and then drift out into the ocean.

"Don't you use a paddle," asked Morgan.

"What's a paddle?" they asked.

So she described in great detail the shape of a paddle and how it takes a raft where one wants to go. Morgan was sure she had hit upon something that would really be wonderful for them to know about.

"Why would you want to paddle?" they asked her.

"So you can get to where you want to go."

"But how do we know where that is? We don't know where the great oneness wants us to go."

Morgan stopped talking about paddles and the idea of totally surrendering to the present moment began to have new meaning!

Throughout the walkabout she was in a hostile environment, the blazing Australian desert with no food supplies and only a small amount of water carried in an animal bladder around her waist. Except for sitting down to die she had only one choice - to surrender to the situation she found herself in and be in each moment.

The idea that we don't always know what is right or best for us was also illustrated vividly by the attack of the flying insects. In our world we like to have things that are friendly and nice around us. We like cats but not spiders, bunnies but not wolves. We may like the concept of spiders and wolves but we probably don't want them to visit us. In Australia the insects swarm and Morgan didn't like bugs landing on her face. She would swat at them. Finally, the People rigged up a hat for her with things dangling from the brim to help keep the bugs away. However, one day the insects swarmed around them and were crawling into their noses and ears and their mouths if they tried to speak. Morgan vented her frustration as she swatted at them and shook them away with all her effort.

"How can you stand it? How can you just be there and let them crawl all over you and into every crevice?"

They more or less laughed tolerantly as they would at an ignorant child. And explained how the bugs helped clear out their nasal passages which was essential for them to breathe and cool the burning air of the desert before it entered their lungs. They also reminded her that they lived to advanced ages with their hearing intact. Perhaps the bugs helped keep their ear canals healthy.

"And then later these insects fly away from us and go ahead to a place we might want to eat. They lay their eggs there and those eggs turn into grubs, a valuable food supply for us."

Morgan was speechless. How do we know the balance of nature. It cannot be decided by what we like or what makes us comfortable, necessarily. The world environment is suffering as we all know, because of our past and continuing attitudes to natural resources.

In Victoria papers I see examples of this attitude, of wanting nice animals, pleasant environments, and our desire to control things. Starlings were making a mess of the courtyard beside city hall. There were several old plane trees in the square where the birds would roost and swarm around, leaving their droppings on sidewalks and generally smelling up the place. Well, in Victoria this was just not acceptable! City officials tried several strategies over the years to discourage the birds from swarming around this location. Finally, in an act outrageously dramatic, they cut down the plane trees! Well, of course, the birds are back in other trees in other parts of the city. Are we going to cut down every offending tree?

Then there's the bunny kill. The newest hospital in the Capital Region was built in the country. The rabbits lived there first and continued to visit

the grounds. The patients and hospital staff thought they were cute and encouraged them by feeding them. Rabbits that had been pets and whose owners now considered them a nuisance, were dumped here and the population grew to offending proportions. A truck full of men arrived (at the hospital's bidding) and shot a bunch of them to reduce the population.

In another part of the local paper there was an article about a provincial government policy to kill wolves because they were too numerous in a particular location. Nature is out of balance partly because of these kinds of decisions. I thought the bunny problem could have been partly solved if they had imported a few of those wolves. But no, that decision would never happen, people who live in the nearby subdivisions don't want wolves, those carnivores, so close to home.

Sigh. It's no wonder the aborigines consider us mutants. Morgan's talk and her book have given me much food for thought.

by Leslie Hogya



## Learn Babaji's Kriya Yoga

Initiations with M. Govindan, author of the book  
*"Babaji and the 18 Siddha Kriya Yoga Tradition"*  
in Victoria, B.C.

Introductory lecture & meditation, August 5, 7-9 p.m.  
Initiation into wonderful techniques of breathing, meditation and postures, weekend seminar Saturday & Sunday August 6-7, 9 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., receive a complete training in all techniques of Babaji's Kriya Yoga in a series of progressive initiations.

Call Pat (604) 386-8754 or M. Govindan (514) 284-3551

M. GOVINDAN, M.A., has practiced Kriya Yoga intensively since 1969 as a disciple of the great Himalayan Yogi, Babaji, including many years in India. After fulfilling certain rigorous conditions, he was asked by Babaji in 1988 to go and teach Kriya Yoga to others.



*Michael and Linda Shevloff*

*Linda and Michael Shevloff have gone to live in Hong Kong! Michael was offered a job there so they seized the opportunity.*

*Linda will be exploring the culture and, of course, looking for fellow yogis. They are not sure how long they will be gone but they will be returning every year to visit and they do intend to return to their home in Victoria - one day! The yoga community here will miss Linda, her gentle personality and the strength she showed when teaching yoga are a unique combination.*

*We all wish Linda and Michael well in their new life.*

# The West Coast Trail

by Nan Brown



*Nan Brown in **supta baddha konasana** over a log.*

I'm lying in my sleeping bag in the tent. From this position, close against the flyscreen, I can look up at the full moon and the stars on this clear night.

My eyes are open as I relax. You might think I was practicing savasana, but in truth a corpse-like pose is about the best I can achieve this night, my first on the trail.

Four of us set out from the trailhead near Bamfield on that sunny Sunday morning. With our 40-pound packs we were all set for a week of self-sufficiency.

But the warnings of the parks staff stayed with me through that first day of fairly easy hiking alongside the beautiful white sands of Pachena Bay, then up into the forest along the cliffs, past Pachena lighthouse and down to the first campsite at Michigan Creek. "The ladders are out at Cullite," they had said. There were other warnings about an inoperable cablecar at Walbrun, bridges out, and poor trail conditions, but creeks are fordable, and poor trail conditions just slow one down.

Cullite is quite another kettle of fish. The trail drops down 270-rung ladders into the canyon, then up the other side. Without ladders the hiker resorts to fixed ropes to scramble up the steep sides which feature stretches of near-vertical, slime covered rock faces.



You might say I was a mite preoccupied, but I was pinning my faith on the pranayama session I had taken the day before setting out - Shirley had assured me that she knew someone as old as me who treks in the Himalayas with no more preparation than regular pranayama.

There was an additional obstacle for me - a gammy knee, injured just days before the hike, and still decidedly unstable.

I took deep breaths of that ocean air, the rhythm dictated by the crash and withdrawal of the breaking waves. I directed it from the stars to my knee and to an ankle which had been letting me know it objected to all the extra weight. And, I reminded myself, the present moment is all I have. The past is gone, the future with its non-ladders is not yet here.

So I hiked with mind focused on each step.

Not that there's much choice. Lack of attention means a slip, either on the craggy surface of a rock shelf, or, in the woods into a mudhole or over a cliff. Once the balance is disturbed the weight of the pack makes regained equilibrium well-nigh impossible.

It's like a week-long yoga intensive, except that I never, never, locked my knees.

Backpacking and meditation are almost synonymous, at least for me.

All senses are focused on the feet. The creaking of the pack effectively cuts out conversation. Occasionally there's a chance to walk with some rhythm and breath can be synchronized with the footsteps.

And there's a chance to practice some asanas, albeit with modifications. The one-legged balancing poses are high on the agenda as one seeks the next secure foothold.

The second night out, we did shoulder stands on the sand - and I guess I did lock my knees for that, but that was as energetic as we got. Other nights it was *supta baddha konasana* over any suitably-sized log, and then *savasana* into sleep.

We hiked the rock shelf, splashing through shallow rock pools and streams, and inspecting the pink and green sea anemones. We paused to watch the sea lions, enormous animals that hauled themselves out of the water just below Carmannah lighthouse.

We negotiated the tree roots and muddy inclines of the inland trail, and stumped along the boardwalk over the bogs.

And yes, we forded the Walbrun, and negotiated the ropes at Cullite. The bridges, ladders and cable cars had been taken out by a storm which had raged through the previous week, and stopped all but the hardiest of hikers in their tracks.

The bottom half of the trail, always the toughest, was in particularly poor condition. As we fought for secure footholds through quagmires and over the tree roots, we had to find a way over, or under, blown down tree trunks. As usual, they were too low to the ground to crawl under with the pack, and too high on the top-side for comfortable climbing.

We spent the last day and a half straining every muscle to accomplish a mile an hour pace. But accomplish it we did.

Why, you may ask, would an apparently sane woman who is obviously old enough to know better, strap a 40-pound pack on her back and subject herself to this physical, mental and emotional challenge?

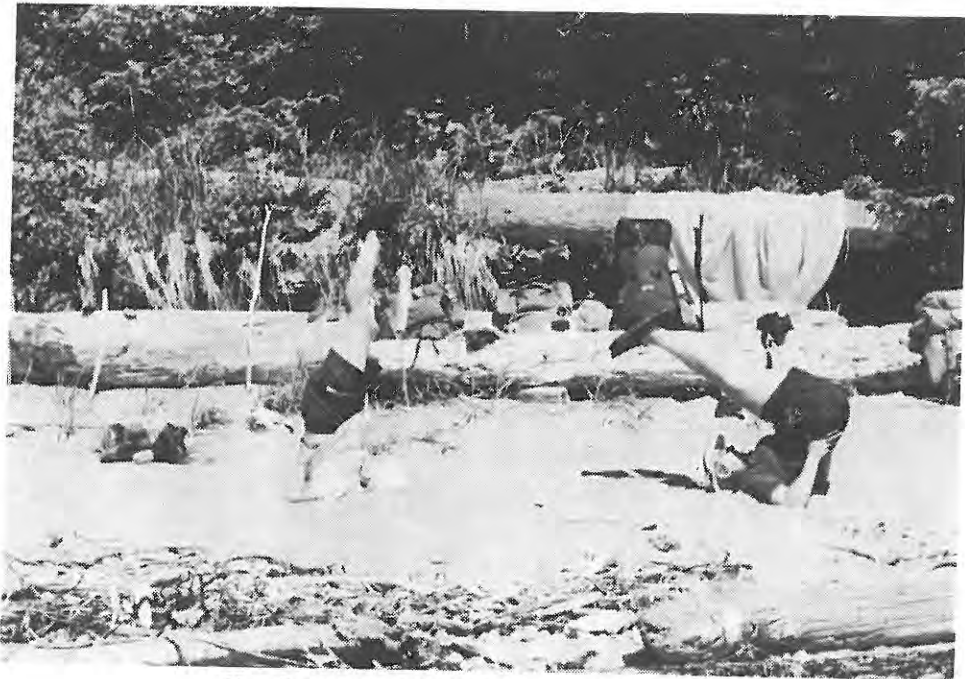
Perhaps she's in her dotage. Perhaps it's like beating your head against the wall - it feels so good when it stops.

It is, perhaps, akin to a yoga intensive.

For a week the hiker is alone, living in the open in what must be argueably the most beautiful surroundings in the world - stretch after stretch of white sand beaches, Pacific breakers rolling in and pushing the white surf onto the beaches, or sometimes storming inland in implacable grey mountains of water. On the landward side those West Coast rain forests, beloved of Emily Carr.

The sense of carrying all the essentials of life - food, clothing, and shelter - on one's back brings its own legacy into life back home. It's a legacy of clearing the clutter from everyday life. A legacy of sorting the essential from the inessential. A legacy of 'don't sweat the small stuff' along with the knowledge that, after all, it probably is all small stuff.

In other words, life becomes pure euphoria - even with the kneecaps locked.



*Nan Brown and Thelma Wagner (of Calgary)  
in shoulder stand.*

## SALTSPRING RETREAT

Reincarnation is a topic that is often discussed among people I talk with. The topic makes interesting conversation as people's opinions depend upon their faith in the idea. So the conversation seldom gets heated because most of the participants, like me, are open to the idea and each has some suggestions to make. Suggestions about how easy it would be to leave the work till next time, about the fact that they want not to come back again, next time they'd like to be something or someone else, or that life will be one long pleasurable experience and no work.

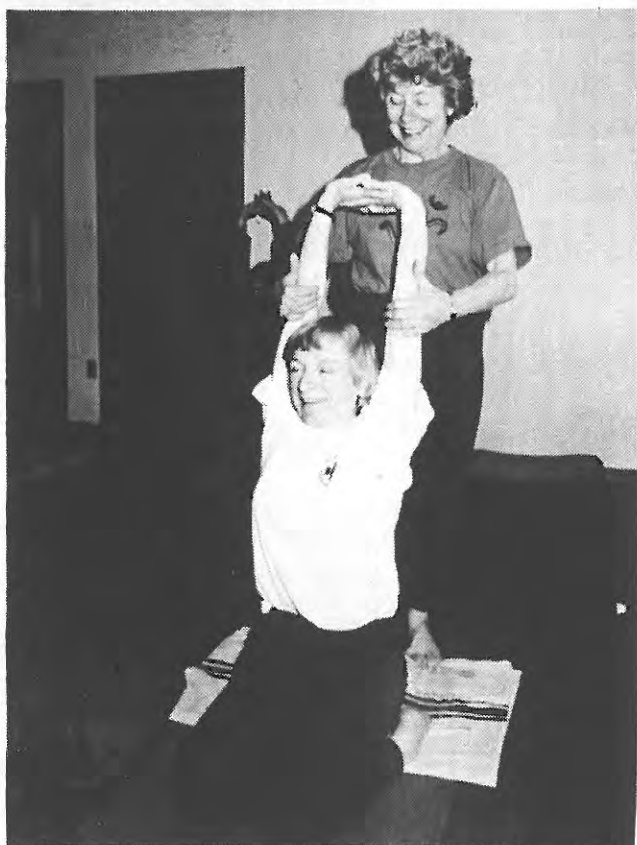
I am still working out my ideas in this life and the next life is a kind of 'back-up' for me. However, I think that I'm getting some practice for reincarnation in my present life. Many deaths and re-births have occurred for my benefit and I am born again quite often. Some of these life and death experiences are quite painful when I resist the changes that they signal. Others are a joy to embark upon.

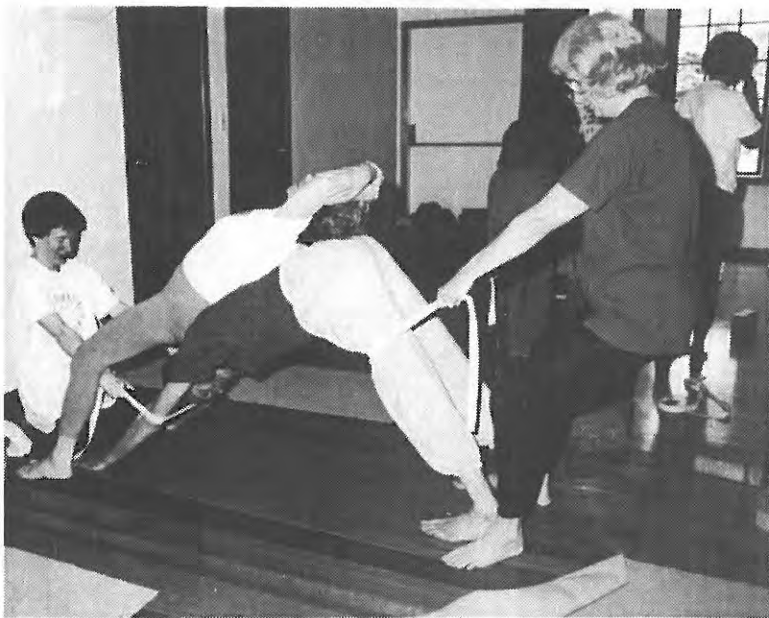
One such joyous occasion occurs on an annual basis, the Saltspring Retreat. I welcome the opportunity my teacher, Shirley Daventry French, gives me to bring new life to my dying spirit. Life and death are powerful words and experiences like the Saltspring Retreat are powerful symbols for me. The work that is offered affords me the opportunity to renew my faith and carry on my new life(s) and accept my death(s). I can work surrounded by other hard working people and I can relax in a peaceful atmosphere.

Some of the photographs in this issue were taken at the 1994 Saltspring Retreat. They show people working to renew their sense of consciousness, working through the body to make contact with their mind and spirit. Each of us leaves with an experience of death and the rebirth of consciousness. Little by little my ego dies away and I experience the growth of my spirit.

Thank You.      Jennifer Rischmiller



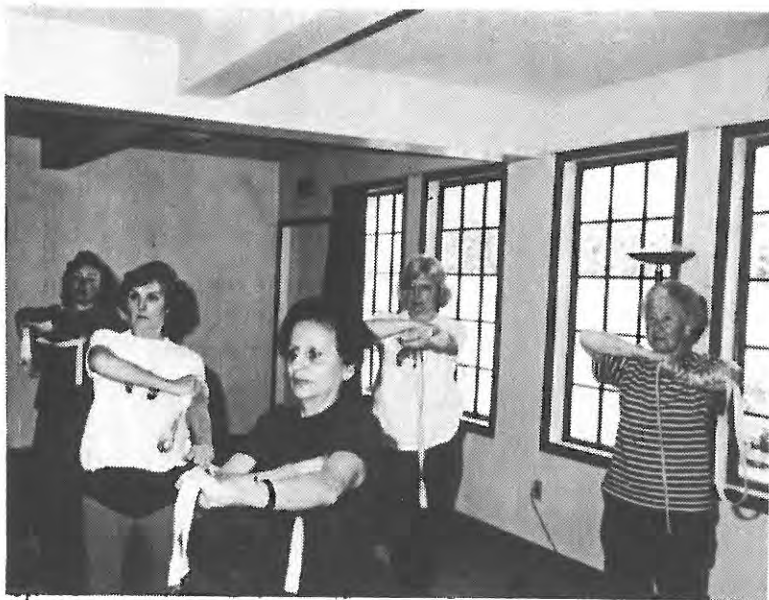
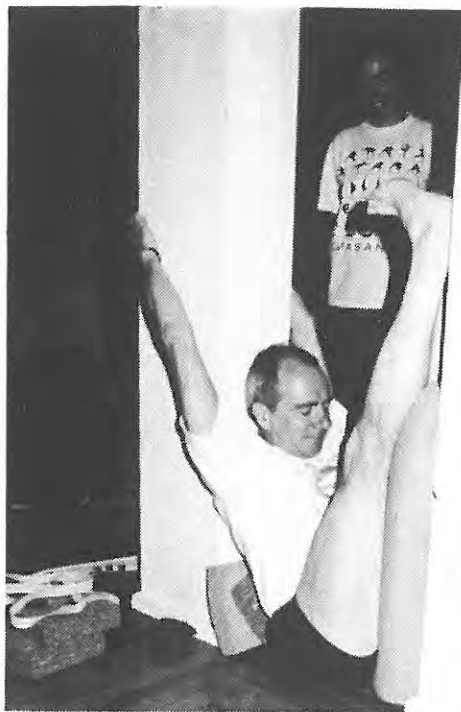




**SALTSPRING  
RETREAT**









# yoga centre of victoria

**Knowing Reality In Progressive Awareness (KRIPA)  
Yoga Asana Workshop with**

**Father Joe Pereira**

**October 4, 5, and 6, 1994**

**7:00 - 9:00 pm**

**Central Saanich Cultural Centre (Activity Room B)**

**1209 Clarke**

**Brentwood Bay, B.C.**

**(30 minutes from downtown Victoria)**

**Registration Fee:**    \$85.00 (Yoga Centre Members)  
                                 \$95.00 (Non Members)

Father Joe Pereira has studied Yoga with Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar for 20 years and has a Masters degree in Indian Philosophy that emphasizes Yoga. He is the founder of the KRIPA program at Mount Carmel Church, Bombay, India in which he has incorporated the yogic teachings for people with drug dependencies. Father Joe combines insights from his work with victims of chemical dependency, his faith and Yoga. He is a note worthy and internationally known Yoga instructor.

**To Register:** Make cheque payable to the **Victoria Yoga Centre**  
and mail to:    Marlene Miller  
                         8570 Sentinel Place  
                         Sidney, B.C. V8L 4Z7

For further information please call Marlene at 655-4306

**Note:** If you are interested in a morning meditation between 6:30 and 7:30 am to be held at the Victoria YM-YWCA, 880 Courtney Street, Victoria, please indicate when registering for the asana workshop. (You do not have to be registered for the asana workshop to attend the meditation.) Further information and registration fee will be forwarded.

THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE  
and THE VICTORIA YM-YWCA  
*are pleased to announce*



**YOGA**  
*with*  
**RAMANAND PATEL**



A Weekend Workshop  
**November 4 to 6, 1994**  
to be held at the Victoria "Y"  
880 Courtney Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 1C4

|                      |                                          |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Friday, November 4   | 6:00 to 8:00 pm                          |
| Saturday, November 5 | 10:00 am to 1:00 pm &<br>3:00 to 5:00 pm |
| Sunday, November 6   | 10:00 am to 1:00 pm                      |

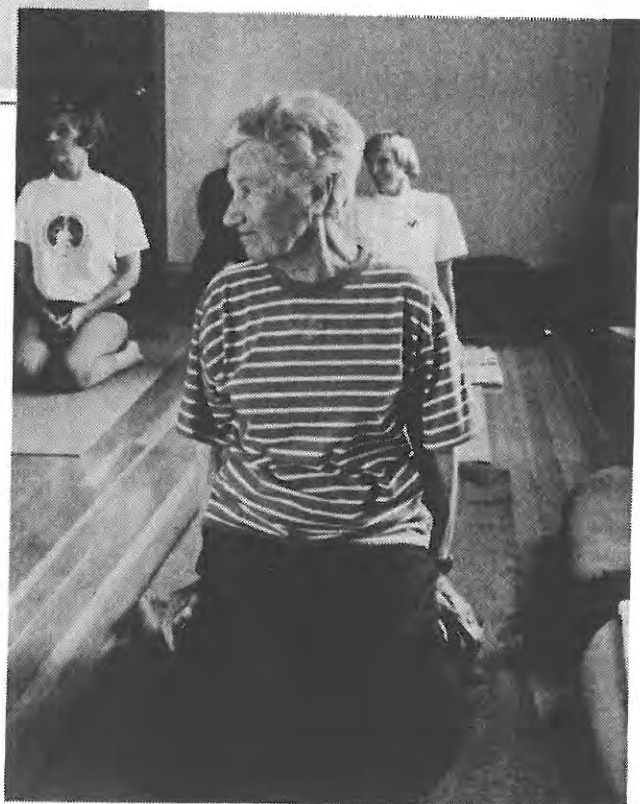
FEES:     \$130.00    Yoga Centre and "Y" Members  
             \$140.00    Non-Members

This workshop is for students of all levels with experience of Iyengar Yoga.

**RAMANAND PATEL** is a creative and innovative teacher who began his study of yoga at an early age under the tutelage of his father. In 1968 he became a student of the Yoga Master B.K.S. Iyengar. His father and Mr. Iyengar have had the greatest influence on his life. Ramanand's workshops are challenging, enlightening and fun, and his annual visit 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 this year.

**REGISTER EARLY AT THE "Y" MAIN DESK** - registration is limited. Cheques should be made payable to Victoria YM-YWCA. Refunds will be made only if space can be filled from a waiting list, less a \$15.00 service charge.

Enquiries: Shirley Daventry French 478-3775, Linda Benn 478-0757 or the "Y" 386-7511.







### The flower and the storm.

Pale grey blue the flower blooms  
through cotton wool clouds of emotion.  
Behind it all mother stands tall.  
Reflecting the hue of the ocean.

The flower grows with baleful light  
turning dark in its heart of power.  
Through shafts of light it smites the bight  
to prove it controls the power.

Then mother's son creeps behind the hill  
collecting the evening sky.  
Control is only a transient thought  
as softness comes to I.

Jim Rischmiller

## YOGA

in the

## Highlands

(north Millstream Road area)

with

**LINDA BENN**

Classes Starting  
in September

478-0757

## 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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721-3477

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

### RATES per ISSUE

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

# "Y" SATURDAY AM YOGA

**August 6, 13, 20, 27**

with  
**Celia Ward**  
**9:30-11:00am**

## Competition

The flowers bloom through sun and rain,  
playing their part in life's symphony.  
Pressed by fear of death's embrace.  
which has been and gone.

I hear a trees green leafed voice call,  
now we share the same life-force.  
As the oboe plays its melody  
hidden within a moment's chord.

I am this, part of Divine Mother's grace.  
As we all are whatever our pace.  
Rather than direct my place  
space's symphony needs my soul.

**Jim Rischmiller**

## **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL CHANGE OF POLICY**

### **NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS**

### **EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**

**MEMBERSHIPS RENEWED DURING 1994 WILL BE  
RENEWABLE AT THE BEGINNING OF 1995 AND AT  
THE BEGINNING OF EACH YEAR THEREAFTER.  
THE COST OF MEMBERSHIP WILL BE \$20.00 NO  
MATTER IN WHICH MONTH THE MEMBERSHIP IS  
PURCHASED.**

# YOGA CALENDAR

## SEPTEMBER

Register for Yoga Classes at the Y.

17: Pranayama in Metchoshin led by Shirley Daventry French.

24: Teachers meeting at the Y.

## OCTOBER

2: Sunday Workshop. Meet the Teachers Extravaganza.

4-6: Father Joe Pereira Workshop. Contact Marlene Miller for details. 655-4306.

14: Yoga Centre Gathering at the Y.

22: Pranayama in Metchoshin led by Shirley Daventry French.

29: Teachers meeting at the Y.

## NOVEMBER

4-6: Ramanand Patel Workshop at the Y. Contact Shirley Daventry French for details. 478-3775.

18: Yoga Centre Gathering at the Y.

19: Pranayama in Metchoshin led by Shirley Daventry French.

26: Teachers meeting at the Y.

## DECEMBER

3: Victoria Yoga Centre Annual General Meeting.

11: Light on Yoga Workshop at the Y led by Shirley Daventry French.

## 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 and renewable each January.

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. [ ]

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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 its inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

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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, V9B 5T7. Telephone: (604) 474-5630.

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**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: AUGUST 15, 1994**

Margaret Feehan

1581 Sonria Place  
Victoria, BC  
V8P 1P3

*Margaret Feehan*



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**VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY**

3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R. #4, Victoria, B.C., Canada, V9B 5T8

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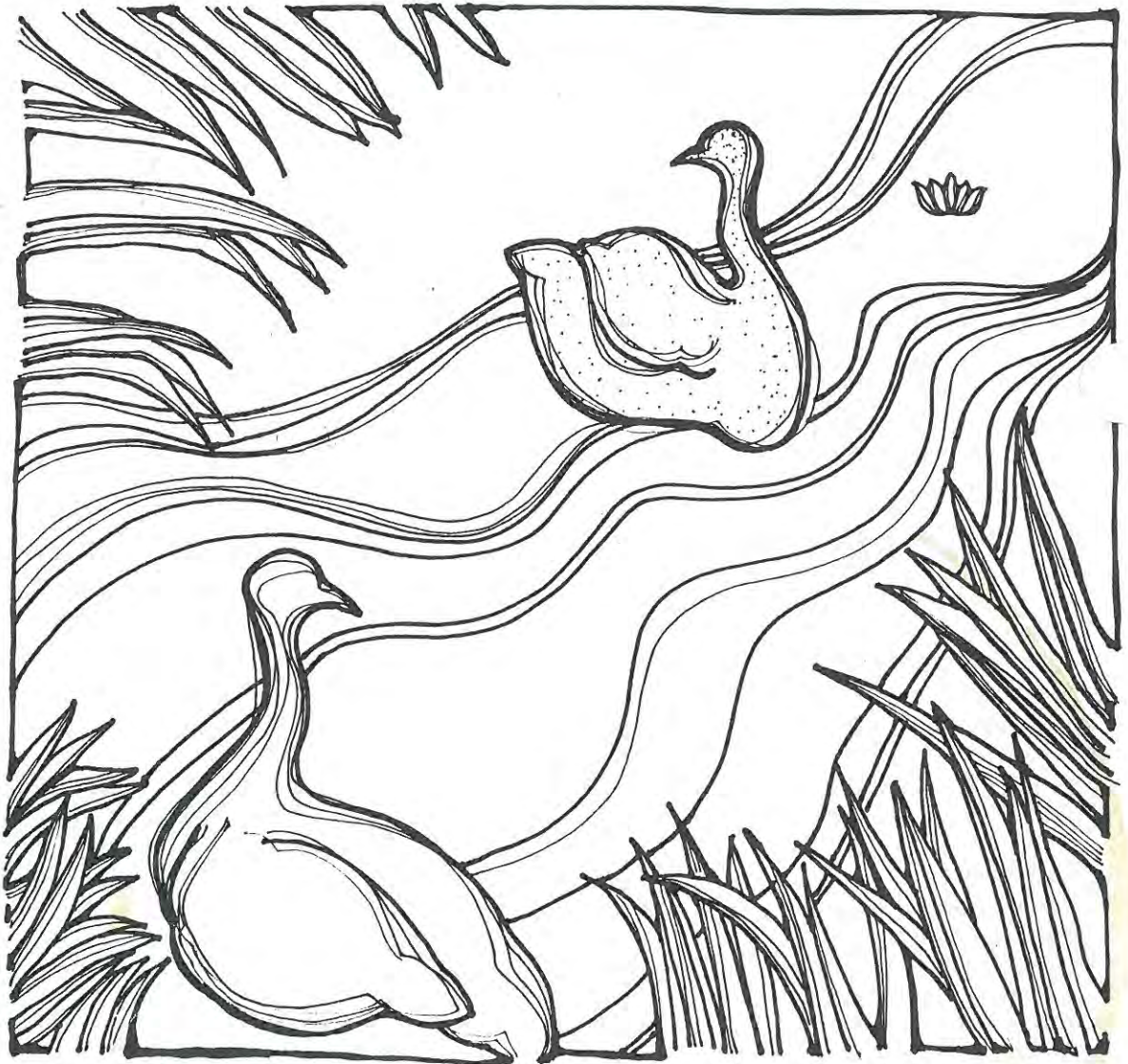




# VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

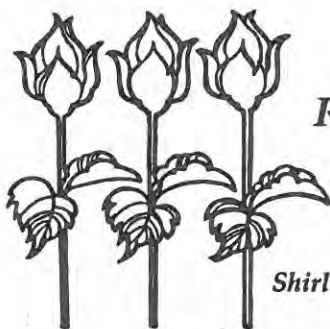
## *Newsletter*

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***Please subscribe***

***September, 1994***



## Reflections

by  
Shirley Daventry French

After my first venture into town for several weeks, I returned to find two messages on my answering machine. One was truncated—this machine has had its own agenda lately, showing impatience and clicking in after one ring even though it is programmed to wait for four. It has obliterated some messages completely including one from Derek saying that he wouldn't be home to dinner. The truncated message said: call me when you have a moment. No name, no number. Call who? It sounded like Linda Benn's voice. The other message was from Jim about an executive meeting planned for the coming weekend. He didn't ask me to call him, so I didn't.

Our last meeting was in May. It is customary for the last item on our agenda to be setting the date for the next meeting. We selected a date for a Sunday morning at the end of August—a long way off. Too soon, it is here. The weather is lovely, the Commonwealth Games are being held in Victoria, and Sunday is their last day. The city is in celebratory mood. When the Games are over, my daughter and grandchildren arrive for a visit and then it will be Labour Day and back to work.

Earlier this week I remembered the upcoming meeting and mentioned it to Derek, then I forgot about it. Knowing it would soon be very busy around here when the children arrived, aged two and three, I said to Derek: "Well, we have a quiet weekend to look forward to first." "Don't we have a yoga meeting," he replied. With little enthusiasm

I replied: "Oh yes! I'd forgotten about that."

Jim called again last night.

"I'm checking in about the executive meeting."

"Yes."

"I'm not sure how many will be there."

"Oh."

"People are going to the Games."

"Which people?"

"Well, so and so!"

And apparently, the presence of some others was also doubtful.

Do we go ahead?

Jim's inclination was to say, yes. Mine too. Certainly, I am reluctant to spend a summer Sunday morning driving into town where many roads will be closed for the Games' Marathon, especially when the alternative is to relax in the peace and incredible beauty which surround me out here in Metchosin. On the other hand, I know how difficult it will be to reschedule this meeting. There will be conflicts of interest whatever date we chose, and inevitably events will occur which will prevent some directors from attending. With ten busy people it is always difficult or even impossible to find a date which will suit everyone.

A few years ago we tried to function with only two directors' meetings a year, and it didn't work very well. We really do need to meet every two or three months to keep on top of things.

My conflict of interest about attending this particular meeting, is that I simply don't want to get fully involved in the Victoria yoga scene—not yet. Soon enough classes will begin and I will be following a more rigorous routine. Lately, I've been hiding out in my country home, not phoning or contacting anyone in the yoga community, enjoying leisurely practices and time for reflection—some of which is about the yoga scene and my involvement with the business and political affairs which are an inevitable part of any worthwhile endeavour.

Earlier this summer I received a letter from Faeq Biria, the director of the Iyengar Yoga Institute in Paris and President of the French Iyengar Yoga Association—a very fine teacher, and close disciple of Mr. Iyengar. He was discussing some of the problems of running a national association. The previous evening they had had a meeting and one of their members resigned saying that she did not think the work of a yoga association would be so much heavy administrative work, and what's more, that having done all this work you would face so much criticism. She was resigning because she wanted to concentrate more energy and time on teaching and practising. He answered that the work of running an association was difficult and sometimes unpleasant, but compared to what we received from Mr. Iyengar, it could only be considered a very small way of paying our debt towards him.

When I called Linda Benn (whose message had been censored by my machine), I found her as reluctant as I was to plunge in to yoga business, but there was a need to discuss the fall programme. We conducted our business and then went on to talk about our recent travels: hers to Bellingham to study with Felicity Green, and mine to Yasodhara Ashram and a visit with Swami Radha in Spokane. These were highlights, but here we were again, chopping wood and carrying water. I mentioned that my deck was adorned with yoga blankets which I was washing in preparation for fall classes, and apparently Linda's was festooned with sticky mats. Apparently her husband Don's plea for help in our newsletter went unheeded, and Linda is still doing this chore.

Facing the inevitable drawing to a close of a wonderful summer, I prepared the brochures for my private classes, ran off labels, stuck on stamps and so on. I also wondered what is happening about the

September newsletter. I don't know because I haven't made any effort to know, but I do know that having made a commitment to write a regular column I should be doing it instead of procrastinating.

Duty keeps calling me. Some loose ends from the summer intensive required a visit to the Y, as well as some details to attend to for Ramanand's November workshop, so I timed this trip with other downtown errands. Trying to slip in and out of the Y incognito, I bumped into person after person I knew. A yoga class was about to begin, and I was encouraged to join it, so I searched for the spare tights I keep at the Y in case of emergency, and enjoyed being a student in Celia Ward's class. After class, four of us went to lunch and mused over our summer quests. From there I went to Radha House to deliver a parcel brought from the ashram and talked with its director, Jessica Sluymmer about my journey and hers on this spiritual path.

Everyone I met greeted me very warmly and, despite myself, I was pleased to see them. My seclusion was coming to a close.

Inevitably as September approaches, I am being drawn into the responsibilities which come with being a yoga student and professional yoga teacher. There is a lot to be done, but as I make contact once again with my yoga associates, I am grateful

- to have work
- work that I love
- work that is beneficial to my self and, hopefully, to others.

It is a blessing to be able to do this work. May I always remember this! ♦



# Letter to the Editor

To the Directors and Teachers of the  
Victoria Yoga Centre Society:

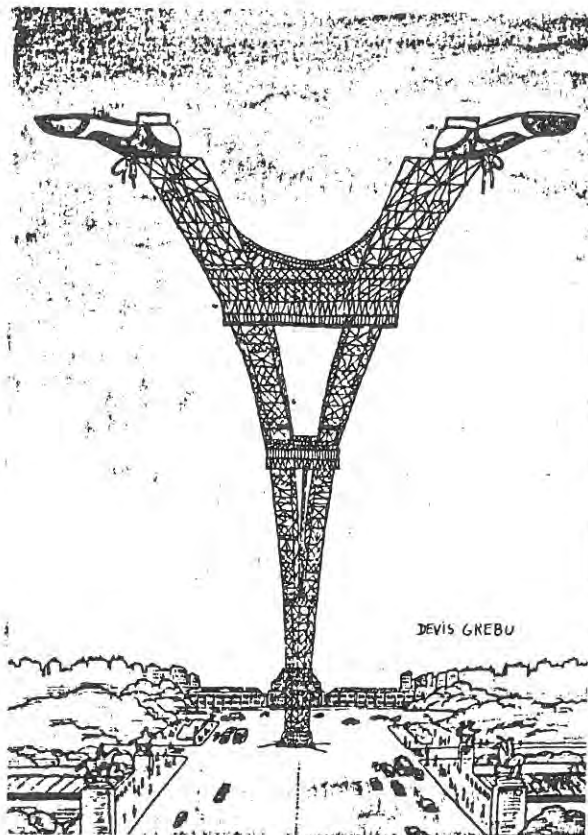
It has been my great pleasure to participate in the recent Iyengar Yoga Intensive in Victoria. My attendance at this program was preceded by a longterm commitment, both in terms of increased personal practice, as well as time. The latter always seeming to be in short supply! I'd like to express my gratitude for the material support that helped make my attendance possible, and for the other kinds of support that made this program the rich experience it was.

First, my thanks to the Directors of the Victoria Yoga Centre for granting me one of the scholarships apportioned for the Intensive. I have returned to school, to better my situation (a "mature" student...) and presently am not working. The money was an unexpected boon. Thank you all very much.

Second, despite heroic efforts to the contrary, I began the Intensive challenged by a physical problem that threatened to make my participation impossible. Instead I benefited immeasurably from the work! I'd like to thank all the teachers for the precision and concern they brought to helping me deal with the situation and to get the most out of the classes. I'd also like to thank the leaders of the seminars I attended for their patience and graciousness.

Yours truly,

Paul Lescarmure  
Victoria student



*Dear Yoga Teachers,*

*As you can see, Paris is getting into yoga in a big way.....*

*Can't wait to get back to structured classes.*

*A bientot,*

*Marie Roulleau  
(Victoria student)*

## **A Tree**

*A tree is solid and true  
It purifies and gives oxygen for breath  
Cools in the heat  
Shelters in the cold*

*Roots grow into unseen depths  
Into the earth  
Nurturing  
Providing stability and strength to the whole  
Roots anchor the hillside  
Holds down the richness of the soil*

*Branches provide homes for birds and squirrels  
Bend in the wind  
Support the leaves*

*Bark thickens, protects  
Lichen spores cling to nubbiness*

*A tree, quiet on the outside but is  
A humming hub of life within  
It responds to the subtle turnings of the earth  
as it travels around the sun.*

*A tree is clear in its purpose  
Always growing towards the Light*

**Leslie Hogya**

*This poem was written for Evie Chauncey and is dedicated to her.*

### **YOGA IN METCHOSIN** with Shirley Daventry French

#### **Asana Classes**

*morning and evening classes  
plus an afternoon class for  
people with special problems  
Classes commence September 13th  
\$80.00 for eight-week session*

#### **Pranayama**

*for experienced students  
Saturday mornings  
September 17th, October 22nd  
November 19th  
\$25 per class (\$65 for 3 classes)*

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



# Father Joe Pereira

by Marlene Miller

I first heard of Father Joe Pereira's teachings and work from Hilda Pezarrio, a yoga instructor of Vancouver. She described a man who challenged all students in their yoga asana practice. He was very personable and made a personal connection with each student. Last year I was able to attend his workshop sponsored by the Vancouver Iyengar Association and coordinated by Hilda.

At the start of the workshop I began, as usual, from the outer body; however, Father Joe, using the firm foundation in the physical, quickly, through his instructions and insights, took me into the core of my being. I first touched the place of inner softness, then stillness to a sense of inner peace. It had been a long time since I had this deep connection with myself through asana. Mantra, pranayama, and sitting meditation had more readily taken me inward than asana had, yet I knew there was a path to this profound deep inner place or space through asana that was first experienced in a class taught by Gita Iyengar. There was re-connection with the inner calm and the sense of functioning from the centre of my being through Fr. Joe's teaching. Also, during my years in Yoga I had not reconciled my Christian heritage and upbringing with Yoga, and heard this Yoga "cult" was to be feared. I consoled myself with thoughts of 'cult' being a short form for 'culture'! And, I came to know a spiritual self through Yoga that I had not experienced in Christianity except that as a child I was drawn to 'something' in Sunday school and again later as a young adult in church. Now, here I was being taught Yoga by a Jesuit priest, Father Joe Pereira.

Father Joe, as he has become to be affectionately known, began studying Yoga as a result of meeting Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar, which was shortly after he had been ordained. He wanted to know if men and women would be taught separately, to which

Iyengar replied "Ask the Bishop, what sex is the soul?"(1) Mr. Iyengar certified Fr. Joe to teach Yoga in 1975, and guided him in teaching asana to the alcohol and chemically dependent. Inspired by Mother Teresa and at the request of Ossie, a street person in Bombay who had suffered with alcoholism, Fr. Joe took three people off the street and four people from Mother Teresa's hospice and gave them a home. "Using hatha yoga, prayer, Christian Mediation, the AA 12 step program and Logotherapy, all with emphasis on giving life meaning, Fr. Joe developed what is known as the "Kripa model of therapy". "Kripa" means "God's grace".(2)

In 1981 Father Joe established the Kripa Foundation in Bombay. KRIPA India now runs twenty-two rehabilitation centres with yoga being a primary form of therapy. In the near future a Kripa Foundation facility is to be opened in Calgary, Alberta. The program seeks to treat the whole person body, mind and soul. The rate of relapse with this program is far lower than the worldwide average recorded by the World Health Organization, says Fr. Joe.(3) He has also "discovered that introducing yoga into a Christian framework attracted young people alienated by traditional, institutionalized religion".(4)

Through yoga practice, he says "I have come to experience the Lord very powerfully as the presence of compassion, love, kindness, mercy, service and goodness".(5) This message clearly comes through Fr. Joe's teachings as he challenges each student to see, feel, observe and work through their own dependencies.

It is a pleasure to welcome Father Joe Pereira to Victoria. For information on the workshop in Victoria please see the advertizement elsewhere in this newsletter. For information on Kripa write: Kripa Foundation, Mt. Carmel Church, 81/A Chapel Road, Bandra, Bombay 400 050, India.

(1) Yoga Journal May/June 1991

(2, 3, 4, 5,) Calgary Herald (Gordon Legge)



# yoga centre of victoria

**Knowing Reality In Progressive Awareness (KRIPA)  
Yoga Asana Workshop with**

**Father Joe Pereira**

**October 4, 5, and 6, 1994**

**7:00 - 9:00 pm**

**Central Saanich Cultural Centre (Activity Room B)**

**1209 Clarke**

**Brentwood Bay, B.C.**

**(30 minutes from downtown Victoria)**

**Registration Fee:   \$85.00 (Yoga Centre Members)  
                              \$95.00 (Non Members)**

Father Joe Pereira has studied Yoga with Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar for 20 years and has a Masters degree in Indian Philosophy that emphasizes Yoga. He is the founder of the KRIPA program at Mount Carmel Church, Bombay, India in which he has incorporated the yogic teachings for people with drug dependencies. Father Joe combines insights from his work with victims of chemical dependency, his faith and Yoga. He is a note worthy and internationally known Yoga instructor.

**To Register:** Make cheque payable to the **Victoria Yoga Centre**  
and mail to: **Marlene Miller**  
**8570 Sentinel Place**  
**Sidney, B.C. V8L 4Z7**

For further information please call Marlene at 655-4306

**Note:** If you are interested in a morning meditation between 6:30 and 7:30 am to be held at the Victoria YM-YWCA, 880 Courtney Street, Victoria, please indicate when registering for the asana workshop. (You do not have to be registered for the asana workshop to attend the meditation.) Further information and registration fee will be forwarded.



I was the head of a parade today. I didn't want to be. I didn't like it. I wished every one behind me would go away. I was driving in a rural, beach front area of greater Victoria. The posted speed was 40 kilometers an hour ( about 25 MPH). I could see a red car a few cars behind me swerving out at every opportunity as though he was trying to pass. I noticed that there seemed not much activity on the road ahead nor anyone trying to cross the road. So I thought oh well, I'll go a little faster. I was doing about 50 K. and still I was the head of the parade and everyone behind was tailgating me and each other. Well, I thought, so what. Let them suffer. I'm only doing what I should, and in fact I'm technically speeding.

I figure that the people who post speed signs have good reasons, and if not, its not up to me to prove anything by speeding (even though now I was). Soon the red car was right behind. And in front of me some people were trying to pull out of a driveway. A pedestrian was trying to cross. I slowed back down to 40. Now the little red car went nuts. He started blaring his horn at me. And swerving in and out of the oncoming traffic trying to get past me. Finally, in desperation, I pulled off into someone's front yard and let him pass. As he did he laid on the horn, shouted obscenities out the window and raised the proverbial insulting finger.

I felt the onslaught of his anger, his fury , as though I had been hit-as a physical blow. Fortunately I was near my destination. I pulled in under a tree and felt tears close. Am I the only person left who knows what a speed limit is?

What to do? Next time I think I should:

1. Buy a car from the movie studios used by a James Bond type character that shoots out other people's tires, or turns the road to oily slickness,
2. Get a cellular phone with direct access to traffic police,
3. Stay home,
4. Pull over at the first sign of someone anxiously tailgating. Maybe, I'd get a wave instead of the finger,
5. Drive even slower so I can see if he or she will do something even worse,
6. Follow Patanjali's advice and ignore people like that.

I wanted to do more than ignore, I wanted to hurl things.

Or I could have gotten into doing something really stupid, like slamming on my brakes when he was tailgating. Or venting my frustration on the next human being who happened along.

I went down to the ocean where the wind was blowing. I stood and let the feel of the wind clear my head. But as I stood there a woman was screaming at her dog for chasing another dog. I mean really screaming.

I said, "Why don't you put the leash on her, for heaven's sake."

As usual I should have just minded my own business. She mumbled something about the thing being broken. And fortunately, for

me I just shut up. I wanted to scream at her for being so stupid. Luckily, she didn't head for a little red car, or I might have!

Putting myself in front of a group of students as a yoga teacher means I think I should be very good.

Even when I eat. Like white rice, I think maybe I should only eat brown rice and steamed chard and kale. (I hate kale) I like white rice better. Besides, it cooks faster. When I go to the local pub with friends I might have a coke. I don't drink, but bring on the salt and sugar. Yes, fries or nachos to go with the coke.

Any free time I have, I suppose should be taken up with re-reading Patanjali's Sutras, or analyzing last night's dream, practicing the harder poses, for me padmasana. But I'm definitely in and of the world. But I like to do a lot of things. I like the movies, in fact when I finish typing this, I have a movie waiting to go in the VCR. I also like to go out with friends. Dancing is one of my favorite activities. I like Latin music, Reggae, rock even old time fiddle tunes.

I've discovered that dancing can be more than fun. Earlier this year my sacrum was jammed. I think it was from skiing. I practiced twists, and gomukasana. I did standing poses and inverted poses. I went to the chiropractor. After a sleepless night, tossing and turning to find a place that didn't hurt, we were supposed to go dancing. There were live bands playing old rock songs. I was worried I would be unable to dance or that it might make it worse. Well, I did dance. I danced for hours. The next morning my back was better than it had been for weeks! And I had so much fun!

Another day, I was feeling that pinched feeling again in my lower back. I put on some of my son's music and danced around the house. A fellow yoga teacher called and was sure my kids were home having a party. "No," I confessed, "just me dancing around the house."

by Leslie Hogya ◆

# HEAL WHAT AILS YOU.

Call  
Jennifer Trost DTCM  
Licensed  
Acupuncturist

598 4784



**YM-YWCA**  
of Victoria



**THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE  
AND THE Y.M.Y.W.C.A.**

## **WELCOME YOU TO A FRIDAY NIGHT GATHERING**

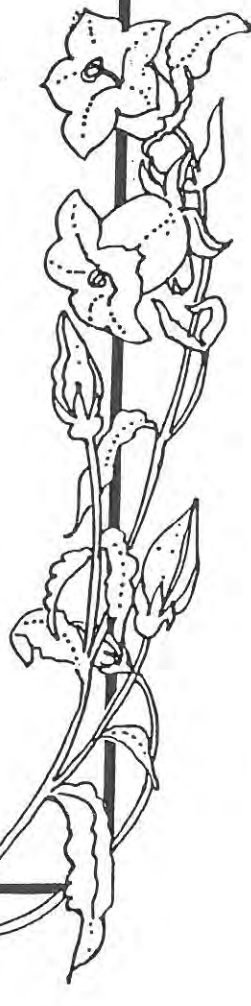
**Asana Practice at 6 p.m. with Leslie Hogya**

**Potluck dinner at 7 p.m. in the Yoga Lounge  
(please bring your own plate/cutlery)**

**followed by a showing of a B.K.S. Iyengar film**

**Date: Friday, October 14, 1994**

**Everyone is welcome  
Please join us**







VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

## *Yoga for Beginners*

with

*Lauren Cox*

Sunday, October 16

Y.M.-Y.W.C.A.

Yoga Studio

10:00A.M.-12:30 P.M.

refreshments follow

This Sunday workshop for beginners is shortened to give new students an introduction to the workshop format.

A balanced sequence of poses will be presented.

Fee: \$20.00 for members of the Victoria Yoga Centre

\$25.00 for non-members

Phone Lauren for registration: 382-3287



## YOGA, COMMUNITY AND FEAR

"Taking a new step, uttering a new word is what people fear most."

-Fyodor Dostoyevski

I keep a jar beside my bed. It is clear and if you picked it up and looked at it, you would think it was empty. It isn't. It is filled with words.

Each night, before I fall asleep, I open the jar, place it over my mouth and speak into it. I fill it with all the words that have gone unspoken during the day. Sometimes, I scream into it. Other times, I whisper.

Each morning, I take my jar and open it, slowly lifting the lid. What words did I speak yesterday? How do I hear them now?

There is always one word inside that jar. Usually it disguises itself by other words such as: too busy, their fault, pushed away, no time, can't do it, too tired. But if I listen carefully enough, the jar tells me what I am really saying. It uses one word that cuts through all the others. The word is fear.

Lately, I have been thinking about belonging to The

Victoria Yoga Community. I speak into the jar:

"I want to belong, but I don't know how."

"I want to belong, but I'm not a part of the clique."

"I want to belong, but 'The Old Guard' is blocking my way."

"I want to belong, but someone must accept me first."

"I want to belong, but I am too busy."

"I want to belong, but I don't want to work for it."

"I want to belong, but I want to remain independent."

"I want to belong, but it is too much work."

When I spoke these words into my jar, what came back to me was the usual word: fear. When I told my jar that there was an 'Old Guard' it told me there was really only my fear about being rejected. When I told my jar that I needed to be accepted, it told me to accept others first. When I said that people were closed to me, it told me to open my own heart first. When I said that I was too busy, it told me that I was scared to be involved.

The jar beside my bed looks deceptively empty. But it's not. Fear takes up so much room.

by Margaret Feehan

# RADHA HOUSE

## Victoria

1500 Shasta Place, Victoria, B.C. V8S 1X9

604 595-0177

### Open House

*Sunday, September 11, 3-5 p.m.*

We invite you to join us in this informal gathering as we start a new year. This is a wonderful opportunity to greet old friends and to meet new ones. Looking forward to seeing you then.

### Guru Puja

*Sunday, September 11, 8-9 p.m.*

A special Satsang of gratitude to honour our teachers who have dedicated their lives selflessly to help others find their inner strength and life's purpose.

## 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 practises that will change your life. Ongoing.

Fee: 11 classes \$121

### Introduction to the Kundalini System

*This is a six-week course. Wednesdays 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.*

Fee: \$60

### Hatha Yoga: The Hidden Language®

*Mondays: 5:30-7:30 p.m. All levels. (Ongoing)*

*Tuesdays: 12:45-2:45 p.m. All levels. (Ongoing)*

*Saturdays: 10:15-12:15 p.m. All levels. (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 an improved physical and mental condition, and a deeper understanding of the body as a spiritual tool.

Please note: No drop-in class on Saturdays when coinciding with scheduled workshops.

Fee: 11 classes \$121, \$11 per drop-in class.

### Hatha Yoga: Yasodhara Ashram Style

*Fridays: 5:30-7:00 p.m. All levels. (Ongoing)*

This is an ongoing class and a good introduction to the poses.

Fee: 10 classes \$90

### Dreams

*Wednesdays: 1-3 p.m.*

Dreams offer a direct way to connect with the part in us that knows, and that speaks each night in our own symbols. In this class we investigate dreams from a yogic perspective, and focus on their application in daily life. Dreamwork is an excellent preparation for kundalini class.

Fee: 11 classes \$121

### Bhagavad Gita Reading Group

*Saturdays: 8:30-10:00 a.m.*

Experience the inspiration, depth, and relevance of this ancient yogic scripture, through reading and reflection together with others.

No fee. Registration is open.

### Satsang and Bhajans

*Sundays: 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. If you wish to be on the Prayer List, please contact us by phone or letter.

# Respect in Yoga

*by Aadil B. A. Palkhivala*

We cultivate, as we grow in our yogic reach, many qualities which further assist progress and allow us to lead more attuned, balanced lives. Qualities such as control with humility, responsibility with surrender, power with respect. Indeed, it may be that we are never in control until we are humble, never responsible until we surrender to the higher Law, and never powerful until we have learnt to acquire and direct the delicate yet constant flow of respect for everything.

In trying to put on a garb of authoritative knowingness in this, our microchip-laser-accurate-faster-and-bigger-is better modern world, many of us have lost the quiet aspects of the three dualities: Humility, surrender, and respect. Today, I deal with respect.

Emerson, in "Lectures and Sketches", writes, "Men are respectable only as they respect." Thus, at least for the ego that being respectable fans, though better for the transformative power that respectability with wisdom commands, we must learn to cultivate a sincere respect for ourselves and for that which we are blessed with.

We respect nothing until we are grateful, until we take nothing for granted. Gratitude for everything, from a cheap disposable pen to the home we live in, from our families we claim to love so dearly and know so well, to the tiny, daily-vanishing species in tropical rain forests far from our cities, unexplored, unknown, yet vital. There may be no quality which causes as quick a transformation from sorrow to joy, from depression to elation, from dejected futility to awakened usefulness rather than overflowing gratitude.

Gratitude for life, for breath, for movement. Gratitude for our things, our families and friends, our world, our teachers, time, and above all as a result, ourselves. Gratitude makes every effort worthwhile and every result a blessing. Gratitude breeds respect.

Respect for our **belongings**, the multitude of things we live around and use, is respect for the Giver, for surely we acquire nothing without grace. This requires an unpretentious care for our things - keeping them clean and orderly - whether it is respect for our homes by not allowing outdoor footwear indoors, for our cars by not slamming doors, or respect for our clothing by never tossing it uncaringly. We must act as if nothing is dispensable, for indeed, the God in all things feels. Respect for our belongings is evidenced by a gentle, awareness-filled, grateful caring for all that we have.

Respect for our **bodies and minds** is respect for our Self, for the body is the vehicle that allows progress on earth, and the mind is the decision-making arbiter. This requires, as a part of a yogic diet, eating organic, vegetarian food, drinking clean water, breathing clean air, reading worthy books, avoiding commercial television totally, listening to music and words that inspire and help you progress, and getting enough rest. Respect for the body and mind further requires a daily yoga practice, ensuring meticulous cleanliness of body down to the slightest dirt in the fingernails, and developing the mental control which allows for sauchya (cleanliness) as well - the mind being filled only with thoughts of goodwill, happiness, love, and peace for all persons in all situations.

Respect for our **families and others**, their belongings, their time, their feelings, is nothing more than an extension of respect for the same in ourselves. A haughty consideration for others reflects a deep frailty, a fearful insecurity, a covering up of the inability to care for ourselves.

Attentive listening, trying to help, to heal, honest inquiry (not the insincere, mindless, las, and nonsensical "howyou doin" most people mouth without ever waiting for or wanting an answer), and the embrace from the heart show respect for others, as well as evidence an inner stability, a strength within.

Respect for our **frail earth**, its tender atmosphere, its abundant vegetation, its magically varied life forms, is respect for its Creator. We seldom miss anything but by the lack of it, and seldom cherish worthy blessings until they are gone. We have but one earth which we leave as our legacy for future generations who will, by the way we've treated it, judge our wisdom in cherishing blessings.

Respect for our **teachers** is respect for the teaching, because knowledge is always without, and its balance with experience, under guidance and direction, brings wisdom within. When we respect our teacher, the guide, the guru, we respect the art she represents, the path he has trod, and even if the teacher turns out not to be of full merit, in return for the humble, sincere respect, the art, the path will reveal itself to you.

We should be consciously, as we are subconsciously, willing to learn only from people we respect. So we must choose our teachers with great care, making absolutely certain that we respect not merely their toned bodies, their amazing asanas, their abilities to convey information, their appearance of spirituality, the books they've written, or the fame they've basked in but, rather, their calm, humble yet powerful features, the light that emanates from their joy-filled hearts and, above all, the pure, unstained logic philosophy they have lived and are actually living. In deciding upon a teacher, look for qualities that have made a better human being rather than a better actor or performer. Then respect will flow spontaneously from within.

Respect for our teachers means putting our egos

aside as we must if we are to learn. Some basic rules I live by in this regard:

- 1) The teacher comes first. Whether at dinners or potlucks, never start without offering the teacher the first plate and service. In India entire gatherings will wait to eat, drink, or start activities until the teacher arrives, no matter how late.
- 2) Always acknowledge the teacher's presence by speaking softly when the teacher is around, never whistling or shouting, never acting as if the teacher's presence doesn't matter and "I'm just going to be me." That is ego. When the teacher enters the room, stop what you are doing, smile, nod, bow, or greet appropriately, and then resume.
- 3) Be humble. If the teacher says that you have made a mistake, apologize and change. Do not argue. If the teacher was technically wrong, you have learnt ego control. If the teacher was correct, you can now see the error all the more clearly for humility. After all, "He approaches nearest the gods who knows how to remain silent, even though he is in the right." A good teacher knows this well and uses it often to test a student's humility.
- 4) Do not tell, ask. If you have to leave early, ask permission if you may. If you want to tape, record or photograph, ask. Be prepared for a "No" answer, even if it means inconveniencing yourself. Better a refusal with an inner blessing than convenience with a curse.
- 5) Unquestioning, unhesitating obedience to the teacher's wishes or commands, be they spoken or unspoken. Even though the teacher may not always be factually correct, the lesson is not in being right or wrong, but in learning to obey. Only when we are willing to sacrifice egoistic independence and thought-bound logic for the teacher's whim, are we on the way to discovering freedom.



This inner freedom is found thus: First we cultivate the quality of respectful listening and unqualified obedience to the external teacher. Over time, moments will come when the external teacher will ask us to defer to our wisdom within. With the fight to listen and obey another already over, the fight to carefully listen and unconditionally obey our inner tuition (intuition) is far easier. This ability to hear and obey the elusive yet constant inner voice takes practice and time but, when we do, we are finally free. This should be the aim of all teachers - to set their students free. To that end, respectful obedience is irreplaceable for, after all, as the great Sri Aurobindo wrote about imperfect man:

"A riddle of opposites is made his field:  
Freedom he asks but needs to live in bonds,  
He has need of darkness to perceive some light  
And need of grief to feel a little bliss;  
He has need of death to find a greater life."

6) Never sit with your feet pointing at the teacher, or lie down lazily in class to listen to the teacher explaining something.

7) A good teacher knows how to bless. Seek the blessings by setting your ego aside and respecting the teacher. After all, when we accept someone as our teacher, we must *give ourselves with love* to the teacher in exchange for the teaching. In giving respect, we automatically receive stillness and humility. In the giving *itself*, without expectation of reward, is the receiving.

Showing these aspects of respect for my teacher is showing respect for the growing seeker within myself. Respecting the teacher outside is respecting the teacher inside.

Lastly, respect for **time**, filling the "unforgiving minute with sixty seconds worth of distance run," is respect for the tender boon of life. Each second is a gift, a unique, unrepeatable blessing. We must learn to waste none. A possibility lurks in

each moment for inspiration, for progress, for understanding, for enlightenment, for transformation. We who learn to live in each moment learn to use it, hence learn to use time. The best way to respect time is to use it wisely and treasure the fleeting second we are in.

We learn, as part of the Divine plan, as students of the integral yoga of life, to be grateful for that which is within, and that which is without, keeping a patient knowing that by forming humble respect for all that is, we create a more Divine potential for all that is to be. ♦

*Reprinted from YOGA CENTERS Newsletter  
January-August, 1992.*

## YOGA PROPS

**Blue Sticky Mats**  
*from Germany*

**Bolsters**

**Belts**

**Hardwood Blocks**

**Foam Blocks**

**Bandages**  
*from India*

Available from  
Shirley Daventry French  
478-3775

THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE  
and THE VICTORIA YM-YWCA  
*are pleased to announce*



**YOGA**  
*with*  
**RAMANAND PATEL**



A Weekend Workshop  
**November 4 to 6, 1994**  
to be held at the Victoria "Y"  
880 Courtney Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 1C4

|                      |                                          |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Friday, November 4   | 6:00 to 8:00 pm                          |
| Saturday, November 5 | 10:00 am to 1:00 pm &<br>3:00 to 5:00 pm |
| Sunday, November 6   | 10:00 am to 1:00 pm                      |

FEES:     \$130.00    Yoga Centre and "Y" Members  
             \$140.00    Non-Members

This workshop is for students of all levels with experience of Iyengar Yoga.

**RAMANAND PATEL** is a creative and innovative teacher who began his study of yoga at an early age under the tutelage of his father. In 1968 he became a student of the Yoga Master B.K.S. Iyengar. His father and Mr. Iyengar have had the greatest influence on his life. Ramanand's workshops are challenging, enlightening and fun, and his annual visit 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 this year.

**REGISTER EARLY AT THE "Y" MAIN DESK** - registration is limited. Cheques should be made payable to Victoria YM-YWCA. Refunds will be made only if space can be filled from a waiting list, less a \$15.00 service charge.

Enquiries: Shirley Daventry French 478-3775, Linda Benn 478-0757 or the "Y" 386-7511.

# Yoga

## Program of Classes in the Iyengar Approach to Yoga

### Program Staff Liaison — Shirley Main

Yoga is a classical Indian philosophy and discipline which promotes self-development and self-understanding. Yoga at the Y is based on the teaching of B.K.S. Iyengar, one of the foremost exponents of yoga in the world today and author of the classic text *Light on Yoga*. This approach creates a dynamic balance between flexibility, strength and endurance with an emphasis on precision of movement and correct body alignment. The practice of yoga promotes health, vitality, concentration and relaxation through the integration of body, mind and spirit.

The Victoria Y offers one of the most comprehensive programs of Iyengar Yoga in North America under the direction of Shirley Daventry French and Linda Benn. Classes are held in a bright, airy, well-equipped studio, and taught by experienced and well-trained teachers, the majority of whom have studied with Mr. Iyengar in India. We offer general classes at four progressive levels, noon yoga, classes for those who are sixty or better, plus gentle and special needs yoga for students of any age who require a slower approach.

### Yoga for Backs

Learning skilful use of the back is fundamental in all yoga classes in the Y program. People who have experienced back problems will benefit from the teaching in any Introductory class. However, the Gentle Yoga and the Special Needs Yoga classes will provide more individual attention and a slower approach for those with back problems.

### Pre-Natal Yoga

Registration is welcome in Introductory level classes. However, you are asked to inform the Instructor that you are pregnant.

*Bare feet essential in all classes*

*All classes are co-ed*

*All classes are in the Lounge*

*If you are placed on a Wait List, come to the first class and talk to the teacher.*

### Introductory

Members: N/C

All students with no previous experience of the Iyengar method should register in this level. Co-ordination, strength, flexibility and stamina will be developed through progressive work with yoga asanas (poses).

| Class | Day   | Time          | Instructor              | Non-mem |
|-------|-------|---------------|-------------------------|---------|
| 401   | Mon   | 9:30-11:00 am | Lauren Cox              | \$44    |
| 402   | Mon   | 7:30-9:00 pm  | Ann Kilbertus           | \$44    |
| 403   | Tues  | 5:00-6:30 pm  | Wendy Boyer             | \$44    |
| 404   | Wed   | 9:30-11:00 am | Shirley Daventry French | \$44    |
| 405   | Wed   | 7:30-9:00 pm  | Jim Rischmiller         | \$44    |
| 406   | Thurs | 1:15-2:45 pm  | T.B.A.                  | \$44    |
| 407   | Thurs | 4:30-6:00 pm  | Linda Benn              | \$44    |



### Gentle Yoga

Members: N/C

A slow approach to yoga for students of any age who are seeking a change from the fast pace of modern life. Basic yoga postures will be taught along with an emphasis on breathing and relaxation.

| Class | Day  | Time              | Instructor | Non-mem | Sen  |
|-------|------|-------------------|------------|---------|------|
| 408   | Tues | 10:30 am-12:00 pm | Linda Benn | \$44    | \$38 |

### Sixty And Better

Members: N/C

Regular practice of Iyengar Yoga promotes good posture, muscle tone, bone strength and a feeling of energetic well being. The care and attention to detail is especially suited for people in this age group.

| Class | Day | Time              | Instructor              | Non-mem | Sen  |
|-------|-----|-------------------|-------------------------|---------|------|
| 409   | Wed | 11:00 am-12:30 pm | Shirley Daventry French | \$44    | \$38 |
| 410   | Fri | 10:30 am-12:00 pm | Linda Benn              | \$44    | \$38 |

### Special Needs Yoga Class

A program designed to address health problems and injuries which require more special care and attention than may be afforded in a regular class. Yoga postures will be adapted to suit individual needs, with an emphasis on breathing and relaxation. Classes will be co-taught by Shirley Daventry French, one of North America's most experienced yoga teachers, and Ann Kilbertus, an Occupational Therapist and yoga teacher. Dr. Derek French, physician and longtime yoga practitioner, will act as a consultant for this program. Registration will be limited to 12 students.

| Class | Day | Time         | Mem  | Non-mem | Sen  |
|-------|-----|--------------|------|---------|------|
| 411   | Wed | 4:30-6:00 pm | \$55 | \$75    | \$65 |

### Yoga — Level One

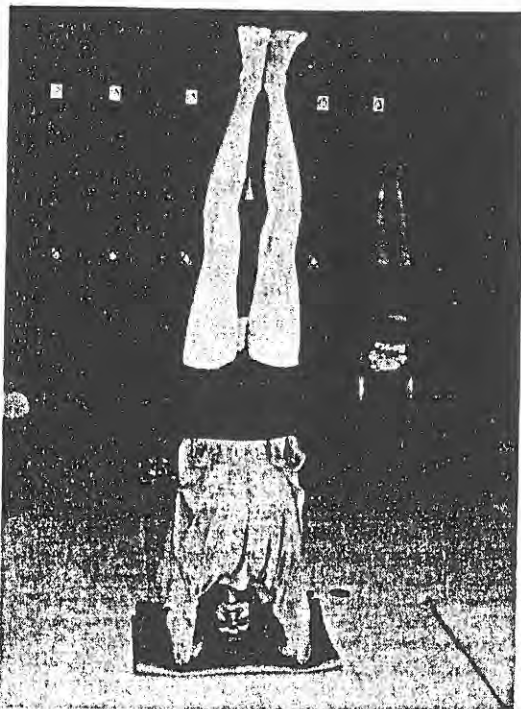
A continuation from Introductory level. New asanas will be introduced, and an emphasis will be on gaining proficiency in basic yoga asanas.

| Class | Day  | Time           | Instructor      | Mem  | Non-mem |
|-------|------|----------------|-----------------|------|---------|
| 412   | Mon  | 11:00 am-12:30 | Lauren Cox      | \$30 | \$49    |
| 413   | Tues | 7:00-8:30 pm   | Margaret Feehan | \$30 | \$49    |
| 414   | Wed  | 6:00-7:30 pm   | Jim Rischmiller | \$30 | \$49    |
| 415   | Fri  | 9:00-10:30 am  | Linda Benn      | \$30 | \$49    |

### Saturday All Levels Yoga

Please note that there will not be a class on the Saturday mornings that the yoga teachers meet, about once a month. There will be 5 or 6 classes per session. Students registering should have completed at least one introductory session of Iyengar yoga.

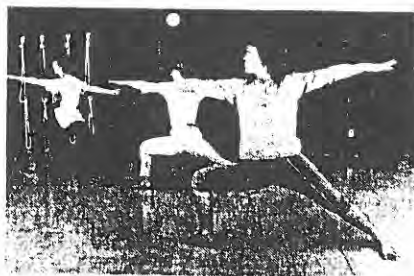
| Class | Day | Time          | Instructor    | Mem  | Non-mem |
|-------|-----|---------------|---------------|------|---------|
| 416   | Sat | 9:00-10:30 am | Yoga teachers | \$23 | \$37    |



### Workshop Series — Level II

An introduction to intermediate asanas for students who have already developed a basic understanding of Iyengar Yoga. Completion of Level One (or equivalent) essential.

| Class | Day   | Time           | Instructor                  | Mem  | Non-mem |
|-------|-------|----------------|-----------------------------|------|---------|
| 417   | Thurs | 10:00 am-12:00 | Shirley<br>Davenport French | \$36 | \$59    |
| 418   | Thurs | 6:00-8:00 pm   | Linda Benn                  | \$36 | \$59    |



### Workshop Series — Level II/III

An intermediate course for teachers and students with a good understanding of the Iyengar method, who will be introduced to more advanced asanas and shown individual ways of working with them. Emphasis will be on refinement and detail. Participants should have experience in Iyengar yoga at an intermediate level.

| Class | Day | Time         | Instructor                  | Mem  | Non-mem |
|-------|-----|--------------|-----------------------------|------|---------|
| 419   | Mon | 5:30-7:30 pm | Shirley<br>Davenport French | \$36 | \$59    |

### Two Noon Hour Yoga Classes

Take time out at mid-day to stretch, recharge and relax with experienced yoga teachers.

| Class | Day   | Time           | Instructor | Mem | Non-mem |
|-------|-------|----------------|------------|-----|---------|
| 420   | Tues  | 12:05-12:55 pm | Linda Benn | N/C | \$33    |
| 421   | Thurs | 12:05-12:55 pm | Lauren Cox | N/C | \$33    |

### Iyengar Yoga — Vic West

Terms: I-V

Instructor: Jim Rischmiller

Location: Vic West Community Y

Open to all levels. Co-ordination, strength, flexibility and stamina will be developed through progressive work with yoga asanas (poses). Free childminding for Tues. am classes.

| Level          | Day   | Time          | Mem  | Non-mem | Sen  |
|----------------|-------|---------------|------|---------|------|
| Adult          | Tues  | 9:30-11:00 am | \$35 | \$42    | \$37 |
| Adult          | Thurs | 8:00-9:30 pm  | \$35 | \$42    | \$37 |
| or \$7/drop-in |       |               |      |         |      |



An Experience in Being  
YOGA & MEDITATION  
with  
David McAmmond and  
Margot Kitchen  
in  
Puerto Vallarta, Mexico  
March 18 to March 25, 1995

\$700 Cdn plus airfare  
We can help with charter arrangements.  
Price includes great accommodation,  
food, all instruction.  
Space limited to 18 participants.  
Register Now!

For more information please call:  
David (403) 289-3194  
Margot (403) 243-1078





**A  
\$100  
SCHOLARSHIP  
is available  
for**

**Ramanand Patel's  
workshop at the Y  
November 4th to 6th**

*Applications and recommendations  
should be submitted  
to Shirley Daventry French  
478-3775  
before September 24th*

**YOGA  
in the  
Highlands  
(north Millstream Road area)**

**with  
LINDA BENN**

**Classes Starting  
in September**

**478-0757**

## **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**

|                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| <b>Full Page</b>     | <b>\$36.00</b> |
| <b>1/2 Page</b>      | <b>\$18.00</b> |
| <b>1/4 Page</b>      | <b>\$12.00</b> |
| <b>Business Card</b> | <b>\$9.00</b>  |

## MISSING PERSONS

The summer issue of the newsletter is mailed to everyone on our membership list. During the rest of the year, many people pick up their newsletter from the Y to help save money on postage. However, our efforts to reach the people listed below were to no avail because we don't have their new addresses:

Marlene Miller, Saanichton, B.C.  
Lois McMillan, Orangeville, Ont.  
Bill Sechens, Victoria, B.C.  
Ellen Bielawski, Sidney, B.C.  
Kelly Fantham, Victoria, B.C.  
Bonnie Lynn McDonald, Victoria, B.C.  
Tina Hickey, Victoria, B.C.  
Angela Rhodes, Victoria, B.C.  
Nancy McGregor, Victoria, B.C.

Please send a change of address notification when you move so that we can update our mailing list.

Thank You.

## MORE MISSING PERSONS;

Dear Yoga Friends,

Please note the following changes to the 1994 Iyengar Yoga Teachers Directory:

With sincere apologies to Erin whose address was omitted from the directory:

Erin Murphy,  
9971 Wilde Road SW  
Calgary, Alberta  
T2J 1G6 (403)-271-4770

The following address change was notified after the directory was at the printers:

Elizabeth Kingsland, Duncan Bayne,  
379 East Chezzet Cook Road,  
RR1, East Chezzet Cook,  
Nova Scotia B0J 1N0

Sincerely,  
Barbara Laurenson (Calgary)

### **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL CHANGE OF POLICY**

#### **NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS**

#### **EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**

**MEMBERSHIPS RENEWED DURING 1994 WILL BE RENEWABLE AT THE BEGINNING OF 1995 AND AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH YEAR THEREAFTER. THE COST OF MEMBERSHIP WILL BE \$20.00 NO MATTER IN WHICH MONTH THE MEMBERSHIP IS PURCHASED.**

# YOGA CALENDAR

## SEPTEMBER

- Register for Yoga Classes at the Y.  
1: Pranayama in Metchosin led by Shirley Daventry French.  
24: Teachers meeting at the Y.

## OCTOBER

- 6: Father Joe Pereira Workshop. Contact Arlene Miller for details. 655-4306.  
14: Yoga Centre Gathering at the Y.  
16: Beginners Workshop at the Y led by Lauren Cox.  
10: Yoga and Your Back with Dr. Derek French and Shirley Daventry French  
17: Juan de Fuca Recreation Centre.  
18: Pranayama in Metchosin led by Shirley Daventry French.  
20: Teachers meeting at the Y.

## NOVEMBER

- 4-6: Ramanand Patel Workshop at the Y. Contact Shirley Daventry French for details. 478-3775.  
18: Yoga Centre Gathering at the Y.  
19: Pranayama in Metchosin led by Shirley Daventry French.  
20: Sunday workshop at the Y led by Linda Benn.  
26: Teachers meeting at the Y. Followed by Body, Mind and Breath workshop given at the Y by Derek French and Shirley Daventry French.

## DECEMBER

- 3: Victoria Yoga Centre Annual General Meeting to be held at the home of Derek French and Shirley Daventry French.  
11: Light on Yoga Workshop at the Y led by Shirley Daventry French.

## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION FORM

It 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 and renewable each January.

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 its inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

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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, V9B 5T7. Telephone: (604) 474-5630.

---

## CREDITS

EDITOR: Jennifer Rischmiller

**ASSISTANT EDITOR:** Shirley Daventry French

**TYPING:** Jennifer Rischmiller, Shirley French

**PASTE-UP & DESIGN:** Lauren Cox

**ADVERTISING:** Carole Miller

**PRINTING:** Monk Quick Copy Centre

**DISTRIBUTION:** Jill Roberts

**COLLATING:** Renate Grinfelds

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**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: SEPTEMBER 15, 1994**

Ted Mather

2738 Graham St.

Victoria, BC

V8T 3Z2



**VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY**

3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R. #4, Victoria, B.C., Canada, V9B 5T8

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## VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

### *Newsletter*

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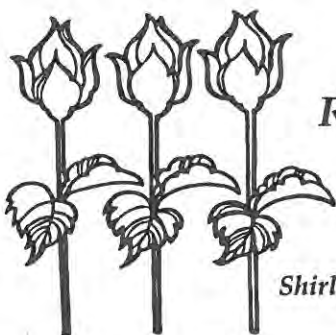
*Pamela Stewart of Prince Edward Island and Shirley Daventry French of Victoria on Parliament Hill, Ottawa, trying to get a fresh perspective on the workings of the Federal Government.*



***Please subscribe***

***October, 1994***





## Reflections

by

Shirley Daventry French

---

The Victoria Yoga Centre is a centre without a centre, at least where this word is used to describe a physical space. But the work of the centre goes on in many places. The primary space is at the "Y", where we have our core program of Iyengar Yoga. There we offer classes and workshops taught by professional teachers in a pleasant airy light well-equipped studio. Over the years, we have established an excellent working relationship based on mutual trust and respect. It has worked and continues to do so because the statement of purpose of the "Y" echoes the purpose of yoga :-

"The YM-YWCA of Victoria is a charitable, community based association of volunteers and professionals, working together to enhance the quality of life in the local and global communities, based on the principles of human dignity, justice and peace. Our mission is to provide quality community leadership, programs, services and education for individuals and families that encourage and support a balanced approach to development in body, mind and spirit. Our aim is to provide opportunities for growth for all people... a growth from unfit to fit, from alienated to involved, from involved to responsible."

These are more than a collection of idle thoughts and words; they are put into action every day at the downtown Victoria "Y". Substitute the words "Victoria Yoga Centre" for "Victoria YM-YWCA" and you could be describing the work of our centre.

This work has fostered the growth of Iyengar Yoga and created a demand for more classes and, of course, more teachers; so we developed an Iyengar Yoga teacher training apprenticeship which has provided a pool of well trained teachers in greater Victoria and further afield. It doesn't stop there: most of the Victoria teachers attend class together once a week, and once a month are joined by their colleagues from other areas on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands for teachers' meetings to refine their practice and hone their teaching skills.

Once a month we also hold gatherings at the "Y" for students of all levels where we have a one hour group practice, followed by a pot luck dinner and discussion on some aspect of yoga philosophy or psychology— and how to put this into action in daily life. Then there is our week long summer intensive, our spring retreat on Saltspring Island, Sunday workshops with local teachers, weekend workshops with visiting teachers. We publish our newsletter ten times a year and have done so for thirteen years. We sell yoga books, and maintain a library of books, video and audio tapes. We raise money to fund all of this, to sponsor students who can't afford classes, to provide scholarships to attend workshops, conferences and help with the expense of going to India. Behind all of this activity you will find the yoga centre executive and numerous others, who volunteer their time.

All of this and much more happens in and around Victoria under the auspices of the Victoria Yoga Centre! Yet still I sit in meetings and listen to complaints that our sense of community is weakened, our study of yoga restricted, because we have no building of our own. Not that I have anything against having our own building—and one day it may happen, when certain energies come together and make it a priority. Meanwhile, I am impatient when I hear comments such as one voiced by someone at a recent meeting, that his students wanted to find out what lies beyond the practice of asana, and bemoaned the lack of a space where they could get together after class and discuss

the philosophy of yoga and their individual problems in applying it to their lives.

An Indian would laugh to hear us talk about lack of space. In a country as large as Canada, where most of us live in our own homes or apartments, space is not really a problem. Those searching for more contact, wanting to investigate where yoga is taking them, could invite their fellow students to their own home, or go to one of the many cafes close by the "Y".



SHIRLEY ADJUSTING RON

This is how the yoga centre got started, when a group of us wanting to continue the work begun in the classes, got together on Friday evenings to practise and have a discussion. We met in different houses, and because I have a large house with room for asana practice, more often than not, it would be here. We met over lunch, tea and dinner in many restaurants and coffee shops. We went for walks. In those early days, wherever and whenever possible, we explored hungrily how these Eastern teachings might fit into our Western lives.

I thought about this last Saturday at my pranayama class as we sat around the table and had a fascinating discussion ranging over many yoga-related topics.

When Derek and I moved into our house twenty two years ago, I had just started teaching yoga, and it seemed paradoxical and perhaps an unwise move to go fifteen miles out of town at the same time as embarking on a career which would require me to spend several days a week travelling into town. However, there were other factors at work.

We wanted to make changes in our lifestyle, and at this time in the early seventies many people were living communally, sharing land, homes and resources. Not quite ready to live in a commune, we met three other married couples of like mind (or so we thought) and began to consider the possibility of a living arrangement where we would each have a separate house, but share many things like cars, laundry facilities, babysitting. All of us had young children of school age.

We had many pleasant evenings where over dinner we explored this idea, and discovered that one of the men owned a large acreage of beautiful view property in Metchosin, not far from where I am now living. We spent weekends hiking around this hilly estate, and found ideal sites to build our houses close together, but not too close. We even got as far as getting estimates on having a road put in. And then, one night this man pulled the plug out and told us that he had decided to sell the

property. I was devastated. I had put a lot of hopes and dreams into this project. But this man, a psychiatrist by profession, knew what he was doing—none of us was ready for such a commitment. Since that time, one couple emigrated to the United States, another got divorced, the third moved first to an Ashram and later to Vancouver. Derek and I moved to Metchosin.

Although we could not afford to buy the beautiful acreage on the mountain, we decided to look for a property where we could build a house for our family with sufficient land to grow vegetables. With the ignorance of two people born and brought up in London, we talked grandly about becoming self-sufficient in food.

One day, after two idyllic weeks camping on a secluded beach on Cortes Island we returned to Victoria, decided it was time to move from the busy street on which we lived, and the next day set out to look at a house in Metchosin. We were a bit suspicious because the advertisement had a photo of the view but not of the house which turned out to be a “handyman’s special” —not our forte. We drove around and came across a ‘For Sale’ sign and followed a winding gravel driveway to a pleasant large house with a beautiful view. The moment we entered we had a strong sense of having found the right place. Eager to buy it, we tried to contain our enthusiasm so that the real estate person would not detect this. “We’ll think about it,” we said in as detached a voice as possible, and left. Outside, once we got into our car, turned to each other and said: we must have this house!

Our intuition was right. This is a special place.

It was, and continues, to be a well used house. We have made changes, knocking down walls and putting in larger windows to take advantage of the view, but basically it remains a comfortable family home—hospitable to my immediate family and the extended yoga family alike. Among its many attributes was a large room in the basement where

my children could have a space of their own to play, and in their teenage years to entertain friends away from the prying eyes of their parents but safe at home. It also had an in-law suite where an elderly aunt of the previous owners had lived, and which was waiting to provide a home for Derek’s mother when his father died and she decided to join us in Canada—but we had no thoughts of this when we bought the house.

My children, who were eleven, ten and seven when we moved there, have grown up and moved away. Their playroom has become our yoga room and the studio where I teach my private classes—but we had no thoughts of that when we bought the house.

My mid-week Metchosin classes are attended mostly by local residents, but weekend workshops draw people from Victoria and up-island. Once a month, on Saturdays, I offer pranayama classes which have evolved into an interesting half day workshop. Pranayama starts at 8 am after which we adjourn for tea, toast and discussion around the dining table. When all of this has been digested, we do an asana practice after which we adjourn again for lunch and more discussion. The pranayama class is formal with me doing the teaching, the asana practice is informal with each of us doing our own individual practice but every now and then stopping to share an insight or ask for help or feedback about a particular asana. There is a lot of life and laughter in these sessions.

The first pranayama class of the season was last weekend, and it happened that I was reading a fascinating book called *A History of Her Own* about European women from pre-history to the present. I had just finished a chapter called *Women in the Salons*, and I suddenly realised that this house is like a *salon* in the old-fashioned sense of the word. Nowadays it is rarely associated as it was in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with a place to explore, to ask questions, venture opinions, and hear those of other people. Sometimes a free flow would range over many topics with everyone pitching in. Sometimes

conversation focussed around a particular problem a particular individual was experiencing at the time

Salons were places in which talented and learned women could meet with men as intellectual equals—a very rare occurrence in those days. The various hostesses created a genteel environment by insisting on tastefulness, courtesy and polite behaviour. Men and women of the intellectual, social and artistic elites would converse freely. The salon provided shelter for views or projects unwelcome in the court. Good food and wine were served along with these elaborate discussions.

While I would hesitate to describe what goes on in my pranayama mornings as genteel, the conversation does flow freely around many topics and while women are often in the majority, the men who are there always have their say on issues of interest to both sexes. Eager, sometimes heated, we are nevertheless courteous and polite. Ideas and opinions are expressed, questions which might be difficult to raise at home or at work can be asked here. Support is proffered and we have the opportunity to learn from each other's experience of interpreting the teachings of yoga. Laughter is in

abundance as we recount tales and see the humour in our various predicaments. It is not a therapy group, nor an intellectual game, but an exploration of the twists and turns of the spiritual path.

The table we sit around (sometimes squeeze around) is a refectory table, long and plain, like those in monasteries of old, and I always make a huge pot of soup which is served with good bread and coffee—simple nourishing fare to complement the conversation.

A few years ago, when our work was not as well supported as it has been of late, we looked at our program of events and thought about what had worked well and what had not. The question was raised: what do we like to do? The answer: practise yoga, eat, talk. Those with a discerning eye may have observed that many of our functions now include food and the opportunity to speak up and be heard—but the practice always comes first and foremost, and then this talk is not idle chatter, but the use of our mind and our gift of speech to find out a little more about who we really are and what our priorities are in this lifetime.

Om namah Sivaya. ▲



SHIRLEY TEACHING IN MONTREAL THIS SUMMER.



# YOGA CENTRE NEWS

The Directors of the Victoria Yoga Centre met in August and had a productive discussion about how people feel when they join the Victoria yoga community. Often when the Directors get together these discussions take place and my horizons are broadened. Sometimes the discussion takes a large part of the time set aside for the meeting but it is never a waste of time. More often it is a privilege to share with others their feelings and a small part of their journey. I always enjoy Director's meetings, it's a part of my social life, sharing food and experiences with people of like minds.

Eventually the business of the day was dealt with and we found out:

1. The newsletter may need to have a larger number printed - we'll keep a check on the numbers used over the next few months.
2. We must make sure that non-members who register for workshops are automatically added to the membership list, as the workshop fee includes membership fee.
3. Shirley Daventry French presented the Yoga Centre with a cheque for \$1091.50 as our share of the proceeds from the Summer Intensive - the largest amount from that workshop so far.
4. Karyn Locken will be resigning as treasurer by the end of the year.

5. The program committee has been busy and programs and workshops have been planned up till the end of June, 1995. See newsletter for current details.

6. Ann Kilbertus has been elected as the B.C. representative on the national committee of the Iyengar Teachers Association.

Next meeting will be held in October. ▲

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Friends,

Would you please redirect my subscription to my new address, which is enclosed. The journal is the one consistent, quality source of support, information and challenge for me and I do appreciate receiving it.

Thank you for your work.

Sincerely,

Kelly Murphy  
Parksville, B.C.

*When renewing her subscription to the newsletter, Leslie Fiddler of Vancouver offered the following suggestion :-*

P.S. About mat washing: how about asking the senior students to take one or two mats each for cleaning? Wendy Davis(*her teacher*) does that and it works. Then the workload is shared.





VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

## *Yoga for Beginners*

*with*

*Lauren Cox*

Sunday, October 16

Y.M.-Y.W.C.A.

Yoga Studio

10:00A.M.-12:30 P.M.

refreshments follow

This Sunday workshop for beginners is shortened to give new students an introduction to the workshop format.

A balanced sequence of poses will be presented.

Fee: \$20.00 for members of the Victoria Yoga Centre

\$25.00 for non-members

Phone Lauren for registration: 382-3287





**THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE  
AND THE Y.M.Y.W.C.A.**

**WELCOME YOU TO A FRIDAY  
NIGHT GATHERING**

**Asana Practice at 6 p.m. with Leslie Hogya**

**Potluck dinner at 7 p.m. in the Yoga Lounge  
(please bring your own plate/cutlery)**

**followed by a showing of a B.K.S. Iyengar film**

**Date: Friday, October 14, 1994**

**Everyone is welcome  
Please join us**



## Yoga, Community and Freedom

When I began my journey on the yogic path I was full of fear. Fear about the consequences of future changes, about not knowing where I was going or why.

The journey has been long and eventful and I have been fearful many times. Surrounded by the community I have been supported so that I can face the fear and discover for myself that there is nothing to fear but fear itself. Fear has been a debilitating factor along the path but, once overcome, I have the freedom to choose the path so as not to be driven along. The community has helped me to find my freedom, make my choices.

I have been given the opportunity to learn about where I want to go and what I want to be. It has been difficult to ask for help and even harder to accept it when offered. But help I have received - sometimes like it or not!

Freedom takes the fear out of my journey. The freedom comes from making my own decisions and taking responsibility for the consequences of my choices. The community supports my efforts, reinforces my freedom and helps me out when the consequences are hard to handle.

For me, the community is there whenever I seek it out and sometimes the community seeks me out. I like to think I'm there when the community looks for me. ▲

Jennifer Rischmiller

*I would like to invite our readers to contribute to this column, I think it would be useful to have comments on the yoga community, both here in Victoria and other places. The Victoria Yoga Centre heard some opinions earlier in the year which I am planning to transcribe and publish.*

## BODY, MIND and BREATH

with

**Shirley Daventry French  
Dr. Derek French**

**Saturday, November 26th**  
1:30 to 4:00 pm at the Y  
880 Courtney Street

**Y & Yoga Centre Members:**  
\$25.00  
**Non-Members \$30.00**

*Nothing is more important in  
life than breathing.*

This workshop will explore the intimate relationship that body and mind have with each breath you breathe. It will also look at how breath can be used as a tool to deepen awareness, and help you to become more relaxed and healthy in every day life.

Ensure yourself a place in this special workshop by registering early at the Y Main Desk.

For further information,  
phone Shirley at 478-3775.

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Body

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& Spirit

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Jennifer Trost DTCM

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Acupuncturist

598 4784





Photographs  
from  
Celia's Workshop



## Thoughts on Teachers and Students

by Aadil B. A. Palkhivala

There are men and women whose deeds are glorious, whose authority is axiomatic, whose words are wisdom, whose presence is power, whose will is worship, whose touch is transformation. These exemplary men and women are the core of our existence, the reason for our living, and the vindication for our life.

They are the ones who have spent their years in total dedication to a noble goal, a spiritual meaning, the concealed Divinity underlying existence. They are the teachers, the gurus, the seers, the saints. Our dedication to them is our dedication to the goal, the Godhead. In their time they stayed around others and we, in ours, stay around them so that the loftiness of purpose which has lit the flame of their aspiration may, over time, with devotion, respect and obedience to their inspired will, light ours.

Everyone has something to offer everyone. From some we learn what to do, from others what not to do. However, mixing and combining a bit from one with a bit from another, over time makes a mongrel. A heretic hybrid. A confused, complex, crossbred compose. Sticking with one tradition, one learning, one lineage produces pedigree. A single streamlined strength. A pure simplicity. A mind uncluttered. A vision unalloyed. A teaching uncompromised.

Onepointedness. Humbly obey the teachings of one teacher. You may try many before you find the one whose words and actions are, at your stage of development, absolute. We are told that an ignorant student tends to pick an ignorant teacher, an egoistic student an egoistic teacher, and a knowing student a knowing teacher. Allowing for a gamut of variations on this philosophy, it is prudent to remember that if our teachers are not ahead of us on the steep road that leads towards the same glorious end, however enticing their

words or silvered their tongue, time will declare only deep disappointment.

You beware the pauper who will share with you the secrets to wealth, as the toad who promises to teach you to sing. Though many a yogi has lead though lame and lifted though tired, watch carefully the one who promises you a life he has not led himself.

It is known that an egoistic student cannot tolerate a Master. For a Master sees through you. You stand bare and exposed before a Master with no suits to hide a warped body, no justifications to qualify a lazy action, nor verbosity to mask a confused, frustrated mind.

Masters are rare. So seek them who have sought them which you seek. Seek those who live their lofty longings. Then orbit around them as the earth circles the sun, basking in its warmth, yet working and waiting constantly for the moment of perihelion.

A teacher inspires, the teachings bid you work. Some paths are effortless and others effortful. An effortless path is the way of aging and death. You need do nothing to age and die. An effortful path is the way of aging and death. Do only effort, and age and death come briskly. Effort must balance rest as light balances darkness and heat, cold. A time of completeness will come, when the Purusha and the Prakriti meet in the Ishvara, when effort is restful, daytime calm and night glows with light.

We continue to work with our teachers, the inspired Masters of Existence who, despite our dense ignorance and self-wrought egoism, labor with our bodies that they may be supple and strong, our minds that they become calm and unwavering, our emotions that they be pure and balanced, and our spirit that it flow into all parts of our being, bathing us in light and beatitude. To them our deepest pranams, our unfailing gratitude.

*Reprinted from the Newsletter of the Iyengar Yoga Institute of Washing State, Fall 1990.*



VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

# BEGINNING TO BEND BACK

with  
*Linda Benn*

Sunday, Nov. 20  
Y.M.- Y.W.C.A.  
10:00am - 1:00pm  
refreshments follow

Our daily activities usually involve forward bending movements, often resulting in poor posture, compressed organs and inadequate breathing. Rarely do we bend the other way.

This workshop will focus on the beginning backbends: Warrior I, Bridge, Locust, Camel, Bow, Upward Dog etc. Backbends are energizing and strengthening as they open the sensitive and vulnerable front body.

Fee: \$25.00 for Yoga Centre members  
\$30.00 for non-members

Students should have completed a session of introductory yoga  
Registration: Renate Grinfields 381-7546  
Linda Benn 478-0757

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# *RADHA HOUSE*

## Victoria

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### *Fall 1994 Program Calendar*

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

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### *1994 Winter/Spring Calendar*

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#### *October*

14-16: Music and Consciousness

#### *November*

5: Saturday Morning with  
Sitting Forward Bend  
28-December 2: Last week of classes

#### *December*

3: Rose Ceremony, Part 1  
4: Rose Ceremony, Part 2

#### *Open House*

*Sunday, September 11, 3-5 p.m.*

We invite you to join us in this informal gathering as we start a new year. This is a wonderful opportunity to greet old friends and to meet new ones. Looking forward to seeing you then.

#### *Guru Puja*

*Sunday, September 11, 8-9 p.m.*

A special Satsang of gratitude to honour our teachers who have dedicated their lives selflessly to help others find their inner strength and life purpose.

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# Weekly Activities

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## 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 practises that will change your life. Ongoing.

Fee: 11 classes \$121

## Introduction to the Kundalini System

This is a six-week course. Wednesdays 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Fee: \$60

## Hatha Yoga: The Hidden Language®

*Mondays: 5:30-7:30 p.m. All levels. (Ongoing)*

*Tuesdays: 12:45-2:45 p.m. All levels. (Ongoing)*

*Saturdays: 10:15-12:15 p.m. All levels. (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 an improved physical and mental condition, and a deeper understanding of the body as a spiritual tool.

Please note: No drop-in class on Saturdays when coinciding with scheduled workshops.

Fee: 11 classes \$121, \$11 per drop-in class.

## Hatha Yoga: Yasodhara Ashram Style

*Fridays: 5:30-7:00 p.m. All levels. (Ongoing)*

This is an ongoing class and a good introduction to the poses.

Fee: 10 classes \$90

## Dreams

*Wednesdays: 1-3 p.m.*

Dreams offer a direct way to connect with the part in us that knows, and that speaks each night in our own symbols. In this class we investigate dreams from a yogic perspective, and focus on their application in daily life. Dreamwork is an excellent preparation for kundalini class.

Fee: 11 classes \$121

## Bhagavad Gita Reading Group

*Saturdays: 8:30-10:00 a.m.*

Experience the inspiration, depth, and relevance of this ancient yogic scripture, through reading and reflection together with others.

No fee. Registration is open.

## Satsang and Bhajans

*Sundays: 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. If you wish to be on the Prayer List, please contact us by phone or letter.

## Registration

For further information, please call 595-0177. Further daytime classes can be formed if interest warrants. Fees due at first class. Participants will be asked to sign a release form.

## Life After the Yoga Development Course

by Julie Hodgson

I can sum up the experience I have had in Montreal in one word - tough. I know the word tough is not a particularly yogic term but it best describes the sense I had for the first couple of months I was here.

I went to Yasodhara Ashram in Kootenay Bay, B.C. in August, 1992, to take the ten day course and, by the second day of the course, realized I wanted to continue this work in more depth. I asked Swami Radha to pencil in my name for the three month Yoga Development Course (YDC) starting in January, 1993.

When I returned to Ottawa, I thought about the decision I had made, wondering how I would tell my family, friends and colleagues at work. I got a dream one night, complete with flashing lights and neon, saying: "Charity begins at home." I made up my mind to leave my job and to head west.

The course itself was wonderful - I felt absolutely safe and cocooned in Light. I had been studying Yoga at Radha House in Ottawa since 1984 and the ten day course gave me some idea of the intensity of work that the three month course would offer. I found the course deeply satisfying at the time and realize, in retrospect, that it has given me a foundation on which to base my life.

I stayed on at Yasodhara Ashram after the course ended until September, 1993, joining residents in the work of the Ashram. It was an opportunity to put into practice what I learned about myself in the YDC, and to develop a daily practice. As a temporary resident, I was invited to take part in weekly Dream and Hidden Language Hatha Yoga classes and these helped me continue the practice

of reflection and inner work. I was also able to attend Satsang in the evening, something which I miss a great deal now as it brought the Ashram together as a community of Light.

I had a series of indications, through my dreams and in my practices, that I should stay in British Columbia. An opportunity to stay at Radha House in Victoria opened up. I was not ready to come back to the East - I didn't know why - but wanted to respect that feeling. I spoke with Jessica about staying at Radha House Victoria and she agreed I could rent a room. I moved to Victoria in September and made myself at home in short order.

I was able to complete the book reports required for the YDC while I was in Victoria, and was able, as well, to take a Hidden Language Hatha Yoga class and a Dream class. I also took part in the Bhagavad Gita Study Group that met on Saturday mornings which was a good way for me to read the Gita, one of the twenty six books on the 1993 YDC reading list. I was also able to do my own practices, to continue Prayer Dance and to attend Satsang on Sunday evenings. I see the time I had in Victoria as a real gift. It allowed me time to adjust to the city, albeit in a sheltered way, while pursuing my spiritual practices.

In January, 1994, I began to teach a weekly Hatha Yoga class at Radha House which I felt very privileged to do. It was a wonderful way for me to share the Light with others and I understood more clearly the spirit of the Work.

Suddenly in March, 1994, many things came to an end. My part time job finished, the funding for another project I was working on failed to come through and I handed in the last of my book reports. I came back East at Easter, visited family and friends, and found out about a job in Montreal. I applied for the job, saying I would be returning to the East in the middle of May.



It felt very much as if a chapter of my life was over. I knew I had to re-enter the work force and get back into the stream of things. I returned to Victoria and said my good-byes before heading off to the Ashram to take the Kundalini and Dream Interpretation training. It was wonderful to be back at the Ashram and I felt as if I had come full circle over a period of close to two years. I came to realize during that two week period how strong my commitment to the Work is, and how deep my connection to the Light has become.

Very shortly after my arrival back East, I was working at the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal. It was not the job I had applied for, but a contract position involving the coordination of activities around an exhibit which will open here in October. I found myself in a very intense, very stressful work environment and I suffered from culture shock. The thing that disturbed me the most was the amount of noise - particularly noise from the traffic. I am living and working right downtown and found the regular street noise, sirens, shouting and so on, almost unbearable.

I found the noise at work equally disturbing - people, computers, telephones, meetings. I found

the amount of anger and frustration in the workplace quite palpable and felt overwhelmed and invaded by it. I sought refuge in my practices. For the first month or so, I came home and would cry for long periods, simply from the stress of daily living. I retreated into my practices and stayed at home.

After about two months I started to get dreams in which I was walking out of the mountains and into the valley. I was talking with people and asking directions. I was mingling with the crowd. I decided it was time to start exploring the city, to start where I am, to penetrate my space.

The pressure of work has eased up, my french is improving considerably, and I am getting used to the city. The practices I learned and developed through Yoga have kept me focused and clear. I have taken more precautions on going out, surrounding myself in Light, and repeating my Mantra as I walk through the city. I have not found a spiritual community here in Montreal, although Swami Vishnu-devananda, who died a year ago, has a centre here. He was also a disciple of Swami Sivananda and he established an Ashram about an hour's drive north of Montreal.

## 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  |

I'm planning to go there in September as there will be celebrations honouring Swami Sivananda.

I sense I am here for one or many reasons and am trying to keep my inner eyes and ears open for messages. In closing, I would like to say hello to all my Victoria friends and to thank you all for the warmth and support you gave me during my stay here. ▲

Much Light to You

Om Tara

Julie Hodgson  
Montreal.

## **B.K.S. Iyengar in Toronto**

*Teachers—please note*  
that an unedited copy  
of a video of Mr. Iyengar  
conducting classes at the  
1993 Canadian Iyengar Conference  
may be borrowed from

Donna Fornelli  
235 des Bourgeons,  
Aylmer, Québec J9J 1R8  
(819) 685-0491

## **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL CHANGE OF POLICY**

### **NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS**

### **EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**

**MEMBERSHIPS RENEWED DURING 1994 WILL BE RENEWABLE AT THE BEGINNING OF 1995 AND AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH YEAR THEREAFTER. THE COST OF MEMBERSHIP WILL BE \$20.00 NO MATTER IN WHICH MONTH THE MEMBERSHIP IS PURCHASED.**

# YOGA CALENDAR

## NOVEMBER

### OCTOBER

- 5: Father Joe Pereira Workshop. Contact Marlene Miller for details. 655-4306.
- 14: Yoga Centre Gathering at the Y.
- 15: Beginners Workshop at the Y led by Lauren Cox.
- 16: Yoga and Your Back with Dr. Derek French and Shirley Daventry French
- 17: Juan de Fuca Recreation Centre.
- 22: Pranayama in Metchoshin led by Shirley Daventry French.
- 23: Teachers meeting at the Y.

4-6: Ramanand Patel Workshop at the Y. Contact Shirley Daventry French for details. 478-3775.

- 18: Yoga Centre Gathering at the Y.
- 19: Pranayama in Metchoshin led by Shirley Daventry French.
- 20: Sunday workshop at the Y led by Linda Benn.
- 26: Teachers meeting at the Y. Followed by Body, Mind and Breath workshop given at the Y by Derek French and Shirley Daventry French.

### DECEMBER

- 3: Victoria Yoga Centre Annual General Meeting to be held at the home of Derek French and Shirley Daventry French.
- 11: Light on Yoga Workshop at the Y led by Shirley Daventry French.

## 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.#4, Victoria, B.C. V9B 5T8

Membership/Subscription fee is only \$20 per year and renewable each January.

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. ( )

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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 its inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

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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, V9B 5T7. Telephone: (604) 474-5630.

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**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: OCTOBER 15, 1994**

**VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY**

3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R. #4, Victoria, B.C., Canada, V9B 5T8

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# VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

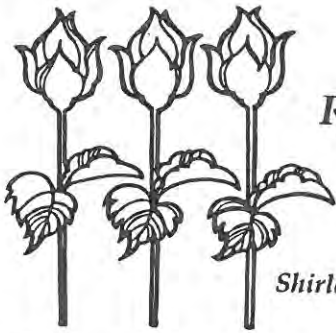
## *Newsletter*



***Please subscribe***

***November, 1994***





## Reflections

by  
*Shirley Daventry French*

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November 1981 to November 1994! Thirteen years ago, this newsletter appeared for the first time in its present format. During that time we have produced on average ten issues a year. At first we published twelve, but this became too much so we combined the July and August issues into a Summer issue, and December and January into a Christmas/New Year issue. There may have been the odd lapse here and there when we became overwhelmed and only produced nine issues—but these have been rare.

Isn't this a lot of work?

Yes.

Doesn't it cost a lot to produce ten issues a year?

Yes.

Why do we bother?

Well, sometimes I ask myself that question—especially when subscriptions fall off; when Jennifer, Lauren and I seem to be the only ones interested at all; when I am going through one of my “fed up with the whole Victoria yoga community” phases.

Does anyone read it?

The editorial and design staff (Jennifer, Lauren and myself) ask themselves that question frequently when the silence is deafening, when they feel that their efforts are in vain, and all the carefully compiled words, thoughts and pictures simply drop into a void out of sight and out of mind.

Hopefully, if the newsletters are not read at least

they are recycled and not simply tossed into the garbage. We have had fun on occasions playing with the idea of publishing an issue full of gibberish, to see if this would generate any reaction.

With any long term commitment, there are bound to be periods of high energy and enthusiasm, and others when it is difficult to carry on, where the work is an effort and inspiration is hard to find. In these periods, we do the best we can. Yoga is a lifetime commitment, and the work on the newsletter is a part of our yoga. Mr. Iyengar often speaks of the nectar and ambrosia which are generated from the practice of yoga; but this is not always there—sometimes it is dry and difficult, but still we must persevere.

It is wise at such times to pay some attention to how, why, when and where we are practising, and whether some changes are required. Certain questions need to be considered. Is it yoga asana I am practising or, according to a description of yoga which I read in our local paper recently, “the ultimate low impact workout”? Is my writing and editing for the newsletter karma yoga or merely a habit? My other work in yoga, is it selfless service or self serving? Am I following a path of right livelihood? Time and time again, what I discover is that the only change which is required is in my attitude, and with this the juices begin to flow again.

Once I have made the effort to overcome my disgruntlement and got on with the work, what usually happens is that a letter arrives, frequently from far afield, saying how much a certain issue, a certain article helped the writer to face one of their own obstacles. Often people write that my reflections touched on the very same issue that they were wrestling with at that moment, that they found encouragement from knowing that they were not alone in this struggle, that my perspective on my plight had shed some light on their situation. We get bogged down in our own mind stuff and the emotions this generates, and sometimes a word

from someone else who is wrestling with a similar predicament can help us to get unstuck.

There is tremendous value in writing things down. Primarily because it helps you to clarify things for yourself. It is always revealing to read unedited transcripts of your own writing. Of course, what appears in the newsletter has often been edited to make it better reading, for personal reasons, and sometimes for diplomacy—but the drafts which end up in the wastepaper basket can be very revealing, and sometimes quite therapeutic.

In Yoga, from the most beginning student to a Yoga Master such as Mr. Iyengar, all have their own experience. Of course, he has so much more than us, and we are wise to learn what we can from him and other experts in this field. But we can also learn from each other. Any parent will tell you how much they have learned from their children, and teachers from their students.

What were we writing about thirteen years ago? I keep a set of back issues of the newsletter, with a few holes here and there where I have lent or given away my last copy. Thinking about this anniversary, I went to my bookshelves and pulled out those published in the first year. It struck me at once how much more man and woman power we had available at that time.

There were a lot of working committees which, I was interested to read, included an Organising Committee for an International Yoga Conference on "Yoga and Health" to be held at the University of Victoria in 1984. In turn this committee established others: Registration and Accommodation, Publicity and Program, Finance and Fund Raising—all with several members. This was in addition to standing committees for Newsletter, Program and Finance.

I'd forgotten about the Yoga and Health conference, because it didn't happen—not because of lack of interest but because our energies were diverted when we learned that Mr. Iyengar would be coming to

North America in 1984, that he would be making his first visit to Canada, and Victoria was one of three cities on his itinerary. Here again, committees were set up, and many meetings took place to make sure not a moment of his time with us would be wasted, and that as many people as possible would have the opportunity to work with and meet this renowned teacher.

The second thing which struck me as I read through these old newsletters was how many articles had been contributed by teachers and by many students about their struggles to establish a personal practice, and their efforts to integrate the teachings of yoga into their daily lives. There were interviews with visiting and local teachers. There were many good photographs, drawings and cartoons. There was a lot of poetry, both serious and humorous. We had crosswords, puzzles, questionnaires, quizzes, and a yogic version of 'Snakes and Ladders'.

The local sources of material have dried up considerably despite ongoing efforts on the part of our editor to get people to write about the many classes and workshops which happen week in week out, or about their personal practice. Every one is so busy— but most of us were busy thirteen years ago too!

If the newsletter were to disappear, would anybody care? Perhaps, a year or so down the line someone would stop and think: "I haven't seen a Victoria newsletter for some time. I wonder what happened?"

In my naivete, I thought that not only would we continue to have contributions from people who would be only too willing to share their experiences with our readers, but that the majority of readers would take out a subscription. The subscription drives on public television used to irritate me immensely, but these days I have some sympathy with their plight.

One of the problems is that we give out the newsletter free of charge in our local classes. However, each cover clearly displays the words PLEASE SUBSCRIBE, there is a subscription form inside the back cover, and it must be self-evident that it costs a considerable amount of money to publish each issue—even though the production work is all done by volunteers, whose donations of time, talent and personal resources keep costs to a minimum.

So why don't we charge for them? There are several reasons. One is that we would then have to observe various tiresome regulations regarding taxes etc., plus the added complication of collecting the money before or after class. A yearly subscription is a much simpler way. But there is another reason, which is more important, and that is a continuing commitment to increase knowledge and awareness about yoga, its practice, its philosophy and psychology, and to encourage people to take advantage of the many classes, workshops and conferences being offered locally and further afield

It is interesting to note that at the present time, out-of-town memberships outnumber local ones almost three to one. A few years ago this presented us with a problem, because at that time we had two categories of membership, full with voting privileges, and associate membership, non-voting for out-of-town people whose main interest was to receive the newsletter. However, a non-profit society runs afoul of the Societies' Act if there are more non-voting than voting members, so we scrapped the associate category and simply made everyone a member. We wondered if this would limit the support from distant parts, but instead this support has grown to such an extent that the newsletter is mailed out all over the world, to many countries in all continents.

I have wondered if some local people are deterred from joining because they think it may commit them to something that they are not quite sure about. Be assured, it commits you to nothing

more than offering us some financial support to continue this work.

People learn about our newsletter in many ways. When I travel to teach elsewhere I always take copies with me, and in response to letters and phone calls about yoga I always send out a complimentary copy. Not too long ago, I had a phone call from a woman who had just returned from studying at the Institute in Pune. When browsing through the many books and publications in their Library, she had come across our newsletters, had enjoyed reading them, and now she was back in North America and wanted to take out a subscription. Very gratifying!

Here we have to be careful, because ideally this work is not done in a search for gratification, but for more lofty reasons.

In an excellent exposition on Karma Yoga, Swami Vivekananda says that we have the right to work but not to the fruits of our labour. We must learn to ask no reward "save that of knowing that we do Thy will". He also says that: "Karma-Yoga is a system of ethics and religion intended to attain freedom through unselfishness and by good works." This is a fine ideal, which it is important to keep in mind as we struggle with the dark side of our nature which feeds our neediness and turns the work into drudgery. It is rare that all of us are fed up at the same time, so we encourage each other to keep going, and as long as we feel that the newsletter is serving some worthwhile purpose, it will continue—and when that purpose ends, we must let it go.

During the duration of the newsletter, from time to time somebody indispensable to its production decides they have had enough and resigns; or perhaps they leave town to live elsewhere. There is consternation. Woe is me, what will happen, who will fill their shoes? The sobering reality is that no-one is indispensable, and if the newsletter is meant to continue, which has been the case so far—someone else appears with the required skills,

takes over and the work goes on infused with a new spirit and not necessarily in the same way.

It is this attachment to having things continue as they have always done which often gets us into trouble. We can become very attached to our work, and Vivekananda warns us that any attachment makes a deep impression on the soul binding us down and causing our work to become slavery instead of the path to liberation: "selfish work is slave's work".

I have learned so much from participating in this newsletter, and from working with so many diverse individuals. This anniversary column is written in appreciation of all those who have worked on the production and distribution of the newsletter these past thirteen years, as well as all those who have supported this work. ▲

## PRANAYAMA

in Metchosin

with

Shirley Daventry French

Saturday, November 19th

Pranayama Class  
and Asana Practice

|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| 8:00 to 9:30 AM  | Pranayama      |
| 9:30 to 10:30 AM | Refreshment    |
| 10:30 to 12 noon | Asana Practice |
| 12 noon          | Brunch         |

Fee: \$25.00

Information and registration: 478-3775

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Jennifer:

Today is Thanksgiving. This year, I feel especially grateful and blessed. It is a little difficult to express the feelings of gratitude that I have; words seem totally inadequate. The strong feelings have risen as a result of attending the workshops with Father Joe Pereira which finished this past week. I was fortunate to have attended the one in Vancouver, and then to have brought Father Joe to the Victoria and Sidney area, and have him a guest in my home. Thank you, Father Joe, for coming here; we have been deeply blessed.

I would like to take this opportunity to give thanks to the many people who gave me encouragement and support in the planning and organizing of the workshops. First, thanks to Hilda Pezarro and the Vancouver B.K.S. Iyengar Association for sponsoring a workshop in their city and for graciously relinquishing their plans to have Fr. Joe give Pranayama/Meditation classes mid-week thus allowing space for the workshops in the Victoria region.

Next, I extend much appreciation to Margot Kitchen and Valery Petrich in Calgary for helping in calling India to contact Fr. Joe and for distributing tapes on meditation.

Thank you to the teachers and members of the Victoria Yoga Assoc. for your encouragement and support. The planning of the workshops through the Centre made the administrative tasks much easier. The efforts in helping to coordinate, advertize in the Newsletter, and assist with finances, as well as the teacher's announcements of the workshops in their classes are all greatly appreciated. I am very fortunate to be a member of the Centre.



THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE  
and THE VICTORIA YM-YWCA  
*present*

# BODY, MIND and BREATH

*with*

Shirley Daventry French  
and Dr. Derek French

*Nothing is more vital than breathing.*

This workshop will explore the intimate relationship that body and mind have with each breath you breathe. It will also look at how breath can be used as a tool to deepen awareness, and help you to become more relaxed and healthy.

|        |                                                       |         |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Where: | The Yoga Studio of the YM-YWCA<br>880 Courtney Street |         |
| When:  | Saturday, November 26th 1994                          |         |
| Time:  | 1:30 to 4:00 P.M. at the Y                            |         |
| Fees:  | Y & Yoga Centre Members:                              | \$25.00 |
|        | Non-Members:                                          | \$30.00 |

Shirley is a student of the Yoga Master B.K.S. Iyengar and an experienced teacher of his method of yoga. Derek is a physician in general practice in Victoria and a longtime student of yoga.

*Please pre-register at the Y's Main Desk - Registration is limited*

Information: Shirley Daventry French at 478-3775  
or Victoria Y 386-7511



# PRANAYAMA AND THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

by Dr. J.T. Shah

*This article first appeared in the commemorative magazine for Mr. Iyengar's 75th birthday which was published by the Light on Yoga Trust, Bombay. Dr. Shah is an Ear, Nose and Throat specialist from Bombay and a student of Mr. Iyengar, with whose permission we are pleased to reprint this article.*

Without breath there is no life. Breathing is essential for life to continue.

Each breath supplies vital oxygen to each and every cell of the body and removes the toxic carbon dioxide from the body.

The respiratory organs help in the exchange of gases between the atmosphere and the lungs and between the lungs and the blood. The cardiovascular system helps in supplying the oxygenated blood as vital nourishment to all the tissues for their survival.

The respiratory system consists of the nose, throat, larynx, trachea, bronchi and the lungs. The nose and the throat with their associated structures form the upper respiratory system, and the larynx and the rest form the lower respiratory system.

## FUNCTIONS OF THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

The main function of the upper respiratory system is purification and air-conditioning of the inspired air, so that it is dust free, and at the same time bringing right temperature and humidity to reach the delicate tissues of the lungs to allow maximum exchange of gasses to take place in the shortest possible time.

The nasal cavities are lined with columnar cells possessing hair like filaments (cilia) which are covered with a thin layer of mucous. This mucociliary blanket traps the dust and bacteria and filters the air at the entrance of the nose.

The complex air-conditioning process is due to the three turbinate bones present in each nasal cavity. These are highly vascular and erectile structures whose expansible and contractile functions regulate a controlled volume of warm air to the lungs. They are extremely sensitive and are controlled by the autonomic nervous system.

## ADVANTAGES OF NASAL BREATHING

Mouth breathing is unphysiological, inefficient and causes excessive drying in the throat, compared with nasal breathing, as the nose possesses a wide control over the airway and it can rapidly reduce or increase as the need demands and yet fast enough not to deprive the lungs of oxygen.

Also in nasal breathing the lungs expand to a great dimension and there is an increase in the inter-alveolar pressure which improves oxygen absorption.

The nose thus acts as a resister to the air flow. Its air conditioning function depends on the interaction between the air and the nasal surface. A narrow width with a large surface area improves these functions. In fact, a certain amount of resistance seems to be normal for comfort and good health. The air currents in the nose follow a parabolic course from the nostrils to the posterior openings in the nose; from the pharynx downwards through the larynx, trachea and bronchi into the lungs. On exhalation, the pathway is reversed, except that some secondary air currents and eddies are formed.

## THE NASAL VALVE

The most important regulator of nasal airway resistance is the nasal valve which is the passage between the lower lateral wall of the nose formed by the upper lateral cartilages and the partition of the nose of the septum. This is the narrowest and the most flexible portion of the upper airway on either side. Its action controls the inspired air flow changing it from a column to a sheet of air, giving shape, velocity, direction and resistance to the air currents and controlling the rate and depth of respiration. The nasal valve thus controls the breath, and becoming conscious of this area can considerably improve breathing. This valve is made use of in Nadi Shodhana Pranayama to balance the airways on the two sides to gain control over the autonomic nervous system.

## NORMAL RESPIRATION

During inhalation, the lung volume expands with the muscles of the diaphragm and the external intercostals, and in exhalation the inspiratory muscles relax and the expiratory muscles are made active to release the breath.

The diaphragm is a tough sheet of muscle attached to the lower ribs, sternum and the vertebral column which divides the torso into two chambers, namely the chest above and the abdominal cavity below.

During inhalation, the diaphragm massages the abdominal organs, whilst in exhalation it helps in emptying the lungs, gently massaging the heart.

The respiratory system is the only system which though involuntary, can be made to function voluntarily.

## REQUIREMENTS OF A HEALTHY RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

For a healthy respiratory system, the lungs must be healthy, the spine and the respiratory muscles must

be strong, and the respiratory passages must be clear.

Deep breathing depends upon elasticity of the lungs and the activity of the air cells composing them. If the lungs are fully elastic and all the air cells or alveoli functioning well, then the respiratory system is at its peak.

## TYPES OF BREATHING

- (a) High or clavicular breathing. Here the respiratory muscles of the neck and the top part of the lungs activate;
- (b) Intercostal or mid-breathing where the central part of the lungs are activated;
- (c) Diaphragmatic breathing where the lower lungs are mainly activated; and
- (d) Total or Yogic breathing wherein the entire lungs are used to their fullest capacity with minimum exertion.

Each one of us takes fifteen to sixteen breaths per minute. In each inbreath or outbreath, different tissues and cells of the lungs function. The Yogi observes these various activities of the cells and studies to bring them to function rhythmically in total or Yogic breathing.

## ADVANTAGES OF YOGIC BREATHING

Yoga teaches you to breathe correctly. The complete Yogic breath incorporates the diaphragmatic, intercostal and clavicular breathing into a single integrated movement, so that total lung expansion occurs.

Breathing provides a powerful tool of expanding one's awareness of the body and the mind, and reflects not only the physical and mental condition of the person, but also helps to create it. The rate, rhythm and depth of respiration, all have an effect on the energy flow that sustains the tissues of the

body. If this energy flow is reduced to a particular part, disease will ensue, which can be removed by re-establishing the energy flow by proper respiration.

Those individuals whose thoracic cage and lungs are well developed and who make good use of it are disease free, whilst those who breathe badly end up with emotional and health problems. Good breathing brings the latent spiritual forces to life and gives happiness and peace.

## ASANAS AND THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

Backward bending asanas create a high pulmonary pressure, force air into every air cell or alveolus of the lungs and open them out, thus increasing the vital capacity of the lungs. They also widen and expand the thoracic cage and increase the strength of the respiratory muscles.

All sitting, standing and twisting asanas help not only in straightening and strengthening the spinal muscles, but also help to open up the thoracic cage.

Inverted asanas increase the blood flow to the brain stem and thus improve the functioning of the Respiratory Centre. Thus different asanas such as forward, backward, side bending and inverted, help in the drainage of the mucous from different portions of the respiratory passages and the lungs. The respiratory airway can thus be kept completely clear for maximum air to reach the lungs. Dependent and stagnant portions of the lungs would also be drained out.

## PRANAYAMA AND THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

Pranayama or prolongation of breath, or control of breath, increases the elasticity of the lungs as well as increasing the width, length and anteroposterior diameter of the thoracic cage. The pranayama should be done without tiring the respiratory muscles.

Due to the expansion of the lungs the vital capacity of the lungs increases.

By prolongation of the breath, more time is given for oxygen absorption from the air into the blood and for elimination of carbon dioxide from the blood into the air. Actually its real benefit is the preparation of the respiratory system to work efficiently throughout the day and not just its immediate effects. Slowing of the respiratory and the heart rate reduces the basal metabolic rate thus reducing the stress on the body and the mind and increasing the longevity of life.

Pranayama is thus not only the control of different physiological functions but is the control of the very life process that vitalises the human being.

Different Pranayamas have different effects physiologically and psychologically.

Viloma Pranayama creates awareness of the different portions of the thorax and the lungs. Ujjayi Pranayama helps to master the complete Yogic breath, whilst Nadi Shodhana Pranayama creates awareness in the nasal valve with digital manipulation by applying gentle pressure with the thumb on one side and the little and ring fingers on the other side of the nose over the region of the nasal valve. This technique has been beautifully described in the book *Light on Pranayama* by Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar. By following this technique, the nasal valve can be suitably altered to regulate, increase or decrease, prolong or shorten, smooth equally and rhythmically balance on both sides, restoring co-ordination between the two sides of the body. At the same time one can gain control over the autonomic nervous system.

However, in playing with Pranayama, a man plays with his heart, lungs and his nerves. Undue strain and imperfect techniques without the supervision and guidance of an experienced teacher or a Guru can lead to irreparable and permanent damage to these organs, but when done properly and regularly will

never fail to ensure good physical and mental health to the person.

#### USE OF PROPS TO ENHANCE THE RESPIRATORY EFFECTS OF PRANAYAMA.

Props such as bolsters, chairs, benches and ropes can be used in Pranayama to help open up the thoracic cage and the lungs. These have been widely used in Iyengar Yoga to help persons with respiratory problems ventilate their lungs. In practising Pranayama in the supine position, a longitudinal bolster placed under the thoracic spine increases the thoracic space and helps in thoracic breathing and clearing the middle and upper lungs. A cross bolster placed under the thoracic spine helps in diaphragmatic breathing and thus helps in clearing the basal lungs. Use of a chair would help to keep the spine erect and expand the thoracic cage and the lungs.

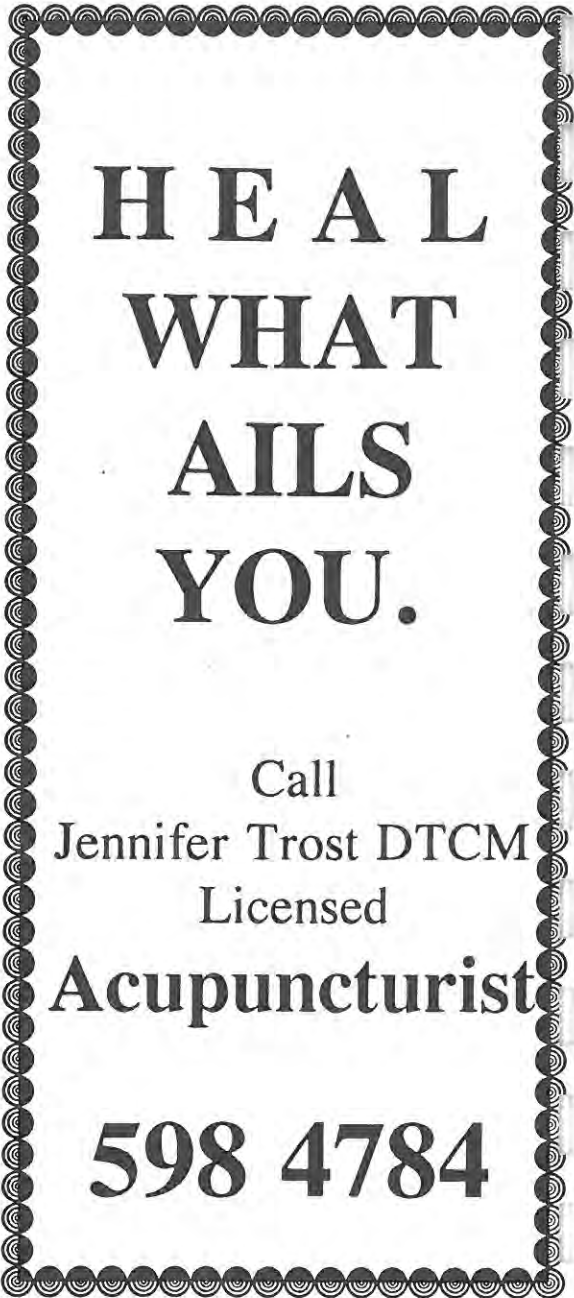
Props can be a boon for patients with bronchitis, asthma, tuberculosis and chronic obstructive lung disease.

#### IN SUMMARISING

It can be said that beneficial effects of both Asana and Pranayama on the respiratory system are manifold. Asanas liberate the latent energy, whilst Pranayama regulates its flow. No physical exercise can ever match the beneficial effects of these on the respiratory system.

In Yoga, to live is to breathe, and to breathe correctly is to live longer.

My Pranams to Guruji Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar for giving me such a deep insight into the realms of Yoga. ▲



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VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

# BEGINNING TO BEND BACK

with  
*Linda Benn*

Sunday, Nov. 20  
Y.M.- Y.W.C.A.  
10:00am - 1:00pm  
refreshments follow

Our daily activities usually involve forward bending movements, often resulting in poor posture, compressed organs and inadequate breathing. Rarely do we bend the other way.

This workshop will focus on the beginning backbends: Warrior I, Bridge, Locust, Camel, Bow, Upward Dog etc. Backbends are energizing and strengthening as they open the sensitive and vulnerable front body.

Fee: \$25.00 for Yoga Centre members  
\$30.00 for non-members

Students should have completed a session of introductory yoga

Registration: Renate Grinfields 381-7546  
Linda Benn 478-0757



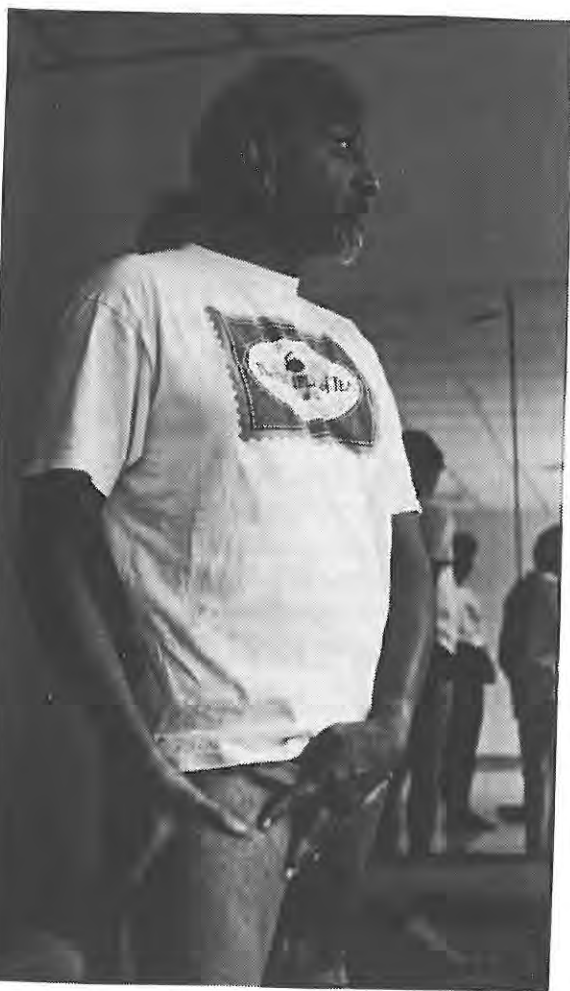
## A RETROSPECTIVE

*This month, in recognition of the thirteen anniversary of our newsletter, we are pleased to present some articles and excerpts from articles published during the first year.*

### **"IT'S ALL EXPERIENCE."**

**— An Interview with Ramanand Patel**

*For our very first issue in November 1981, Norman MacKenzie interviewed Ramanand Patel, and here are a few of his comments :*



**Norman:** Perhaps you could talk a little bit about ways in which you are able to take the understanding that you've acquired from yoga and practice it in daily life situations, simple things such as walking or sitting or, perhaps, even in the way you teach.

**Ramanand:** I think that because yoga is an art and not a science, it's very difficult to delineate exactly what happens and how it affects our life. It grows on you as time passes, and at a time in your life or in my life one aspect of yoga may acquire the greater emphasis and greater predominance. And it changes, and goes in a haphazard fashion. Only from looking back can one realise what change has taken place, but while it is taking place it is so slow that it is difficult to say what is affecting you in what particular way.

A very early example I remember of this was that I began to notice how I was walking when I was about fifteen or sixteen years old. Most people walk with their toes apart and heels together and it seemed odd to me. I started turning my feet in. I used to walk with my left foot much further out and my right foot slightly out. Then I started changing that pattern, and I remember myself walking at that age and trying to turn my feet in. I think it took me about seven years or so before naturally, without thinking, I began to walk correctly. It's a very, very slow process. Nor can you be aware of it all the time; but gradually, the body learns and changes its ways.

With postures that I practise, the same has happened. Your manner of breathing changes, but much more than this physiological way, I think you acquire a sense about the world that makes more difference to you than anything you can think of. You see the fallacies of the world much more clearly than you might otherwise have seen. I have absolutely no way of describing how that happens. I don't believe there is a soul alive on the planet who knows what physiology brings that about. But I am convinced that it may have something to do with the discipline of yoga.

The changes you make in your body are through long practice of slow, gradual changes. Hence your outlook on life is affected in a similar way. When you see things that don't appear alright or in order to you, you don't look for immediate results and changes. So you are not a revolutionary in that sense. You also recognise what has happened to the world has come about slowly over a period and what we have today is a result of not just one generation's thinking but several generations very slowly thinking about that change. Also you recognise that it would have to be a gradual change to be a meaningful change.

Things that need changing must be nibbled away at, slowly; but the constant slow effort has to be made, a consistency in the effort has to be there. So it affects the way you treat people, the way you live with people, the way you relate to people and the way you relate to the world, the whole universe around you.

*And later :*

Norman: Do you have thoughts about the symbolic meaning of asanas? Are there any asanas in particular, for example that you have found have been of some deep significance to you in making changes in your life or in coping with experiences in life?

Ramanand: No, I am intensely practical. My training has been in engineering science and when somebody describes some symbolism in any particular thing, I find it is beautiful poetry but other than that, symbolism has no meaning in my life. I think quite often it is used to avoid the real issues. Sometimes it is used to express beauty but I don't have any specific thing that I consider in postures significant in that sense.

When I practice my postures I do it in a prayerful attitude, being careful not to interpret prayer in the way the normal person does. Not praying to some other being up there, but more to create a proper attitude of mind. I would use that word of prayerful approach to posture, not to use it violently on myself.

## A HISTORY OF THE NEWSLETTER

*Our second newsletter, in December 1981, contained the first of many columns by Shirley Daventry French. Originally it was called "A Message from the President" and later became "Reflections". Following is an excerpt from her second column published in January 1982.*

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. 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. Not only that, they have also had experience in putting out a University newspaper. With their help, we have come a long way from those first two typewritten sheets.

#### **ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER.**

*In January 1982, the editor, Norman MacKenzie, wrote about the new improved newsletter, and following are some excerpts from this article.*

This is the third issue of the Yoga Centre of Victoria Newsletter in its new format, so by now you have had a chance to look at it and, we hope, enjoy it. If you do enjoy it, perhaps you would like to know something of how it is produced, and how you can help with it.

The newsletter is typed by volunteers on IBM Selectric typewriters, and then reduced to the size you see it here (about 75% of original size). The pages are pasted up, headlines, advertisements and screened photographs inserted, and then it is copied by Xerox. Collating, stapling, folding and distribution are also done by volunteers.

The following are some things you can contribute, and ways you can help to keep the newsletter going. We will, of course, credit any contributions that are used.

Photographs. either black and white or colour prints. Your photos will be screened and copied for use in the newsletter, and returned to you if you pick them up, or send a stamped self-addressed envelope at the time of submission.

Writing. We would like to receive written contributions—letters to the editor, reports on workshops, personal experiences, suggestions of things you would like to see in the newsletter, or your favourite recipe for our new column. If you are sending an article, don't forget some photos to go along with it.

Advertising. Our new format, since it is larger, is more expensive. The society cannot afford to support it completely, so we have begun to offer advertising space to cover the additional costs. If you have a business, buy an ad. or if you know of a business which benefits from yoga practitioners—yourself, for instance—or which offers a service of interest, ask them to buy an ad. Our best chance of selling is if you will ask merchants who you personally support. Our rates are low and we offer a very specific target audience.

Artwork. If you have any drawings that would be appropriate for this publication, we would happily consider them for publication.

Subscriptions. We think that the newsletter is of interest to people other than Victoria. We already have a few subscribers elsewhere in B.C. and in Alberta, and we would like to have more. If you have any friends who might be interested why not send them a subscription, or send them a copy and tell them about our membership which includes a subscription.

*Most of the above still applies, with the exception that typewriters have become obsolete and we all write on computers. However, it is the preference of our designer, Lauren Cox, to exercise her artistic talents by using the old-fashioned cut and past method for layout. She is much better and faster at this than most of us would be trying to fiddle around with our limited computer skills.*

## **1981 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

*Excerpts from a short report published in the January 1982 newsletter:*

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held on December 5, 1981 at the home of Shirley and Derek French. Officers of the Society were elected, an increase in membership fees was approved and a number of activities for 1982 were discussed.

*and note this—*

Following the business meeting, a feast and dance was attended by approximately thirty members. Good yogic Christmas cheer was shared by all.

*(This seems to be a good time to remind you that on Saturday, December 3rd, 1994 the Annual General Meeting will once more be held at Shirley and Derek's home, and in accordance with tradition will be followed by a Christmas Party and Feast*

## **VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE**

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1994, AT 6.00 P.M.**

**Please join us for a brief business meeting.**

**This will be followed at 7.00 p.m. by a**

**Christmas Potluck Supper and Celebration**

**Bring your favorite friend, food and beverage**

**to the home of**

**Derek and Shirley French, 3918 Olympic View Drive,  
Metchosin**



It is with deep gratitude that I acknowledge Jessica Sluymer of Radha House, Victoria and the members of my Kundalini class for helping me to trust my experiences and intuition to invite Father Joe here.

The past seven days have been full of special blessings for all of us. Fr. Joe kept reminding us to say of our attachments, of our belongings and even of those significant others in our lives, "You are important to me but you are not my destiny. Thank you and good bye. God, you are my destiny." He brought the gift of ways to understand, know, and trust God's love. Now, even we too must say: "Thank you and good-bye" to Father Joe. I hope that, through God's grace, it will not be long before Father Joe returns to Victoria.

Father Joe, and all who helped these workshops become a reality, my heart-felt thanks and gratitude. It has truly been a privilege to work with all of you. May God bless us all in all our endeavours.

With Love and Gratitude,

Marlene







**THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE  
AND THE Y.M.Y.W.C.A.**

**WELCOME YOU TO A FRIDAY  
NIGHT GATHERING**

**Asana Practice at 6 p.m. with Celia Ward**

**Potluck dinner at 7 p.m. in the Yoga Lounge  
(please bring your own plate/cutlery)**

**followed by a talk given by Sunil Rajpal, a long time resident of the Sri  
Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry, India. Mr. Rajpal will talk about  
living at the Ashram and the work of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother.**

**Date: Friday, November 18, 1994**

**Everyone is welcome  
Please join us**



# YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA

## ITEMS FOR SALE

### BOOKS

**YOGA, THE IYENGAR WAY** - Silva, Mira & Shyam Mehta (1990)  
- \$27.00

**THE RUNNER'S YOGA BOOK** - Jean Couch (1990) - \$25.00

**BACK CARE BASICS** - Mary Pullig Schatz (1992) - \$26.00

**LIGHT ON THE YOGA SUTRAS OF PATANJALI** - B.K.S. Iyengar  
(1993) - \$19.00

**YOGA VRKSA, THE TREE OF YOGA** - B.K.S. Iyengar (1988) - \$15.00

**YOGA, A GEM FOR WOMEN** - Geeta S. Iyengar (1983) - \$25.00

**IYENGAR, HIS LIFE AND WORK** - Autobiographical writings and  
contributions from many students - \$25.00

**70 GLORIOUS YEARS OF YOGACHARYA B.K.S. IYENGAR**  
- Commemoration Volume - \$25.00

### MATS

Non-slip, sticky, washable, Purple Tapas mats - \$35.00

### TO ORDER

Please talk to your Yoga teacher or phone Linda Benn at 478-0757  
Prices include G.S.T.

THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE  
presents

# IN THE LIGHT OF YOGA

A special benefit workshop  
in celebration of the birthday of  
Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11th 1994**

10:00 am to 1:00 pm  
at the Victoria YM-YWCA  
with

**Shirley Daventry French**

Yoga Centre Members \$25.00  
Non-Members \$30.00

Shirley Daventry French is a longtime student of Mr. Iyengar, and one of North America's most experienced teachers of his method of yoga.

The Victoria Yoga Centre is a non-profit society registered in British Columbia which propagates the teachings of yoga and the work of Mr. Iyengar through many activities :-

- \* workshops & classes
- \* monthly newsletter
- \* books & video tapes
- \* scholarships
- \* monthly gatherings
- \* retreats
- \* teacher training \*

**WE INVITE YOU TO ATTEND THIS WORKSHOP  
AND SUPPORT OUR WORK.**

For All Levels of Students - Beginners are welcome  
Refreshments will be served

Registration: Phone Shirley at 478-3775 or Jim Rischmiller at 474-5630

ARE YOU A SENIOR?  
COPING WITH OR  
RECOVERING FROM AN ILLNESS?  
IN A WHEELCHAIR?  
OR JUST PLAIN TIRED?

**THIS VIDEO CAN HELP!**

# GENTLE YOGA

WITH MARGOT KITCHEN

## A GREAT CHRISTMAS GIFT!

**Margot Kitchen has studied and taught yoga for over 20 years. Let her guide you through two 30 minute stretching and breathing routines that will gently restore energy and balance to your system!**

SEND CHEQUE OR MONEY ORDER  
FOR \$25.00 + 5.00 SHIPPING AND HANDLING TO:  
YOGA ODYSSEY

4607 CORONATION DRIVE S.W., CALGARY, AB. T2S 1M5  
PHONE: (403) 243-1078



**The Victoria Yoga Centre**

# **The Stories of the Asanas**

with

Jim Rischmiller

New Years Day  
Sunday January 1st 1995  
Y.M.-Y.W.C.A.  
10:00 am - 1:00 pm  
Refreshments following.

The yoga asanas are more than just physical exercises. They come from a immense body of knowledge that evolved to help us understand who we are and how we fit into this world. In this workshop we will be using some stories from this knowledge and practice, to help us discover the story in our asana.

This workshop is an open to all who have some yoga experience. Come prepared for asana practice and bring a sweater to keep you warm during the story telling. All other materials will be provided.

**Fee:** \$25.00 for Yoga Centre members  
\$30.00 for non-members.

**Registration:** Jim Rischmiller 474-0392  
or 474-5630.



# YOGA CALENDAR

## NOVEMBER

- 18: Yoga Centre Gathering at the Y. See ad this issue.  
19: Pranayama in Metchosin led by Shirley Daventry French.  
20: Sunday workshop at the Y led by Linda Benn.  
26: Teachers meeting at the Y. Followed by Body, Mind and Breath workshop given at the Y by Derek French and Shirley Daventry French.

## DECEMBER

- 3: Victoria Yoga Centre Annual General Meeting to be held at the home of Derek French and Shirley Daventry French. See ad this issue.  
11: Light on Yoga Workshop at the Y led by Shirley Daventry French.

## JANUARY

- 1: New Year's Day workshop with Jim Rischmiller at the Y.  
13: Friday Night Gathering at the Y.  
28: Teachers' Meeting at the Y.

## FEBRUARY

- 5: Sunday Workshop fundraiser, Meet the Teachers. Co-ordinator Ann Kilbertus.  
10: Friday Night Gathering at the Y.  
25: Teachers' Meeting at the Y.

## MARCH

- 5: Sunday workshop with Marlene Miller  
10: Friday Night Gathering at the Y.  
25: Teachers' Meeting at the Y.

## APRIL

- 29: Teachers' Meeting at the Y.

## MAY

- 5: Friday Night Gathering at the Y.  
7: Sunday Workshop with Leslie Hogya  
27: Teachers' Meeting at the Y.

## JUNE

- 2,3,4: Saltspring Retreat led by Shirley Daventry French

## JULY

- 24-29: Yoga Intensive in Victoria (to be confirmed).

## Yoga Centre News

When our financial year ends on October 31 1994 the Yoga Centre will complete its 13th year of existence. During those years some thousands of students have taken classes and workshops sponsored by the yoga centre, resulting in a strong community of yoga people here in Victoria. I regard the energy put forth by us practitioners of yoga as a counterbalance to some of the darker energies in the world and count it as a privilege to help where I can. The Yoga Centre will soon be having its AGM and electing new directors. I encourage you to come to the AGM, and consider offering your services in some way. The short AGM will be followed by a party afterwards to which all are welcome. Come and have some fun. Lets get some good energy out there..

Jim Rischmiller ▲

# IT'S MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME!!!

**YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES DECEMBER 31, 1994**

**WHAT DOES A VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE MEMBERSHIP PROVIDE?**

- : A subscription to the newsletter**
- : Voting privileges at the AGM**
- : Discounts on Victoria Yoga Centre workshops**
- : Support for Victoria Yoga Centre activities and workshops**
- : Support for workshops given by guest teachers**

## **MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION FORM:**

**Please complete 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 \$20.00 and renewable each January.**

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

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

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

**Please do not mail me the newsletter during class sessions,  
I'll pick one up at my 'Y' class ( )**

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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 its inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

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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, V9B 5T7. Telephone: (604) 474-5630.

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**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: NOVEMBER 15, 1994**

**VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY**

**3918 Olympic View Drive, R.R. #4, Victoria, B.C., Canada, V9B 5T8**

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