

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE NEWSLETTER



March/April 2003

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"All those who persevere and are prepared to put in some effort on their own part will discover that Iyengar Yoga is a path of awareness leading to freedom and self-knowledge - a path of evolution and involution."

-Shirley Daventry French

The
Victoria Yoga Centre
is pleased to present

An Intermediate Workshop

with

Faeq Biria

For levels 3 and 4 students

May 2-4, 2003

Victoria Yoga Centre
202- 919 Fort Street

Faeq Biria is the director of the Centre de Yoga Institute de Paris.
He is one of Mr. Iyengar's foremost disciples and a
worldwide ambassador for his work.

Faeq has travelled in various countries throughout the world helping
them implement Iyengar Yoga certification and assessment.

He travels to India annually and is a strong link in the worldwide
community of yoga in the Iyengar Tradition.

This workshop will offer a unique opportunity to study
with this dedicated and inspiring teacher

Times:

tentative schedule, to be confirmed

Friday 6-8:30 pm

Sat 11am-2pm and 3-5pm

Sun 9:30am-12:30pm and 1:30-3:30pm

Cost:

\$225 plus GST: VYC members

\$255 plus GST: non members

Registration;

opens March 3, 2003

Call or mail:

The Victoria Yoga Centre
202-919 Fort Street

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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 persons of the society at large by the study and discipline of Yoga." The Society owes its inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

The Society Newsletter is published regularly, providing current information on events concerning yoga in the Victoria area and the Yasodhara Ashram. Published by the VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY.

Anyone wishing to contribute articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions may contact the

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For more information on Victoria Yoga Centre activities and events, please call 386-YOGA or visit our website: www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca

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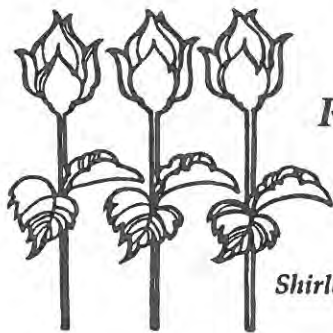
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Note: The editor/newsletter committee hold the right to edit all articles at their discretion. It should also be noted that not all articles submitted are printed in the newsletter due to space and other considerations.



Reflections

by
Shirley Daventry French

When I am going to teach somewhere I have not visited before, they generally ask for some biographical information to use on brochures and other promotional material. As someone who once worked in advertising, I am well aware of the importance of what you say and how you say it. Wanting to encourage people to come so the workshop will be viable, nevertheless I do not feel it is up to me to say much about myself other than give them my curriculum vitae and permission to use this as they wish. Hopefully my experience stands for itself, and interested people will know at least that I am trained in what I am going to teach, that I continue to study with my teacher, and that I will be working within a system of yoga which is known and respected worldwide.



Most of my workshops are for people who have some experience in Iyengar Yoga. The challenge is not to convince them of its authenticity and value, but to offer ways of working within the system which may remove some obstacles and generate some discoveries about themselves - their higher selves. If it is a course for teachers, then my responsibility is to help them better to understand and present the work in a clear and systematic way as Guruji wishes. I am not teaching

Shirley Daventry French yoga, although of course my teaching has to come through my unique transmitter. It's a bit of an enigma, because hopefully my teaching is creative in finding ways of connecting with students and communicating the teachings of yoga, but I am not attempting to teach a Creative Yoga class. My goal is to transmit Yoga in the tradition of B.K.S. Iyengar as clearly as possible.

With a Master of such magnitude as B.K.S. Iyengar, I am only too well aware of the importance of disciplined practice. It is abundantly clear how far my knowledge and ability fall short of his - on all levels. This is not false humility but sober reality. If, through me, the students get a better understanding of the potential of Guruji's work as a tool for their exploration of inner space, then I am doing my job properly. If this comes through clearly, it is thanks to Guruji. If not, it is because my personal stuff and my limitations are getting in the way.

Recently my eye was caught by advertising for yoga teacher training to be taught by someone who, so it was said, had previously given two successful teacher training courses. How, I wondered, was this success measured. By the number of students? Or the income it generated? Or because the participants loved it and said so? As is commonly the case these days in yoga advertising, the information about this course was accompanied by testimonials of the "it changed my life" variety. These alerted the sceptic in me who said: "We'll see!" What kind of yoga they had been trained in was not exactly clear.

One of the problems here is that out of ignorance many people feel they have sufficient expertise to go out and teach a system of yoga without the blessing of the Master of that system, or those to whom he or she has delegated authority. Still others, again out of ignorance, pick and choose, mix and match, from this system or that as they see fit. Eclectic is what this approach is often called. Confusing is what I often think. It can be fun and entertaining and students may

like it, but it can also be an interference to the real work which needs to be done and a hindrance to the soul as it makes this life's journey.

In the beginning there is no problem with trying out many different kinds of yoga in the quest to find out which is the right path for you. However, long before thinking about becoming a teacher it is essential to become more selective, to zero in on what it is you want to do and concentrate on this. Otherwise, you will have little of value to teach.

I have some personal experience of dealing with choices of this nature. As well as being a certified Iyengar teacher, I also hold a certificate issued by Swami Radha at Yasodhara Ashram for a yoga teachers' course I took there in the early 1970's before I became a student of B.K.S. Iyengar. It was valuable work which has made immeasurable difference in my life and for which I shall be forever grateful. It took me to a place where I was better able to digest the teaching of Mr. Iyengar when I became his student. Among the disciplines I studied on this course were Hatha, Mantra and Japa Yoga, Dream Interpretation, Meditation, Symbology and Divine Light Invocation. It took three years of difficult and diligent work to attain this certificate, most of it under Swami Radha's eagle eye.

I have integrated these practices into my daily life, and their fruits have enriched my life enormously. My certificate says I am trained to teach them. Do I? Certainly not! I am very well aware that they have not

been followed at the level which Swami Radha would expect from anyone teaching in her name. She would require that I have my practice vetted, overseen, guided by someone able to give me uncoloured feedback and direction – someone designated by Swami Radha for this purpose. Swami Radha is deceased but before dying appointed her successors, those whom she trusted to carry on her work. I would have to be working with them, answerable to them. This gap between being a student, even a sincere, skilled or adept one, and being a teacher in the yogic sense is not very well



understood. Every true discipline involves the element of supervision, scrutiny of one's work and accountability. Yoga is no exception.

When I received my certificate from Swami Radha I was studying closely with her but instead of going more deeply into this work I veered off in another direction

to Pune and B.K.S. Iyengar. In the beginning I questioned whether a pilgrimage to Pune was an avoidance of work which I needed to do here; but in the course of reflection and discussions with Swami Radha it became apparent that it was the light which was drawing me to Guruji and in the end I went with Swami Radha's blessing. Having made this choice, despite my certificate, it would have been unethical to continue to present myself as a teacher of her system of yoga. Daily, though, I honour her for all she gave to me. Before I met her, although I yearned for the light, I had no idea how to approach it.

In the '70's, yoga went through a wave of popularity in the West similar to the one we are experiencing now, with the significant difference that at that time few were interested in much physical effort and now that is almost the entire focus.

These days, from all I see, hear and read about what is going on in the name of yoga in North America, I am in danger of becoming thoroughly cynical and disillusioned. The environment is predominantly exhibitionist, narcissistic, competitive. Classrooms are full of scantily clad students. Teachers inflate their biographies with grandiose and unsubstantiated claims. Whatever happened to refinement of speech? Whatever happened to *satya* (truth)? Whatever happened to selfless service? And whatever happened to the idea of first becoming an expert before even thinking about teaching - let alone training others to teach?

Last week a reporter from the local paper came to the Victoria Yoga Centre to gather information for an article she was writing on yoga. She was surprised to hear that the teacher training we offer takes a minimum of three years. Moreover, before applying for this training applicants have to have at least two years experience of Iyengar Yoga and a mature practice.

In fact, the majority of those whom we accept as trainees have far more experience than two years.

Following is an excerpt from our teacher training document :

—The applicant must be committed to Iyengar Yoga, both as a practice, and as a way of life. This would include an awareness of the ethical basis of yoga, the *yamas* and *niyamas*.

—Prior to application, the student must have taken classes weekly for a minimum of two years with an experienced Iyengar Yoga teacher and have a regular personal practice. Attendance at Level III/IV classes is required. The applicant should be familiar with all the *asanas* taught on the Introductory Level I & II syllabus of Iyengar Yoga as defined by B.K.S. Iyengar.

With yoga, the more you practise, the more you realise how little you know and the less likely you are to present yourself as a teacher training candidate too soon. Many of our trainees began because either myself or one of the other local senior teachers saw some potential in them and encouraged them to think about the possibility of teaching. We are concerned with quality rather than quantity. In any case, we cannot train large numbers in the depth we, along with our teacher B.K.S. Iyengar, consider essential. Often a student who is keen to become a teacher is asked to wait and concentrate on refining some aspect of their practice. If they listen to our recommendation, go away and do the necessary work, then their application will be reconsidered and they will probably be accepted. We turn many people away: some because we do not feel their practice has yet become an integral part of their life, which is one of the criteria of being a good teacher. With others it is because they simply have no experience of Iyengar Yoga. Whether we accept an application or not has nothing to do with how flexible the student is! Stiff or flexible, with a mature attitude, eagerness to learn, willingness to change along with passion and a thirst for the teaching, you can become an excellent teacher. Similarly, although you have to be strong to be a good teacher, it is inner strength even more than outer strength which is required.

Probably many of those we turn away simply phone the next yoga centre on their list where prerequisites may not be as stringent as ours. If yoga teacher training is what you are looking for, it is not difficult to find a course which will take you.

The three years of the Victoria Yoga Centre's teacher training may or may not be completed in three calendar years.

A trainee's progress varies according to the experience they bring with them, the intensity of their effort and their ability to grasp principles and apply them. In sutra 1.22, Patanjali says: "The goal is near for those who are supremely vigorous and intense in practice." Perhaps this seems self-evident, but intensity does not always lead to advancement particularly without guidance. In teacher training programs even more than in general classes, the guiding and perhaps restraining hand of a Yoga Master is protection for those involved as well as those whom later they may teach.

The reporter who came to our centre the other day was endeavouring to be fair and impartial. Knowing little about yoga and with no personal experience, she also visited several other yoga centres in the city. In response to the information I gave her about our teacher training program, she said that all the teachers she had interviewed appeared to be certified. I raised the possibility that it was important to find out exactly what this meant. In the last few years the proliferation of yoga teacher training courses is alarming. Take your pick. Three weeks, three months and even a weekend - and all of them turning out "certified" yoga teachers! Once I met a teacher who had been a teacher trainer in a well-known system of yoga which offers a 28-day



basic certification course. "How", I said to her in disbelief, "can you train someone in four weeks?" She smiled at me and answered: "I'm embarrassed to tell you that it's really only three weeks because the last week is primarily concerned with setting up a yoga business."

From-time-to-time I read about someone practising medicine without having earned a medical degree. Recently there was a case in a teaching hospital in the United States where such a man was doing heart surgery. Eventually someone on staff became concerned and checked his credentials (which had not been done before) to find out he was an impostor with no formal medical training!

In the yoga world, when you hear the term *certified yoga teacher*, check it out, find out what it means. Certified by whom? How long did this training take? Who certified the person offering this certification? What were their credentials? Who scrutinises the teaching in this teacher training course? What are their credentials?

What seems to be happening is that someone somewhere becomes certified not necessarily in any particular form of yoga, but a generic kind with few

restraints. Next they open a yoga centre which, in today's climate of enthusiasm for yoga, is likely to fill its classes. Then, of course, any successful yoga centre has to have a teacher training course and with all those would-be yoga teachers isn't it important to offer this service? So this new centre gets into the teacher training business and certifies teachers in its name. Then those newly trained teachers go out and open another centre and eventually establish their own teacher training program and certify teachers in their name. And so it goes!

In the Iyengar system you are not eligible to train teachers until you have completed intermediate certification (which takes many years), and have been to Pune to study several times. The same applies to teaching students with therapeutic problems and pregnant women. Experience is required here not merely enthusiasm.

Years ago, when I first came to Victoria I joined the Y and attended a class known as "Archie's ladies" taught by former Canadian Olympic track and field coach, Archie McKinnon. Archie was getting on in years and sometimes had to miss a class. Quickly I became one of the students called upon to teach this fitness class in his absence. My credentials? A background in competitive sports, a fit and healthy body, and a lot of nerve! These days the fitness world would not condone or, more importantly, risk this at all. You have to be trained and certified under a rigorous system.

When I started yoga, no-one thought about certificates. Guruji himself was not keen on them at first, but the frequent misappropriation of his name by people ignorant and untrained in his method of yoga encouraged him to take this step to maintain the integrity of his work. Now, the certificates issued in his name through national associations such as the Canadian Iyengar Yoga Teachers' Association are valid throughout the world. To attain one takes not only years of training but you must sit an assessment involving a written examination, intense practice and

teaching under the eagle eyes of four assessors. These will be senior certified teachers trained for this task, and your training teacher cannot serve as your assessor because of the difficulty they would have in being impartial. Iyengar Yoga certification is not easy to acquire; it has to be assiduously earned.

Within the yoga world, the importance of certification is now generally recognised. Hence the proliferation of certificates. What is required next is for the unsuspecting public to become curious about just what that certificate is worth. These days, before entrusting their body to a physician, people find out something about her or him, ask questions, even interview the doctor. Why not indeed? In a yoga class where you are going to entrust your body, mind and self to that teacher, why would you not be just as inquisitive? All certificates are not equal. ☺



Short Workshop at the Victoria Yoga Centre

*Menopause Workshop
with Marlene Miller*

Saturday, April 5, 2003

12:00-3:00pm

Members \$38.52 includes GST

Non-members \$44.94 includes GST

*Inspirations from India II
with Robin Cantor*

Friday, April 25, 2003

6:30 - 9:00pm

Members \$37.50 includes GST

Non-members \$43.75 includes GST

*The Victoria Yoga Centre
202-919 Fort Street 250 386 YOGA*

Off The Wall

by Leslie Hogya

Incredible volunteers do amazing things for us at our centre.

Paul Sobejko, recent engineering graduate from Uvic, volunteered to design and build the new rope wall in the small studio.



I met with Paul in December and discussed the needs, problems and location for the ropes.

Over the Christmas holiday, with the help of Rosemary Barrit, all the materials were picked up and special tools were rented.

Being conscientious to get the job done over our program break, Paul worked some late nights. In fact, in a panic one night, he found the street level gates locked. The alarm company had to be called to gain access to the courtyard and to the centre. With determination, the wall was completed in time for the first day of our January term.

Paul, thank you so much for a great job! ☺



The Victoria Yoga Centre

Is pleased to offer scholarships for the following workshops:

B.K.S. Iyengar Scholarship

Teachers please apply in writing

Felicity Green

April 11-13, 2003

Please apply by March 11, 2003

Faeq Biria

May 2-4, 2003

Please apply by April 2, 2003

Saltspring Retreat

June 6-8, 2003

Please apply by May 6, 2003

Intensive

July 7-12, 2003

Please apply by June 7, 2003

Intensive

August 18-22, 2003

Please apply by July 18, 2003

Student Intensive

August 25-29, 2003,

Please apply by July 25, 2003

Apply in writing to The Scholarship Committee and give to your teacher or mail to:

Scholarship Committee

Victoria Yoga Centre Society

202-919 Fort St. Victoria BC V8V 3K3

Call office for details or for more information

contact Amanda Mills or

Wendy Boyer at 250-386-YOGA (9642)

Kind permission has been granted by Yoga Rahasya, to reprint this transcript that was published as a supplement, in January 2000 on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the RIMYI. Due to its length we will publish it in a series of parts.

A "Class" After A Class

Yoga-An Integrated Science (Part Three)

by Prashant Iyengar

YOUR TEACHER IN YOU

Practice must be divided in two parts: consolidation and learning. When you learn, you are required to go forward, you are required to perspire. So, understand this aspect in your practice, so that you also develop the intellectual calibre in the pose when you reflect, when you ponder, because you are objectifying your body and your mind when you reflect in the pose. You are not doing, you are observing when you reflect. And that is **your teacher in you**, because what does the teacher do after all? He observes you and tells you: "This is wrong. This is right. Do here. Do there". So you can have your teacher inside you, when you have a reflective state, because you are observing, you are a witness. When you witness, you know that this point is not done, this point is excessively done, this point is deficiently done and that is how you reveal your own mistakes. And that's how you start learning to learn. Learning to teach, teaching to learn and teaching to teach.

Yoga is a heuristic subject where you are your own teacher, you are your own student. As I said the other day in the class, you want your teacher to understand you in the best possible manner. You do not like a teacher who doesn't understand you, who doesn't understand your problems, right? You immediately discard a teacher who doesn't understand your

problems; so you want your teacher to understand you. Now, who understands you the best? You know that you understand yourself the best. That's why you always accuse others: "You don't understand me!" because you understand yourself. So, since you understand yourself, you can have a better teacher inside you, who is all the time with you, who understands what state you are in, and what your difficulties are.

You all come to the classes, but you can't expect the teacher to know your frame of mind in the class. Maybe somebody is sick in the house, you have to go to the court after the class, you have got some crucial appointment, you have got to meet someone, or some

crucial event is there after the class, or some crucial event has happened before the class... You can't expect your teacher to know those things.

But you will try to hide those things, when you come to the class. Suppose you have got to meet a lawyer after the class, you won't come and say: "I am tensed. I have got to meet a lawyer". You will say: "Let me do the class!" Or

somebody is sick in the house... So, you come in different frames of mind but when we teach, we try to equate you with the others. But when you are unto yourself you will know in what state you are, in what state you are going to be after the practice. So you can understand yourself and you can be a better teacher of yourself than an external teacher. So this is what happens at such a stage.

A beginner doesn't get this benefit. It is only for intermediate, advanced students. Because you know so much, you know *Trikonasana*, you know *Sirsasana*, and you know *Sarvangasana*... It is not necessary for your teacher to be spoon-feeding you every time: "Do this. Do this"... When you know, you can adjust yourself depending upon your situation. So you require a



teacher in you. When you are teaching others, you should be qualified to teach yourself and you must be teaching yourself. And therefore, it's heuristic subject where **you are your own teacher, you are your own student.**

So, many times, we take the class in such a way where you learn to learn. Every time you should not be learning, the teacher should not be teaching. You should learn to learn. You should learn to teach, because you are teaching your own body. You should teach to teach. You should teach to learn. That is a heuristic subject. Otherwise, according to the dictionary, heuristic is "one is one's student, one is one's teacher" But then, what does it imply? You have to **learn to learn, learn to teach, teach to teach, teach to learn.** Think over these four things.

Learning to learn is the way to learn. It is also the process of learning. How do you learn something? Many students read books, they study the books, they are taught in the classes, they are taught in the schools, but still, they cannot learn. The teacher goes on teaching and they still can't learn, because they don't know how to learn a thing. So you should know how to learn: learn to learn.

Then you should also know "learn to teach", because you are teachers. At least, you are teaching yourself. So you should learn to teach, how to teach. Then, teach to teach. You should teach also how to teach what you call "teacher's training program". What is taught there? You are taught to teach, that is "teach to teach". And then, teach to learn. So that's how your practice is to be approached and the classes to be conducted, as a teacher. These things should be made aware to pupils. Don't make the students dependent all the time. You say, they do. You must bring the perceptions in them; they must know what they are doing.

HIGH-TECH PRACTICE

Some people say they have a job which demands a lot of them; they are not ready to practice, I would say.

They just want you to feed them.

Yes, this depends upon the calibre of the students. If they come for just a few workouts, they expect that you pull, push, turn, and lift. That's what they expect. Well that's their calibre: you should do that much and get away with it. But, then if you think that they can be improved, they can be graduated, then make them self-sufficient. So this whole thing in practice is based on one *sutra* which speaks about mastery of *asana* (II, 47). What is mastery? It is not constantly struggling; it is maturity. Maturity must be there; cessation of effort must be there. And you expect that, when you are skilful in something, what do you expect? You expect that you are able to do the same thing, the same output with less input. That is skill. So when do we learn to do the pose with less input? We don't do it. We go all out. Every time we go all out in our poses. We never bother whether, "Can I do the same degree of pose with lesser input?" That is "**high-tech practice**".

You have seen Guruji several times. See, he is on a stool, or in independent *Viparita Dandasana* for fifteen minutes, twenty minutes, half an hour or so, sometimes. Do you mean to say that he is struggling for all half an hour? If he struggles for half an hour, he can't stay there for half an hour. You ask him, or you watch his half an hour *Viparita Dandasana*, see how he does it. Then you say, "I'm going to take a photograph of you in *Viparita Dandasana*". If he is doing *Viparita Dandasana* for a snap, which is only sixtieth of a second, what will it be? If you have watched Guruji, the above mentioned points would be there. That's why I said, there should be perception and if the perception differs, you are a different person all together. When Guruji practises, if he is staying in a pose like *Viparita Dandasana* for half an hour, a complicated pose, do you mean to say that he is constantly manipulating, doing and doing and doing? Initially, he will be doing, to reach the pose, but once he reaches the pose, will he not be there for some minutes, before the next adjustment, or is he constantly adjusting for thirty minutes? Imagine, when

we take *Viparita Dandasana* in a class, for those couple of seconds, at the most a minute or whatever. We constantly say: "Do this, do this, lift here, pull there", etc.

But that is how Guruji is also doing it, to start the pose, to commence the pose: lift here, stretch there, open there, etc. But do you mean to say that if he stays for half an hour, he will be constantly doing it? Simple thing, then you just watch how he stays, how he does and you are carried away. You have never bothered, how he stays, whether he stays there by doing, or is he also non-doing? He can stay there, because of non-doing. If he stays there by doing, his mouth will get exhausted, jaws will get exhausted because, and you can imagine how much you use your jaws in *Viparita Dandasana*. Your teeth and your jaws, your face. The *Viparita Dandasana* that you do in your class, if you try to stay there for half an hour, you will be there no more. See in that one second, how much you harden your face, your brain, your jaws, your teeth, your eyes, how many things do you do. Now, suppose if you do that for thirty minutes... Will you be there to do? Will you last for thirty minutes?

So, have you not wondered that when Guruji stays there, more than doing he is in a non-doing state?

Which is the sutra?

"*Prayatna saithilya ananta samapattibhyam*"

.. *Yoga Sutra II, 47*

It is in *asana sutra*² in the second chapter. There are three *sutras* on *asanas* and one of the *sutra* says: "*Prayatna saithilya ananta samapattibhyam*. *Prayatna saithilya*": cessation of exalted efforts for reflection, or meditation on infinitude. So if you are expected to be meditative in a pose, you can't be gripping your jaws and teeth. Your brain cannot be tensed and hard.

So every pose, however complicated it is, has its level of relaxation. You must attain it. It is not that all the poses have the same level of relaxation, because you can be more relaxed in *Halasana* than in *Viparita Shalabhasana*. You know what *Viparita Shalabhasana* is?

Viparita Shalabhasana is reversed *Halasana*, lie on your stomach and take the legs over the head. So, it has its own level of relaxation; you can't say, "I am as relaxed as in my *Sarvangasana*, *Halasana*"... it is not same relaxation, but each pose has its level of relaxation. *Vrchikasana* has its own level of relaxation...

Both *Swastikasana* and *Vrchikasana* are poses in which you must have relaxation but their levels differ. But it doesn't mean that, being in *Vrchikasana*, you should be biting your teeth and hardening your jaws because it is a difficult pose. So in every pose you must reach 'ease' and you can only reach ease when you are matured, when there is no learning. When you are learning, you are clumsy; and when you are clumsy, there is over-combustion. You generate heat in the body when you are learning. Do you recall those days where you were learning to cycle, how tensed you were? Now, are you tensed to cycle? No. Because you are matured. If you are asked: "What do you do to balance?" You can't answer. But then why are you tumbling ten times, when you are learning? That is maturity. So, if you are constantly doing your practice like learning to cycle, you are constantly falling, constantly involved in injuries here, there and tensed all over...

You were distinguishing between THINKINGLY DOING AND THOUGHTFULLY DOING. Can you explain that?

There is thinking in the learning process. It has a different thinking: "How should I do more? Where should I do more? When should I do more? How should I do more? So you are thinking even in learning. But then, that's why I said, "**thinkingly doing**" and "**thoughtfully doing**", are two different things.

When you are thinkingly doing *Trikonasana*, you always bother about this foot, that foot, this toe, that toe, this ankle, that ankle, this lower leg, that lower leg. You are constantly thinking: "Have I done it here?" "Have I done it there?"... from the toe to the fingertips. There are millions of points and you go on questioning

those millions points: you are constantly moving from joint to joint, muscle to muscle, bone to bone, that is “thinkingly doing”. That is not “thoughtfully doing”. “Thoughtfully doing” is a reflective state, **“thinkingly doing” is a thinking state. It is not a reflective state.** So when you are learning, you have got to think: it is not doing it thoughtlessly. You have got to think while you are learning. I have also explained in the class, when you are taught, you should also think of what is being said and how it can be implemented. If the teacher says, “open your sternum” you should know how to open the sternum, what is to be done to open the sternum. So you have got to think, there also. But it is a different thinking process; it is a more motorised thinking process, related to motor activity. But here it is related to psychological activity, when it is reflection, when it is thoughtfully doing. Anyway, basically the practice must be divided in two parts: learning and consolidating. And when you learn, when you practice for consolidation you will mature, you will get the cream of the pose. And every degree of the pose has something to offer. Don’t think that unless you have reached the ultimate final pose then only the fruit comes. No.

At every level, asana has something to offer. Even if you are in *Janu Sirsasana*, you are not able to take your head to the leg; still the pose offers you something. Don’t think that all your body should be flat on the leg and you should be holding somewhere in the forearms, for *Janu-Sirsasana* to get the effects. Don’t wait till you reach “B.K.S. degree” of the pose to attain the fruits of it, because the fruit can be attained at every degree. You do not have to wait till you have reached the level of proficiency of *asana* as in *Light On Yoga* to attain the fruit. At every level, the fruit is reaped. And try to taste the fruit of every pose at every degree.

EFFORT MANAGEMENT

The problem is, as you speak it is very easy to understand, but when in practice what I feel is that this reflective mind is like grace, it comes and

sometimes it doesn’t come. When it doesn’t come, it’s like a struggle inside ourselves: how does one keep it coming?

Yes. Of course it is something that has to come. I have explained the mathematics of that, the mathematics of an effortless state, after which you qualify for reflection. Unless you reach an effortless state you don’t qualify for reflection. **Unless you reach an effortless state you can’t get a reflective state**, that is one thing that you must understand.

Because, unless effort has ceased, the lake of the mind is not still; if the lake is not still you can’t get undistorted reflections. The water is disturbed constantly, therefore you can’t get reflections. So, there is a simple illustration I have given several times in the class. When you do, say, *Janu Sirsasana*, as a sincere student you go all out, go to the maximum position with all your efforts. Then what are you supposed to do thereafter? Can I maintain the *Janu Sirsasana* by lessening the motor force of the biceps, triceps, and shoulders? Because *Janu Sirsasana* is not meant for biceps, triceps and deltoids. There are hundred poses if you want to develop deltoids, biceps and triceps. *Janu Sirsasana* is not meant for your biceps, but then when you are doing, all of you are using the biceps, the triceps. So measure what is the effort to get this *Janu Sirsasana*, which is your “the best”, at that point of time. Now can I lessen my efforts and yet maintain *Janu Sirsasana*. Sometimes you’ll be able to carry out the process, that effort is lessening, the voltage of the physical body is slowly dropping, but the pose is not lost. That happens only at a particular point of time. Then what happens, your pose also starts receding. But don’t stop there. Again you have to strike a bargain: I have lost 10% of effort but the pose is only lost by 8%; still you are in the plus. Again I am lessening another 10% of effort but I am losing only 7%; still you are striking a bargain. But when it happens to be equal, that is, you lessen by 10% and pose also goes by 10%, then stop there, and don’t withdraw the effort thereafter.

As you mature in the pose, you will be getting the next hierarchy where you can still withdraw the effort yet not lose the pose. This is one way. So go all out and start withdrawing superfluous muscular forces - you might be using your jaws, your teeth, in several poses. Maybe there are superfluous efforts; you can do without jaws being clinched, without tensing the temples, hardening the temples. So learn to analyse, go all out, sincerely, and start withdrawal, that is one way.

The other way is to start the pose at the mildest level of *Janu Sirsasana*, and then watch. If I induct, say 10 units, whether my pose can go more than ten units? That is mathematics. So, like the lazy people or those who don't want to work try to avoid responsibilities, try to avoid work, escape from the work as far as possible. They put it to someone else or they escape when they are expected to work. Similarly, you should see: "Can I be doing that? Can I reach a degree of *Janu Sirsasana* by using less effort than what I have been using all these days? That's also bargaining. Just as you bargain while shopping - not in your country perhaps; even in this country we have lost all those things: the labels are there and you can't bargain. But you do bargain. Anyway, the thing is that you can bargain, starting from a mild degree and slowly go towards a middle degree and conserve all the effort.

Sometimes, you have to do all your practice in that way. That is the way of consolidation: "Can I use less effort and improve the pose? Or can I, without using any effort, intensify the pose? Sometimes it is possible. Unnecessarily you pull and push, where it is not required. So don't think that you are justified by going all out into the pose, because if you go all out in *Janu Sirsasana*, you can never justify difficult forward bends, because you have gone all out in *Janu Sirsasana*. And by going all out you have struck the pose. Now, if *Paschimottanasana* requires ten times more energy than you don't have it. You don't have it because you have used all your energy for *Janu Sirsasana*, say, that is your 100% energy. Now, suppose *Paschimottanasana*

requires twice or thrice the energy of *Janu Sirsasana*, you don't have the energy and you will never justify *Paschimottanasana*. So, you should know that maybe my concept that *Janu Sirsasana* requires 100% effort is wrong. It may not require so much. Don't think that it is sincerity, it is foolishness. Using all our energy for all the poses is not sincerity because some poses are less complicated, some poses are more complicated. There is a big difference between the efforts required for *Trikonasana*, *Utthita Parsvakonasana*, *Sirsasana*, *Trikonasana*, *Parivrtta Parsvakonasana*. So, if you go all out in *Trikonasana*, you can't go all out for *Parivrtta Parsvakonasana*. It is not sincerity to go all out in *Trikonasana*, because you should know how much is required for it, because otherwise, everything else is going to be superfluous.

I have said many times, suppose you want to go to the market and buy something - just ten, fifteen kilos of vegetables. Now are you wise in carrying a trailer truck to get just fifteen kilos of vegetables? Or are two hands enough? It is not wise to carry a trailer truck often, twenty or thirty wheelers to get only fifteen kilos. Why don't you ask in your practice whether I am carrying a trailer truck to carry something that is just ten, fifteen kilos? That is effort management, which is very very essential and will help you develop the cessation of efforts. Otherwise you will never attain the pose. So when you are practising, say for *Janu Sirsasana*, the way to learn is: "What is the effort I require? How much effort am I using? How much effort can be used?" So, when these propositions are ascertained, you should definitely opt for. "How much effort should I use?", not "How much effort can I use?"

Let us imagine a weight-lifter who lifts 300 kilos in the world championship and he's trying for 300 kilos. Now, if you give him only 5 kilos, will he lift the weights in the same manner? And if he lifts them the same way, is he stupid or intelligent?!

That effort management has to be there. So, find out how much a pose requires, and is it necessary to use

superfluous force? Because if you're in *Janu Sirsasana*, if you are at the middle shin, by increasing the effort, you will not go beyond the foot! So why should you exercise so much? Why should you exert so much? That's why I say: "If you go all out, you're all out!", which is not expected.

When you learn the mathematics involved, you definitely develop a reflective faculty. That mathematics being: "I don't require so much", "this is available", "this is required", "this is applied" and "how much more can be applied?", "how much less can be applied?", "how can it be worked out?". The mathematics comes into your system itself, your body itself, and then you realise: "I don't require so much effort". "Am I applying it superfluously? Or am I deficiently using it?" Because, at any given time, you can't be making big progress. You can't go on improving *Janu Sirsasana* by leaps and bounds in one day - it takes may be six months or one year. So why should you go on so much for one day? Learn to conserve the efforts.

"*Prayatna saithilyam*" "is the principal of *asanas*, you must try, at every level of your pose: "Can I lessen the effort?". That is the habit you have got to develop, in the practice of *asanas*. That is the principal concept of Patanjali himself, and you have seen Guruji practising. He can stay for time, with ease. This comes by endeavouring to practice with lesser effort every time.

STEALING THE ADJUSTMENTS

You said 'you have to steal the adjustments.' Can you explain this vice or virtue?

Yes. There are several aspects to "stealing the adjustments" because you have heard from Guruji: "To move a part, you have to move the whole. To move a part, you have to hold the whole. "And you will do that only when you are stealing. If you do something very conspicuously: "Open the sternum" and you open the sternum, you have disturbed so many parts! Opening the sternum in *Tadasana* and opening the

A Workshop with Marie-Andree Morin

For Levels II thru IV

March 21 - 23, 2003

Victoria Yoga Centre
202-919 Fort Street

Fri. Mar. 21	6:30 - 9:00pm
Sat. Mar. 22	11:30 - 2:30pm + 3:30 - 5:30 pm
Sun. Mar. 23	12:00 - 3:00pm

(Times to be confirmed)

sternum in *Ujjayi Pranayama* - do you do the same? You can afford to give a jerk in *Tadasana* to open your sternum; you can't afford to give that jerk in sitting *Ujjayi Pranayama*. Why do you do it? How do you lift the sternum in your sitting *pranayama*? You do it delicately, you steal. The adjustment is stolen. You steal the adjustment in such a way that other parts will not even know. Not only are they not disturbed, they should not even know that the sternum is lifted. When you're trying to do something which should not be noticed by others, it's stealing. And that is to be developed in your practice. When you are doing *asanas*, the adjustment is not jerky, it's a steady process, because so many things are involved. Our body is like a boot-lace system. You know what a "boot-lace system" is? "Boot-lace" means the lace of the shoes. If you move the lace in one hole, you are moving it in all the holes. You can't move the lace only in one hole. If you move it slightly, even in one hole, you are equally moving it in all the holes. So, in the body, if you do move at one

place, you are creating movement everywhere. The body is a boot-laced system. If you work on the respiratory system, other systems are influenced; if you work on digestive system, others systems are influenced. You can't just say: "I'm working on respiratory system, only on skeletal, muscular system. You can't do that. You are working on all the systems.

Therefore, you should know that, when you are making an adjustment. In some aspect, you are not supposed to disturb other parts and also move all the parts. You must be circumspect. **Adjustment should not be a "Big Bang".** Adjustment is a process and therefore you should be stealing, like a thief. You know what "stealing" is? The thief is circumspect. As I said in the class that if you have ten thousand rupees in your right pocket, you are watchful about it all the time. So, all the time your mind is there. But still you are pocket is picked. And this thief, is not only concerned about your pockets when he steals but he also takes care that nobody notices him and nobody knows that he is stealing. That is how you should make adjustments. It is stealing adjustments.

LISTEN TO ONE MORE THING!

How do you open your chest? Have you ever questioned yourself? You can't open your chest by moving the chest. Action is not in the chest. When the teacher says "open your chest!", you should not act in the chest, you should act in the back. Now, stick out your back ribs. Now, don't disturb that, open your chest! Can you do it? No. Why not? That is back. This is the chest. Now coil the back ribs in and collapse your chest! Can you do it? And why not? When the teacher says, "Don't collapse your chest", you should just bother about the chest. So there are certain techniques which are causal, certain techniques which are effectual. So, there is a process, when you open the chest, when you don't open the chest. It starts somewhere else. Lastly the chest opens as an effect. It is not the cause. When the teacher says: "open your chest", you are not supposed to open the chest. You are

supposed to move your back. All these perceptions will come when you'll have this reflection in your practices. "Do I really open the chest?"

All the teachers say, "open your chest." You can't open the chest. You don't open the chest. You can never open the chest. You have to only work with your back. So the adjustment is a process and you will know the process only when you practice with discernment. And many times, you know, when you don't understand things... A film is there, sometimes you go by slow motion... Why? So that you can see clearly what has happened. Why not understand the slow motion of your adjustment? How do you adjust? What are the things which are involved in adjustment? Adjustment, therefore is not a Big Bang, should not be a Big Bang. It should be a process. If it is a process, understand how many stages are there in your adjustment. And how many things are involved? What is the sequential order in which the whole process is laid up? And all those things will come, as I said, the intelligence in your postures, your practices, will certainly come when you practice. That reflection, that discernment will certainly come only when you do effort management. So we all think that Iyengar Yoga is working hard, working hard, working hard... Unfortunately, you are on the wrong track. Iyengar yoga is not a stone-breaking business! So your concept of working hard itself is wrong. You think you should perspire. You have to perspire but don't think only that is Iyengar yoga. You will perspire as a process, in learning stages, or out of the process of doing for learning. But don't think that to perspire is Iyengar yoga.

When you have watched Gururji, his demonstrations, his grace etc., do you mean to say that he is exhausted by it? You have seen that after a demonstration he can talk, and he is as relaxed. But he doesn't come out, after demonstration, like a boxer after a bout of boxing. Why don't you look at his practice, from this standpoint, and then try to define what the system is. Then you will understand that all the things which I am telling you about are there in the system which has

to be traced. Actually, they are all on the surface because you are on a wrong track, because you are carried away by his postures. How is he doing *Trikonasana*? How is he doing *Vrchikasana*? How is he doing *Kandasana*? How is he doing this and that etc... You are carried away by something and you don't see how he is doing it. Here, in difficult postures, when he is doing, does he do like you're doing *Viparita Dandasana* in the class? Your face, your jaws, your teeth, your eyes? There, if he is not doing it, how is it that he is not doing it? And why is he not doing it? He can show, "what a difficult pose I am doing". He can also clench his jaws and tighten his eyes and show people that it's a very, very difficult pose, to make them understand it is not simple. He can do that! People will say, "it's a really very, very difficult thing", and there will be a loud round of claps. Another thing is that he doesn't do that to show you that it is simple, but he is doing it in a simple manner. He is simple in his practice. He is simple in his demonstration. That is what you see on his face.

That's how the grace will come. The grace doesn't come by stone- breaking business. Otherwise we should be all graced: we are working very very hard, we break the stones eight hours a day, ten hours a day but we are not graced. Do you mean to say hard work is only the grace? That's not the hard work. Hard work is integrated work. And you are required to work hard because in your learning processes, as I said, you will have to go from hierarchy to hierarchy. You'll have to struggle. Struggle is there, but it is not only struggle. ***Therefore your practice must be divided: this is the***

struggle track and this is the reflection track, and both should be co-mingled and also practised side by side. And then, when you integrate, you will all become B.K.S. Iyengars, then you will not come to me! When that is integrated, you will have no doubts. So, until then, you must see that these two tracks are there in your practice - **the effort aspect and conservation aspect. Action and reflection.**

And as you mature, they will come closer and closer; at some places they will get co-mingled, that will give you the cream of *asana*. And you will come to know that the Grace is there. At every stage, the Grace is there: don't wait to become B.K.S. Iyengars, for Grace. You can get Grace at every stage. ☯

Interviewed by Christine Perre in August 1998 at the R.I.M.Y.I., with the participation of Cathy Boyer, Corine Biria and Jean-Marie Perre.

Transcribed and rewritten by C. Perre.

For more copies write to:

RIMYI, 1107 B/1 Hare Krishna Mandir Road,
Model Colony, Shivaji Nagar, Pune 411 016, India
e-mail:mehtat@vsnl.com

Replies to The Suggestion Box

Light left on in the women's washroom?

Answer. The Landlord requested this.

**Family yoga, pre-natal, kids yoga
different times, days, etc.**

Answer. Scheduling these classes depends on teacher/space availability. Keep watching the schedule.

**Why is special needs and gentle the
same time on Wed.?**

Answer. The thought was, one could graduate to gentle, after completing some sessions of special needs. Again, the time it is offered is teacher availability (only senior teachers are qualified to teach special needs).

Welcome to New Staff

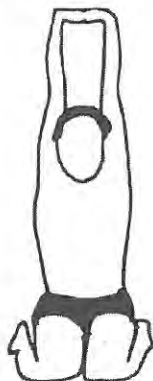
Corrine Lowen	Office Manager
Karin Holtkamp	Office Assistant
Christine Dimofski	Bookkeeper

Britta Poisson continues as receptionist with help
by Monica Dimofski and Heather Hobbs.

PRACTICE SEQUENCE #1



1a Virasana



1b Parvatasana
in Virasana



2 Gomukhasana
(arms only)



6 Utkatasana



7 Utthita Trikonasana



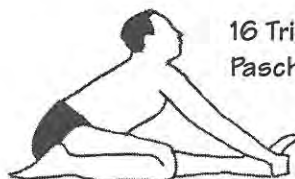
8 Utthita Parsvakonasana



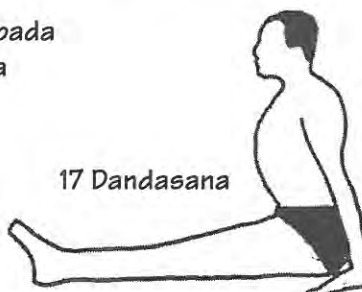
12 Malasana



13 Siddhasana



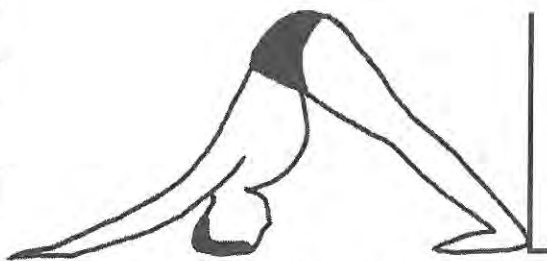
16 Triang Mukhaikapada
Paschimottanasana



17 Dandasana

18 Salamba
Sarvangasana





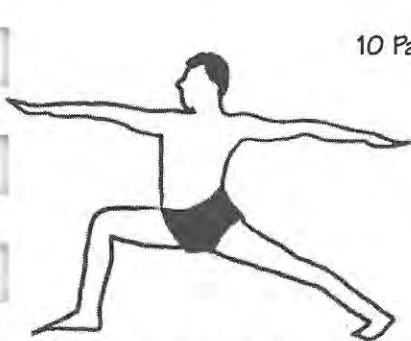
3 Adho Mukha Svanasana



4 Tadasana



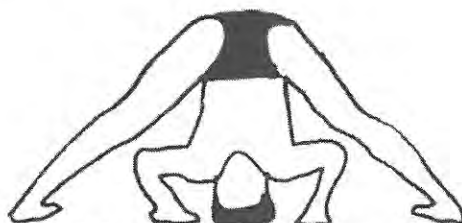
5 Vrksasana



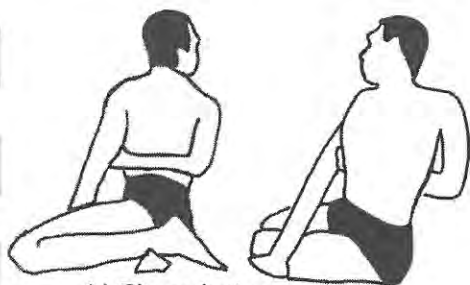
9 Virabhadrasana II



10 Parighasana



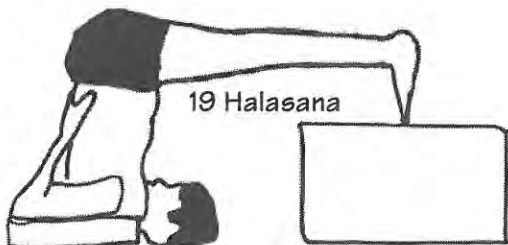
11 Prasarita Padottanasana



14 Bharadvajasana I



15 Marichiasana I



19 Halasana



20 Savasana

Light on Questions

by Ty Chandler

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the birth of the new Question and Answer Column of the Newsletter. The first question you may have is why has it taken so long to get this column up and running. The answer, quite simply, is that nobody stepped up to take on the task. You see, the way it works around a non-profit organization is that if a 'bright idea' is aired, and there happens to be a committee member within earshot, the person with that bright idea may be prompted to make their idea realized. So suffice to say, after a great many prompts I have agreed to take on this column.

As both a teacher and a student I know that questions can arise that we may not have the opportunity to ask, or perhaps the teacher does not have time to answer. I hope this column will help. If I don't know the answer to the question myself, I will do my best to find the information. Due to space not all questions will be answered.

You may leave your question at the front desk of the VYC or mail it to: 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8V 3K3, Attention: Ty Chandler.

Q: Could you list a set of asanas or print more articles on menopause?

A: This is a list of asanas from *The Path To Holistic Health* (B.K.S. Iyengar, 2001) also referred to as "The Big Book". As one of our centre's teachers, Leslie Hogg, puts it, "A book full of mini miracles." Please consult the book on the list that follows (we have a copy in the library) as there are many modifications of the classic asanas.

1. Dandasana 2. Upavista Konasana 3. Baddhakonasana 4. Supta Baddhakonasana 5. Virasana 6. Supta Virasana 7. Supta Padangusthasana 8. Supta Padangusthasana (leg to the side) 9. Prasrita Padottanasana 10. Adho Mukha Svanasana 11. Uttanasana 12. Ardha Chandrasana 13. Utthita Parsvakonasana 14. Utthita Trikonasana

15. Tadasana Samasthithi 16. Tadasana Urdhwa Hastasana 17. Tadasana Urdhwa Baddha Hastasana 18. Tadasana Paschima Namaskar 19. Tadasana Gomukhasana 20. Adhomukha Virasana 21. Janu Sirsasana 22. Paschimottanasana 23. Adhomukha Svanasana 24. Salamba Sirsasana 25. Viparita Dandasana 26. Salamba Sarvangasana 27. Halasana 28. Setubandha Sarvangasana 29. Setubandha Sarvangasana 30. Viparita Karani 31. Savasana.

If you have been practicing yoga for at least one year then Ujjayi and Viloma 2 Pranayama are recommended.

In researching your question I was able to spend some time with *The Women's Book Of Health and Yoga* (2002, Linda Sparrow and Patricia Walden).

Chapter 11 is titled 'Easing into Menopause' and has insightful advice on symptoms such as hot flashes, heavy/irregular periods, erratic mood swings, insomnia, fuzzy thinking, fatigue, headaches, urinary incontinence, heart palpitations and anxiety. Patricia, a Senior Certified Iyengar Yoga teacher, has designed specific asana sequences for the different ailments. There is also wise and compassionate discussion on the mental, emotional and spiritual transition that is occurring. ☯

Victoria Yoga Centre Photo Archival Project

Over the years, many photographs have been taken of yoga classes and workshops. We would like to archive these on computer disks and in albums for library use only or for newsletter articles.

If you have any pictures you would like to donate or loan for scanning, please bring them to the centre, labeled attention Connie Barker.

The 19th Annual Retreat at the Salt Spring Centre

June 6-8, 2003

with Shirley Daventry French

Shirley is a senior student of B.K.S. Iyengar and has studied with him many times, most recently at the Ramamani Memorial Institute, Pune, India in February 2002.



Registration for the retreat will open for paid
Yoga Centre Members on March 21, 2003.
If there are any spaces left, Non Members may
register April 1, 2003.

C/o to Corrine Lowen
Victoria Yoga Centre
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria, BC, V8V 3K3

\$320 shared accommodation in house
\$280 to camp, \$250 for commuters

Non members

Add \$30. All prices include GST.

For more information contact :
Corrine Lowen or Ty Chandler at 386-(YOGA) 9642

REVIEW WORKSHOP

Chris Saudek Workshop

by Melissa Perekhudoff

Chris Saudek has been described as a devoted student of the Iyengars for more than twenty years. Living in Wisconsin, she has studied extensively at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute in Pune



and is certified as a Senior Intermediate Teacher of the Iyengar method. She is a master teacher in her own right, teaching from a systematic approach and linking the actions in one basic pose to the actions in more challenging poses.

Chris came to Victoria to give an Intermediate Workshop in November 2002. The major theme of the workshop was *Supta Padangusthasana*. Balancing the pelvis by drawing both leg bones into their hip sockets brought harmony to the body and spaciousness in the abdominal area. The theme of drawing the femur bones into the hip sockets was then carried on throughout the workshop beginning with Friday evening's practice. The sequence

consisted of: *Urdhwa Prasarita Padasana*; *Jathara Parivartanasana*; *Parivrtta Hasta Padangusthasana*; *Parsvottanasana*; *Parivrtta Trikonasana*; *Viparita Dandasana*, with a rolled blanket in the lumbar; *Bharadvajasana*, on a chair; *Sirsasana*; *Eka Pada Sirsasana*; *Parsva Sirsasana*; *Parivrtta Eka Pada Sirsasana*; *Halasana*; *Sarvangasana*; *Eka Pada Sarvangasana*; *Parsva Halasana*; and a final *Halasana* with the feet hip width apart and the hands overhead.

On the second day, practise of *Paripurna Navasana* incorporated the same learnings as *Supta Padangusthasana* where the leg action came from drawing the leg bones into the hip sockets. Likewise we learned a similar action with the arms to draw the arm bones back into the shoulder sockets; these two key actions permitted a longer stay in the pose. Further instruction was then given to lift the abdominal muscles up, not allowing them to puff out. This work in *Paripurna Navasana* was a highlight in the workshop for me as it clearly demonstrated that when the right actions are executed one can stay longer in the pose with less effort. As the arms and legs do their duty the body works in harmony to create grace in the pose.

Chris gave brief and specific instructions, always clear and precise. She used a technique of repeating





the same direction twice to give the students time to hear and absorb the information. Her steady, quick tempo and continuously repeated instructions kept us focused and alert. She conveyed the critical information boldly never raising her voice to get our attention but rather using direct eye contact to establish rapport and to keep the attention of the class.

I thoroughly enjoyed Chris's approach of teaching philosophy through the discoveries in the body. Few words were exchanged that did not apply directly to instruction of the asanas. Very little time was spent on philosophical talks. In fact the philosophy of the

teachings became clear through the emphasis on the practice.

Chris offered wise counsel by encouraging *svadhyaya* (self-study). She said, "Respect the past, stay grounded in the present and be hopeful of the future". Certainly any physical limitations in the pose kept us respectful of the past. Her persistent instruction kept us grounded in the present.

The peace and joy that permeated the room at the end of the workshop made us hopeful of the future. Thank you Chris! ☺

Congratulations!!

The following teachers achieved their Jr.
Intermediate III certification in
Toronto this January:

Linda Benn	Victoria
Leslie Hogya	Victoria
Ann Kilbertus	Victoria
Marlene Miller	Victoria
Pamela Stewart	Prince Edward Island



VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE'S Friday Night Gathering

Date: Friday, March 7

at the Victoria Yoga Centre
202-919 Fort Street

Asana Practice 6 pm

Potluck dinner 7pm

Bring food to share and
your own plate/cutlery

*Everyone is welcome to join us.
Bring a friend, partner or family member.
By donation. Free to members.*

REVIEW WORKSHOP

Heart of Yoga –Intermediate Workshop with Shirley Daventry French



"Shirley commented on many aspects of yoga, but one comment in particular struck me: *The body is the book of our lives.*"
"... The gift that Shirley gives is the ability to frame the self within, and beyond the asanas, to move the physical into the spiritual and to awaken the organic beauty of the library within."

-Ron Burnett (Vancouver)

As I return home after the weekend workshop with Shirley, I am again reminded how my mind and my thoughts can limit what I see as possibilities for myself- whether that be on the yoga mat or in all other areas of my life. I will hear Shirley's voice repeating, *Just do your very best, that is all the Divine asks of you!*"

-Terice Reimer-Clarke (Whitehorse)

"Shirley emphasized that to get the full benefits of yoga, people need to approach it with a seriousness of purpose and an openness to change. It is easy to get lazy about yoga: to do the postures that come easily and to avoid those that are more challenging. To say to yourself, 'Look, I'm just not destined to do full arm balance in the middle of the room.' Once you say that to yourself, you stop even trying to do it. It's a lot easier to close a door than to leave it ajar, waiting for the final push that will bring enlightenment."

"...The challenge to keep all doors open was, for me, at the heart of this workshop and at the very heart of yoga."

-Sara Beam (Victoria)





"There was a sense of awe and wonder in the air as we gathered close around Shirley, like young children around their teacher reading a favourite story." "... we will always gather around our yoga teachers seeking illumination. Perhaps it is this awe and wonder – of the wisdom shared, of the knowledge passed on, of our own bodies and the possibilities within, which lie at the heart of yoga."

-Susan Robinson (Victoria)



"A great teacher, by example, expands our ideas of the possible in human experience... I did my first handstand and my first backbend... I don't have to wait to see if fear has 'gone away' before I'm allowed to progress."

-Donja Blokker Dalquist (Victoria)

"... the main lesson for me from this weekend is that yoga practice involves balance: balance between left and right, top and bottom, front and back, balance between mind and body, strength and flexibility."

-Gary Wong (Victoria)



"In her classes I feel a mixture of kindness and steely toughness in her challenges. She offers a blend of compassion with unrelenting insistence and inspiration as she drives us past self imposed limits." "...She quoted a philosopher, saying that life is a walk on the razor's edge, in which we keep falling off and that the only response is to get up and go again. After quoting this Shirley said, *and that is why there is another breath*. These few words took me to the Heart of Yoga."

-Sheri Berkowitz (Salt Spring Island)



"To be in touch with our path of evolution, our dharma, we have to practice svadhyaya, self-study, one of the niyamas. To practice this we have to learn and give ourselves opportunities to study ourselves. Asana and Pranayama are the basic foundation practices for this, but then we have to apply these realizations to our external life."
~ Felicity

FELICITY GREEN

in Victoria

Iyengar Yoga Workshop

April 11-13, 2003

Friday 6:00 - 8:00pm

Saturday 11:00 - 2:00pm, 3:00 - 5:00pm

Sunday 12:00 - 3:00pm

Participants must be able to hold headstand and shoulderstand for 5 minutes, using appropriate props.

Felicity is a regular visitor to Victoria. She has dedicated herself to yoga for over 30 years and holds an Advanced Iyengar Yoga Teaching Certificate from Mr. Iyengar. She has produced "Basic Yoga", an instructional video as well as asana and pranayama audio practice tapes. Felicity's teaching style is challenging and nurturing. She is well respected for her knowledge of yoga therapeutics as well as the psychological and spiritual aspects of yoga. Her home base is nearby on Lopez Island, near Bellingham, WA.

Fees:

Members: \$175 (plus GST \$187.25)

Non-members: \$200 (plus GST \$214.00)

Registration:

Opens for Yoga Centre members: February 3, 2003

Non members: February 24, 2003

Refunds minus 10% if your space can be filled.

Please make cheques/credit cards for the full amount payable in Canadian funds to the Victoria Yoga Centre.

Mail to: Linda Benn c/o Victoria Yoga Centre, 202 - 919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8V 3K3

Enquiries to:

Victoria Yoga Centre (250) 386-YOGA (9642) or

Linda Benn (250) 478-0757, lbenn@islandnet.com

Vision 2008

by Greg Sly

"One of my wishes for the Yoga Centre's future is that it will continue to be a community which fosters divine friendship such as I have experienced."

– Shirley Daventry French

Tapas describes the collective ardor and zeal that was the tangible result of the Victoria Yoga Centre Society's recent "Strategic Planning Session". Following the yoga centre's AGM, the workshop entitled, "Where Are We At? Where Are We Going?" took place on Jan. 25 and 26. Excitement generated during the first wave of two years ago was re-created as our shared vision was explored and revealed, but with the added confidence from the successful opening and operation of our new Center at 919 Fort Street.

In the opening session of the workshop we re-constructed our "Wall of Wonder", a postered time-line of the evolution of the VYCS and its members, and took stock of the achievements of the past two years. Our "Guiding Principles" from the "first wave" surrounded us in mini wall posters, while our Mission Statement, "To encourage the physical, mental and spiritual growth of its members and other interested members of the society at large, by the study and discipline of yoga," was writ large and vibrant.

Nathen Bernshaw and Corrine Lowen again facilitated the process of identifying goals, anticipating obstacles

and taking concrete actions that has been so successful for us. From our collective brainstorming and wish list for the future, some themes emerged and evolved into the following headings:

- Practice Before Business
- Appropriate Merchandising
- Expanded Facility
- Governance
- Foundation
- Community Programming
- Accreditation and Professional Development
- Samadhi Retreat Centre
- Shining Our Light (PR)
- Program Development

By the time this newsletter reaches you, we will have had another session to create the action groups required to begin the work towards Vision 2008. We may anticipate that whatever we decide to do, it's going to happen! ☺

Upcoming Assessment Dates:

2003

Jun. 20-22	Introductory 1 & 2	Edmonton
Oct. 17-19	Introductory 1 & 2	Winnipeg
Nov. 21-23	Junior Intermediate 1	Ottawa

Please note:

The Introductory 1 & 2 Assessments are held annually the third weekend of June and the third weekend of October.

N
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Newly opened Iyengar Yoga Centre in Mumbai, India is accepting students visiting from other countries.

Iyengar Yogashraya
126 Senapati Bapat Marg
Lower Parel
Mumbai 400 013
Phone: 2494 8416

Student Intensive

with Robin Cantor & Ty Chandler

Monday, August 25 Friday, August 29, 2003

Time: 9 am -12 pm

Robin and Ty are certified Iyengar Yoga Teachers
Level 2 experience required
See next issue for details

The Victoria Yoga Centre Society held its AGM on Jan. 24, 2003. The following reports were submitted. Our next issue will list new committees and "who does what" in the VYCS.

President's Report

Submitted by Leslie Hogya

2002 was a year of growth, growing pains, consolidation, expansion, a bit of everything all at once. A year ago we had just finished running our first full session in our new space. We were still unsure if we would make enough money to pay the rent and teachers' salaries. We were working on a cement floor. Now one year later in 2003, classes and workshops fill up and props for sale seem to fly out the door. Our office is busy and crowded with people trying to get their work done in a hallway, with a computer system not meant for the volume of work we have.

Last year we had one paid employee, Britta Poisson, who worked 16 hours per week plus volunteered for many more. To help her we had a whole fleet of volunteers that worked at the front desk, thank you to you all! Finally it was evident there was just more work than volunteers could do. Recently we hired new staff, including a new manager for the centre, Corrine Lowen. We now have seven people working in various positions all on a part time basis.

We are also now able to offer bursaries for classes, have increased pay for teachers, and are negotiating with our landlord to rent more studio space on the ground floor.

Yet, everywhere in the city more yoga centres pop up, like mushrooms in the rain. How do people find us? Through our web site, through ads and public service announcements, but mostly through you, through your friends, and other students at the centre who come back. The reason they come back is because of the quality of the program. The inspiration for all of that comes from B.K.S. Iyengar and the dedication to the

art of yoga he ignites in all of us with his own dedication. Our senior teacher, founder and local inspiration is Shirley Daventry French. Her trips to Pune, her constant practice, her demand from us that we stay up in *Sirsasana* or arm balance longer. The quality of the teachers under her guidance has given us the foundation from which we work. The teachers and teachings are at the heart of the centre.

Through our programs, our newsletter and all we do, we have built a community, and that feeling of community is what sets us apart from many other centres. Besides the teachers, the centre depends on the board to keep things working. I want to thank all the board members for the hours they spent in meetings and the extra jobs they all do, from dusting prop shelves to painting walls to deciding on who will get scholarships.

Thank you to Constance Barker, Ted Mather, Doug Hart, Amanda Mills, Linda Benn, Martha Chick our Secretary, Corrine Lowen and Rosemary Barritt, our Vice Presidents and Drew Yallop our Treasurer, all of whom have worked hard and yet agreed to serve on the board again- perhaps in new capacities.

I want to make special thank yous to Debra Johnson who served on the board this year and helped coordinate publicity, Wies Pukesh head of the program committee, and Britta Poisson who volunteers in so many ways around the centre. They are stepping off the board.

Thank you all very, very much for being there for us.

A year ago I announced that this would be my last year as President. And so it is, with this AGM, my official duties end. I will continue to serve on the board as "Past President" and I will also help oversee daily operations of the yoga centre.

When we opened our doors over a year ago, I had no idea I was about to launch myself into the role of small business operator dealing with vendors, with students, with budgets, with flickering lights, broken telephones, landlord relations etc.

I appreciate all of you on the board for all you have done. This job has been a highlight. We worked hard, we laughed a lot, we toasted birthdays, we practised yoga together. We've been a great team. Thank you. ☺

Membership Report

Submitted by Constance K. Barker

Victoria Yoga Centre memberships continue to be vital to the outreach and growth of our thriving community.

Memberships support our newsletter, scholarships, our teachers, workshops, Friday Night Gatherings and much more.

A subscription offers many benefits as well. A membership offers pre-registration, discounts and scholarships to workshops, it provides library and video borrowing privileges, free video nights, and it affords space to practice at designated times.

Some of our national and international members report on how much they value receiving our newsletter which they say is filled with inciteful and educational articles. As well, they appreciate the information on upcoming workshops which a few will travel long distances to attend.

Mr. Iyengar recently wrote to the centre thanking us for the ones we mail to him, Geeta and Prashant.

The role of the Coordinator of Memberships has evolved over the past year. Data entry is now done, most efficiently, by a paid staff member, Karin Holtkamp. She ensures that the membership list is kept up-to-date and accurate, not only for the benefit of local members, but also for the mail-out labels for the newsletter.

Memberships are \$30.00 and expire December 31 of each year. When a membership comes in after November 1, it is credited towards the following year. In the fall, reminders are mailed out in the newsletters and are available at the front desk for local members.

At the end of 2002 there were 396 members from places including India, Thailand, China, Hong Kong, England, France, Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Canada. This compares to 360 members at the end of 2001. In Victoria, there are 175 members this year, compared to 166 members the previous year. Students are encouraged to join the Victoria Yoga Centre to enjoy the many benefits and to be a part of a growing community. ☺

Teachers' Group Report

Submitted by Linda Benn

This has been a successful and challenging year for the members of our teachers' group. I was surprised to add up our classes and find that we have enough qualified teachers to offer 50 classes per week at the Centre.

Currently our group has 39 members, mainly from greater Victoria but also from the Yukon, Queen Charlotte City, Prince George, Kelowna, Lasqueti Is. etc. A few members are not actively teaching right now (such as Maggi Feehan who had a baby this fall) but they all maintain interest in the activities of the group.

We welcome Doug Hart, Britta Poisson, Karyn Woodland, Terice Reimer Clarke (Whitehorse) and as of this month, Linda Kusleika (Smithers) to the teacher training program. Teacher training is overseen by the Teacher Training Committee comprised of Shirley Daventry French, Marlene Miller, Leslie Hogle, Linda Benn and Ann Kilbertus.

This summer we offered three fully registered Intensives for teacher training: July for Introductory Level, August for Junior Intermediate level and a Student Intensive. We are constantly being asked about more teacher training opportunities.

This year with the help of Rosemary we changed and clarified our teachers' insurance policy. Only those who maintain close ties with us are eligible for the insurance.

During the year we have had monthly meetings and practices focussing on the syllabus of asanas, anatomy, peer teaching, sequencing, inversions, forward extensions, insights from India shared by Leslie, and a discussion of common medical problems that occur in classes by Dr. Derek French. We have had some wonderful discussions about philosophical definitions of Sanskrit words, the Bhagavad Gita, death, The Tree of Yoga, and Yoga History.

Robin Cantor, Wies Pukesh, Shirley Daventry French, and Leslie Hogya went to study at the institute in Pune. The Yoga Centre offered scholarship support and in turn these teachers enrich the practice of Iyengar Yoga in the Centre.

Several teachers have successfully prepared for assessment with the national association: Introductory - Ty Chandler, James Currie-Johnson, Gwynneth Powell, Jo Anna Hope, Chris Lea, and Kelly Murphy (Nanaimo). Jr. Intermediate 1- Yvonne Kipp. It is a great challenge to do an assessment. I especially admire those candidates that don't succeed the first time but renew their commitment and effort and apply again. Recently, Ann Kilbertus, Marlene Miller, Leslie Hogya and Linda Benn received their Junior Intermediate Level III certificates. They are all grateful for the support and guidance given to them by the yoga community and in particular, Shirley Daventry French.

I know that the Yoga Centre teachers would like me on their behalf to express gratitude for the increases in teachers' fees and the generous bonus that we received at the end of the fiscal year. We will try to be better in submitting our invoices accurately and on time in the coming year.

We also appreciate the friendly, competent staff and volunteers that make the students feel so welcome at the centre. We are grateful to those whose constant vigilance improves the way we operate, making sure that class lists are made, props are available, wall ropes are installed, floors are clean, bills are paid etc. Even though Leslie is one of the teachers, I must

particularly thank her for overseeing the entire operation of the Yoga Centre, not only being able to see the large picture but also the small details that need to be constantly dealt with. ☺

Scholarship Report

Submitted by Amanda Mills

November 1, 2001 - October 31, 2002

Chris Saudek

Nov. 2001	\$ 100	Britta Poisson
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Salt Spring Retreat

June 7 - 9	\$ 100	Amanda Grant
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	\$ 150	Sue Riddell
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	\$ 150	Jim Riddell
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	\$ 275	President's Fee:
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	\$ 135	Leslie Hogya
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	\$ 135	Drew Yallop
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July Intensive

July 15 - 20	\$ 300	Wies Pukesh
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	\$ 200	Britta Poisson
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	\$ 200	Christine Dimofski
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Junior Intermediate Intensive

Aug. 19 - 23	\$ 200	Lauren Cox
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	\$ 200	Marlene Miller
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	\$ 200	not awarded
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Student Intensive

Aug. 26 - 30	\$ 100	Jeannette Merryfield
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	\$ 100	Connie Barker
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Ramanand

Sept. 27 - 20	\$ 100	no application
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Budgeted Total for fiscal year	\$ 2,375
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Total awarded for fiscal year	\$ 2,075
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Note: Previous fiscal year	\$ 2,355
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B.K.S. Iyengar Scholarship Fund

Funds raised at December 2001 workshop \$ 1,548.58

\$ 500	Wies Pukesh
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\$ 500	Marlene Miller ☺
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Newsletter Report

Submitted by Gwynneth Powell

The Newsletter Committee has undergone many changes since last year. We now consist of 9 members. Shirley Daventry French continues to serve as Protocol Advisor as Lauren Cox is our Artistic Contributor/Advisor.

We have 3 rotating editors: Gwynneth Powell, Greg Sly and Melissa Worth. Taimi Mulder and Jane Munro continue to take on various assignments/tasks.

Susan Robinson is our newest addition and has taken on the job of Proofing Editor. Advertising is in the process of being passed on from Nancy Searing (T.B.A.).

The committee is functioning more efficiently with the purchases of a laptop computer and a digital camera.

Greg Sly is considering taking over the position of Board Liaison for the Newsletter Committee. ☺

Class Bursary Policy

The Victoria Yoga Centre Society offers class bursaries on a term by term basis to students who could not otherwise come to classes.

Please see the front desk for applications or more information.

YOGA VIDEO NIGHT – At the Victoria Yoga Centre

Friday, April 4.....6:45 - 8:15pm

Bring your own popcorn and a friend. Be inspired!

Finance Report

Submitted by Drew Yallop

For year ending October 31, 2002

Assets

Current Assets

Total Chequing/Savings	93,653
Total Accounts Receivable	(7,132)
Total Other Current Assets	28,216
Total Current Assets	114,737
Total Fixed Assets	55,466
Total Assets	170,202

Liabilities & Equity

Liabilities

Total Accounts Payable	(4,776)
Total Credit Cards	(743)
Total Other Current Liabilities	3,503
Total Current Liabilities	(2,016)
Total Liabilities	(2,016)
Total Equity	172,218
Total Liabilities & Equities	170,202 ☺

Donors and Gifts Thank you!

The following people have generously donated to the Victoria Yoga Centre:

Tadasana (Up to \$200)

Palkhivala family

Sheila Howard

Sirsasana (\$200 +)

James Currie Johnson

Thank You:

Paul Sobejko for building the rope wall in the small studio.

The Times Colonist for the great picture of us up on the ropes.



The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

Program of Classes in the Iyengar Approach to Yoga

Term 4: March 3 – April 19, 2003

April 22 - April 27 possible special classes

Term 5 will begin April 28. Note: more classes may be added later in March in a third studio. Check web site, or call office.

Some classes will be adjusted due to special workshops.

Level 1

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	6:30 – 7:30am	Corrine Lowen
Mon.	12:00 – 1:30pm	Lauren Cox
Mon.	3:45 – 5:15pm	Jo Anna Hope
Mon.	7:30 – 9:00pm	Ann Kilbertus (full)
Tues.	10:00 – 11:30am	Leslie Hoga
Tues.	12:00 – 1:00pm	Jeannette Merryfield
Tues.	5:00 – 6:30pm	Melissa Worth
Tues.	7:00 – 8:30pm	Ty Chandler, Corrine Lowen
Wed.	6:30 – 7:30am	Corrine Lowen
Wed.	4:30 – 6:00pm	Nancy Searing (gentle)
Wed.	6:15 – 7:45pm	Ty Chandler (full)
Wed.	7:45 – 9:15pm	Gwynneth Powell
Thurs.	8:30 – 10:00am	Linda Benn
Thurs.	4:30 – 6:00pm	Leslie Hoga
Thurs.	6:00 – 7:30pm	Wendy Boyer
Fri.	10:30 – 12:00pm	Linda Benn
Fri.	5:00 – 6:30pm	Gwynneth Powell
Sat.	9:00 – 10:30am	Corrine Lowen
Sun.	10:30 – 12:00pm	Ty Chandler
Sun.	4:30 – 6:00pm	Chris Dimofski

Level 1/2

Day	Time	Instructor
Wed.	9:00 – 10:30am	Ty Chandler
Wed.	7:30 – 9:00pm	Melissa Worth

Level 2

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	7:30 – 9:00pm	James Currie-Johnson
Tues.	10:00 – 11:30am	Robin Cantor
Tues.	6:30 – 8:00pm	Melissa Worth
Wed.	6:00 – 7:30pm	Gwynneth Powell
Fri.	7:00 – 8:00am	Chris Dimofski
Fri.	9:00 – 10:30am	Linda Benn
Sat.	9:00 – 11:00am	Marlene Miller
Sun.	9:00 – 10:30am	Ty Chandler
Sun.	3:00 – 4:30pm	Chris Dimofski

Level 2/3

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	10:00 – 12:00pm	Lauren Cox
Tues.	5:30 – 7:00pm	Leslie Hoga

Level 3

Day	Time	Instructor
Thurs.	10:00 – 12:00pm	Shirley Daventry French, Linda Benn
Thurs.	6:00 – 8:00pm	Ann Kilbertus, Leslie Hoga

Level 4

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	5:15 – 7:15pm	Shirley D. French

Drop-Ins

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	6:30 – 7:30am	Corrine Lowen
Tues.	12:00 – 1:00pm	Jeannette Merryfield
Wed.	12:00 – 1:00pm	Chris Dimofski
Thurs.	6:30 – 7:30am	Corrine Lowen
Thurs.	12:00 – 1:00pm	Lauren Cox
Fri.	7:00 – 8:00am	Chris Dimofski
Fri.	12:00 – 1:00pm	Ty Chandler

Pranayama April 3-24

Level 3 or 4 – teacher's permission required

Thurs.	7:00 – 8:00am	Shirley D. French
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The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE #202, 919 Fort St. 386-YOGA (9642)

Term 4: March 3 – April 19, 2003

Introduction To Pranayama

Wed. 7:00 – 8:00am Ann Kilbertus
Level 2 required. March 19, 26, April 2, 9

Men's Yoga

Thurs. 7:30 – 9:00pm Greg Sly

Focus on Women

Fri. 9:30 – 11:00am Chris Dimofski

Pre Natal Yoga

Tues. 1:30 – 2:45pm Robin Cantor

55 & Better

Wed. 10:30 – 12:00pm Leslie Hogya

Special Needs

Wed. 4:30 – 6:00pm Shirley D. French,
Ann Kilbertus,
Leslie Hogya
Thurs. 1:00 – 2:30pm Leslie Hogya,
Linda Benn

Back Care

Mon. 4:00 – 5:15pm Linda Benn

Gentle

Wed. 4:30 – 6:00pm Nancy Searing

Family Yoga

Wed. 3:30 – 4:30pm Lauren Cox

Ty's Yoga Kids (Ages 10-14)

Fri. 4:00 – 5:00pm Ty Chandler

High School Yoga (Ages 14+)

Fri. 3:30 – 4:45pm Gwynneth Powell

Early Morning

Mon. 6:30 – 7:30am Corrine Lowen
Thurs. 6:30 – 7:30am Corrine Lowen
Fri. 7:00 – 8:00am Chris Dimofski

The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers help with many things at the Victoria Yoga Centre. This column introduces some of the people who give a great deal to our community.

Karma Yoga (it's not about past lives)

by Jane Munro



Jim Knox, Yoga Centre volunteer

Nineteen volunteers worked on the front desk of the Victoria Yoga Centre in 2002. Each went through a training process then spent time answering the phone, meeting people who walked through the door, registering students for classes, selling props and books, taking payments, and finding answers to questions. Volunteers kept the desk open around classes in the evenings and on weekends. Their careful listening and attentive service greeted newcomers and long-time members with respect and warmth.

The following people gave what time they could: Connie Barker, Rosemary Barritt, Ty Chandler, Martha Chick, Karin Dayton, Chris Dimofski, Jane Fothergil, Amanda Grant, Doug Hart, Karin Holtkamp, Leslie Hogya, Jim Knox, Erin MacKay, Orleen MacLulich, Britta Poisson, Gwynneth Powell, Jim Riddell, Sue Riddell, Carolyn Taylor-Sly.

This list includes students at every level as well as several teachers. Some put in a few hours; others covered many shifts. Each helped the Victoria Yoga Centre survive its first year. Now the Centre is able to hire staff for the front desk.

One regular, Erin MacKay, enjoyed meeting “a whole whack of different people,” especially when there was a free class. Some difficult-to-answer questions led her to search for a deeper understanding of yoga. She found volunteering on the desk “very cool—it opens your mind.”

Karin Holtkamp also liked interacting with people of all ages, levels of yoga experience, ways of life—students, housewives, police officers, managers. Volunteering provided a glimpse of “the inner workings of the Victoria Yoga Centre.” What’s more, it was a chance to put the theory of Karma Yoga into practice. “You’re right out front—out there—putting it to the test.” She defines Karma Yoga as “selfless service—not wondering about the end results.”

Rosemary Barritt, coordinator of the volunteers last year, elaborates. Karma Yoga has “no on and off switch,” but volunteering may be a choice for certain times or particular reasons. “If asana is a route to inner self, then getting to the place of Karma Yoga is a direction for your whole life.”

Shirley Daventry French tells how Swami Radha distinguished between favours extended to her as a spiritual teacher, and those offered her as a private woman. When she stayed in their house filled with children, Shirley and her husband gave her their bedroom and slept in the yoga room. Swami Radha was

appreciative of this gesture which allowed her some privacy, comfort and space. However, her thanks were more effusive if she were on a social visit than if she were visiting in her capacity



Yoga Centre volunteer Amanda Grant

as Swami Radha, the spiritual teacher. In this latter instance, she explained, there was really no need for thanks because the gift would contribute to the evolution of their souls.

So, thanks from the Victoria Yoga Centre, and may these nineteen souls evolve happily! ☯



Radha Yoga Centre

Yasodhara Ashram

Yasodhara Ashram was established by Swami Radha in 1963, at the request of her guru, Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh, India. Beginning with a small group of people, a shoestring budget and an old farmstead, Yasodhara has grown to be the spiritual centre of a fluid and widespread community of yoga practitioners which encompasses yoga groups and centres in Canada, the United States, Europe and Australia.

An invitation from the Ashram:

This year is the Ashram's 40th anniversary and we've designated the entire year as a time of pilgrimage.

"Pilgrimage" means journey to a sacred place. Come anytime.

You are invited to attend a course or a special festival, or Karma Yoga or a retreat. Journey with your family

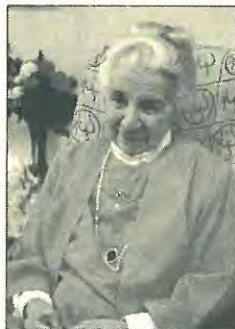
or a group, or find your way on your own.

At the Ashram you will connect with others in a community of Light. Here you can absorb the atmosphere of 40 years of spiritual practice and discover the deeper meaning of yoga.

We welcome you to Yasodhara Ashram - the first ashram established in Canada, a place inspired by a vision and built on a foundation of integrity and selfless service. Join us in celebrating the power that has sustained this place for 40 years.

Make your pilgrimage to the Temple of Divine Light.
Make your pilgrimage to the Light within.

(from the 2003 Yasodhara Ashram Program Calendar)
www.yasodhara.org



Swami Radha

Dream Yoga Workshops

We will be offering Dream Yoga Workshops
on two Sunday afternoons:

March 16 & June 8

Learn to understand your unique symbolic dream language and
gain independence through interpreting your own dreams.

Come to any session, no previous experience necessary.

Sliding scale \$20 - \$30

Please call to register.

YOGA CALENDAR

MARCH 2003

- 1 Divine Light Workshop
with Radha House
- 7 Friday Night Gathering on Karma Yoga
- 21-23 Marie-Andree Morin Workshop
- 29 Teacher's Meeting

JUNE 2003

- 6-8 Saltspring Retreat
- 20-23 Introductory Level I and II Assessment
in Edmonton
- 21 Surya Namaskar with Ty Chandler
- 28 Teacher's Meeting

APRIL 2003

- 4 Friday Night Video
- 5 Menopause Workshop
with Marlene Miller
- 11-13 Felicity Green Workshop
- 25 Inspirations from India II
with Robin Cantor
- 26 Teacher's Meeting

JULY 2003

- 2-7 Introductory Teacher's Intensive

MAY 2003

- 2-4 Faeq Biria Workshop
- 9 Friday Night Gathering
- 24 Teacher's Meeting
- 30-31 CIYTA AGM in Winnipeg

AUGUST 2003

- 18-22 Intermediate Teacher's Intensive
- 25-29 Student Intensive

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION FORM:

Please complete this form and send it with your cheque or money order to the Victoria Yoga Centre Society,
c/o Constance Barker, 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3

Membership/Subscription fee is \$30 and renewable each January

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Postal Code: _____ Country: _____ Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

☐ Do not mail me my newsletter during sessions, I'll pick one up at my class.

☐ Receipt Required.

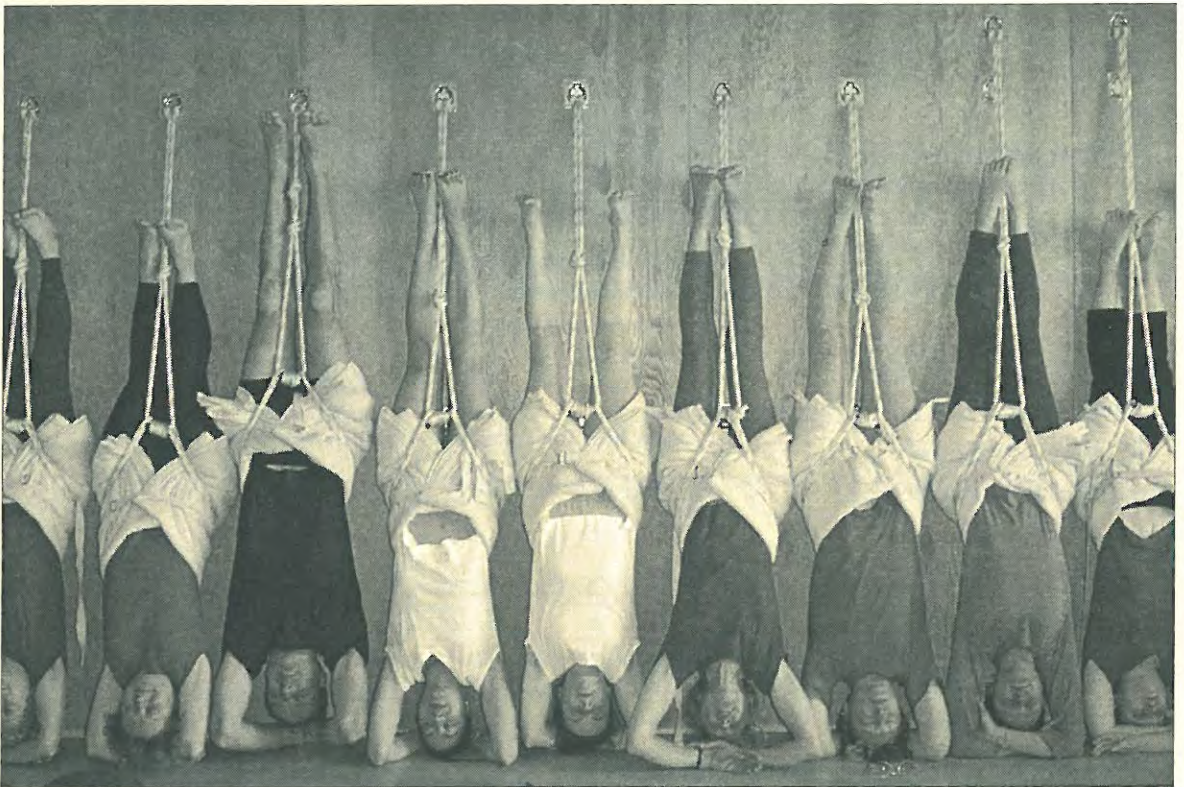
VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

NEWSLETTER

May/June 2003



Subscribe Now



"More than your mind and body, yoga concerns your very Self."

-Shirley Daventry French

Back by
Popular
Demand!

August 25-29

Monday to Friday

9am to noon

"Practice (abhyasa) is
the art of learning that
which has to be learned
through the cultivation
of disciplined action"

"Practice is a generative
force of transformation
or progress in yoga"

B.K.S. Iyengar

Student Summer Intensive!

with Ty Chandler and Robin Cantor



Ty and Robin are certified Iyengar teachers who bring enthusiasm, dedication and humor to this five day intensive. There will be two hours of asana (including yoga korunta and a timed practice) a day, introduction to pranayama, and philosophical and spiritual discussion.

A lunch at the Spice Jammer will be provided.

Learn how to establish and deepen your daily practice.

Level 2 Iyengar experience is required for this workshop.

Fees:

\$210.00 for Victoria Yoga Centre members

\$240.00 for non-members

Credit card or cheque payable in Canadian
funds to: The Victoria Yoga Centre

Call or mail:

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

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The Society Newsletter is published regularly, providing current information on events concerning yoga in the Victoria area and the Yasodhara Ashram. Published by the VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY.

Anyone wishing to contribute articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions may contact the

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Victoria BC V8V 3K3

For more information on Victoria Yoga Centre activities and events, please call 386-YOGA (9642) or visit our website: www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca

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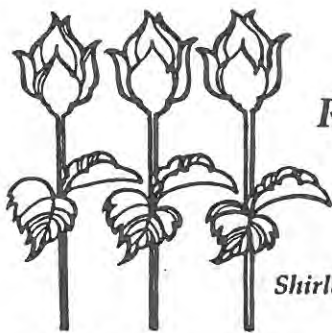
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Note: The editor/newsletter committee hold the right to edit all articles at their discretion. It should also be noted that not all articles submitted are printed in the newsletter due to space and other considerations.



Reflections

by
Shirley Daventry French

Mistaking the transient for the permanent, the impure for the pure, pain for pleasure, and that which is not the self for the self: this is called lack of spiritual knowledge, avidya.

B.K.S. Iyengar, *Light on Patanjali's Yoga Sutras: II-5*



It is a time of turmoil: throughout the world, across the nation, locally and personally. Earlier this year I spent a month away with my husband and twelve year old granddaughter, fulfilling a promise made when she was three years old to take her to Asia to ride an elephant. That we did – twice, along with much else. It was a wonderful

time, culminating in her participation in a yoga workshop I gave in Hong Kong on our way back to Canada.

During the three weeks we spent in Thailand, she had asked frequently to practise yoga with me. However, this presented some difficulties, because daytime temperatures went as high as 40 degrees, so I wanted to practise in the relative cool of early morning. This was not a problem for me as I am used to rising early. My granddaughter, on the other hand, on the verge of becoming a teenager, sleeps late given half a chance. Generally, by the time she got up I had finished my practice and was ready for breakfast!

Throughout the trip she asked many questions about

yoga, so when we were in Hong Kong it was not surprising she was interested in seeing the studio where I was going to teach, but she wanted more. She wanted to take the class. I was reluctant at first because I did not want her presence to distract me or the other students. We were staying with friends, Michael and Linda Shevloff, and it was Linda who invited me to teach in her studio. On the first night of the workshop Michael and Derek were going to a jazz concert, so Adriana would have to come with Linda and me to the studio. "Can I take the class", she pleaded, "Can I? Can I?"

I told her to bring her shorts but also to bring a book so that if she became bored or restless she could go in a corner and read. I also told her to put her mat close to Linda's so she could follow her if she did not understand my directions, and that she must promise to do everything I told her to. Adriana is very athletic, takes dance classes and is exposed to yoga at home because my daughter, her mother, is a keen yoga student. I did not think she would come to any harm provided she maintained her concentration, which she did – for two hours that night and three in another class which she was eager to attend. I was impressed.

After the first class, when we had returned home and were getting ready for bed, she came into my bedroom and commented on a short talk I had given at the beginning of class on yoga as spiritual practice. She had been surprised to hear me use the word 'spiritual' and had a lot of questions about this.

Students in many of the fitness oriented yoga classes these days would be surprised to hear yoga described as spiritual practice, and this is very sad. At a workshop I gave in Saskatchewan last weekend, there were many teachers from across the Prairies and some of them talked to me about their concern over this aspect being overlooked. I spoke to them in the same way as Guruji and Geetaji have talked to me about the responsibility to first bring spiritual values into my own life and then, when I teach, maintain the integrity of the teachings by presenting them to my students in the same way. It has to be in a way where we feel comfortable, and this will only happen when our own practice is geared to this end.

My time in Hong Kong was a combination of vacation and work, and a good transition between the complete relaxation of Thailand and all the ramifications of our return home to what we mistakenly call 'reality'. The timing of our trip was impeccable. As we prepared to depart we were concerned about the threat of war with Iraq, particularly because we were traveling with our granddaughter. We were also concerned over the premature birth in Victoria of another granddaughter, but she had stabilised and was doing well so we felt comfortable in leaving. Our trip was completed and we were safely back home before the war started and before the emergence of the threat of SARS. As if this were not enough to worry about, when I picked up my mail and email I was plunged into controversies on the Iyengar Yoga scene internationally, nationally and locally.

Oh to be back on the southern beaches or northern hills of Thailand! Is it still peaceful, or has the worldwide disturbance infused life there? With so many travellers between Hong Kong and Bangkok, I am sure that they are not immune from the spread of SARS. In any case, I can't go back. Instead of wasting time on that fantasy, my energy is better employed dealing with what I have to address here. Towards this end, I must be grateful for the opportunities I have had rather than greedy for more. My break gave me a new perspective on many ongoing problems along with renewed enthusiasm for the life I have chosen for myself and the challenges I have embraced. As a result of the time away, when I turned my attention to the issues at hand I was better able to discern how to proceed, set priorities and get on with them.

When my mother was still alive and in her eighties, she would often say that she was glad that she was not young in "this awful world" which she contrasted unfavourably with the world in which she had lived most of her life. I would marvel at this, because this was a woman who was born during the Boer War, came of age in the First World War in which her brothers and my father whom she had just met all fought at the front. One brother was killed, and two gassed in France. My father, serving in Palestine, had some close calls but came through unscathed physically. After the war they married and had children just as the world

economy collapsed and gave rise to the Great Depression. They were rescued from this only by the Second World War during which her husband was once again on active service this time along with her son. For good measure, in this war she was bombed along with her elderly mother and young daughter for the best part of six years!

When has it ever been other than "an awful world"? I often wonder about the human race with its propensity towards cruelty, and reading history does nothing to reassure me unless I look beyond the external to the indomitable human spirit which arises in the midst of the most terrible diversity. Where does this come from? How can I foster that in myself? For interesting reading on this topic I recommend Victor Frankl's book *Man's Search for Meaning*. Swami Vivekananda also has interesting things to say about this in his discourse on *Raja Yoga*. He asks the question: "Why should we be unselfish? Where is the necessity, the force, the power, that compels me to be unselfish?" He posits that from a purely rational position there is no reason for this. We don't act in unselfish ways because people tell us that we should. Why would anyone ever lay down their life for another? It is beyond reason, and this is where the practice of yoga takes us, towards knowledge of a higher state of existence.

Each generation comes of age to face its own struggle. The world, it seems, is not meant to be a comfortable place. It is always in turmoil, and to think otherwise is an illusion. All that has changed lately is that current world events have brought its instability into sharp focus, particularly in North America. Life here on earth is transient. To pretend otherwise is a delusion, one which many people attempt to perpetuate until the end of their lives. As the writer William Saroyan said on his deathbed: "Everybody has got to die, but I always believed an exception would be made in my case". If I needed a reminder of my mortality, it came from my granddaughter on our trip as we spoke about her future including her hope that Derek and I would be around when she gets married and has babies. A quick mathematical calculation did not come up with very favourable odds!

In sutra II-3, Patanjali cites five *klesas* or afflictions

which disturb the equilibrium of consciousness. One of them is *abhinivesah* or clinging to life. The others are *avidya* (ignorance), *asmita* (egoism), *raga* (attraction) and *dvesa* (repulsion). *Avidya* or ignorance, so he says, is the source of all the others.

Years ago I saw a film, made by the BBC, where the South African author Laurens Van der Post was talking to Carl Jung towards the end of Jung's life. In fact he died a few weeks after this film was made. There is a moment imprinted on my memory where Van der Post asks Jung if he believes in God. Jung pauses before answering and a beatific smile transforms his face as he looks up, shaking his head gently from side to side, and says: "No! No! I don't believe". After another pause, he looks up and says, "*I know*." At that moment I knew he knew, and hoped that by the time I reached the end of my life I would be able to say that with the same conviction as Jung.

It is no accident that the pose which ends our asana practice is called *savasana*, corpse pose. Unless we come to terms with our mortality, we cannot live a full life. How many people when sick unto death are still talking about "when I get better". How many people faced with a life threatening illness are so busy reassuring themselves that they are going to beat it that they are unable to focus on the current threat and how to approach that. Swami Radha used to say that when someone suffering from a critical illness came to her for spiritual counseling, she asked them to review their life and consider why it should be spared and what changes

they would be prepared to make if it were. At the same time they must face the possibility of their death, perhaps sooner rather than later. When sick or in any crisis, first we have to be fully in the present moment. This is what crises teach us - immediacy.

On one of my trips to Pune I was caught in the middle of a mass protest when the mob became violent and began throwing rocks, wrecking cars and everything else in their path. Afterwards many people said "you must have been scared", but I wasn't. I was too busy deciding what to do and then doing it. If I told them this, they would then say: "I expect you felt it afterwards", meaning my fear. But that was not true either. Afterwards what I felt was pleased at my presence of mind, ability to act sensibly and quickly.



This is far from unique. Many people have spoken to me about how they are able to cope with the most dreadful situations when their mind stays in the present. There are always options, albeit somewhat limited at times.

One of the primary choices we have to make is to live life as a warrior, not courting danger but not hiding

from it either; or as a wimp, trying to play it safe which is never successful. Clinging to life only devalues it: eventually our grip is prised loose.

Sometimes in the midst of a crisis, it is possible to see incidents or signs pointing towards this crisis which we have ignored. If our ignorance prevented us from foresight, at least with hindsight we can reflect on what happened and learn – ignorant no longer.

The primary purpose of the practice of yoga is to remove our ignorance. It is from ignorance that we identify with our body and its appearance, our mind and its achievements, our job, our status in society, our roles in the family and all the external paraphernalia we acquire in life on earth. All of this is fleeting. While we need our body to journey through this life, it is not who we really are. Neither is the mind. We are just confused about that. In the words of a vedic prayer, we confuse the unreal for the real, darkness for light and death for immortality. Until this transformation is complete, while even a vestige of ignorance remains, we need to keep practising. For this practice we require the body and the mind. When we practise in a spirit of devotion, with sincerity and humility, the body and mind become spiritual tools. For this purpose they are invaluable and, like all tools, must be treated with care and respect so that they last as long as we have need of them. In this regard we have to hone our skills, requiring more practice.

According to Patanjali, this false identification lies at the heart of all pain and sorrow. Ignorance may exist in us in an attenuated or dormant form, it may be hidden or fully active.

In all these forms, ignorance has been visibly abroad in the world in the last little while. Perhaps it always is, and it's just that I am often sheltered from this knowledge, or practising denial. From observation of the world at large and direct involvement in my particular corner, it is a disturbing time. What clarity I have been able to achieve, comes out of the years of practice behind me which direct me towards actions which will lessen the disturbance. Otherwise they may either aggravate it, or bury the problem to arise at another time.

We speak of practising yoga, not doing or performing yoga. It is a lifelong practice. Jung practised a form of yoga (whether he called it that or not) which removed his ignorance on one of life's most significant issues. There was not a shred of doubt, which is another of life's obstacles, in him.

Years ago I was present at a series of discourses by Swami Venketesananda, a disciple of Swami Sivananda Saraswati. He was speaking about the benefits of *mantra yoga*. "Why," asked someone, "do you have to repeat a mantra?" Swami Venketesananda quickly replied: "You don't, if it works the first time!"

Whatever form of yoga we practise, we must continue until we are completely transformed so that ignorance and all its manifestations have no place within us to reside. Since I began yoga over thirty years ago, many changes have taken place. It is almost as if I have lived several lives in this one. Many things which were common nature to me before are now inconceivable, but I am reminded from time to time that other undesirable and harmful traits still exist when they re-emerge, sometimes bursting out on the scene unexpectedly.

Guruji once asked me: "can there be such a thing as partial truth?", and then supplied the answer himself: "No!". Until such time as I know the entire truth my practice of yoga will continue in this life or others. ☯

NEW

Coming ... Summer Sadhanas

June 23-27 and July 2-5

A 90 minute practice for 5 days in a row - each of the weeks will have an early morning, mid morning and evening time slot to suit your schedule.

Look for info on the website or inquire at Reception Desk.

The Opportunity to Practice

By Adia Kapoor

At the beginning of every yoga class, we invoke the spirit of Patanjali, giving thanks for the path of yoga, our teachers, the health of our bodies, and the opportunity to practice today. For me, this *opportunity* for practice takes on many different meanings, depending on the day. If I arrive at class worried about the impending attack on Iraq, this opportunity means being thankful for a peaceful home, free from the ravages of war, where I can practice without fear of falling bombs. If I am busy that day, rushing all about trying to get errands done, the opportunity means being thankful for the time in life reserved for practice. But lately, having recently returned from a seven month stay in Asia, this opportunity relates to our Yoga Centre itself, with all its opportunities for the study and practice of yoga.

While in Edmonton last month, I found myself participating in yoga classes everywhere from the local recreation center to a space converted from an old bookstore. It made me thoughtful about the blessings of having our own space at the Victoria Yoga Centre and all the opportunities this affords our community. In a booming city like Edmonton, demand for yoga teachers is increasing faster than supply, and self-proclaimed "yoga centers"

spring up overnight, even advertising on the side of the freeway with a phone number to call for classes. Church basements and living rooms are all coveted places to hold classes. If only every city had a space such as ours. We Victorians should count ourselves lucky to have a non-profit, community owned and operated centre with all its perks: the central downtown location, the spacious facilities, the quality of teaching, the love and devotion of members and volunteers. Yes, our centre is a true yoga shala, a temple of learning.



Adia in the courtyard that adjoins the three studios

I first began yoga at the age of seventeen with my mother, studying Wednesday nights under the guidance of our next door neighbour. She taught Hatha Yoga in our co-operative housing project, less than a one minute walk from our front door. Even then though, laziness would fill us, and the very act of leaving the house became a chore in our minds. We were not appreciative of the opportunity to practice yoga so close to our home. Later on, when I had moved to Vancouver my practice dropped off when faced with a forty minute bus ride to class. How I longed for those days when classes were right next door. Now that I am here in Victoria, I am

grateful every day that from wherever I am in the city, Fort Street is never that far away. The opportunity to go to class is always there and easy to attain.

I thought of our centre often while I was in Asia last summer! Whether staying in one place or traveling

about, it was difficult to track down a teacher, and even then I was taking a gamble on what sort of yoga they would teach. For seven months I practiced diligently on my own, taking classes when I could find them. Classes were held in ballet schools with no air-conditioning in the sweltering July heat, or on hotel rooftops, and even in beach side restaurants. The teachers ranged from Australian diplomats to well-traveled yogis in suits to weightlifters. My own practice took place in cramped hotel rooms or dirty hallways. Other times, when I opted for crowded beaches as a practice space, I had to endure begging children, staring youth, and dangerously close soccer games.

I recently saw a film with footage from 1939 about Guruji's early days of yoga practice. It showed him practicing up to twelve hours a day on the front steps of his house. I can only imagine the stares I would receive if I were to contort myself on my front lawn in Cook Street Village, not to mention the distractions. I can appreciate what a tremendous amount of focus and dedication Guruji must have had, particularly in a country as busy and crowded as India.

Sometimes we forget what gift lies before us by having the Victoria Yoga Centre at our fingertips. I hope all of us, whether we attend one class a week or one-a-day, take a moment to appreciate our gifts, and to do what we can to maintain and improve our yoga shala. In the peace and quiet of the Victoria studio, hanging from the rope wall or lying in *Savasana* on our springy floors, I give a silent "thank-you" for our beautiful home and its abundant opportunities. ☯

Free Introductory Classes

"Periodically offered for your friends who want to 'check it out' before signing up for a whole term.

Check at reception for upcoming dates.



Short Workshop at the Victoria Yoga Centre

Surya Namaskar/Sun Salutations
with Ty Chandler

Saturday, June 21, 2003

1:00-3:00pm

Members \$30.00 + GST

Non-members \$35.00 + GST

The Sun Salutation is a part of daily religious prayer, which comes from time immemorial. Everyone, along with offerings and prayers, saluted the sun, since Surya, the Sun God has tremendous solar energy, which is a vital need for wo/mankind.

Surya Namaskara gives mobility, flexibility, alertness, speed, sharpness and freedom while developing will power and physical strength.

Join Ty and explore the individual postures within the salutation, as well as the meditative aspect of repeated cycles reciting the names of the 12 Sun Gods.

The Victoria Yoga Centre

202-919 Fort Street 250-386-YOGA (9642)

Victoria Yoga Centre Photo Archival Project

Over the years, many photographs have been taken of yoga classes and workshops. We would like to archive these on computer disks and in albums for library use only or for newsletter articles.

If you have any pictures you would like to donate or loan for scanning, please bring them to the centre, labeled attention Connie Barker.

Light on Questions

by Ty Chandler

Q Why use Sanskrit names for the asanas/poses? I think I know the answer but would like to know the official reason.

Jim Riddell

A Thank you for your question Jim. A friend and fellow teacher Melissa Perehudoff from Kelowna said that when she receives this question she replies, "Well, it's the same as when you go to ballet class and all the names are in French!"

As I began my research I encountered a sea of information. In limiting my answer to one page, here is my attempt at official.

The word Sanskrit is defined in the Webster's Dictionary as:

Etymology: Sanskrit *samskrta*, literally, perfected.

1: an ancient Indo-Aryan language that is the classical language of India and of Hinduism

The Iyengar system of yoga follows the classical yoga method in the tradition of B.K.S. Iyengar's Guru, Sri Krishnamacharya and of Lord Patanjali. The teachings that are presented to you in your asana and pranayama classes stem from this lineage.

Patanjali was a great Indian sage and considered the Grandfather of Yoga. The date of his earthly existence was somewhere between 200 and 800 BC. He systematized and recorded the Yoga Sutras into 196 aphorisms that explain and guide the seeker toward the understanding of one's true nature. Patanjali's Yoga Sutras are accredited as being precise, succinct and profound. The knowledge of the sutras stems from many great bodies of work: The Vedic Scriptures (or 'The Vedas'), The Ramayana, The Mahabharata and The Bhagavad Gita.

Sanskrit has been defined as having two types of distinctions. One is 'Vedic Sanskrit', a more archaic form that is believed to have existed from 1500 - 1200

BC. It is the form that the Vedas were written in. 'Classical Sanskrit', the second form, is believed to have begun around 500 BC. This form of Sanskrit was said to have arose from the attempt to standardize and simplify. I found this an interesting parallel to Patanjali's 'simplification' of the great yogic teachings into 196 aphorisms. From the limited research I did in the sea of information that is out there (and some of it contradictory) I suspect that Patanjali may have used Classical Sanskrit when he made his paramount and timeless contribution of the Yoga Sutras. Many beginners find the use of Sanskrit strange and confusing, so teachers may also give the English translation with the Sanskrit name, i.e. *Ardha Chandrasana*/ Half Moon Pose. The names of many postures symbolize their inner meaning, some are named after gods, sages, animals, aspects of the natural world (mountains or trees) and some are simply defined by the body part and shape i.e. *Urdhwa Prasrita Padasana*/ Upward Stretched Foot Pose.

Once when I was traveling in Asia, I heard a saying, "English is the language of money". An interesting contradiction is that many consider Sanskrit the language of the Gods. Apparently it was the Rishis who created Sanskrit. Rishis were inspired poets or holy sages whose aim was spiritual enlightenment. Studies have shown that Sanskrit produces a combination of sound vibrations that when spoken or heard have a specific effect on one's mind and consciousness. If the Rishi's main goal was enlightenment then it makes sense that they would create a language that would support and encourage this path. This may be something to consider next time you begin your practice and say, "*Tadasana*". ☺

Resources:

Light on the Yoga Sutras, B. K. S. Iyengar 1993

Yoga the Iyengar Way, Silva, Mira and Shyam Mehta 1990

Webster Dictionary 'on line'

info@cuhcs.org.uk

REVIEW WORKSHOP

Divine Light

by Frances Harber

What is a Divine Light Workshop? Although I was drawn to the notion of learning a healing meditation, my fear-of-the-unknown instantly kicked in with lame excuses why it would be impossible to attend a Saturday afternoon workshop. I had a pile of laundry organically growing in the house, and so on. It's nice to know that my inner voice is at least stronger than a pile of dirty socks, and able to nudge me through the doors.

At the beginning of the workshop, participants gathered into a circle and our workshop leader, Karin Scarth from Radha House, welcomed us. Karin explained that the Divine Light Invocation was a practice that had been passed on from Swami Radha, who herself received it in a divinely inspired way in India in 1956.

I think many of us in the West have had the experience of praying with our heads, but the Divine Light Invocation is a way to pray or meditate purposefully with your entire body, mind and spirit. Gently, Karin introduced us to techniques of tensing and relaxing our bodies as we focused our concentration, suspended our breath and internally repeated a mantra.

In between intervals of practice, we were given quiet time and space to write and reflect upon any thoughts, images, feelings or emotions that came up for us. Karin encouraged us to write them down as a way "to hang on to the butterflies of thought before they fluttered away".

As a healing meditation we were invited to put anything into the circle of Divine Light: ourselves,

friends, family, projects, world peace, the past, the future, and to see ourselves as channels for the Light. The challenge is to acknowledge that this mediation is an exercise of will and an act of surrender.

At the end of the workshop we were all given the gift of a small but beautiful book that outlines the practice of this meditation. It is filled with jewels of wisdom collected from world cultures, and rich in ways to enhance our practice of this transforming meditation. And so by the end of the afternoon, while a laundry pile grew a littler heavier, I got to grow lighter. ☺

Replies to The Suggestion Box

What about a Level 2 class on Thursday night?

Answer: See the new schedule—Level 2 on Thursdays at 5:30!

What about a pre-natal class on weekends?

Answer: At long last we have a teacher available! See the new schedule – 3 pm Saturday with Lauren.

Can we move the prop shelf?

Answer: We have tried it in different locations. We could spread some props out on shelves out under the windows. We are always refining all these things. Any carpenters out there???

Can people in class have priority in registering for new terms?

Answer: Yes, they can and they do. There is already a policy in place allowing continuing students to register one week prior to opening registration to the public. (Check at the front desk.)

How about a hook on the washroom door?

Answer: We have asked the property manager for permission ...



THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

is pleased to announce two

IYENGAR YOGA TEACHER TRAINING INTENSIVES

July 7 to 12, 2003

with Leslie Hoga, Ann Kilbertus, Linda Benn

This six-day intensive will focus on preparing teachers for assessment in Iyengar Yoga at Introductory Level 1 or 2. Leslie, Ann and Linda are experienced teachers certified at the Intermediate Level through the Canadian Iyengar Yoga Teachers' Association. They are qualified C.I.Y.T.A. assessors. All three are committed to assisting local and outlying yogis to become skilled Iyengar Yoga teachers. Preference will be given to members of C.I.Y.T.A.

August 18 to 22, 2003

with Shirley Daventry French

This course is for certified Iyengar Yoga teachers who wish to prepare for assessment at Junior Intermediate Level 1, 2 or 3. Shirley is a long-time student of B.K.S. Iyengar who has awarded her a senior teaching credential. She has been teaching Yoga for thirty years and is one of North America's most experienced teachers in the Iyengar tradition. Shirley has been training teachers in Victoria and throughout Canada for many years.

* In both Intensives there will be daily classes in asana and pranayama, yoga philosophy and the art and science of teaching.

* As in previous years, Iyengar Yoga teachers from other countries are also invited to apply.

Fees: Yoga Centre members: \$500.00 + 7% GST, Non-members \$530 + 7%GST

Registration opens February 3rd. To receive the application and registration forms, please contact:
Victoria Yoga Centre, 202 – 919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8V 3K3 Telephone: 250-386-YOGA (9642)

Or Ann: 250-598-0976 Linda: 250-478-0757

Email: Linda: lbenn@islandnet.com or Ann: stpatrick@entirety.ca

Student Intensive: For those thinking about doing teacher training in the future and intermediate level general students, please note that there will be a Student Intensive Aug. 25–Aug. 29.

Details in next newsletter.

BOOK REVIEW

by James Currie Johnson

Health Through Yoga (2002)

by Mira Mehta \$32.95

Mira Mehta has been familiar in the world of yoga since 1990 when she co-authored, with her mother and brother, the best-selling *Yoga, the Iyengar Way*. Students in Victoria had the chance to meet her in February 1999 when she came here to give a weekend workshop. When I attended her workshop, her teaching style made a lasting impression on me. She made economical use of language, kept an unrushed tempo and logically 'built up' each pose and was very responsive to the student's questions. In her new book, *Health Through Yoga*, her teaching skill shows on every page. The book contains eleven yoga routines that contain many yoga details that we heard in her visit to Victoria.

The first routine focuses on the base of the body, the feet and legs. The sequence is: 1. *Tadasana* (Palm Tree Pose) 2. *Trikonasana* (Triangle Pose) 3. *Parsvakonasana* (Lateral Angle Pose) 4. *Ardha Uttanasana* (Half Stretching Pose) 5. *Virabhadrasana II* (Warrior Pose II) 6. *Adhomukha-Virasana* (Hero Pose with Head Down) 7. *Virasana* (Hero Pose) 8. *Urdhva-Prasarita-Padasana* (Upward Extended-Leg Pose) 9. *Savasana* (Corpse Pose)

A more advanced routine, the eleventh routine, enhances mental and emotional well being. It is called "The Affirmative Mind" and follows this sequence:

1. *Purvottanasana* (Anterior Stretching Pose) 2. *Matsyasana* (Fish Pose) 3. *Supta-Baddhakonasana* (Supine Cobbler's Pose) 4. *Supta-Virasana* (Supine Hero Pose) 5. *Adhomukha-Virasana* (Hero Pose, Head Down) 6. *Adhomukha-Savasana* (Dog Pose, Head Down) 7. *Adhomukha-Vrksasana* (Full-Arm Balance or Hand Stand) 8. *Pincha-Mayurasana* (Elbow-Balance) 9. *Sirsasana* (Head Balance) 10. *Viparita-Dandasana*

HEALTH
THROUGH
YOGA



MIRA MEHTA

(Inverted Staff Pose) 11. *Ustrasana* (Camel Pose) 12. *Urdhva-Dhanurasana* (Upward Bow Pose) 13. *Adhomukha-Virasana* (Hero Pose, Head Down) 14. *Sarvangasana* (Shoulder Balance) 15. *Setubandha-Sarvangasana* (Shoulder Balance Bridge) 16. *Viparita-Karani* (Reverse Action Position) 17. *Savasana* (Corpse Pose) 18. *Ujjayi-Pranayama* (Conquest-Helping Breath) 19. *Abhyantara-Viloma-Pranayama* (Inhalation in Stages)

In addition to helpful yoga sequences, Mehta's new book highlights a perspective on *how* yoga works. She studies the practical benefits of yoga and examines these benefits through *ayurveda*, the Indian medical science.

In *ayurveda* the body is seen to function as a combination of three energies known as *doshas*. Everybody's body type is determined by the predominance of the *doshas* within their body, and everybody is prone to certain weaknesses and illnesses caused by imbalances. Yoga postures act to balance the *doshas* and restore equilibrium. This is how yoga works to maximize energy and well being.

Mehta is not the first teacher to link *ayurveda* and yoga. Geeta Iyengar, in her 1990 book, *Yoga, a Gem for Women*, mentioned the dosha imbalance and wrote that yoga practice helps regain a healthy balance. Mehta delves deeper into the yoga/ayurveda connection. She describes the philosophy of *ayurveda*, its most practical recommendations, and how each dosha is affected by specific yoga poses. *Health Through Yoga* is packed with tables, diagrams, photos and quotes. At the end of the book is a chapter called "Readings for Serenity", a selection of the ancient Indian teachings.

In conclusion, this is a book for both students and teachers of yoga. I have found it helpful for my own practice and in teaching both restorative and general yoga classes. It gives me a new perspective on why yoga works. I believe *Health Through Yoga* will remain a valuable yoga reference for many years to come. ☯

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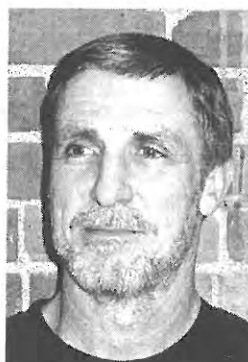
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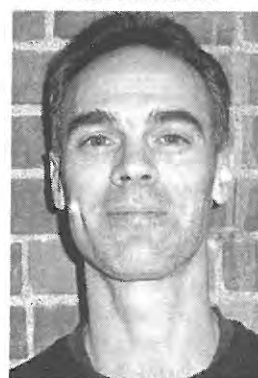
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REVIEW WORKSHOP

Marie-Andree Morin
March 21-23, 2003

by Ann Kilbertus

*Om saha naavavatu saha nau bhunaktu
Saha veeryam karavaavahai
Tejasvi naavadheetmastu
Maa vidvishaavahai
Om shaantih shaantih shaantih*

This invocation began an inspiring workshop with Marie-Andree Morin from Montreal. She reminded us that during this time of war, not only are those who are killed a part of us, but so also are those who kill.

She recalled a statement which the U.S. President made after the terrorist attacks in New York City. He suggested that people go shopping to feel better...but he didn't say where... Marie Andre suggested we take the time in this workshop to shop within ourselves.

Through teaching which was clear, clean, and focused, she guided us within. Instructions and postures were repeated and linked, over and over, so the work could penetrate more deeply into the body, mind, and spirit. "Elongate, lengthen, become taller, elongate, more..." Her instructions and clarity of voice became like a mantra lighting the way within.

We worked with introductory asanas and we worked hard. Every day we did *Supta Tadasana* with thumbs interlocked overhead, *Eka Pada Supta Pavanmuktasana* with a strap (knee to chest) and *Supta Padanghustasana* I with a strap going from the raised leg groin to just below the mound of the lower leg (which was bent to increase the traction on the outer groin of the raised leg).

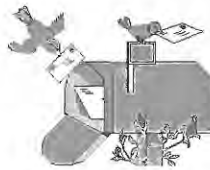
The foundation work was laid each day with the above and other asanas and was systematically linked with

every asana that followed. The experience of *Savasana* at the end of each day and at the end of the workshop was quiet and profound.

Marie-Andree gave generously of her experience and understanding with ease and grace. In this way she exemplified a strong link in the transmission of teachings which come from Pune. In the end, due to the steady and experiential nature of the sequences she taught, I was left with a deepened insight and understanding.

We closed the workshop with the mantra for peace, again in Sanskrit.

May the Divine protect us together
May s/he nourish us together
May we work together
Uniting our strength for the good of humanity
May our learning be luminous
And purposeful
May we never hate one another
May there be peace, peace, and perfect peace. ☯



IN OUR MAILBOX

I was very pleased to see the practice session in the last newsletter. There were several things that worked well for me. First of all it encouraged me to do a home practice! This is something that I have been meaning to do and know I need to do but I have not been consistent. I do have a couple of good Iyengar Yoga books but when I work on my own, I tend to do the postures that I like and not pay enough attention to having a properly balanced practice. I felt this was provided here. Also (a small detail) I liked the fact that the pictures were big enough that I could see them without glasses - who wants to wear reading glasses to do yoga!

Although I realise it would depend on how long one holds the postures, I am curious as to how long on average this practice is intended to take?

I look forward to future versions. As this was titled #1, I am assuming there will be more.

Thanks, Jane Beauchamp

Hi Jane,

Thanks for your feedback on the practice that was presented in our last issue (and which is now up on our website). In terms of how long it might take to do the practice, there are many variables as you mentioned. Practice #1 can be done in less than an hour if you move from pose to pose and hold each side for 20 or 30 seconds. If on the other hand you want to hold the poses longer, do some of them twice on each side, or even more... well you could easily practice for 2 hours. For example, sometimes we might go to our class and do *Utthita Trikonasana* (triangle pose) 4 different ways: back foot at the wall for stability; front foot up the wall to learn to work the front leg better; back body against the wall for alignment; hand to the chair for more torso rotation. So when *Trikonasana* comes next in your practice, you can practice what you recall from class. You can do this with all the poses (which might take many hours to get through a practice) or you may go from pose to pose for a while and then slow down and work a bit more intensely on one or two poses and then carry on through the rest of the practice. So from day to day your practice can look very different even though you are working with the same poses.

As with everything, it all depends on you, your creativity, time availability and your priorities. In any case, regardless how long you spend, always leave time for *Sarvangasana* (working toward 5 minutes), *Halasana* (working toward 2 minutes) and *Savasana* (for at least 5 minutes).

If you have specific questions about postures, ask your teacher, nothing makes a teacher happier than

to know you are practicing at home. And this can make you happier too. Happy practicing.

Gwynneth Powell (editor)

PRACTICE SEQUENCES

The first two teaching syllabi* of the international Iyengar teaching system are called 'Introductory I' and 'Introductory II' which contain approximately 60 asanas. The Canadian Iyengar Yoga Teacher's Association is constantly in touch with the Iyengars in Pune, India regarding updates or changes to the list of poses. To better serve our students the Victoria Yoga Centre's Newsletter Committee decided that we would create three practices out of these two syllabi. In doing so we wanted to achieve two things: firstly, to list *and* illustrate the poses; secondly, to present home practices from this collection of asanas that are sequenced for a balanced effect.

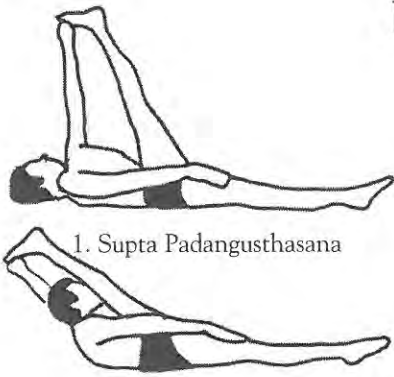
Published consecutively, Practice #1 (March/ April 2003 issue) is geared for level one students. In this issue there is a level one/two practice. And in July/ August 2003 we will publish the third, a level two practice. These three practices combined will contain all of the asanas on the above mentioned syllabi. For your convenience Practice #1 can now be found on our website: victoriayogacentre.bc.ca

* These are the first two syllabi in a total of thirteen published in *Yogadhara* (2000).

Credits:

First and foremost, gratitude is extended to Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar for the guidance that these syllabi provide. Thank you to members of the Victoria Yoga Centre Society who worked to bring these practices to you in this form: Diagrams of the asanas were traced out of *Light on Yoga* (Iyengar 1966) and *Gem for Women* (Iyengar 1990) by Christopher Lea. Scanning and formatting of diagrams by Paul Sobejko. Practice sequences put together by Gwynneth Powell and Melissa Worth. ☯

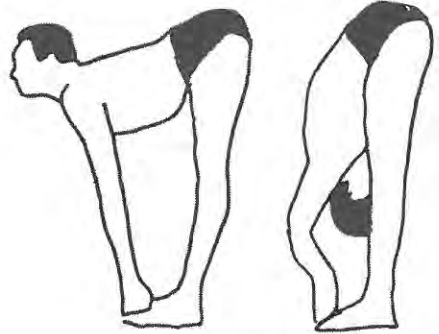
Level 1-2 Practice



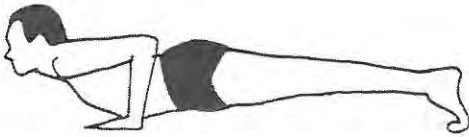
1. Supta Padangusthasana



2. Utthita Hasta Padangusthasana (with support)



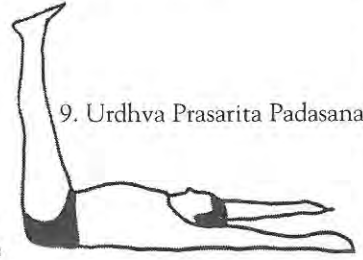
3. Padangusthasana



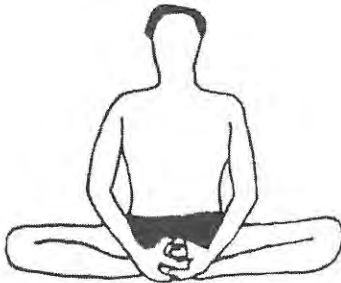
7. Chaturanga Dandasana



8. Urdhva Mukha Svanasana



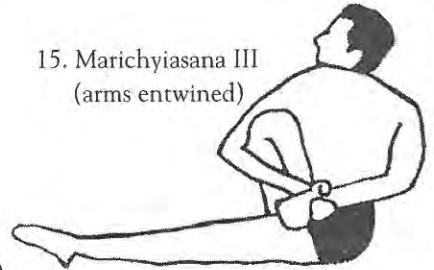
9. Urdhva Prasarita Padasana



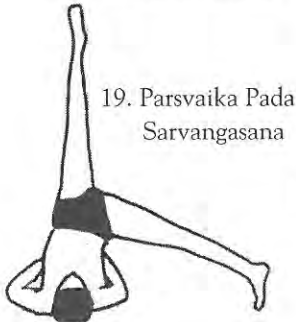
13. Baddha Konasana



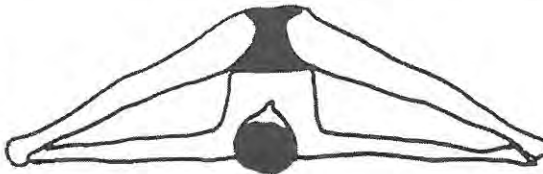
14. Malasana (heels down, facing a wall)



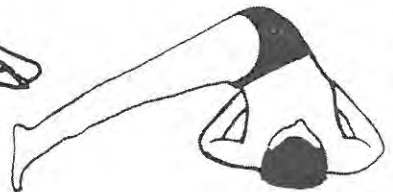
15. Marichyasana III (arms entwined)



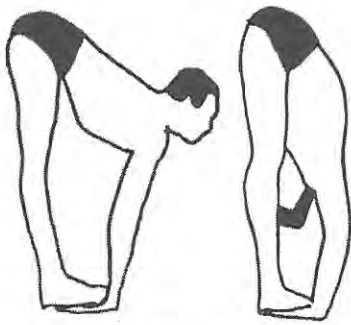
19. Parsvaika Pada Sarvangasana



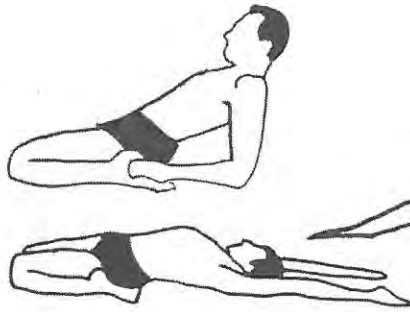
20. Supta Konasana



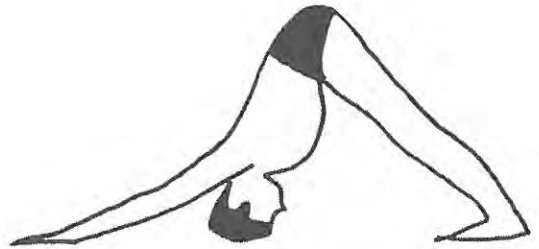
21. Parsva Halasana



4. Padahastasana



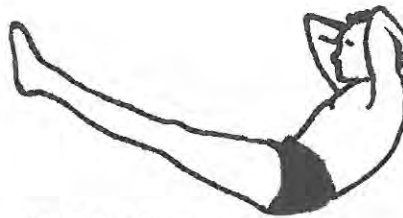
5. Supta Virasana



6. Adho Mukha Svanasana



10. Paripurna Navasana



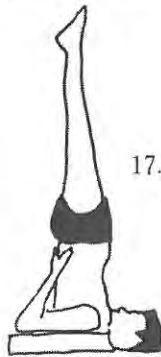
11. Ardha Navasana



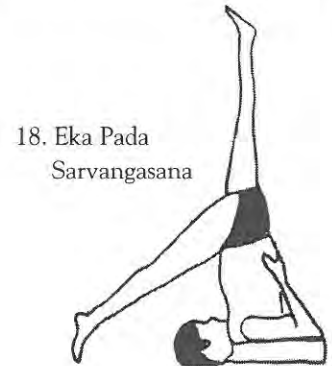
12. Upavista Konasana (sitting straight)



16. Ardha
Matsyandrasana



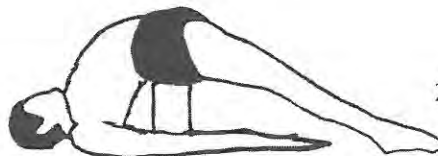
17. Salamba
Sarvangasana



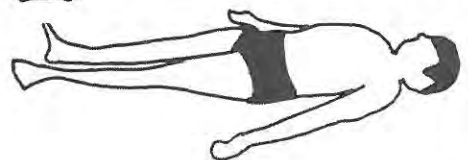
18. Eka Pada
Sarvangasana



22. Karnapidasana



23. Setu Bandha
(with support)



24. Savasana (on bolster with eye
band; observing in and out breath)

Kind permission has been granted by Yoga Rahasya, to reprint this transcript that was published as a supplement, in January 2000 on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the RIMYI.

Due to its length we will publish it in a series of parts.

A "Class" After A Class

Yoga-An Integrated Science (Part Four)

by Prashant Iyengar

SAFETY MEASURES IN THE SYSTEM

It is traditionally believed that yoga is playing with danger. The other day you enigmatically said yoga is dangerous but safe. Can you shed more light on this topic?

What I was trying to say is that Yoga has a tremendous esoteric access to the subtle parts, the subtle complicated systems. Comparing the access, the safety measures that it has, is really incredible and if you follow the principles of yoga, you are certainly with all your guards. But it happens many times that people do not practice the principles of yoga and may be a part of it is practised. Therein lies the danger. That's why even if we put a lot of stress on *asana*, *pranayama*, there also, when we practice, we must see that other principles of yoga are inculcated in our practice. When you practice you will not become indiscreet, you will not become injudicious, you will not be crazy, delirious.

But suppose, for example, somebody approaches *asanas* like a gymnast approaches his exercises, or her exercises. There is a craze to get something and, with that craze, if one practices *asana*, *pranayama*, definitely the principles of yoga are kept aside and you become an exercise fanatic. And all you want, like a gymnast, is just go after getting the results for whatever degree of exercise you want to reach. You are after it. You are crazy. You are delirious and by hook or crook you try to attain results. Because, ultimately, you want to win the gold medal! So you go all out, without any discretion,

without any judiciousness. Your only aim is to reach that degree and get the gold medal. And in the process, you loose so many things, for which you don't bother. And if somebody is so crazy and mad, it could be a mania, exercise-mania, exercise-craze, then you are not following the yogic principles and therefore you are dis-insulated for any troubles. They will definitely attack you and will finish you.

But if you are practising yogic principles, you will be moderate, you will be temperate, you will be judicious and discrete and in that case, the yogic practices are absolutely safe. In spite of the fact that I said they have a very great deep access to your mind and mental

mechanism, mental functioning, mental constitutions, all that will be with complete safety. Because yogic principles are like guards. If you follow yogic principles, the *Yama-Niyama* etc., the moral, ethical, principles in your practice, if your practices are conditioned, navigated and shaped by those principles, then there is definitely no danger. Now, to give an example which is very palatable: if



someone is looking at Guruji and says "He does hundred and eight *Viparita Chakrasana* and I should do it because he does it." And "he is really an ideal of mine and therefore I should do it". Well, he creates room for danger because he should know where he stands and how much he is qualified. You can do hundred and eight but you will not be as he is after his hundred and eight. That's the big difference nobody notices. There are some of his students who did practice with him. If Guruji did hundred and eight, they also did hundred and eight but they did not bother to find out the state of Guruji after hundred and eight as compared to their state after hundred and eight. They never bothered, they only had the satisfaction of having done them along with him: "he did hundred and eight, I did hundred and eight"! This

is the aspect which brings danger in our practice, if you are crazy, if you are delirious, if you are mad after something. But when you are practising other principles of yoga, you will certainly know for what you are qualified and how much you should do. I have said sometimes in the class, these are the propositions: "How much am I doing?", "How much can I do?" and "How much should I do?"

Once you have these principles guiding your practices, there should be no danger. But if you are just thinking of "how much I can" and "how much can I do", well you are keeping the gates open for all the troubles to enter in. But once you know "how much should I do", then the gates are absolutely closed for any troubles to enter in. So that is the aspect of discretion and judiciousness in the practice. If you are following Guruji in a hundred and eight *Viparita Chakrasana* you should follow him in everything. That, they don't bother... what he eats, what he sees, the rest of the day, or how much *pranayama* he does, and what other things he does. That, nobody bothers to find out. So that's the problem that the principles of practice are very important to learn. That will properly give you sufficient impelment and no more no less. That is very important. If you have tremendous impelment, don't think it is an advantage. It should be an optimum impelment. You know what is "impelment"? Do you understand? The force making you practice, the force behind you: impel. "Impel" is to "push". So the push that you have in your practice must be governed by other factors, otherwise you will be mad, or crazy.

Like a gymnast who may work without any care to his body and his calibre to reach that point to get the gold medal. You can imagine what happens to them after that. Their life as a gymnast is only for fifteen or twenty years. Gymnast's life is very very short. Sportsmen's life is also a little longer but again it is short. And then after this career is over, their whole life is filled with a vacuum, and they invite various mental problems, because thereafter there is going to be no achievement, no laurels, no claps. People will

not be applauding them. No press publicity. So they suffer with all those things.

People want that; once they are used to it, that recognition, people applauding, appreciating, people always staying around pleasing you and once that is gone, they feel a vacuum. So the thing is, safety measures are there if you understand the principles of yoga. Once you are following them, then there is no danger at all, because it is a tremendously safe system although it goes beyond your faculties, your perceptions, your powers, your sensitivity and mental powers. It really takes you beyond those powers. You see, when you go into the mystical aspect of yoga, you are groping in dark, but you are not without a guide. And when you have a guide, even if you are in foreign place, you don't have any difficulties. If you have a reliable person as your guide, you don't have any worries. **So if you follow the principles, you have a guiding force within you although you are moving in dark, although you are moving in something unmanifest, something inconceivable.**

A yogi is supposed, from a certain stage, to face the unknown...

Yes. Yes. Therefore you have a guide, when you have these principles properly inculcated. Then you are totally confident and also you have no apprehension, no fears, no fumbles, otherwise there will be fumbles. If you don't attend to integral yoga, then such dangers can come. In *pranayama* particularly. That's why the texts say that *pranayama* is very dangerous.

It can kill you! (cf Hatha Yoga Pradipika 11,15)

It can kill you if you don't practice the principles of practice. Once you are following the principles of practice then you will not antagonise the science. **If you antagonise the science, the science is dangerous** and therefore, several times, in the talks also I said that the theory of our practice is very important. We must understand the theory of our practice. What I said is, the "scientification" of our practice is very important.

A practice is a scientific only if it has a theory behind it. No science is without theory. There is theory even in a practical subject, it must be there and it must be understood so that there are no confusions, there are no doubts, there are no fears, there are no apprehension. Otherwise always there are doubts: "Am I right?", "Is it right?"

Those things will happen if you do not know the **theory of practice** and once you know the **theory of practice**, you have a ready reckoner with you. Immediately you can find an answer for any doubt that you have.

Don't you think the mind can become also very clever with us, or more than us?

Clever in what sense?

It can mystify us...

Mystify or cheat you? That happens only when you don't practice the principles of yoga. If you are practising *ahimsa / satya / asteya / brahmacharya / aparigraha / saucha / santosha / tapa / svadhyaya / Isvara pranidhana*, that won't happen. If you know what those are, if you practise them, there is no danger. Because most of us practise lop-sided yoga, then difficulties come. Several times I have said there are **psychodynamics of practice**. How the mind should be and what you should do with the mind in a particular pose, in a particular cycle of postures. You should know as you know physical techniques about the shin, about the sternum, about the spine, about the joints, about the muscles etc etc... You must also know something of the mind, as to how the mind should be in the pose and what the mind should do in the pose. So they are all technical aspects of yoga, our technical aspects are not only restricted to the joints and muscles, and bones and cartilages. Because those are also technical parts: how your senses should be, how your mind should be, how your eyes should be, how your ears should be. All those are technical aspects and therefore if you know the theory of it, you will attend to every aspect of it, and everything will be taken care of, and you will not

have such difficulty that you might get artfied intelligence, or tricky intelligence. Those things will not happen. Otherwise your mind will be tricky because you are not doing anything to tame the mind, you are not doing anything for the mind and that's why such danger can occur.

Can you give an example for the interview like how the mind should be in one pose, so the people can understand?

Well, say for example, when you are doing *Trikonasana*, why are you doing *Trikonasana*? That's how the mind should be questioning: "Am I doing this only to tone my leg muscles and only to tone my spine and back muscles?" So then, naturally, the answer will be : "It is not only for that". Those things should be happening and apart from those things, something else should be happening. So **Psychodynamics starts with the question: "Why am I doing it?"**

And then if you get the answer that you are doing it for the whole. Ultimately *asanas* are done for *citta*, are done for the consciousness, because the effect of *asana* is not mentioned on the body. It is also mentioned on the body, the mind, the whole gross body and also the subtle body. Patanjali says the effect of *asana* is: "*latah dvandvah anabhighatah*" (Y.S. II,48), "that you are free from dualities".

Do you mean to say that dualities are only physical?

Like heat and cold. **The dualities are also mental.** So effect of *asana* is primarily mental and as they have mental effects, the body in the process is also undergoing an effect, which is desirable and conducive. So standing poses are not only for toning the leg muscles, toning the back muscles. They will be toned, but other things are happening. If you have hundred rupees, it implies that you have got ten rupees, right? If you have hundred rupees in your pocket, you can't say "I don't have ten rupees". Because ten is part of hundred. So if effect of *asanas* is in the consciousness, that is like hundred rupees and if you tone your back muscles and leg muscles, it is like ten rupees. So having

hundred rupees you are going to have the ten rupees.

So why am I doing the *asanas*? What should I be getting in the *asanas* on my mind?

Well, Guruji, in several places and several times, has said: "*Asanas are for citta pari karma*". He says: "***Asanas are for purification of the mind***". You use the word "cosmetics", it just says there are cosmetics for the body, cosmetics for the face. But there are cosmetics for the mind in yoga. So **the *asanas* are cosmetics of the mind**. They should give that quiet, serene, sublime, sedate, passive, restful effect on the mind. And for that sake *asanas* are to be done. So you must know that if by *Trikonasana* I have got to attain such a state I should be doing something in that direction. Apart from ankles to hip sockets and from hip sockets to shoulders and to fingers, you must do something else to get the mental affect of yoga, after *Trikonasana*. Therefore you have certain other things to do in *Trikonasana*. And you know that *asanas* are psychosomatic, Guruji has said several times, "you have to get elated when you are dull sometimes". Now how do you get that elation? You have got to flush the brain and when you do that, by working on the glandular aspect through *asanas*, you get the elation.

Or you want the circulation, for the brain and that's why you may do jumpings and full arm balance or some dynamic fast things and you get the circulation. So then, again it is not just physical. Suppose you are dull, you get fresh when you do *Halasana*/*Paschimottanasana* fifty times. Or you do full arm balance ten times and you get fresh. How can you call it "physical"? Because you wanted to overcome something that was a mental state, the gloom was a mental state, dullness was a mental state which you wanted to overcome and you did some *asanas*. So definitely, *asanas* are psychosomatic and when they are psychosomatic, you can't be just working on soma and through soma, for soma, you must also work through the psyche, for the psyche, and through soma on psyche.

So, therefore the psychological aspects are very very

much explicit in our system. When you are emotionally down, a particular cycle of postures are given. Why? If the postures are physical, well, they should not do anything on your emotions. But if you are emotionally upset, *Viparita karani*. *Viparita Dandasana*, *Setu Bandha Sarvangasana* are given. Now, if they are only physical poses, if they are physical, they should not do anything on your emotions. Why do they do? So all the *asanas* have those bearings. Psychological bearing, mental bearing is there which is now express to you. It is nothing new to Iyengar students.

You know in the West we see a lot of people, sometimes they come as beginners to our class but maybe they have been practising meditation for years and getting already problems or strange experiences...

Yes. A simple thing, when they are doing meditation, they have not done what you do and they say that they have done meditation. They have transgressed from the principles of *Astanga Yoga*. It's an infiltration into higher aspects of yoga, unqualified entry in meditation. It is an infiltration into meditation. It's a taboo - they are not supposed to be meditating. And they have done it and they pay for it. That's why I said if it is a lop-sided practice, then it is going to have ill effects. Because you have definitely committed a blunder, it is a mistake. It's not the ignorance. Suppose there is a laboratory and you enter the laboratory and do something and harm yourself. It is totally your fault, because, being ignorant, you are not supposed to enter the laboratory and play with the things there. So if you take some liquid, acidic in form, from the bottle pour it in your hands and, as a result, your hands burn, it is not the fault of the acid, it is your ignorance, and it is your fault. You are not supposed to enter the laboratory and play with the things there. Similarly, that's what happens, **that means you are going against the science and you want the science to be safe. When you go with the science there is no question of non-safety.** You can invite the problems when you don't go with

the science. If you are lucky enough, you will escape. So that's why the safety measures are there and particularly with reference to the amount of access to the subtle aspects in you that they give. **Safety measures are incredible in the system.**

MILD/MIDDLE/INTENSE/PRACTICANTS

MILD/MIDDLE/INTENSE/PRACTICES

The last time I was telling you about practice and of its three grades : **mild, middle and intense**. But we never bother to know that **there are grades in practices and practicants**. Usually when we say "it's a mild practice", we refer to the practican, that he/she is mild in his practices, that he/she is intense in her practices. They are not practices, we refer to a mild practican, an intense practican, etc. There are two aspects: practices and practicants. This is beautifully brought out in Vyasa's commentary. So, as you were talking on practice last time, this is also an important aspect, that **there are two aspects: mild, middle, intense practices, mild, middle, intense practicants**. For example, if you read a text book of the first standard, primary school; now, if you read the text of primary school, eight hours a day, ten hours a day, you are working intensely. You know the whole book by-heart and still you study on and on and on. So you are intensely doing it for eight hours a day, ten hours a day or perhaps fourteen hours a day. But then the practican is only intense, but his practices are mild, because he is only reading the first standard book. So when we refer to practice, we must understand these two aspects: what are our practices and how are we practising? It is not only that we should be intense. If you are intense in a very primary thing, you can't expect advancement.

By reading the first standard book for twenty years, you can't expect a degree saying that "I have studied for twenty years and I should get a degree". To get a degree you have to study something that is to be studied at the twentieth year, not the first year. Suppose you are a student of English, if you study the same book for twenty years, you can't expect a certificate of

graduation. But if you study the twentieth year's text and learn it, then you can expect a degree.

So it is just not important that you should be intense, it is important where are you intense. **Are you intense in mild practices?** Then the results are going to be the same. You can't get results beyond a limit. Then whether you study that book for fifteen hours a day or eight hours a day or four hours a day. You are not going to gain beyond a limit. By studying first standard English for four hours, if you gain something you can't expect to gain in the same proportion if you study for twenty years, because the book doesn't contain so much. The book doesn't contain so much to give you five times or six times. So in practices you must know "what are the practices I am undertaking". So understand how to make gradations of the practice, it is the two aspects - practices and practitioners. The practices - what are the principles you are following and what is the level of those principles? and then your intensity and whether it is mild, middle or intense. So in the first chapter of the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, there is a beautiful *sutra* and its commentary; Vyasa has brought this out in the *sutra* :

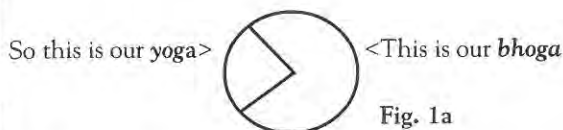
"mrdu madhya adhimatratvat tatah api viseshah"
(Y.S. I, 22).

This *sutra* of Patanjali mentions mild, middle and intense practices and practitioners. He says that an intense practitioner of intense practices gets *samadhi* or yoga quickly. That's what he says. So both the things are mentioned. Your practices should also be intense and you should also be intense, and I am explaining this in diagrams below.

You know **what are mild practices?** We are all mild practitioners of yoga, even if we practice eight hours a day or ten hours a day, or perspire, and still we are all mild practitioners because the practices which we have taken up are mild. Now you can see the difference between your practice of yoga principles and that of Gururji: are they the same? Suppose, if you say that if Gururji practices *asanas* for four hours a day and I practice eight hours a day. Do you mean to say you are

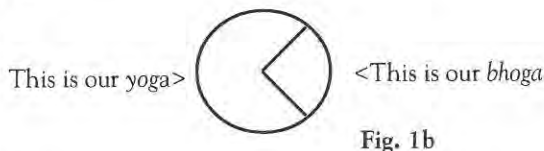
on higher intensity by practising eight hours a day? Because what principles he practices and what principles you practice is the one which makes the big difference. We are all mild practitioners because our yoga is integral with *bhoga*! Our life is "yoga mixed up with *bhoga*" (enjoyment, experience, etc.) So our mild practices are graphically shown (Fig. 1)

Draw a circle here and make a division, say twenty per cent, show 20% of it, that's all that's our yoga, and the rest is *bhoga*.



And this yoga aspect can be moving; this is something between six and seven in the morning, it can go seven to eight, eight to nine, compromising everywhere... our late night, last night late night, heavy meals "Let me not practice now, let me see and try in the evening"... "Let me not practice this much, I have over eaten... I am not going to sleep tonight...let me not do too much."

So many compromises are there in our yogic practices, depending upon what has preceded and what is going to follow. If you are going to undertake a journey, you will say: "let me do just *Sirsasana*, *Sarvangasana*, resting poses, I'll have a long journey, fourteen hours flight back home"...or "I had fourteen hours flight to come here, let me do this much of yoga"...



... If this is *bhoga* and this yoga, it is still a mild practice intensity in practitant. If you reverse the position: the *bhoga* (20%) and yoga (80%), it is still in the mild category, because they are interpersonal, they are in

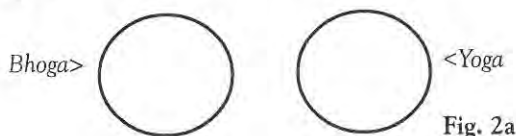
one circle. Your yoga is influenced by *bhoga*, *bhoga* is influenced by yoga, being in one compartment. So here, even if there is an increase of sixty per cent, eighty per cent, still, it is only mild yoga.

So it's not a question of time or length of practice like 8 hours, 12 hours or 14 hours a day?

Yes. Because your yoga is so tainted by your life and your experiences of life, it is constantly getting the taint. Happiness of life influences your yoga. Excitement of life influences your yoga, frustrations, sorrows of life influence your yoga.

Unless we go to the Himalayas and do yoga full time..

No. You need not be going to the Himalayas, you can create the Himalayas in your own place. Suppose there are middle practices, then these changes are as shown in Fig 2.



So, they are not intermingled. Yoga is separate from your life. This is possible for *madhyamadhikaris*, the middle intensity yogis. That their yoga is not influenced by life or tainted by *bhoga*, because there are two circles. The yoga is kept as separate and isolated and yoga will not have any impact or taint your life. That is the middle hierarchy yogi and he is qualified for *samadhi*. Sorry to say that the yogi in Fig. 1a or 1b is not qualified for *samadhi*, even if it is ninety nine per cent yoga end one per cent *bhoga*, because it is still one circle.

(showing the Fig. 2 diagram) Is this still capable of giving *samadhi*?

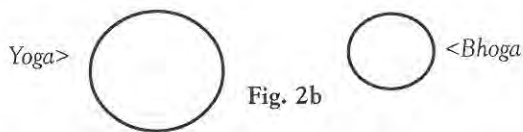
Yes. He is qualified for *samadhi*. This person of the first diagram (Fig. 1a or b) is not qualified for *samadhi*.

Can you explain the two circles more...

Yes. These two circles, say for example, these ascetics, like *Shankaracharya* etc. They could practice yoga in such a way that their life could not influence or create

any infections to yoga. For us, the infections are there. Unhappy? Yoga is affected. I'm unhappy, my practice is affected. I'm excited, yoga is affected. Success?

Affected. Failure? Affected. This affects us but here, for someone like *Shankaracharya*, or the saints, they do not get the influence or infections and that's why I showed the yoga as a separate aspect and *bhoga* as separate aspect. They have no contact. Nowhere they come in contact. Now when circle of yoga is small and *bhoga* is big, it becomes "**mild**". When they are both equal sizes, they are "**middle**". When the circle of yoga is the largest, circle of *bhoga* small, it becomes "**intense**".



These are the yogis who are not onslaught on account of calamities. You know, we also get calamities, and they also get them. We also loose our parents, they also loose their parents. We also loose our dear ones, they also loose their dear ones. But there is a big difference between the trauma that we experience and the trauma that they experience. There is no trauma for them because they understand the reality of life. They know that the people come and go, like the waves in the ocean. They know that when the wave comes it is going to go back. Whatever is coming to the shore is going to go back. So they understand the philosophy of life and therefore their life doesn't influence their spiritualism. Because they know that this is business-reality and not the ultimate reality.

You are a mother because of a relation. But you are not essentially a mother, you are nobody's daughter, you are nobody's mother, you are nobody's sister. It is only in the business of life, playing a role, you become somebody's sister, somebody's mother, somebody's daughter, some body's in-law. **That is not the reality. It is a transitory reality, it's the business of life.** So therefore **their life does not influence yoga**. So that's how they are able to maintain untainted practice.

Yogic principles are there, and their practice will not be influenced by the life.

How do they get such ability?

It is their evolution. See, I offend you, you get insulted. Right? Somebody offends me, I get insulted. I praise you, you get elated. But for them, these things, these dualities do not bother them. The saints have suffered. The saints also have been antagonised by society more than you and me. They seemed to have suffered more. But they did not really suffer. We thought the saints suffered. But the saints have not suffered because they understand the nature of reality. That is evolution: because of evolution, this can happen. So from here, you have to graduate there. You can't, from to-morrow, say, that I will start practising in such a way. It will not happen. It's the evolution: **you must go through the evolution.**

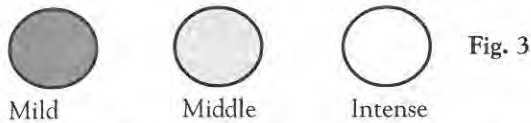
Then you are qualified to go to the second hierarchy. That's why I said, you just know that, that because if Guruji does hundred and eight *Viparita Chakrasana*, you are not qualified to do it. Now you question whether you should or you should not do it. That's a different thing. So you can't say that well if this is not a proper hierarchy "I must go to this hierarchy" and if you try to do it, you will not succeed. You will not be able to keep your life totally isolated from yoga and yoga isolated from life. They will be intermingled, because you are not qualified.

So, we have to evolve to reach a state, whereby the business of life will not influence our yoga. So that is the *madhyamadhikari*.

Great *acharyas*, great saints also suffered intimidation. The society intimidated them, antagonised them. All sorts of afflictions were inflicted on them. They were attemptedly tortured, but they were not tortured. They did not undergo any torture. We think that they were tortured, but they had the same tranquillity in them. And if they suffered, they were not saints. Understand again. If they say that: "Oh, I underwent lots of hardships and intimidations", they were not saints then.

That's why the Christ ressucites to show us he is beyond...

Yes. That's the second hierarchy. What's the third hierarchy? Third hierarchy, there is only one circle as in Fig. 3.



There is only yoga. And this happens to those like *Shuka Mahamuni*, *Patanjali* and *Vamadeva*. who got liberated in the same life. So there is only one circle. It is all yoga and if there is any *bhoga*, it will only make this circle grey, it will be slightly grey. Because of infections of life, infections of *karmas*, it will be tainted by a grey colour. If it is middle, the taint will be less, it will be off-white. And if they are *adhimatra*, that is intense, in intense practices, in intense *sadhana*. it will be super white, snow white. The *karmas* will not be creating any afflictions in them. So they have only one circle and that is "intense practice".

Do you mean that there is no life after death for these people?

Yes. No life after death. Know the difference here. Here, in the first diagram (Fig. 1a,b), our yoga is interspersed with *bhoga*. But here (in Fig. 3), everything is yoga and there is little infection of... like, you know, we are all exposed to the same bacteria because we are all in the same conditions. But it is possible that one of you might get ill tomorrow because of less immunity. We all consume the same water but we all don't suffer from cholera. Some of them who have less immunity will suffer. We all go and eat in one and the same hotel on a day and one of us suffers, one of us suffers less, one of us does not at all suffer, because of immunity. Yogis in the ultimate realisation have the experiences, like they will go to sleep, they will get up, the natural things will happen. They will get hungry, they will get thirsty. So they will eat to quench their thirst and hunger. But then the grip of *karma* is further

less. It will become off-white. And when the grip of *karma* is not there, it will be super white.

Can you explain a little more on the 2nd and 3rd stage?

You see, in the second one, the life is coupled with the two aspects; yoga is also practised, *bhoga* is also going on, experience is also going on. Pains and pleasures are there. But like the saints, they are able to maintain their frame of mind, quietude of mind without any affect or intimidation. Therefore they will aspire for higher state because *bhoga* is going on side by side with yoga. They don't get agonised but the agonising factors are present, the pestering factors are there. But when you go to this higher level, the pestering factors will be negligible, and will not be influencing at all. It is just a taint, brownish, off-white. That's how their life will be. But here they will definitely have the two things in life. They will say that this is my yoga, this is my spiritualism and that is my business of life, in family and society. They do not identify themselves with the role they play in family life or social life. If you have read *Tukaram's* life, his wife was a horrible wife, she troubled him, and she gave him hell. If he was not troubled, it's a different thing, but still it was part of his life. Whenever he wanted to sit for a *Bhajans*, worship, or *japa*, she would make him work but he did not get agonised. He had no grudge. When he would sit for *japa*, the wife would say: "the child is crying, you take care of the child." He was not agonised, but those *bhogas* were there to influence his whole life. They did not influence him but they co-existed. **Yoga - Bhoga** co-existed.

Here, in Fig. 3, they don't co-exist, as in when the *bhoga* is mild, because it will always be there - as I said, little infections will be there, as we are taking in bacteria, but we are not suffering.

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As you have done for the 2nd one, can you give an example for the 3rd one?

Third is like the *Shuka Mahamuni* and *Vamadeva*. Have you read their life? They were totally out of this world although they were in this world because they were about to be liberated at the end of that life, or on a particular point of time in that life. They were about to be liberated and that's why they had a unique way of life. Shankaracharya had successes and the failures, but there were no question of any success and failure for them. So they created Himalayas wherever they were. The Himalayas were not around them. Shankaracharya moved from place to place, he had debates, he had encounters, and he had fights. Saints also had antagonising people around, they were moving with people, travelling with people, some of them respecting, some of them not respecting, some of them despising. They did experience all those things but their yoga was not influenced, being saints. These are the examples of only those who were about to be liberated. For them, it occurs, it happens. So that is **intense yoga** (Fig. 3), this **middle yoga** (Fig. 2) and that's why I say: "**we are all practising mildest of mild yoga**" (Fig. 1). For us, like everything is part of life, yoga is also part of life. When we are able to segregate then we come to the middle level (Fig. 2) with two separate aspects and when we come to this (Fig. 3), there is only one aspect. And there again, the mild, middle, and intense levels are present. Again, in **intense**, if further makes a classification, **intense, more intense and most intense**. For most intense, they get instantaneous *samadhi*, instantaneous liberation. Like *Vamadeva*. *Vamadeva* came out of the womb of his mother and immediately got liberated. He was not even a human being for one moment: the moment he came out, they say he darted beyond the universe for liberation. So that means liberation is just the next moment, **when it is intensely intense, in intense practices**. So when we refer to intensity, we only refer to one aspect, not the practices. We are all practising mild yoga. You might practice intensely but you are still practising mild yoga. Because there are lots of

compromises, the business reality of the life compromises our yoga: "To-day I could not do, to-morrow I will not be able to do... to-morrow I am travelling...", "I have some other commitments whatever"... So many things are interrupting us. So even if you practice 10 hours a day, 14 hours a day, it is not going to be more than mild practice. Practicant is intense but practices are mild. So that's the mathematics which is beautifully brought out in the theory of yoga. We speak of intensity but, you see, we are all intellectuals, we never bother knowing what intensity is, what mildness is. So there are two aspects. ☯

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Transcribed and rewritten by C. Perre.

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The Year of the Plank

by Monica Dimofski

I remember attending Shirley's level IV class shortly after the new centre opened.

Things were in the process of being organized and some props had yet to arrive. At the beginning of class there was a discussion about sympathy, and how a yoga class holds little room for such a demonstration. While Shirley spoke, I questioned if I understood her words, but in a subsequent class I realized first hand what she meant.

For about a year, I was slowly recovering from a wrist injury. I was unable to do full arm balance and many others postures that required most of my body weight onto my hands. Coming from a gymnast background, this was difficult for me to accept, so to do these poses I eventually became dependent on the slanted plank. Full arm balance, which had been one of my favourite asanas, had become a most disheartening and challenging pose. I felt I was regressing in my practice.

During Shirley's class that day, our first pose was to be full arm balance. I remember my fear and discouragement at having to do it. I approached Shirley and said, "I have a wrist injury

so I usually use a slanted plank."

"Well we don't have slanted planks yet," she remarked.

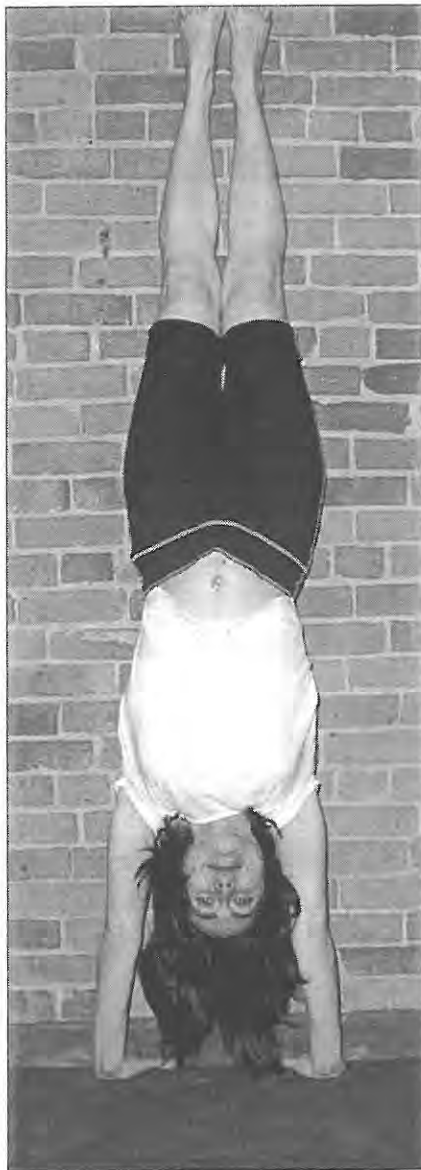
"I know, so um..."

"Just do it!" she demanded. With obedience and trepidation, I approached my mat. Paralyzed by fear, I

remained in my poor dog pose for some time with my inner monologue repeating, "kick up Monica, kick up." I could hear Shirley's voice filling the room: lift this, extend that, lengthen here... "Kick up, kick up" the monologue continued. So I did.

With shock and elation, I stood on my hands. The pain present, but not overbearing, almost brought tears to my eyes. I went up and down several times, thrilled and grateful at Shirley's lack of sympathy. What was I expecting her to say anyway, "Oh you have a sore wrist, poor thing, why don't you go lie over a bolster?" Luckily Shirley would have none of that nonsense.

Ever since that day, full arm balance has become my first pose, whether in my home practice or as a warm up before class. I still have some discomfort occasionally but my injury is well on its way to recovery. Now when I stand on my hands, that quiet disappointment has been replaced with quiet gratitude - gratitude for Shirley not allowing me any options that day, and for showing me first hand how her lack of sympathy demonstrated the greatest kindness. ☯



Asana and Consciousness: the body-mind connection

by Sally Adnams

At the Victoria Yoga Centre, we practice *asana* (postures) and *pranayama* (breathing), twisting ourselves into bizarre postures, while trying to breathe into our little toes, our groins, our shoulder blades. We try to isolate and work under-used muscles, and breathe life into our neglected, bloodless, dry patches. We know we feel better when we do this on a regular basis. But the question is, why, and what are we trying to accomplish?

When we do this work, we are stabilizing *prana*, maybe even extending it, which is what "*prana-yama*" means. Prana is all that vibrates in the universe - heat, light, magnetism, gravity, life, and spirit. It is cosmic energy that is immanent in all that is alive. Prana (energy) and *citta* (consciousness) appear together like cosmic twins within us. Where one is found, so is the other. This is Life. Where there is no breath, there is no prana, and no consciousness. This is death.

Whilst we live, we can learn to extend prana into our dull, bloodless areas, and activate them. We focus our minds and energy on a particular area, thus concentrating prana, and where prana is concentrated, *citta* is concentrated also. By the practice of *asana* and *pranayama* we activate not only our bodies, but our minds too, creating energetic links - a bridge for millions of neuronal pathways - between mind and body, purifying the channels of communication between them, until mind and body work as one.

As *Hatha* Yogins, our aim is to unify mind and body into body-mind, strengthening ourselves as we prepare for the ecstatic union with spirit, which, if we are ready, can occur in this life, in this very body. Enlightenment is a whole body-mind event. There are many yogic pathways to enlightenment, not all of them *Hatha*. We can practise *Karma* Yoga (selfless service in action), *Bhakti* Yoga (love and

devotion), *Jnana* Yoga (wisdom and learning) and other forms of yoga, devoting a life time to the understanding of a particular calling. And those of us who practice *Hatha* Yoga, need too, to spend a life time understanding, or better yet, realizing, our chosen area of work.

Hatha is the "forceful" yoga. For us, our tool is our body-mind and we use action, focus, and breath to achieve our purpose. Eventually, we use *asana* and *pranayama* to manipulate our own life force, which runs along our spine, in constant fluctuation, between the base of our spine and the crown of our head, like an electrical, or magnetic current. It has two aspects, a positive and negative flow, that correspond with the sympathetic and parasympathetic flows of our own nervous systems.

These two aspects of the life force are suggested by the name, *Hatha*. "Ha" represents the solar force, the masculine, positive, hot, powerful, active current, and "tha" represents the lunar force, the feminine, negative, cooling, receptive current. The work of the *Hatha* Yogin, as suggested by its name, is to marry these opposites, and stabilize them. Yoga is the unity of these two dynamic poles, so that eventually, we are physically strong and stable enough to bare the fruits of this marriage - the release of our own *Kundalini* energy, when it is time.

In book II:29 of the *Yoga Sutras*, Patanjali describes the observances and practices of the yogin who has chosen

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the *Ashtanga* (or eight-fold) path. These are as follows;

- 1) *Yama* (non-violence, truth, abstention from stealing, continence, and absence of greed).
- 2) *Niyama* (cleanliness, contentment, religious zeal, self study and the surrender of self to the supreme Self.)
- 3) *Asana* (perfect firmness of body, steadiness of intelligence, and benevolence of spirit.)
- 4) *Pranayama* (regulation of breath, restraint of breath.)
- 5) *Pratyahara* (retreat, withdrawal of the senses.)
- 6) *Dharana* (concentration, control of sense organs.)
- 7) *Dhyana* (meditation, contemplation, reflection, attention.)
- 8) *Samadhi* (profound meditation, absorption, superconsciousness.

This is a ladder of observances and practices that modify one into another. Some are external quests, some internal quests, but all are essential to the dedicated yogin who desires Freedom. The benefits of these practices are multiple, cleansing the organs of action, the senses of perception, sharpening the intelligence and purifying consciousness within, until finally, Freedom is realized.

According to Mr. Iyengar in *Light on the Yoga Sutras* (1984), "when the student learns how the minutest modifications of a toe can modify the whole asana, he is observing how the microcosm relates to the whole, and the organic completeness of universal structure is grasped."

When we practice asana and pranayama or the third and fourth limbs of the eightfold path in conjunction with the first two, yama and niyama, then we can prepare ourselves well for the last four practices. With right effort and concentration in asana and pranayama, we arrive intensely in the present moment, in the "now" of yoga. Perception and action become one, when mind, body and soul unite. This is the perfect posture, with perfection in action and freedom in consciousness.

This is no easy job, however. *The Mahabarata* says it is

easier to stand on the sharpened edge of a knife than for an unprepared person to "stand in the concentrations of yoga". But the rewards are great, for yogic concentration is a high energy state leading to mastery of the life force. Where enough attention is paid, there is connection, and when attention comes to be fixed in the top-most, psycho-energetic centre at the crown of the head, the quality of consciousness may change radically, yielding the ecstatic state.

This then, is why we contort and ventilate the body, to still the mind waves in small incremental steps, and eventually realize our own Freedom. ☯



Long time teachers at our centre... Leslie Hogya (foreground) and Ann Kilbertus teach the level III Thursday evening class



The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

Program of Classes in the Iyengar Approach to Yoga

Term 5: April 28 – June 22, 2003

April 22 - April 27 possible special classes

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

Level 1

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	6:30 – 7:30am	Doug Hart
Mon.	12:00 – 1:30pm	Lauren Cox
Mon.	3:45 – 5:15pm	Jo Anna Hope
Mon.	7:30 – 9:00pm	Ann Kilbertus
Tues.	10:00 – 11:30am	Leslie Hogya
Tues.	4:45 – 6:15pm	Melissa Worth
Tues.	7:00 – 8:30pm	Wendy Boyer
Wed.	6:30 – 7:30am	Corrine Lowen
Wed.	4:30 – 6:00pm	Nancy Searing (gentle)
Wed.	6:15 – 7:45pm	Ty Chandler
Wed.	7:45 – 9:15pm	Gwynneth Powell
Thurs.	8:30 – 10:00am	Linda Benn
Thurs.	4:30 – 6:00pm	Leslie Hogya
Thurs.	5:45 – 7:15pm	Wendy Boyer
Fri.	10:30 – 12:00pm	Linda Benn
Fri.	5:00 – 6:30pm	Gwynneth Powell
Sat.	9:30 – 11:00am	Corrine Lowen
Sun.	10:30 – 12:00pm	Ty Chandler
Sun.	4:30 – 6:00pm	Christine Dimofski

Level 1/2

Day	Time	Instructor
Wed.	9:00 – 10:30am	Ty Chandler
Wed.	7:30 – 9:00pm	Melissa Worth

Level 2

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	7:30 – 9:00pm	James Currie-Johnson
Tues.	10:00 – 11:30am	Robin Cantor
Tues.	6:30 – 8:00pm	Melissa Worth
Wed.	6:00 – 7:30pm	Gwynneth Powell
Thurs.	5:30pm – 7:00pm	Greg Sly
Fri.	7:00 – 8:00am	Christine Dimofski
Fri.	9:00 – 10:30am	Linda Benn
Sat.	8:00 – 9:30am	Corrine Lowen
Sun.	9:00 – 10:30am	Ty Chandler
Sun.	3:00 – 4:30pm	Christine Dimofski

Level 2/3

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	10:00 – 12:00pm	Lauren Cox
Tues.	5:30 – 7:00pm	Leslie Hogya

Level 3

Day	Time	Instructor
Thurs.	10:00 – 12:00pm	Shirley Daventry French, Linda Benn
Thurs.	6:00 – 8:00pm	A. Kilbertus, L. Hogya
Sat.	9:00 – 11:00am	Marlene Miller

Level 4

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	5:15 – 7:15pm	Shirley D. French

Drop-Ins

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	6:30 – 7:30am	Doug Hart
Tues.	12:00 – 1:00pm	Jeannette Merryfield
Wed.	6:30 – 7:30am	Corrine Lowen
Wed.	12:00 – 1:00pm	Christine Dimofski
Thurs.	12:00 – 1:00pm	Lauren Cox
Fri.	7:00 – 8:00am	Christine Dimofski
Fri.	12:00 – 1:00pm	Ty Chandler

Pranayama June 5, 12, 19

Level 3 or 4 – teacher's permission required

Thurs. 7:00 – 8:00am Shirley D. French

The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE #202, 919 Fort St. 386-YOGA (9642)

Term 5: April 28 – June 22, 2003

Timed Practice

Tues. 5:30 – 7:00pm Ty Chandler

Led Practice

Wed. 5:00 – 6:30pm James Currie-Johnson

Introduction To Pranayama

Wed. 7:00 – 8:00am Ann Kilbertus

Level 2 required. May 14, 21, 28, June 4

Men's Yoga

Thurs. 7:30 – 9:00pm Greg Sly

Focus on Women

Wed. 6:30am – 8:00am Jeannette Merryfield

Fri. 9:30 – 11:00am Christine Dimofski

Pre Natal Yoga

Tues. 1:30 – 2:45pm Robin Cantor

Sat. 3:00 – 4:30pm Lauren Cox

55 & Better

Mon. 10:30 – 12:00pm Wendy Boyer

Wed. 10:30 – 12:00pm Leslie Hogya

Special Needs

Wed. 4:30 – 6:00pm Shirley D. French,
Ann Kilbertus,
Leslie Hogya

Thurs. 1:15 – 2:30pm Leslie Hogya,
Linda Benn

Back Care

Mon. 4:00 – 5:15pm Linda Benn

Gentle

Wed. 4:30 – 6:00pm Nancy Searing

Family Yoga

Wed. 3:30 – 4:30pm Lauren Cox

Ty's Yoga Kids (Ages 10-14)

Fri. 4:00 – 5:00pm Ty Chandler

High School Yoga (Ages 14+)

Fri. 3:30 – 4:45pm Gwynneth Powell

The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE



VICTORIA
YOGA CENTRE'S

BIG BIG PRACTICE



Date: Friday, May 16

at the Victoria Yoga Centre
202-919 Fort Street

Asana Practice 6 - 7:30pm

Potluck dinner to follow

Bring food to share

*Everyone is welcome to join us.
Bring a friend, partner or family member.*

By donation. Free to members.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers help with all kinds of things at the Victoria Yoga Centre. This column introduces some of the people who give a great deal to our community.

Keiko's Account

by Jane Munro

After Keiko Alkire has folded sixty mats during a Special Needs class, her hands are dirty, even though the mats get washed frequently. That's one negative consequence from her volunteering. When helping with that class, she feels like a nurse assisting doctors and patients—it's the teachers who diagnose and prescribe; it's the volunteers who fetch and support. She holds up legs, props a back, carries bolsters, clears the floor. As the year progresses, it's harder to find steady volunteers. Sometimes, when she's seeking a couple of people to help mail out the Newsletter, she'll make fourteen phone calls.

Keiko doesn't want to gloss over the negatives to volunteering, but for her the positive aspects outweigh them. For example, when someone who has undergone chemotherapy comes to a Special Needs class, the teachers give postures to boost the immune system. Keiko hears their advice and sees how they work with the student. Similarly, she figures that when Mr. Iyengar instructs AIDS patients to do particular asanas, it's to boost their immune systems and nervous systems. Over time, she learns a lot.

And, she makes her own discoveries. One eye-opener came as she helped a student, whose body was half

paralyzed after a stroke, go into Utthita Trikonâsana. She got the feet braced, supported the torso, put the left arm in place, then raised the right arm. As soon as she pulled up on the right hand, the right foot lifted inadvertently. This reminded her of a baby learning to walk, swinging its right arm with its right leg. It also reminded her of playing two-handed scales on the piano, making her fingers act independently. It illustrated how coordination depends on a complex system of commands between brain and body. Keiko has practiced Iyengar yoga for nineteen years.

She started for health reasons—back pain.

Although she still experiences pain she figures if she didn't do yoga it would be worse. Her reasons for regularly volunteering at the Yoga Centre are simple: she has the capacity to do it—she can organize her time to include it, and she can find enough energy to sustain her commitment. What keeps her going? Keiko says, "The philosophy of yoga agrees with me."

To her, yoga's philosophical tenants resemble those of

Buddhism. She describes Buddhism as a "protestant" response to "catholic" Hinduism. It provides a solution to the endless cycle of karma and rebirth by teaching an individual how to reach Nirvana—a blissful state full of divine light, accessible to anyone through practices that lead to detachment. Likewise, yoga's practices teach one to observe the mind, detach, and find serenity.

Keiko also volunteers in a few other places. For instance, she does fund-raising. Without fail, the benefits tip the balance—she always counts her volunteering as a positive experience. ☺

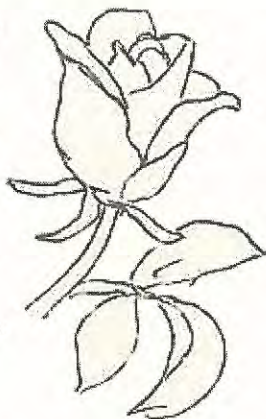




Radha Yoga Centre

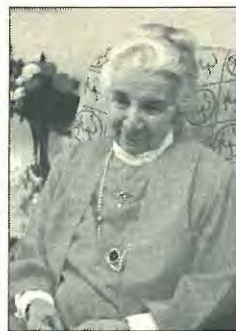
The Rose Ceremony at the Radha Yoga Centre

The Rose Ceremony has two parts, Saturday evening and Sunday morning. Using the rose as a symbol of your own spiritual growth and commitment, this is a time to clarify and express your personal dedication to the Most High in your life, and then release your grudges and resentments.



"God, here is a flower. I have not made the flower. I have no power to create a flower. I have really nothing, not a single thing, I can call my own. But I take this little part of your creation, and I give it back to you, charged with my love, my emotions and my devotion. Please accept my offering."

-Swami Radha



Swami Radha

"The decision to do the Rose Ceremony is, of course, a very special one. In order to make it you must clearly see the questions before you: Do you want to be rooted in the pursuit of something that gives you some satisfaction and a place in the world, or do you want to be rooted in divine love?"

-Swami Radha

Saturday July 12 at 7:30pm and

Sunday July 13 at 9:30am

bring two roses

please call to register

free, all welcome

Light Up the World

Sunday May 4, 1-4pm

sliding scale \$10-\$30

Learn or deepen the healing practice
of the Divine Light Invocation.

Proceeds to the Light Up the World Foundation,
providing light for families in developing countries.

Dream Yoga Workshop

Sunday June 8, 1-4pm

sliding scale \$20-\$30

YOGA CALENDAR

MAY 2003

2-4 Faeq Biria Workshop
9 Friday Night Gathering
16 Big,Big Practice
24 Teacher's Meeting
30-31 CIYTA AGM in Winnipeg

JUNE 2003

6-8 Saltspring Retreat
20-23 Introductory Level I and II Assessment
in Edmonton
21 Surya Namaskar with Ty Chandler
23-27 Summer Sadhanas
28 Teacher's Meeting

JULY 2003

2-5 Summer Sadhanas
7-12 Introductory Teacher's Intensive

AUGUST 2003

18-22 Intermediate Teacher's Intensive
25-29 Student Intensive

SEPTEMBER 2003

20 Women's Health
27 Teacher's Meeting

OCTOBER 2003

4, 5 Going Deeper
25 Teacher's Meeting
31- 2 Chris Saudek

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION FORM:

Please complete this form and send it with your cheque or money order to the Victoria Yoga Centre Society,
c/o Constance Barker, 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3

Membership/Subscription fee is \$30 and renewable each January

Name: _____

Address: _____ City _____

Postal Code: _____ Country: _____ Phone _____

E-mail _____

☐ Do not mail me my newsletter during sessions, I'll pick one up at my class.

☐ Receipt Required.

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

NEWSLETTER

July/August 2003



Subscribe Now



"Without art there is no science. A Philosopher is always an artist and vice versa. Our body is the instrument for our art."

-B.K.S. Iyengar

Summer Sadhanas

at the Victoria Yoga Centre

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

This summer we offer two *Sadhanas* 90 minute practices for 5 consecutive days.

Each *Sadhana* has an early morning, mid-morning, or evening practice time.

Choose the one that suits your schedule!

Prerequisite:

Completion of Level 1 and some familiarity
with headstand and shoulderstand.

Monday, June 23 – Friday, June 27

6:30 – 8:00 am	Ty Chandler
10:00 – 11:30 am	Linda Benn, Wendy Boyer
5:30 – 7:00 pm	Gwynneth Powell, Jeanette Merryfield

Wednesday, July 2 – Sunday, July 6

6:30 – 8:00 am	Ann Kilbertus
10:00 – 11:30 am	Robin Cantor
5:30 – 7:00 pm	Christine Dimofski

Fees for each 5-day Sadhana:

Members \$90 (+GST), Non-Members \$110 (+GST)
(Register in two or more *Sadhanas* and receive a 15% discount!)

To register, drop in, or call us at:
#202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 3K3

Phone: 386-YOGA (9642)
Website: www.victoriayogacentre.ca

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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 persons of the society at large by the study and discipline of Yoga." The Society owes its inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

The Society Newsletter is published regularly, providing current information on events concerning yoga in the Victoria area and the Yasodhara Ashram. Published by the VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY.

Anyone wishing to contribute articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions may contact the

Victoria Yoga Centre Newsletter:

202 - 919 Fort Street

Victoria BC V8V 3K3

For more information on Victoria Yoga Centre activities and events, please call 386-YOGA (9642) or visit our website: www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca

Deadline for next issue: July 15, 2003

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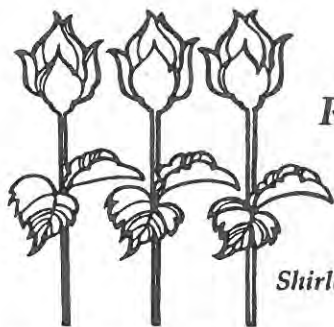
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Note: The editor/newsletter committee hold the right to edit all articles at their discretion. It should also be noted that not all articles submitted are printed in the newsletter due to space and other considerations.



Reflections

by
Shirley Daventry French

In December 1981 I wrote the following column for the newsletter answering the question: *Where is the Victoria Yoga centre?* I was president of the yoga centre at that time and it was entitled "Letter from the President". My column metamorphosed into Reflections in April 1983.



"I am often asked 'Where is the Victoria Yoga Centre?' It's difficult to answer that question briefly. Sometimes it's at my home; sometimes at the Ingimundson's or the Miller's or Ann Rosemary Conway's or at the Y or any number of other

places where we gather as a group to study, practice and explore the teachings of Yoga. But really it's in the hearts and minds of the people who are its members

It's Penny Carter helping Norman McKenzie move by driving out to Metchosin after a week's work and an intensive weekend workshop and then in the rain and fog heaving a station-wagon load of heavy boxes into the house. A week later it's Bruce and Sue Ingimundson, whose occupations include engineering, nursing, teaching yoga and (last but not least) bringing up four young daughters, taking time out of their weekend respite to help another yoga centre

member, Marlene Miller, move into her new apartment.

Marlene and Norman themselves embody the spirit of the yoga centre by their work in preparing and distributing newsletters, organizing, chairing and recording meetings, teaching yoga and helping out in a number of ways - all in addition to holding down full-time employment. The yoga centre is Lavona Parker putting a book from the yoga development course at Yasodhara Ashram on audio tape for a blind man who would like to take this course. It's Karen Moreau Abel and Susan Riley scrubbing out my kitchen in preparation for a visit by Swami Radha. It's Carole Miller, who, in the midst of a busy personal and professional life, always finds time to listen, to offer support to others, and whose perseverance I have always admired.

The yoga centre is a group of us participating in an Iyengar Yoga workshop. It's doing the work necessary to bring these workshops about such as organization, putting people up in our homes, and the less attractive jobs like moving a carload of props from the Y to James Bay and back again.

It's the sustained effort of preparing to go to India and study with B.K.S. Iyengar himself and the willingness to prepare for this experience without any guarantee that you will be one of those selected to go.

It's sixteen people staying at my house for a workshop with Swami Radha and, without my having to ask, preparing food, clearing up etc. Everything which needs to be done gets done quietly and efficiently, our combined efforts making it possible for all of us to get the most out of the visit of this great teacher.

It's Derek French and Trish and Bill Graham personifying the spirit of karma yoga by freely offering their professional services. Derek, a physician and longtime yoga practitioner, by teaching

anatomy, physiology, care of the back and health related topics to yoga teachers and trainees. Bill and Trish, professional designers and printers, giving generously of their time and expertise to produce our newsletter.

Many others too, like Frances Walsh who has poured over a typewriter for hours on various of our endeavours. Ann Rosemary Conway, an artist who designed our lovely seal along with many brochures and posters and who, like Richard Reeves, helps us unravel the mystery of our dreams. And to unravel another mystery - that of my bookkeeping - Denis Fafard, chartered accountant, has offered his services.

It's also the students who open their bodies and minds to our efforts at teaching, the out-of-town members who invite us to give workshops or who travel long distances to participate in workshops here, who support us by their donations.

The yoga centre came into being a few years' ago when I returned from a three month stay at Yasodhara Ashram. Swami Radha encouraged me to build bridges to bring people of like mind together for spiritual growth and learning. On occasions during these past five years I have felt that I was building these bridges almost single-handed. I no longer feel like that. In Victoria we now have a team of skillful bridge builders. I thank you all.

I'd like to end with a prayer which always reawakens in me a feeling of gratitude: "May all be blessed as we are blessed!"

Most of the people mentioned in this article are no longer involved with the centre. This does not mean, of course, that they are no longer on the spiritual path. With some I have no knowledge of their whereabouts; with others I know that they are continuing their spiritual journey somewhere else. Some live in other cities and some in other countries. Some continue to subscribe to the newsletter and stay in touch, others do

With longtime yoga practitioners, when we speak of "the work" we mean not only our practice of asana, pranayama and whatever other personal spiritual practices we do regularly, we mean propagating the teachings of yoga and putting them into practice in all aspects of our life.

not. People come and go but the work goes on.

It's the same when I look at the group photograph from my first trip to Pune. The majority of the students in my first intensive with B.K.S. Iyengar are not among his students today. Whether most of them practise yoga I do not know. People come and go but the work goes on.

With longtime yoga practitioners, when we speak of "the work" we mean not only our practice of asana, pranayama and whatever other personal spiritual practices we do regularly, we mean propagating the teachings of yoga and putting them into practice in all aspects of our life. This involves the practice of *Kriya Yoga*, the yoga of action: self-discipline, self-study and devotion; and the eightfold path of *Astanga Yoga* with its foundation of the individual and universal ethical disciplines of *yama* and *niyama*. It also involves selfless service or *karma yoga*. These practices lie at the heart of yoga and the heart of the Victoria Yoga Centre. Together they constitute "the work".

These days it is much easier to answer the question: *Where is the Victoria Yoga Centre*, than it was in 1981. It is downtown at 919 Fort Street. The block between Quadra and Vancouver streets. Hopefully it also continues to exist in the hearts and minds of its members as they work together to keep the ideal alive of a spiritual centre in the city whose stated purpose is

to encourage the physical, mental and spiritual growth of its members by the study of yoga.

Yoga is a discipline. Like most disciplines it is easy to start, difficult to sustain and challenging to master. Being part of a group of like-minded *sadhakas* or aspirants helps considerably. I was very touched in the last issue of the newsletter by Adia Kapoor's article¹ about the centre and particularly her statement : "I thought of *our* centre often while I was in Asia last summer!" Adia encouraged those who come to the centre and take classes to take time to appreciate what it offers. A very yogic sentiment, because gratitude is an essential ingredient on the spiritual path.

In the current climate of Yoga, a non-profit yoga centre such as ours appears to be something of an anachronism. Rather, we are following a tradition, thousands of years old, and teachings which are as relevant to life in twenty first century Canada as they were in ancient India.

With certain changes, the work of our centre goes on today in much the same way as it did when I wrote that column twenty two years ago.

One major change is that we are now fully an Iyengar Yoga centre, leaving the propagation of Swami Radha's work to her disciples at Radha Yoga Centre whose work we respect. As you become more proficient at any discipline you must become more exclusive in its practice. Only then can you hope to penetrate its depth and discover its more subtle aspects.

Another significant difference is that we have added the considerable business of running an actual yoga centre space to all our other work in the community.

The work has changed. The names have changed as well, although a few of the people mentioned in my 1981 article are still actively involved. We have expanded and the work has expanded. There has been a sizable expansion in the area of teacher training, including preparations for national certification and

assessment, and our participation in the work of the Canadian Iyengar Yoga Teachers' Association. Thankfully our teachers and our general membership have supported this expansion by doing the work which needs to be done.

We should, as Adia says, be appreciative of our centre. We should not ever take it for granted. It will be there doing "the work" as long as there is support from our membership in both tacit and tangible forms. The pioneers of the Victoria Yoga Centre understood the value of selfless service as a potent spiritual practice, and their efforts set the foundation for the centre we have today.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, when he is speaking to Arjuna about the importance of *karma yoga*, Lord Krishna says: "And do thy duty, even if it be humble, rather than another's, even if it be great. To die in one's duty is life: to live in another's is death."²

If you are not clear what is your duty, step inside the centre, attend classes, develop a personal practice, come to gatherings and special events, associate with your fellow students and your teachers, and find out where your unique talents can be used for the sustenance of the centre, for the propagation of the work from which you have benefited, and coincidentally for your own personal spiritual growth.

Finally, echoing the sentiments with which I ended my article in 1981: *May all be blessed as we are blessed!* ☯

Footnotes

1. *The Opportunity to Practice* by Adia Kapoor, Victoria Yoga Centre newsletter May/June 2003.

2. *Bhagavad Gita* translated from the sanskrit by Juan Mascaro, Chapter 3, verse 35.

Back by
Popular
Demand!

August 25-29

Monday to Friday

9 am to noon

*"Practice (abhyasa) is
the art of learning that
which has to be learned
through the cultivation
of disciplined action."*

*"When you are
fully in the body,
you meet the soul."*

B.K.S. Iyengar

Student Summer Intensive!

with Ty Chandler and Robin Cantor



Ty and Robin are certified Iyengar teachers who bring enthusiasm, dedication and humour to this five day intensive. There will be two hours of asana (including *Yoga Karunta* and a timed practice) a day, introduction to pranayama, and philosophical and spiritual discussion.

A lunch at the Spice Jammer will be provided.

Learn how to establish and deepen your daily practice.

Level 2 Iyengar experience is required for this workshop.

Fees:

\$210.00 for Victoria Yoga Centre members

\$240.00 for non-members

Credit card or cheque payable in Canadian
funds to: The Victoria Yoga Centre

Call or mail:

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

IN OUR MAILBOX



Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute

My Dear Leslie Hogya,

I just now received your letter and noted the contents wherein you mentioned that this year's scholarship was given to Wies Pukesh who came last year and Marlene Miller who will be arriving in June 2003. I hope that they learn well and do justice for this scholarship they get from the "B.K.S. Iyengar" scholarship fund.

Regarding the donations which you want to offer to my plan of building a yoga institute in my village, I have to request you to hold on as I have to get permission from the Central Government to receive funds from foreign students. I have applied for it just now and I would like to wait for three months to get the response from them.

Yours sincerely,

(B.K.S. Iyengar)

I am writing to express my gratitude for the scheduling changes you made (after the schedule was already printed). I am sure this was inconvenient for some of you, but you have made me and the others in our morning class with Christine very happy. I hope too, that by offering an evening Focus on Women class, a whole new circle of women yoga students will find a meaningful haven from their busy lives.

I have a renewed sense of loyalty to the Victoria Yoga Centre and a very grateful heart.

Namaste, Stephanie Ippen

Dear Rosemary,

I am sorry that you were not at this morning's Level 3 class. There were about 26 students there, and I tossed out the question: *What does it mean to you to have this space here to come to and practise yoga?*

Had you been there, you would have heard that it means a great deal to all of them, which was expressed eloquently and affectionately. They appreciate all who do the work to keep this space open, functioning and solvent, whether at the forefront or behind the scenes. It was clear that this group of students value the Centre very much not only as a place to practise and learn, but as a focus for yoga in all aspects of their lives.

If you should ever doubt, as you go to yet another meeting or face yet another controversy, that your work and that of the Board on our behalf is valued, please be assured that from what I heard this morning it certainly is. Under Leslie last year and yourself now, this is in every sense a spiritual Centre for yoga in its fullest sense.

I should like to add my personal appreciation to that of the students in the class taught by me this morning—who are not "my" students but, as Adia Kapoor said in the recent newsletter, students of "our Centre".

Would you please pass their appreciation on to your Board.

With love and light, Shirley

Ed's Note:

Rosemary Barritt is the President of the Board of Directors of the Victoria Yoga Centre. Other individuals who serve on the Board include: Connie Barker, Leslie Hogya, Doug Hart, Martha Chick, Ted Mather, Amanda Mills, Jim Riddell, Sue Riddell, Drew Yallop, Linda Benn, and Greg Sly.

On The Newsletter

Keiko Alkire told us in a recent issue that it has taken her as many as 14 phone calls to locate a newsletter volunteer. The other day in class, Shirley asked "What does the Yoga Centre mean to you?" One of the things that means the most to me, and I believe distinguishes us from other organizations is our newsletter, and that it takes such effort to produce makes it all the more impressive.

Published since 1981, our archived back issues are a fount of resource material, as well as containing accounts of some of the more thrilling moments in VYC history. Did you know for instance that Mr. Iyengar visited Victoria and was honored by the Mayor? Or that you will find an account of Shirley's day trip to Niagara Falls with BKS Iyengar and his entourage? I love curling up on the library cushions and reading the back issues, it has been an interesting way to get to know my teachers and fellow students, gaining insight into their yoga journeys.

In London England attending a yoga class I was told that "our" newsletter had just arrived, and in Halifax Nova Scotia a year later, a similar occurrence. I felt pleased at the realization that a world wide audience of Iyengar students has access to Shirley's "Reflections" column as well as some of our other wonderful writers. Weis Pukesh and Neil McKinley come to mind.

Whether the newsletter contains articles on death and dying, or musings on beloved teachers, the newsletter will take you for a ride on the "Maid of the Mist", you will travel back and forth to India; you may laugh, and will probably cry. I am certain that you will be impressed and inspired by the history of the Victoria Yoga Centre.

Karin Dayton

Clearing Doubts about Yoga Practice during Menstruation

by Geeta S. Iyengar

Kind permission has been granted by Yoga Rahasya to reprint this article by Dr. Geeta S. Iyengar, published in Vol. 10, No. 2, 2003.

There appears to be a lot of confusion in the minds of teachers as well as students about what they should and what they should not practice during menstruation. This has led to several students questioning Smt. Geeta S. Iyengar about the same. So, she has compiled answers to some of the most commonly asked questions regarding yoga practice during menstruation.



Which are the asanas and pranayama one can safely do during menstruation?



From the day menstruation begins until it ends, which may take four to seven days, one should stick to the practice of those asanas that do not obstruct the menstrual flow and help a woman keep herself healthy. Only those selected asanas have to be done which do not make her run out of energy or bring any hormonal disturbance.

The standing forward extensions - (Utthistha paschima pratana sthiti), such as Uttanasana, Adho Mukha Svanasana, Prasara Padottanasana, Parsvottanasana - preferably with the head supported - help during menstruation. In order to soften the abdomen, one has to make the back concave before going to the final asana. But those who suffer from bodyache, low BP, low energy or sudden fall of their blood sugar level should avoid these postures.

Ardha Chandrasana and Utthita Hasta Padangusthasana II, help to check heavy bleeding, backache and abdominal cramps. Those who suffer from lower back-pain, sciatica, slipped disc have to add these two asanas to their list.



The supine *asanas* (*supta sthiti*) - such as *Supta Virasana*, *Supta Baddhakonasana*, *Supta Svastikasana*, *Matsyasana*, *Supta Padangusthasana II* (done with the support of belts, bolsters and blankets), relax the muscles and nerves which are under constant stress, strain and irritation. These *asanas* help to relax and slow down the constantly throbbing vibrating organ so that minimum vital energy is consumed.

Those who suffer from breathlessness, heaviness in the breasts, water retention, heavy bleeding, abdominal cramps, mental irritation and impulsion find these *asanas* very effective to reduce and get rid of those problems.

The simple forward extensions (*paschima pratana sthiti*) - such as *Adho Mukha Virasana*, *Adho Mukha Svastikasana*, *Janu Sirsasana*, *Trianga Mukhaikapada Paschimottanasana*, *Ardha Baddha Padma Paschimottanasana*, *Marichyasana*, *Parsva Upavistha Konasana*, *Adho Mukha Upavistha Konasana*, with head rested on a support, checks excessive bleeding, soothes the adomen and makes the throbbing brain-cells rest. These *asanas* help those who suffer from headache, backache, heavy bleeding, abdominal cramps and fatigue.

The sitting *asanas* (*Upavistha sthiti*) - such as *Svastikasana*, *Virasana*, *Padmasana*, *Baddha Konasana*, *Upavistha Konasana*, *Gomukhasana*, *Mulabandhasana* etc., help to remove tension and stress. It is also a time where one can deal with the knees, hamstrings, groins, ankles, toes in order lubricate, extend and flex, so that the joints are loosened, and the swelling and pain is eradicated. When the legs are soothed by these *asanas* the brain too gets calmed.



During menstruation, it is time for women having arthritic pain to work on their shoulders, elbows and wrists by practising *Parsva Baddha Hastasana*, *Paschima Namaskarasana*, *Gomukhasana* (arm position), and rope 1 for shoulders, etc.

Those who suffer with arthritis, rheumatoid pains, swelling in the joints get sufficient time to work on those areas, by slowly and gradually releasing and relieving the joints without being aggressive. Those who cannot do *Virasana*, *Padmasana* can put in (non-aggressive) effort to work on the knees as there would be sufficient time and one is not in a hurry to finish the daily schedule of practice.

In order to have good organic and nervine rest, one has to do *Viparita Dandasana* and *Setu Bandha Sarvangasana* (*purva pratana sthiti*) which help to energise and stimulate the brain, chest, lungs, heart and maintain hormonal balance.

One can do *Savasana*, *Ujjayi* and *Viloma pranayama* in *Savasana*. If menstruation is normal without any pain, headache, irritation, anxiety, suffocation, depression then one can do *Ujjayi* and *Viloma pranayama* in a sitting position. To maintain good health during menstruation, one should practice Supine, Forward extensions, supported *Viparita Dandasana* and *Setu Bandha Sarvangasana*, *pranayama* in *Savasana*, as a short course, though it normally takes one and a half to two hours.

Q Which are the *asanas* and *pranayamas* to be avoided?

A One should avoid inversions (*Viparita sthiti*), such as *Adho Mukha Vriksasana*, arm-balancings like *Bakasana* (*bhujatalan sthiti*), backward extensions (*purva pratana sthiti*) such as *Urdhva Dhanurasana*, *Kapotasana* and the body knottings (*grantha sthiti*), such as *Yoganidrasana*, *Ek Pada Sirsasana* and abdominal contraction (*udara akunchana sthiti*) such as *Navasana* and *Jathara Parivartanasana*.

One should avoid *pranayama* in a sitting position. Even if it is done, it should not be for more than fifteen

minutes. Avoid *antara* and *bahya kumbhakas*, *uddiyana* and *mula bandhas*, *bhastrika*, *kapalabhati* and *mahamudra*.

Q Which *asanas* are permissible for patients when they have their own programmes of remedial *asanas*?

A This answer has a vast scope yet I will give some clues here. If they have spinal problems then they can perform the standing *asanas* but do them for a shorter duration in order to avoid fatigue. They have to take a proper support for their back, chest, legs and so on to specifically work on their affected area.

As a patient, if they need to do rope movements for their shoulder, neck, back then they should do it with support. The lateral twists (*parivrtta sthiti*) such as *Bharadvajasana*, *Marichyasana* can be done since the abdomen is not compressed. The rest of the twistings may cause undue pressure on the ovaries, uterus, and vagina. Therefore, one should avoid such *asanas*. Other *asanas* enlisted above which can be practised during menstruation can be performed provided they are not contra-indicated for their problems.

Q Why shouldn't we do inversions (*viparita sthiti*) during menstruation?

A The blood flow will be arrested if one does inverted *asanas* during menstruation. Those who tried to do these out of enthusiasm or callousness will have noticed that the flow stops abruptly. This is certainly not good for health since it may lead to fibroids, cysts, endometriosis and cancer and damage the system.

According to *ayurveda*, what ever has to be thrown out should be thrown out and not retained or held in. You cannot hold urine, faeces, phlegm, mucus etc. inside, as they are substances that have to be thrown out. These

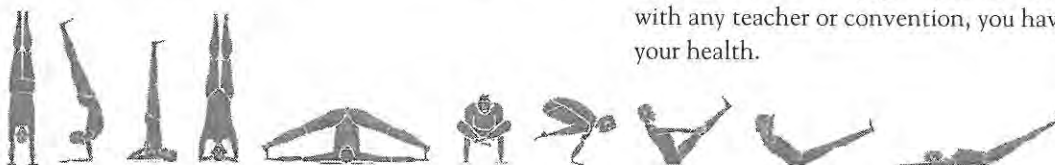
are called as *mala* - the waste, which need to be excreted. They invite diseases if they are retained. During menstruation one has to lessen physical exertion including walking, dancing or heavy household work. The body demands rest and relaxation and one needs to provide that.

The inversions have their own characteristics. This category of *asanas* arrest the menstrual flow and when done during pregnancy they safely hold the foetus. These *asanas* prove to be a boon for those who have frequent miscarriage. For those whose periods are prolonged for more than fifteen days are permitted to start doing inversions after twelve days even if they have a continuous flow. The inversions will arrest the bleeding. Obviously one has to know the cause behind such prolonged and heavy flow and treat that disease with other *asanas* during the days they are not menstruating. But, the flow can be controlled. If a woman spots at the time of ovulation then the inversions act as a medication.

After the menstrual cycle gets over, begin your practice with inversions, as they are great healers as far as the reproductive system is concerned. They quickly bring a hormonal balance. If the effects of inversions are known then one need not doubt about their omission during menstruation. Still, due to obstinacy and rigidity, if one forces oneself to do these *asanas* then they may have to pay a heavy price later if not immediately.

Q Is it safe to do inversions after the third day, during ones own practice and on organised "yoga days"?

A A woman should not ask such a stupid question. The flow has to stop completely. The question is not of three days or four days. The flow has to stop. Whether it is a yoga day or an intensive course with any teacher or convention, you have to protect your health.



As soon as the flow stops, begin the practice with inversions. Do not suddenly start with standing poses, back-bendings, balancings etc. Remember that you have just delivered the unborn baby, since menstruation is known as the funeral of the unborn baby. ☯

In and Around Our Centre

by Leslie Hogle

B.K.S. Iyengar Scholarship

The money for this fund traditionally comes from a workshop given every December around the time of Guruji's birthday. The Board of Directors recently decided to add additional funds to this scholarship. The money can be used by members who wish to study Iyengar Yoga in Pune or elsewhere. For example, Faeq Biria, a senior Iyengar teacher was in Vancouver for five days. Several of our teachers went there to study with him.

The B.K.S. Iyengar scholarship fund is different from our other scholarships, which are offered to members for our own local workshops. If you would like information on how to apply for any of our scholarships, please speak to someone at the front desk for more information (These are for members only).

Nursing

The Victoria Yoga Centre was pleased to host a student from the School of Nursing at the University of Victoria. Krista did her practicum with us this past winter. She was able to help in special needs class and took some classes with the 55 plus group to observe whatthey do. She also spent a day shadowing Ann Kilbertus, one of our special needs teachers, in her day job as an Occupational Therapist in Home Care.

Krista was able to help us by producing a booklet for special needs volunteers. The booklet tells volunteers



Leslie teaches UVic students

what is expected in the class, and how to set up props and equipment.

Her nursing skills were evident, in how quickly Krista was able to understand clients' needs. It was a great learning experience for all, and one we would be willing to take on again.

Partnership with UVic

Last year we reported that a credit course in yoga was being offered at the University of Victoria through the Physical Education Dept. The course is being offered again this spring, and is being taught by University of Victoria Professor Carole Miller who is also one of our teacher group members. Three yoga centre teachers,



**Carole and Ann teach UVic students at on
their "field trip" to YVC**

Shirley Daventry French, Ann Kilbertus and Leslie Hoga are all spending time in the UVic class as guest teachers. We also have invited the students to take one free class at our centre so they can make a comparison between populations. They can also see the difference it makes to take a class in a fully equipped studio.

Studios

We are now teaching on the ground floor of our building in a third studio. When we moved in upstairs, we didn't paint, or do the flooring, or install a rope wall before we opened. We did all that in the newest space, plus improve the lighting, build a partition, remodel the bathroom, and make general improvements in all areas of the space.

A lot of help, both paid and volunteer, went into getting the studio prepared to open. Thank you to all who helped us to get our third studio up and running. See "Studio "C" article by Corrine Lowen, in this issue.

Library

In order to borrow books from our library one must be a member of the Victoria Yoga centre. It is one of the privileges of membership. Our library is often used for impromptu meetings. Often one will find some of the teachers eating, resting or talking together. It is a quiet sanctuary in our centre.

Thank you to the many people who bring in books to donate to the library. You may or may not find your donated books on our shelves. If the books have yellowed pages and are starting to fall apart, they get recycled. The same goes if they are not Iyengar based *asana* books. We do not promote other yoga methods in our books for sale or in our library. So please don't bring us those outdated books from the 1970s that are now dog-eared, or your old yoga magazines and journals—they would be better given to a used bookstore. It's a very small space! Thank you to Janine Beckner who processes all our materials. One of our many volunteers! ☺

Studio "C" Preparation and Opening

by Corrine Lowen

Victoria Yoga Centre has opened a beautiful new studio overlooking the park on Meares Street. What an incredible journey it has been! Just as the dust was beginning to settle on our first year of operation a new opportunity opened up. The tenants on the main floor were planning to vacate their space.

Were we interested in expanding into this space? Would enough students come to fill the space? Would enough teachers be available to carry the extra teaching load? Was there enough energy in the community to sustain the effort required to plan and renovate a new space? Were we doing enough with what we already had? Was this the right space? How would we know the answers to these questions?

Should we do it? Could we do it? Would we do it?

We did it! This seed of an idea had germinated and the sprouting vision began to develop its own momentum. Over the course of the winter the cold bare space on the ground floor developed beyond an idea and became reality in the form of another fully equipped Iyengar Yoga studio, in time to hold classes there in Term 5—May & June.

Thank you to all the members of our community whose combined efforts made that cold space into a vibrant yoga studio. Shirley Daventry French helped us to see through our fears and recognize our opportunity. Her blessing encouraged us to move forward. The members of the board (past and present) spent many hours and meetings pondering and discussing the idea, making every effort to make a good decision for the community, then volunteered hours of time planning and helping to oversee the renovations. Teachers showed their willingness to share the expanded teaching load. Students helped with cleaning and

preparing the space for teaching. A varied crew of workers coped with ever changing schedules, juggling to complete the work in time for classes to start there in the first week of the term. Each one played a part in bringing the "opportunity to practice here today" to members of the Iyengar Yoga community in Victoria.

Special thanks to: Rosemary Barritt, Jim and Sue Riddell, Doug Hart, Connie Barker, Gary Wong, Vince Cummings and Monica Dimofsky who helped prepare the space for teaching. Leslie Hogya, Amanda Mills, Drew Yallup, Doug Hart and Jim Riddell served on the planning committee. Amanda and Leslie organized and coordinated much of the work. John Waters painted, Ted Mather built walls and hung doors, Jake Meems installed lighting and wiring, Dave Sweet and Gardiner MacDermott provided the flooring, Craig installed the new floor and fixtures in the bathroom. Greg Sly made the clothes rack, Nina Zak, Wendy Marley and Sharon Turnbull, chose colours, helped with space planning and supplied window coverings. Robin Cantor and Lauren Cox organized the props, Connie Barker arranged for the chair backs to be removed, Paul Sobejko built the rope

walls, Bruce Cox built shelving and more shelving, and *Setu Bandha* benches, Gwynneth Powell made the eye weights, Jim Riddell cut the mats and made the ropes for the walls, Chris Lea built a new pony. Ty helped with cleaning. Gail Reany helped us negotiate our

lease. Thanks also to Doug Thompson, our land lord, and Island Blue Print. Our students and our community lent their excitement and their support. Our staff: Britta, Christine, Monica, Heather and Karin fielded questions, passed out keys and worked their way through all the upheaval.

Please join us in a celebrating the efforts that helped to create our new studio on Saturday, July 5 from 12:00 noon to 3:00 pm. There will be a practice, music and food. We will celebrate the naming of our studios with the announcement of the winners of our "Name the Studios" contest. Be sure to have brought your entry

form into the center by June 21. Shirley will select three names from the entries, and the lucky winner will be off to the Salt Spring Retreat in 2004! We look forward to seeing you all there. ☺



YOGA PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

BOOKS

(all book prices subject to GST)

Back Care Basics – Mary P. Schatz (1992)	\$30.00
How to Use Yoga – Mira Mehta (1994)	\$25.00
Laminated practice sheets – Chris Saudek	\$ 8.50
Light on Pranayama – BKS Iyengar (1981)	\$30.00
Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali – BKS Iyengar (1993)	\$25.00
Light on Yoga – BKS Iyengar (1966, 1976)	\$30.00
Relax and Renew – Judith Lasater (1995)	\$30.00
The New Yoga for People Over 50 – Suza Francina (1997)	\$20.00
The Runners Yoga Book – Jean Couch (1990)	\$30.00
The Tree of Yoga – BKS Iyengar (1988)	\$20.00
The Yoga of Breath – Richard Rosen	\$25.00
Womens Book of Yoga and Health – L. Sparrow, P. Walden	\$34.95
Yoga A Gem for Women – Geeta Iyengar (1983)	\$15.00
Yoga for Children – Sandra Jordan (1987)	\$20.00
Yoga for Pregnancy – Sandra Jordan (1987)	\$28.00
Yoga in Action: A Preliminary Course – Geeta Iyengar	\$15.00
Yoga Kurunta – Chris Saudek	\$25.00
Yoga the Iyengar Way – Silva, Mira, and Shyam Mehta (1990)	\$35.00
Yoga: The Path to Holistic Health – BKS Iyengar (2001)	\$50.00

AUDIO/VIDEO

(All audio/video prices subject to 7% GST and 7.5% PST)

Introduction to Yoga – Patricia Walden (Video)	\$29.00
Pranayama: The Art of Breathing – Felicity Green (Audio)	\$30.00
Silence of the Spirit – Fr. Joe Pereira (Audio)	\$10.00
Standing Poses: Upright and Inverted – John Schumacher	\$18.00
Yoga, A Basic Daily Routine – John Schumacher (Audio)	\$18.00
Yoga Sutras of Patanjali – Sri Nagarraj/BKS Iyengar	\$10.00

REVIEW WORKSHOP

Felicity Green

By Karyn Woodland

When the newsletter committee asked if I'd write a review of Felicity Green's workshop one month after the April 11-13 fact, I balked. Was my memory up for the challenge? (As Felicity had asked us not to take notes, I would indeed be relying on it!) How good was my recall? How much of her teachings had I integrated into my own practise and teaching?

My first recollection of the work of that weekend was that it had been deep; what I might call 'organic,' or

cellular. Felicity emphasized strengthening the 'core,' or the 'hara,' as it is called in tai chi ("especially as you age!" she admonished).

"Take your sternum towards your spine," she instructed in *Adho Mukha Svanasana*. "Go inside and measure!"

As an Occupational Therapist, she brings to her (many years of) teaching a refined professional knowledge of anatomy and physical function. Yet she reiterated what Mr. Iyengar has often said; "The art of teaching is the art of seeing. You don't need tons of theory."

When she asked us to get three blankets for *Salamaba Sarvangasana*, we exchanged quizzical glances. Could it be U.S. blankets are thicker? No, she wanted us to truly *stretch* our necks.

Attending Felicity's workshop was a bit of a 'sentimental journey' for me. I first experienced her teaching at Yasodhara Ashram 18 years ago. For 10 days, from six to eight am, she put us through our yogic paces.

It was déjà vu as she had us "jackknife" from *Ardha Navasana* to *Paripurna Navasana* at the Victoria Yoga Centre in April. Challenging!

Yet her style (then, as now), is equally compassionate. She was generous in her attention to individual difficulties, (including my own shoulder struggles, helping me to 'unlock the secret in my armpits!')

I have benefited from Felicity's 'presence' in my life on a regular basis through her *Pranayama* tapes (which I highly recommend! Available at the VYC).

Like our teacher Shirley Daventry French, Felicity speaks with a delightful English accent, yet she is a fellow "West



Coaster' living on nearby Lopez Island. Two of her Lopez students, Kimie and Debbie, attended the workshop with her.



They had with them a notice of a gathering they were hosting on Lopez—meditations and chanting for peace. (This was just before the invasion of Iraq.) I believe that we, as students and teachers of yoga, have a responsibility to promote peace (internally first, of course), and I admire those teachers who extend their teachings beyond the classroom.

As Felicity directed in Savasana; "Focus on the light within. Acknowledge it. Greet it. And realize it is within everyone." *Namaste.* ☯

Scholarships and Bursaries

Members' Scholarships are available for the teacher training and student intensives, and all long workshops.

Apply in writing at least one month prior to the workshop you are interested in. See Calendar on back page for dates.

Student Bursaries available to all students presently enrolled in classes. To subsidize your term fees please apply 3 weeks prior to term.

Applications and details for both available at the Reception Desk.



Shirley visits with her granddaughter Olivia during Faeq Biria's workshop

Level 2 Practice



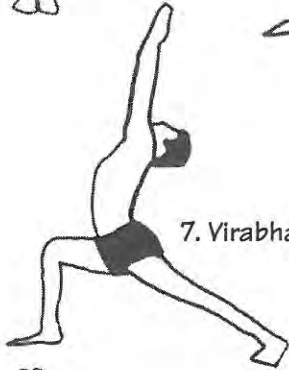
1. Tadasana



2. Utthita Trikonasana



3. Utthita Parsvakonasana



7. Virabhadrasana I



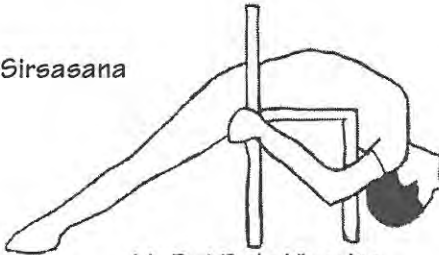
8. Virabhadrasana III



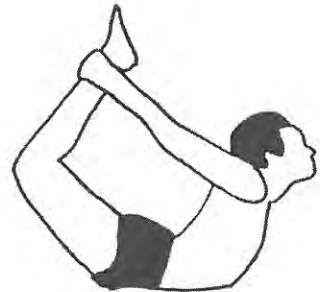
9. Garudasana



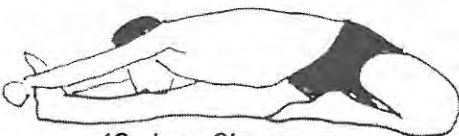
13. Salamba Sirsasana



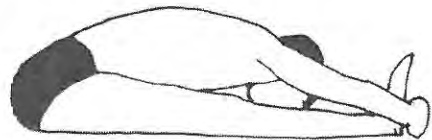
14. Dwi Pada Viparita
Dandasana (on chair)



15. Dhanurasana



19. Janu Sirsasana



20. Paschimottanasana

4. Ardha Chandrasana



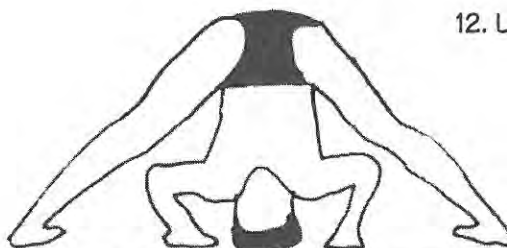
5. Parivrtta
Trikonasana



6. Parivrtta
Parsvakonasana

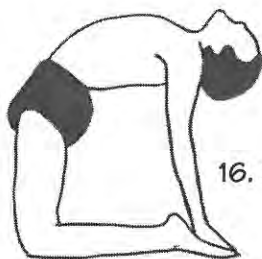


10. Parsvottanasana

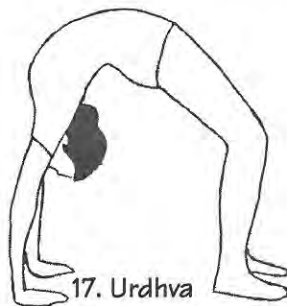


11. Prasrita Padottanasana

12. Uttanasana



16. Ustrasana



17. Urdhva
Dhanurasana



18. Bharadvajasana II

21. Salamba
Sarvangasana



22. Halasana

23. Savasana (with eye band;
normal in-breath, deep out-breath)



REVIEW WORKSHOP

Faeq Biria Intermediate Workshop

May 2-4, 2003

by Greg Sly



At the end of Friday evening's workshop opening session, I seemed to be in an extraordinarily calm and tranquil state, and when I greeted other participants I saw that many had been similarly affected by Faeq's teaching—those whose eyes I met were radiant and calm, their smiles reflecting yoga's purpose of inner unity.

Faeq Biria's first visit to the VYC became an extended weekend workshop as he shone Guruji's light with inexhaustible illumination, endearing him to the 40+ participants gathered here from across Canada and the US. Following this he went over to Vancouver to teach a five day workshop to 60 participants there, with the same results.

"Work intensely not aggressively."

It was a treat that many suggest you must normally travel to the Institute in Pune, India to taste. Faeq's yoga teaching was continuous and intense without strain, his adopted English precise and insistent, his humor riotous, and his knowledge, humility and compassion deeply affecting. Most of the sessions spilled over past their allotted hours, and he extended the final VYC's Sunday afternoon session three hours over into the evening, explaining simply, "You are enthusiastic, so I will teach."

Here is a compilation of Faeq's aphorisms, principles and teachings, and personal expressions of how we were touched by this remarkable teacher. A more detailed experience offered by Constance Drake will follow, and the interview of Faeq Biria done by Shirley Daventry French will appear in the Sept./Oct. issue of the VYC newsletter.

"There is no such thing as an innocent action."

Faeq Biria graced our centre with his wisdom, humour and generosity. Thank you Faeq, for giving to us so generously. His words about Shirley were very touching. He said he had been asked many times to come to Victoria, but knowing we had "one of the best teachers in the world here: Shirley Daventry French", he didn't need to come! Faeq is someone who embodies the best of an Iyengar teacher:

1. **Mobility:** Quick to see us and move to correct and then to inspire us to do more.
2. **Stability:** His own practice is stable and mature, and he leads us to greater understanding because of his strength.
3. **Strength:** In character, in his conviction, in his knowledge of the work.
4. **Alignment:** Alignment with the teachings and with Guruji.

A truly inspiring weekend!

Leslie Hoga

**"Release knots in your body and you
release knots in your mind."**

Would not everybody be able to agree that Faeq Biria is an advanced teacher of the Iyengar method? I believe his ability to pass on Guruji's work is outstanding. Faeq came to Vancouver and taught us for 5 wonderful days. A blessed balance of work, information, humour, teaching presence and "crowd control". Yes we were 60 students and whenever I had a moment to look around (which was almost never) I saw only keen, happy faces sincerely involved in listening and learning. Faeq has the ability to teach a simple point or an easier *asana* so you feel as if it is the first time you hear and do it and to teach difficult *asanas* cleverly and subtly building up to them so you surprise yourself when you find yourself in the pose.

I dare say it would be impossible not to be fascinated by this gifted and devoted teacher who travels the world in Guruji's name and passes on the work so brilliantly.

Ingelise Nherlan



I learned so much about how to work *Marichyasana III*—to begin the turning from the straight leg hip and finish it finally coming from the bent leg hip and when reaching up with the arm, stretch up more with the ring finger to engage the sacrum.

Points to consider when opening up the middle back:

1. Connect the back side of the rib with the front side of the same rib.
2. Concave the mid back (using the bent arm).
3. Pull the back ribs through to the front ribs as though being pulled by a string.

And finally, practicing at times with the straight leg open to 60 degrees to keep the sacrum open.

It was like having a taste of India here in Victoria!

Jennifer

**"One who knows the rhythm of life knows
the rhythm of the universe."**

The energy awakened through asana and pranayama practice can spread throughout the entire body when the inner back groins are opened.

I attended the workshop with Faeq in Van. I thought that he was fantastic. Probably the best teaching that I have ever experienced. I was very tired after the five days but elated and inspired. I really liked doing all the *asana* work in the morning and philosophy in the afternoon, although 5 1/2 hours straight was a bit difficult the first few days but by the third day I was accustomed to it.

Deborah Lomond,
Kelowna

Faeq often told us during the weekend "I want you to have this experience," and that is the main impression I have of his workshop. Experience after experience, coming and going like waves. It was like my first term of Level I—listen, watch, do without necessarily knowing why, what effects to expect, without thinking of how to use this information or even trying to remember anything. It was an experience!

Glenda Hingley

"There is fullness and there is fullness and everywhere there is fullness. Take away from this fullness and what is left is fullness."

"Peace is fearlessness"

Faeq's workshop was inspiring. His work so clearly comes from a deep knowledge and understanding of yoga. In *Supta Padangusthasana* he compelled us to "pierce the flesh of the heel with the bone of the leg," for that action activates the earth element and builds the bones. He has an ability to pierce the depths of the *asanas* and activate his students to build a depth of understanding of the *asanas* within themselves.

Faeq's earthy practicality was punctuated with humorous, insightful and inspiring stories. He encouraged us to approach the *asana* in unexpected ways when we are not getting where we want to go. For example, in *Bharadvajasana*, when twisting to the right, rather than trying to press down the left buttock bone to get

the needed extension, he said "lift the right buttock bone." Faeq, who so obviously is divinely inspired, generously gave us a weekend of perpetual opportunity to taste the nectar of the *asanas*. I am grateful to have been exposed to Faeq's inspired teaching.

Nancy Searing

"The mind cannot create God."

Inspirational. Faeq is a true Karma Yogi. The selfless energy that he put into his teaching and the energy and love that he possessed at the end of each session is testament to his being a Karma Yogi.

Gwynneth Powell





Working with Faeq is almost like being in India. From the chant at the beginning to *savasana* at the end we explored our inner world. Particularly memorable

for me was the progression of twists; *Bharadvajasana*, *Ardha Matsyendrasana*, *Marychiasana III*, and *Pasasana*—how each one works a different band in the back. And how twists are difficult to hold because they put us in touch with our doubts at a deep level, and how through repeated practice and repetition we can face these doubts and move past them.

Ann Kilbertus

"Don't make too much zeal."

I am so honored to have been a part of a workshop with such a great teacher who speaks of Shirley Daventry French as someone who inspires him! We are so blessed!

Wayne Unger

What a gift. Faeq's generosity was evident in the whole weekend! He gave freely & selflessly of himself and the teachings from Pune. A brilliant weekend we are blessed.

Lauren

**In *Supta Padanguetasana I*
-the lower leg is the mind
-the raised leg is the intelligence
-the mind (lower leg) must be stable and calm
for the intelligence (raised leg) to awaken.
-in raised leg work: "Pierce the heel with
the bones of the leg."**

Faeq guided our bodies and minds to a place where anything is possible. I felt as though I could do anything. All obstacles faded in the warmth generated from the light of yoga.

Melissa

Standing on my hands in the middle of the room, trusting in your presence as I let go.

Thank-you Faeq.

Elizabeth Banister

**In *Salabhasana*, when at your maximum,
"shrink and close the back."**

At dinner on Saturday Faeq said. "One who knows the rhythm of life knows the rhythm of the universe." It made me think of times when I feel the rhythm of my own life in sync with my practice. I glimpse that rhythm sometimes. His comment inspired me to be more disciplined in living within the rhythm of my own life.

Did someone say its been six hours of non-stop *asanas*? If you think you have worked to your maximum with Faeq, there's always further to go. What a great metaphor for life!

E. Peckham

**"Do *Karunta* fast or it just becomes an *asana*.
Karunta penetrates more than an *asana*
and helps for penetration to do *asana*."**

YOGA is a MIRROR

by Constance Drake

Yoga is a mirror that reflects what is inside, brings it out and clears pathways so life can be lived with greater harmony. It can be a very personal practice.

When I arrived at The Victoria Yoga Centre Friday afternoon for Faeq Biria's workshop I was looking



forward to the hours of yoga ahead knowing the weekend would provide many opportunities to move more deeply in poses while trying to be present each step along the way. (Whether on the mat or not we yoga practitioners constantly have the opportunity to bring ourselves back to the present; it is our awareness that allows us to do so.) Living life mechanically isn't

"Bonify the inner ankles."

nearly as interesting. Living life in the present is, although its not always an easy thing to do.

We worked a lot in opening the shoulders, chest and groins. It took Friday night and Saturday to get all the cobwebs out—opening the places in my body that hold tension, grip, and just simply take awhile to release. By Sunday I felt so much more the person I am without all the unnecessary 'stuff' that can collect in physical and

psychological nooks and crannies.

Because of such a sense of well being it was interesting to observe strong emotions on the last day of the workshop.

While practicing a partner stretch in deepening the opening of the groins I could feel my left groin gripping. I told my partner to wait. Slowly, with patience I waited for the release to come - a hard stuck place began to thaw

out, tears flowed and then it was over. Just like that. I don't know what the tears were about but it doesn't really matter. My groins responded through my ability to be present, and to be patient by staying with the discomfort rather than backing away from it.

The release of emotions while doing *asana* work is not unfamiliar to me. However I admit having been surprised when a wave of fear suddenly showed up when we were told to hang from the ropes. We had

"Relax the centre of the cheekbones."

been working with the ropes steadily when Faeq told us to hang upside down. "Hang upside down?! No. I won't do that!" These are the thoughts I heard in my mind. So stubborn and unwilling to go further. I knew this wave of fear was a result of having fallen on my head years ago. I also knew the ropes would support me. I didn't want fear to stop me. I knew I could take care of myself if I just had a little help, so I asked Leslie to stand next to me. She did and once I was holding the ropes, hanging upside down and secure, I no longer needed her presence by my side. Mr. Iyengar says that when we face fatigue and fear, confidence and courage will flow into us. How good it felt for me to face my fear right there and then!

Practicing yoga doesn't always have to be an emotional experience but the practice does invite transformation. We are physical beings. We are thinking beings. We are emotional beings. And we are spiritual beings. How grateful I am to this ancient practice that helps us integrate the body, mind and spirit. And how grateful I am to all the teachers that have helped me open the closed up and closed off places inside me that don't need to be there. Mr. Biria is a gifted teacher who

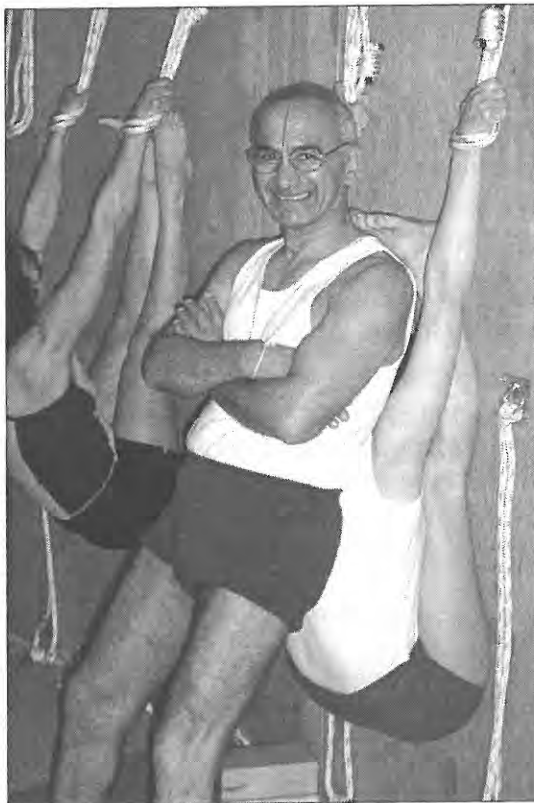
guided me through hours of practice so that I could more clearly reflect the being that I am.

The blessing that Faeq shared as we took our meals together:

Dinner Prayer

If you wish peace of mind
Don't find fault with anyone
Watch your own mistakes.
Learn to consider that the
entire universe
Is not different than yourself.
No one is a stranger to you.
The world and you is one
Om Shanti, Shanti, Shanti.
Om Peace, Peace, Peace.

**Inspired by a dinner prayer by
Sarada Devi, the wife of Rama
Krishna* ☯



Sitting in Swastikasana

- legs heavy and relaxed
- lift from the base of the spine
- extend the lumbar spine up into the thoracic spine
- connect from the mid-thoracic spine to the upper sternum
- extend this connection -this is the abode of the Pure Self
- let the right eye flow into the right lung
- let the left eye flow into the left lung



THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

is pleased to announce two

IYENGAR YOGA TEACHER TRAINING INTENSIVES

July 7 to 12, 2003

with Leslie Hoga, Ann Kilbertus, Linda Benn

This six-day intensive will focus on preparing teachers for assessment in Iyengar Yoga at Introductory Level 1 or 2. Leslie, Ann and Linda are experienced teachers certified at the Intermediate Level through the Canadian Iyengar Yoga Teachers' Association. They are qualified C.I.Y.T.A. assessors. All three are committed to assisting local and outlying yogis to become skilled Iyengar Yoga teachers. Preference will be given to members of C.I.Y.T.A.

August 18 to 22, 2003

with Shirley Daventry French

This course is for certified Iyengar Yoga teachers who wish to prepare for assessment at Junior Intermediate Level 1, 2 or 3. Shirley is a long-time student of B.K.S. Iyengar who has awarded her a senior teaching credential. She has been teaching Yoga for thirty years and is one of North America's most experienced teachers in the Iyengar tradition. Shirley has been training teachers in Victoria and throughout Canada for many years.

* In both Intensives there will be daily classes in asana and pranayama, yoga philosophy and the art and science of teaching.

* As in previous years, Iyengar Yoga teachers from other countries are also invited to apply.

For more information:

Contact Linda Benn, 250-478-0757

lbenn@islandnet.com

Teacher Training Topic is Twists

To prepare for April's Teacher Training meeting, a part of the written assignment was to answer the following question on 'Twists' or 'Lateral Extensions'. Here are some students' responses to the question: *Is there a Sutra, a brief piece of writing, or artistic creation that for you embodies the subjective aspects or symbolism of the lateral extensions?*

"Your body lives in the past, your mind in the future. They come together in the present when you practise Yoga. Do not live in the future, only the present is real. Self-culture begins when you get completely engrossed in whatever you are doing."

– B.K.S. Iyengar (p. 9, Yoga Rahasya Vol. 8.2)

Three of the lateral extensions are named after beings blessed with divine insight. Marici, son of Brahman, was one of the seven legendary seers and considered the father of humanity. Bharadvaja is also recognised as one of these seven sages and credited with composing the hymns collected in the Vedas. Matsyendra received divine form at the hand of Siva. Thus blessed, he became one of the founders of Hatha Vidya and spread the knowledge of Yoga.

The names of these *asanas* seem to point to an evolved state of existence. A similarity in the physical execution of these three poses also seems to point to this. In each pose, one is required to turn the front of the upper body towards the back and turn the back of the upper body towards the front. The upper body opposes its natural directions, causing the front and the back to intertwine. What could this signify?

Just as the earth divides into four cardinal points, so too does the body. The front of the body is the east and embodies eastern characteristics. This direction usually signifies beginning as the sun rises from the east. The back of the body is its western side. The sun sets in the west at the end of the day. For this reason, the west usually signifies ending.

In the lateral extensions, the beginning and the ending intertwine and become beginningless and endless. This

is the living experience of a sage. She or he lives in the present, the moment, unfettered by the bond of the movements of Time.

Britta Poission

In her article in spring 2000 Ascent magazine entitled "Twist and Work!" Swami Lalitananda talked about the symbolism and metaphor of the pose, and asked these questions: How often do you walk onto the job, wind yourself into action and only take time to "unwind" when you leave the workplace? In



**Ann Kilbertus teaching corrections
in Parvrtta Trikonasana**

reference to a balanced foundation she asks: What can help me to remain straight and centred even in challenging or stressful situations? In the twist, the movement is like an upward spiral. Can you bring this same uplifting feeling into your work, using your position to help you spiral up and evolve rather than as a burden that pushes you down? As you do the twist, ask how you may have gotten yourself into a tight situation and observe how you can get yourself out. This pose can teach us that if we are the doers, we can also undo. The spinal twist physically offers a new perspective as you turn to look to each side and also behind you. Symbolically,

what is the greater perspective or broader vision for your life or your work? Can you look beyond yourself and your own concerns to see a bigger picture? Looking back can also be looking into your past, giving you a chance to reflect on your own past conditioning and to question if your attitudes and opinions are still valid now.

Terice Reimer-Clarke, Whitehorse.

The image that immediately comes to mind when I think of twists is the cobra. A snake can easily twist its body around itself. The cobra is the "king" of the snakes and I see the twists as symbolically reaching for a higher purpose. Just as in a spiralling staircase, you must first step up the staircase before you can spiral,



practicing corrections

physically in the twist you must lengthen the spine up before you can revolve or spiral the spine. The symbolism is like a set of Russian nesting dolls with deeper and deeper layers of meaning. I have to admit I looked for a sutra with some reference to an ascending ladder. I found Sutra 1.16. The ultimate renunciation is when one transcends the qualities of nature and perceives the soul. Mr. Iyengar talks about the path of yoga being seen as the ascension of a ladder. *Abyasa* (practice) gives us the impetus to climb the ladder and by *vairagya* (renunciation) we draw up the ladder behind us. We can think about the lower rungs of physical

addictions, emotional reactions and mechanical habits that we must become aware of and transform in order to work towards higher purposes and visions of compassion towards self and others. By climbing up the ladder we can attain *kaivalya* or freedom to live from the truth and wisdom of the Self.

Melissa Perehudoff, Kelowna, BC.

Karyn Woodland looked into Maxims of Mr. Iyengar, from *Iyengar, His Life and Work* and found the following teachings that embody the subjective aspects or symbolism of lateral extensions:

"Rotate and stretch the torso. Your self writes on the spine. Flow the ink to write with your soul imprinting

the
messages
where
needed."

"You
have to
work
through
the gross
body to
the subtle
body (the
spine)
and then
through
the spine
to the
mind."

"It is the
job of the
spine to
keep the brain alert and in position."

"When you clasp the hands in Marichyasana, you are
holding your own dual personality, the mind and the
self are linked." ☯



YYC's new teacher Training Aid



Friday Night Gathering Big, Big Practice

By the Wanachez Family: Silvia, Lori and Kala

The BIG, BIG PRACTICE is held each spring to celebrate our community and to enlighten families and friends to the benefits of Iyengar Yoga. Participants of all levels, shapes, sizes, age and ability create a diverse and interesting crowd. We have been members of the Victoria Yoga Centre since September 2002 and so on Friday night, with all three of us having different levels of experience under our belts, we headed out for our first family practice.

The room glowed in beautiful light – perhaps it was the last light of the day or just the energy of the 50 people gathered for the practice. As we prepared for the practice to begin, we commented on how Mr. Iyengar was becoming a very familiar part of our experience at the Victoria Yoga Centre. Through his teachings, his books and videos, and in the many pictures around the Centre, he was like someone we knew very well, and also like someone who we really didn't know at all. There he was, smiling as always in his picture above the library door, like a gentle blessing on the gathering.

Ty Chandler led us through a remarkable practice. I was amazed that the practice she designed could accommodate so many levels of practitioners. I sat behind two men who were very comfortable with yoga and moved easily through the *asanas* – from *Virasana*, to *Gomukhasana* and so on. At the same time, a family that included two small children was on our right. Both children attempted many poses and with Ty's assistance the little girl was able to do *Dandasana*. By the size of her smile, she really enjoyed it!

Ty let us know that the practice was a modified sequence of the one posted on the Victoria Yoga Centre web site (www.victoriailyengaryoga.ca) – well, sort of! I wouldn't have guessed, but it is true we did modified versions of most of the *asanas* in Practice #1.



While the practice was enjoyable, we don't think that all of the satisfaction that we felt at the end of the BIG, BIG PRACTICE was from the *asanas*. It was the combination of the practice, the meal and the community that made the evening such a positive experience for our family. It is an experience that we would recommend to anyone who takes yoga classes and would encourage them to bring their families and friends – whether or not they are yoga practitioners. It was nice to be able to have a family activity without worrying about clashing interests – who could disagree with yoga and food? ☯

We started with a lying down version of *Tadasana*. I find this an excellent pose to remind my legs to do their job – lift my inner arch, draw up my kneecaps, roll my thighs in – so simple yet, as we are often reminded, the foundation of all poses.

After several warming up poses, Ty asked rhetorically – “Anyone sweating yet? Well, you will after the next pose!” We immediately moved into *Utkatasana* and sure enough a light sweat began to break out on my brow. Shortly afterwards, she acknowledged the heat in the room and snuck open a window.

Thirty people remained after the practice for the potluck dinner, which was still a large, but a comfortable amount of people. Before dinner, Leslie Hoya led us in a prayer. We joined hands – someone even took the hand of a small baby girl held by her mother to complete the circle – and she blessed the gathering and the meal that we were about to share. The food was fabulous and oh-so healthy, including a wonderful sushi salad, Caesar salads, chips and couscous. Then we relaxed with hot tea and indulged ourselves with great desserts – I had two and felt it afterwards!

Light on Questions

By Ty Chandler

Q

Can you please explain the teacher levels (in order) and what they mean?
Thanks, Sylvia.

A

The levels of the Canadian Iyengar Yoga Teachers Association (CIYTA) begin with Introductory I and II. A candidate may sit for the two levels at the same assessment, but will only be given a certificate upon passing level II. The following requirements must be completed to qualify for application to CIYTA Assessment at the Introductory I and II levels.

1. Minimum of 200 classroom hours as a student in asana and pranayama classes.

2. Minimum of 100 hours of workshop experience in asana and pranayama with senior level Canadian and International teachers.
3. Minimum of 100 apprenticeship hours in classes following the Introductory level I and II syllabus over a period of a minimum of three years and maximum of 5 years.
4. Minimum of 50 hours of workshop training in teaching skills.
5. Minimum of three 8 week sessions of sequenced independent teaching.
6. Regular written assignments - covering all aspects of CIYTA teacher training guidelines including the anatomy and philosophy components. These written assignments must interface with the CIYTA required reading list.
7. Written exams - at the discretion of the training program, periodic written exams on each area listed under program content ie: practical aspects, anatomy, philosophy and ethical aspects.

The next level of certification is Junior Intermediate I, II and III.

All three levels must hold a current previous certificate for a period of one to two years. All candidates must maintain a regular personal practice of *asana* and *pranayama*, attend regular classes with a teacher holding a more senior certificate, attend workshops with senior teachers, attend Iyengar Yoga Conferences and under the guidance of a teacher holding a more senior level certificate learn to execute and teach all the *asanas* and *pranayama* listed on the appropriate syllabus.

It is also expected at the Junior Intermediate I level for the teacher to teach with greater refinement and subtlety than at the previous levels. They will be

assessed on their ability to adjust their teaching to the requirements of students, and to show a commanding presence. The candidates may also be asked to explain points of their teaching, and answer questions from both assessors and students. There is a list of points required in regards to practice and teaching that is too extensive to print in this article.



Ty ponders your questions

After the Junior Intermediate levels come the Senior levels I, II, III followed by the Advanced Junior and Advanced Senior. CIYTA holds assessments up to the Junior Intermediate III level. Levels beyond that are granted by Mr. Iyengar at this point. Currently there are 7 people in Canada that hold a Senior Level III. ☯

Please send your questions about yoga to:

Ty Chandler
C/o The Victoria Yoga Centre
Suite 202 - 919 Fort Street
Victoria B.C. Canada
V8V 3K3



The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

Program of Classes in the Iyengar Approach to Yoga

Term 6: July 14-August 17, 2003

Monday classes will be adjusted due to August holiday

Level 1

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	6:30 – 7:30am	Doug Hart
Mon.	12:00 – 1:30pm	Lauren Cox
Mon.	7:30 – 9:00pm	Melissa Worth
Tues.	4:45 – 6:15pm	Melissa Worth
Tues.	7:00 – 8:30pm	Lauren Cox
Wed.	6:15 – 7:45pm	Ty Chandler
Wed.	7:45 – 9:15pm	Gwynneth Powell
Thurs.	8:30 – 10:00am	Linda Benn
Thurs.	5:45 – 7:15pm	Britta Poisson
Fri.	10:30 – 12:00pm	Linda Benn
Fri.	5:00 – 6:30pm	Gwynneth Powell
Sat.	9:30 – 11:00am	Corrine Lowen
Sun.	10:30 – 12:00pm	Ty Chandler

Level 1/2

Day	Time	Instructor
Wed.	9:00 – 10:30am	Ty Chandler
Thurs.	4:30 – 6:00pm	Robin Cantor
Sun.	4:00 – 5:30pm	Christine Dimofski

Level 2

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	7:30 – 9:00pm	James Currie-Johnson
Tues.	10:00 – 11:30am	Robin Cantor
Tues.	6:30 – 8:00pm	Melissa Worth
Wed.	5:30 – 7:30pm	Gwynneth Powell
Fri.	7:00 – 8:00am	Christine Dimofski
Fri.	9:00 – 10:30am	Linda Benn
Sat.	8:00 – 9:30am	Corrine Lowen
Sun.	9:00 – 10:30am	Ty Chandler

Level 2/3

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	10:00 – 12:00pm	Lauren Cox

Level 3

Day	Time	Instructor
Thurs.	10:00 – 12:00pm	Linda Benn
Thurs.	6:00 – 8:00pm	Ty Chandler

Level 4

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	5:15 – 7:15pm	Marlene Miller

Drop-Ins

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	6:30 – 7:30am	Doug Hart
Tues.	12:00 – 1:00pm	Robin Cantor
Wed.	7:00 – 8:00am	Christine Dimofski
Wed.	12:00 – 1:00pm	Jeannette Merryfield
Wed.	5:00–6:30pm	James Currie-Johnson
Thurs.	12:00 – 1:00pm	Lauren Cox
Fri.	7:00 – 8:00am	Christine Dimofski
Fri.	12:00 – 1:00pm	Ty Chandler
Sat.	7:00 – 8:00am	Doug Hart

The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE #202, 919 Fort St. 386-YOGA (9642)

Term 6: July 14 –August 17, 2003

***Learn The Ropes**

Tues. 5:30 – 7:00pm Lauren Cox

*prerequisites required

***Let's Go Upside Down (Focus on Inversion)**

Sat. 9:00 – 10:30am Gwynneth Powell

*prerequisites required

Men's Yoga

Thurs. 7:30 – 9:00pm Doug Hart

Focus on Women

Fri. 9:30 – 11:00am Christine Dimofski

Pre Natal Yoga

Thurs. 6:00 – 7:30pm Robin Cantor

55 & Better

Wed. 10:30 – 12:00pm Jeannette Merryfield

Back Care

Mon. 4:00 – 5:15pm Linda Benn

Ty's Yoga Kids (Ages 10-14)

Fri. 4:00 – 5:00pm Ty Chandler

High School Yoga (Ages 14+)

Fri. 3:30 – 4:45pm Gwynneth Powell

Early Morning

Mon. 6:30 – 7:30am Doug Hart

Wed. 7:00 – 8:00am Christine Dimofski

Fri. 7:00 – 8:00am Christine Dimofski

The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE



*If the foundation is firm,
the building can withstand calamities.
The practice of Yoga is the foundation,
so that the self is not shaken
under any circumstances.*

—B.K.S. Iyengar

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers help with all kinds of things at the Victoria Yoga Centre. This column introduces some of the people who give a great deal to our community.

A Smiling Librarian

by Jane Munro

Have you ever gone into the Victoria Yoga Centre's library? Chances are, you've noticed it—a cozy haven adjoining Studio A. The blinds are often closed on the window wall between them, but sometimes you'll glimpse its wall hanging, floor cushions and low table. There may be a vase of flowers or magazines on the table. Teachers come and go.

This attractive little library is actually meant for all VYC members. When you enter, you'll see the collection of books, cassettes and video tapes. So far, they fit on the shelves of one bookcase. You'll find books on many aspects of yoga—asanas, pranayama, philosophy, sutras, yoga for women's health, for runners, for children—and on related topics—meditation, mantra, Buddhism. There are cassettes and video tapes of Mr. Iyengar and other yoga teachers. The library books have pockets with cards in them and there's a box on the top shelf where you leave signed cards when you check materials out. You may borrow books for four weeks and videos for one week. The process is easy, and there are printed directions should you wish to consult them.

There's also a librarian who is happy to help. Janine

Beckner is the volunteer responsible for organizing and maintaining this resource. She works in the Victoria Public Library system so she knew how to set up a simple arrangement for the VYC. She assembled the collection, most of which had been in the hands of teachers, put pockets and labels on the books, created lists and cards and a tracking process, and continues to look after incoming materials. She is glad to see newer books arriving and hopes the collection will grow and stay current. In consultation with teachers, she's weeded out some of the older books that don't circulate.



Janine has been doing Iyengar yoga with the VYC for eighteen years, and can't imagine life without it. Her yoga class is the fulcrum of her week. She works erratic hours but has arranged to always have Thursday morning off so she can go to yoga and spend some time in the VYC's library. *It's an addiction, she says—the good kind of addiction.* Her passion has inspired her family. Janine's husband and younger son now attend the "men's yoga" class.

Her life is full. Apart from yoga, her job, and caring for her family, Janine also cycles (taking longer trips as well as cycling to work), gardens, paints water colours of flowers, and spends time in a family cabin on Hornby Island. She's come to yoga all these years because *it feels so good and she really likes the people—it's very comfortable and comforting and healing—it's been wonderful!*

When you see her, you'll know she's easy to approach. She listens carefully, is patient, and has a great smile. ☺



Radha Yoga Centre



Swami Radha

ascent intensive presents...

Polishing the Diamond

5 Days of Yoga with Swami Radhananda

October 18-23, 2003

The ascent intensive is an annual retreat presented by ascent magazine. In line with the spirit of ascent, the ascent intensive will focus on in-depth yoga study and practice. This year, join us for Polishing the Diamond – 5 Days of Yoga with Swami Radhananda.

A diamond symbolizes the essence of the light and can be a reminder of who we really are...

Use this opportunity to transform your life. Join Swami Radhananda, ascent columnist, for a challenging yet contemplative retreat, an in-depth exploration of your life through symbolism, art, spiritual practices and foundational yoga teachings.

Set at the beautiful Yasodhara Ashram in British Columbia, Canada, attendance at the ascent intensive is limited, a maximum of 20, to keep the atmosphere intimate and peaceful.

A unique yoga experience.

The evening of Saturday, the 18th of October to
Thursday the 23rd of October
Yasodhara Ashram, British Columbia, Canada

Cost:

The course fee is \$950.00 (\$750.00 US), and includes tuition, accommodation, and meals.

for more information: 1-800-661-8711

www.yasodhara.org or

www.ascentmagazine.com

Radha House Victoria • 1500 Shasta Place (off St. Charles, south of Fort) • 250-595-0177

YOGA CALENDAR

JULY 2003

2-5 Summer Sadhanas
7-12 Introductory Teacher's Intensive

AUGUST 2003

18-22 Intermediate Teacher's Intensive
25-29 Student Intensive

SEPTEMBER 2003

19 Video Night 6:45pm
B.K.S. Iyengar's "Rooftop Practice"
20 Women's Health
27 Teacher's Meeting

OCTOBER 2003

4, 5 Going Deeper Workshop
25 Teacher's Meeting
31-2 Chris Saudek

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Please complete this form and send it with your cheque or money order to the Victoria Yoga Centre Society,
c/o Constance Barker, 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3

Membership/Subscription fee is \$30 and renewable each January

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☐ Receipt Required.

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE NEWSLETTER



Sept/Oct 2003

Subscribe Now



“...the tree of the self needs to be taken care of. The sages of old, who experienced the sight of the soul, discovered its seed in yoga. This seed has eight segments which as a tree grows give rise to the eight limbs of yoga.”

– B.K.S. Iyengar, *Tree of Yoga*

GOING DEEPER

An Iyengar Yoga Workshop
with *Shirley Daventry French*

October 4 - 5, 2003



An opportunity for Level I, II, and III students to work with senior teacher Shirley Daventry French to explore yoga in a deeper way. Also an opportunity for teachers to observe Shirley.

Shirley is a long time student of B.K.S. Iyengar and has been to Pune to study many times, most recently in February 2002. She is looking forward to returning in December of this year.

Founder of the Victoria Yoga Centre, Shirley has been the driving force in making the Victoria yoga community one of the strongest and most viable in Canada. Students from across Canada and around the world have studied with her. Now local students have the opportunity to learn from her in a workshop setting.

Saturday, October 4

11:00 am-1pm

3:00-5:00pm

Sunday, October 5

10:30 am – 1pm

1-1:30 refreshments

1:30-2:30 debriefing for observers

Fees:

\$100+GST members

\$115 +GST non-members

\$75 +GST for observers (space limited)

Registration opens Sept. 3 for Victoria Yoga Centre members and Sept. 10 for non-members.

Contact: Victoria Yoga Centre at 386-YOGA(9642)

Editor: Melissa Worth

Newsletter Committee: Shirley Daventry French,
Lauren Cox, Gwynneth Powell, Greg Sly, Jane Munro,
Taimi Mulder, Susan Robinson

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The Society Newsletter is published regularly, providing current information on events concerning yoga in the Victoria area and the Yasodhara Ashram. Published by the VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY.

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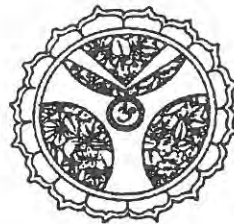
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Note: The editor/newsletter committee hold the right to edit all articles at their discretion. It should also be noted that not all articles submitted are printed in the newsletter due to space and other considerations.

The Yoga-Sutras of Patanjali

with

Shirley Daventry French

Yoga in the tradition of B.K.S. Iyengar is soundly based on the ageless wisdom and practical philosophy contained in Patanjali's yoga-sutras.

The sutras are a series of aphorisms each containing a seed of truth. They provide a framework for living life wisely, and are as relevant in 21st century Canada as they were in ancient India.

This evening seminar will provide an overview of the sutras and explore practical ways of making use of them as a guide for daily living.

Friday October 3

6.00 to 8.30 pm

Birch Studio

\$30 +GST members

\$35 +GST non-members

Registration opens September 3
for members

(Sept. 10 for non-members)



Reflections

by

Shirley Daventry French

"Yoga is as old as civilisation. Brahma, the creator of the world created yoga and therefore the world and yoga came into existence together. It has been known to yogis since time immemorial."



These words begin a discourse by B.K.S. Iyengar which is now available in book form as *Light on Astanga Yoga*¹. In North America nowadays the term "*astanga yoga*" has been appropriated by students of Pattabhi Jois who, like Guruji, was a disciple of Krishnamacharya. It is, however, a generic term used in Patanjali's *yoga sutras*

embracing eight limbs of yoga: *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *dharana*, *dhyana*, *samadhi*. If you practise Iyengar Yoga you follow the teachings of Patanjali which include *astanga yoga*.

As Guruji explains, *Brahma* was the founder of yoga which is "a divine subject given by a divine being, the creator himself".

All of us who practise yoga, whether we are a teacher or not, a seasoned practitioner or not, are asked from time to time to give a definition of yoga. In my case what I will say will vary according to the person or audience I am addressing, their experience of yoga, their level of commitment, the tone of the question,

what lies behind it. Do they really want to know or want to ridicule (not as common these days now that yoga has become mainstream)? Many factors influence which words come out of my mouth.

For instance, when I first became seriously interested in yoga, many of the other things which had consumed my time and energy began to take secondary importance in my life. This was disturbing (not only to me) but to those around me: family, friends, business associates. Questions about yoga were usually asked in a concerned, sometimes an antagonistic tone: "What is this thing called yoga?" I would answer in as non-committal a way as possible, wanting neither to proselytize nor to defend myself. I was a neophyte, trying to find out for myself, not wanting to convert others but seeking space to explore if this was really where I wanted to direct my life energy.

***Brahma* was the founder of yoga
which is "a divine subject given by a
divine being, the creator himself".**

Discrimination is a fundamental element of yoga, and I was given plenty of opportunities to practise this when I embraced its teachings. Having made the decision to pursue yoga rather than a "real" profession, I did have some explaining to do to some people. For instance, family and friends in England, most of whom were pretty concerned already that I would think of leaving a centre of civilisation such as London for an outpost in Canada! When I wrote to my brother about my interest in yoga, his response was an unequivocal: "I have no time for such cults of the irrational."

My mother was another matter. From her perspective, I was living the good life: married to a successful doctor, mother of three lovely children, living in a spacious home, in a beautiful place, fulfilling many of her dreams. Why would I want to disturb this? It took me some time to find the right way to approach her, by

which time I was already teaching and had spent considerable time in an ashram. Knowing my independence and energy, she would not have been surprised that I had decided to do more than stay at home in the supportive role of Mrs. Derek French, doctor's wife and mother of three. But yoga? That would have never crossed her mind. A little volunteer work perhaps, or writing which had always been an interest of mine and could be done at home, or finishing the schoolteacher training which I had aborted in my youth and which to her was one of the few professions suitable for a woman.

My mother was very conservative, brought up in a Victorian household. Duty was imbued in her. From what she had told me it involved duty to King or Queen, country and family and, since she was a woman, this particularly meant serving its male members. Having one brother myself, I remember being horrified to hear my mother describe how she had to give precedence always to her four brothers. I could never understand how she accepted all this without resentment. Clearly she understood the concept of selfless service better than I did. The idea of pursuing one's own growth for one's own sake, however, was beyond my mother's field of reference. It would probably appear selfish rather than selfless – and irrelevant.

While I struggled to find the appropriate way to broach this topic, I continued writing dutiful letters full of the minutiae of daily life. My commitment to the physical practice of yoga would raise no concern because I had followed various sports in a disciplined manner throughout my life. It was the appeal of its psychological and spiritual aspects which would present difficulties. Finally, bored with the superficial nature of the letters I was writing and sad at hiding such an important part of my life from my mother, I sat down one day and wrote the letter which had to be written. When it was finished and posted, I was relieved and happy. It was, so I believed, an honest and open account of this strange turn of events, written in

a manner which would reassure her. Not so! A quick reply enquired whether Derek and I were getting divorced or whether I was having a nervous breakdown! Assuring her that neither was the case, I never broached the subject of yoga and its teachings with her again, and she never asked!

If my mother were alive today I might have acquired the skill to communicate with her with more finesse. Certainly my definition of yoga has evolved over the years, as has my understanding of what being a yoga practitioner means in both practical and philosophical terms. Hopefully, my discriminative abilities are also more refined. It must be said that in the early seventies, at the time of my revelation to my mother, many of those following yoga and eastern philosophy were dropping out and breaking up! My mother would probably be reassured to know that I did not get divorced or break down, and I discharged my motherly duties in such a way that my three children are all healthy, active, fulfilled individuals following professional careers while bringing up their own families.

Yesterday I was rereading *Light on Astanga Yoga* in preparation for a seminar on yoga philosophy which I will be giving in England later this summer. It was interesting to be reminded that even the seers and sages of yoga adapted their definitions according to the times. In this book, as he does quite often, Gururji describes yoga as a complete science stating that each science has a clear and distinct definition classifying its scope, its subject matter and aim, but that these things do not become clear all at once. It takes time for any science to reach its full development and during this process definitions will change. Yoga is no exception because Lord Brahma certainly did not hand over a fully refined, complete yoga science. Lord Brahma is a God. To be of practical use here on earth, yoga had to be researched by human beings and defined out of their experience in a way that would elicit understanding in others. This had to take into consideration the level of people's ability to understand and, apparently, this has

varied throughout the ages.

My first definition of yoga came from my first yoga teacher who said it was the union of individual and cosmic consciousness. This didn't hold much significance for me at the time although it was clear that there was more to this yoga than met the eye. In *Light on Astanga Yoga* Gururji states that this same definition appeared in one of the early texts, the *Ahribudhnya Samhita*. In the era of this text, *sadhakas* following the path of yoga were mature highly intelligent human beings whose personal *sadhana* or level of spiritual practice was of such a calibre that "they could think at the level of the soul". Gururji goes on to say that by the time of the *Bhagavad Gita* this capacity had lessened and Lord Krishna speaks of yoga at a more practical level as equanimity and skill in action.

Gururji surmises that Patanjali, in his day, saw a further erosion of understanding and an increase in ignorance rendering most people unable to perceive the soul. Therefore, Patanjali makes a distinction between *citta* (consciousness) and *cit* (soul) delineating practices to end the fluctuations of consciousness so the soul can be recognised once more and this confusion is ended. This requires discipline, so in the first two sutras he brought in both the idea of yoga as discipline and yoga as restraint. Compared to those who had gone before, people had become lazier, more needy and ambitious and needed a more structured guide to the teachings.

Patanjali does, however, present a fast track for highly evolved practitioners in the first chapter of his yoga sutras. This is entitled *Samadhi Pada* and is a guide for those who have done sufficient work in past lives that *samadhi* lies within reach in this lifetime. As Gururji states in the prologue to *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, such souls are rare indeed. Patanjali's second chapter is called *Sadhana Pada* where the steps to be followed are more clearly set out for those who have a little further to travel. But he doesn't under-estimate their potential. This chapter begins by stating that burning zeal in practice, self-study and surrender to

God are the acts of yoga, and in the next sutra he reminds us that the practice of yoga leads to *samadhi*. The goal is never forgotten.

How much my first teacher understood the meaning of the definition she gave us, that yoga is the union of individual and cosmic consciousness, I do not know. I do not recall her saying much about it, but thanks to her, it was imprinted in my mind although I paid little attention to it at first. Thanks also to her, she introduced me to *Light on Yoga*, to the yoga sutras, to Swami Radha, and encouraged me to make my first trip to Yasodhara Ashram to study with Swami Venketesananda. All this and what I was really looking for was escape from the tedium of domesticity and a few stretches to keep me supple and in good skiing condition! Ready or not, I was being pulled (or perhaps pushed) towards the light.

Definitions have been on my mind recently because I have several requests sitting on my desk for write ups of workshops I have been invited to give in the next year. What will I be teaching? How do I want to describe this in the brochure? What I will be doing is teaching yoga to those who come at whatever level I perceive they will be able to learn to the best of my ability. Can I say that? Would anyone come? Always I attempt to avoid grandiosity and fear my bios lack the impact of others who are either far more enlightened than me or more brazen.

It makes you very sober to have a teacher of the calibre of B.K.S. Iyengar. What do I know? Very little when measured against his knowledge. Well, here's an inspiring workshop write up: "Shirley has studied with B.K.S. Iyengar regularly since the 1970s, during which time she has come to understand how little she knows. However, if you pay your fee and come and study with her, she will be happy to share this with you." It's ludicrous, isn't it? All I can hope is to be a conduit of his teaching and a channel for the light which he has ignited in me. What I usually do is give people some factual information along the lines of "Shirley is a

longtime student of B.K.S. Iyengar. She has been teaching for over thirty years and travels to Pune regularly for further study". Hopefully this will not only speak for itself but attract serious students; those want to delve deeper into yoga in the Iyengar tradition and will come without preconceived ideas or fixed expectations, prepared to practise with an open mind and heart.

As Patanjali tells us in sutra I.20: practice must be pursued with trust, confidence, vigour, keen memory and power of absorption to break spiritual complacency. Hopefully it will give confidence to those thinking of studying with me to know that what I can offer draws from a tradition of yoga which traces its lineage through B.K.S. Iyengar back to Patanjali and Lord Brahma, the creator. Being a student of Guruji limits the claims I can make about my expertise but opens myself and my students to the possibility of unlimited learning.

1. *Light on Astanga Yoga* by B.K.S. Iyengar may be ordered through the Victoria Yoga Centre at 386-9642 or iyoga@telus.net ☯



Short Workshop at the Victoria Yoga Centre

Sun Salutations

with Ty Chandler

Saturday, Sept. 13, 1–3pm

Surya Namaskara gives mobility, flexibility, alertness, speed, sharpness and freedom while developing will power and physical strength.

\$30 +gst members

\$35 +gst non-members

*pre-requisite: at least 2 terms of
Iyengar Yoga level I



The Victoria Yoga Centre is pleased to present

An Intermediate Workshop

with *Chris Saudek*

for teachers and students in the tradition of Iyengar Yoga



October 31 - November 2, 2003

Victoria Yoga Centre
202 - 919 Fort Street

Chris Saudek has been a devoted student of the Iyengars for more than 20 years. She has studied extensively at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute in Pune, including two times when she stayed for more than five months each. The training Chris received as a physical therapist gave her valuable background for her study of yoga. Chris is a precise and disciplined, caring and innovative teacher. She is the director of the Yoga Place in La Crosse, Wisconsin and certified as a senior intermediate teacher of the Iyengar method.

Times:

Friday 6:30-8:30pm

Saturday 10:30am-1:30pm & 3:30pm-5:30pm

Sunday 9am-12pm & 1pm-3pm

Times to be confirmed

Registration:

opens September 15 for members

(Sept. 22 for non-members)

Fees:

\$200+gst for Victoria Yoga Centre Members

\$230+gst for non-members

all prices subject to GST

Contact:

Victoria Yoga Centre at 386-YOGA (9642)

A Message from the President

by Rosemary Barritt

Dear Members

I have been president of the Victoria Yoga Centre for almost six months and I think it is time I introduce myself. Many people at the yoga centre know me but some do not.



You may wonder how I came to be president: I'm not a teacher, I've never been to India, and I'm not that good at remembering all the Sanskrit names of the asanas, and yet at the last Annual General Meeting I was elected president. This is how it came to be.

In the spring of 1996 I was at a party talking to someone about yoga. I told her I had practised yoga on and off since the 70s. She then told me she was a yoga teacher; her name was Leslie Hogya. She invited me to come to one of her classes at the 'Y', I said maybe. It was six months before I took that step and attended Leslie's class. As Iyengar Yoga was new to me I enrolled in a level one class. Until then my yoga practice was something I had done on my own. For me, at that time, being in a room with many other people was a challenge, so I found a corner in the room and that gave me the security I needed. For about two years I stayed in that corner and the light of yoga that shone through Leslie was the magnet that kept bringing me back.

Some time during the third year Leslie asked me if I would consider joining the Victoria Yoga Centre board of directors. I surprised myself and said yes and soon after I found myself in the position of Vice President.

About a year later the planning for our own centre started and I took part in that process.

One year ago I agreed to run for the position of president. Leslie had held the position for six years and felt it was time for someone else to take over, but when January rolled around I did not feel ready to step into Leslie's shoes – I had so many doubts. To help, I kept reminding myself of a phrase Shirley had told us Geeta says to her students: "Is it not your duty, if not, who's duty is it?"

In the past six months I feel like I have grown up and become an adult. Seven years ago I had trouble standing on two feet, now I can do *Adho mukha vrksasana*. Four years ago I remember asking Ann Kilbertus if I could give up shoulderstand, now *Salamba sarvangasana* is one of my favorite poses. Two years ago my mind was in turmoil, today I am like an ocean buoy; I cannot get lost when hit by a storm because I have an anchor. Six months ago doubt was still my master, now doubt is beginning to evaporate. I am no longer trying to fill Leslie's shoes, I have found shoes that fit me and they are beginning to feel comfortable.

I didn't get here on my own, I had yoga to help me and, in particular, Iyengar Yoga. Mr. Iyengar has developed a very special way to pass on a very ancient art and he has my sincere thanks. I am also fortunate to live in Victoria where we have many caring and dedicated Iyengar Yoga teachers.

Yoga can help ordinary people accomplish extraordinary things; I am just one example of that. ☺

Class Bursary Policy

The Victoria Yoga Centre Society offers class bursaries on a term by term basis to students who could not otherwise come to classes.

Please see the front desk for applications or more information.

Following Dr Geeta S. Iyengar's European Tour in April and May 2002, Judith Jones interviewed her for *Iyengar Yoga News*, a joint magazine of the Light on Yoga Association (UK) and the BKS Iyengar Yoga Teachers' Association. The interview took place on 25th August 2002 in the library of the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute in Pune, India. Thank you to IYN and to Geetaji for kindly granting us permission to reprint it here.

An Interview with Geetaji: Part 1

Geetaji, did you enjoy your first visit to the U.K.?

Geetaji: Yes, of course. It was enjoyable so I enjoyed it!

What were the most memorable moments of your European Tour?

Geetaji: It's a bit difficult to say memorable because many of them (the people) I had met here in Pune. Of course, not as a big crowd at one time, but I knew people from different countries who had visited here and I know their standard of seniority. Some of the people were new to me since they had not visited Pune. Some had newly joined Iyengar

Yoga so it was a mixed group. Also I have taught big groups like this (earlier). It was nice. People were good and they responded well to everything, were well disciplined. So I enjoyed it and everything is

fresh in my mind still. The memory has not faded yet.

On this recent tour of Europe did you notice differences in the way Iyengar Yoga is practised in the different countries?

Geetaji: Well - it's not that they practise differently. Any art you take there is always a kind of level in the beginning. The art like music or violin, yoga, whatever you take, in the beginning it is carried in a certain way with a fixed methodology. As understanding of the students increases, the same topic becomes a little broader, a little deeper. It changes accordingly. I can't say there was a difference as such. They had basically followed basic instructions which were given by Guruji to everyone. But many a time they didn't understand where they had to touch the depth of it. Whether teaching or doing or practising yoga it is not just something you do yourself physically. Each thing as you practise and proceed, you have to penetrate further, deeper to find out its inner depth. For example, I tell you today, somebody was practising in the hall *Viparita*

Chakrasana - going back to *Urdhva Dhanurasana* then climbing up on the wall and doing *Viparita Chakrasana*. There were a few other teachers who were watching. I said, "Now look at the person. When he drops in *Urdhva Dhanurasana*. What is the potency of his attention"? When he was bending his

back to drop his arms he was very alert and attentive to do that. Then when he climbed up on the wall and jumped, he just did inattentively. The attention had gone. I said look, while climbing up by taking the help



of the wall he is doing it physically. He is not within. But he stands proudly saying, "Oh I jumped". Whereas in *Urdhva Dhanurasana* he was going back with full attention to drop his arms properly, curving his back properly etc., while climbing up he was just throwing his one leg forward without having any curvature of the back. I told him, "Climb up, now curve your spine in order to come forward", and then he had to be really attentive and penetrate within himself. He was exactly on the borderline of fear that he may fall. At the same time he wanted to do and I brought him to that borderline of fear to courage. I said, "Now, with the same attention that you had in *Urdhva Dhanurasana*, do *Viparita Chakrasana*". Obviously he had to observe that at what level he climbs up and jumps. Then I asked the others to watch his face and eyes. The first five to eight times he had done they could see the ego projecting on his face. But when I asked him to think about what he was doing and how he had to do it, his face changed, he became sober and the teachers noticed this change. I said, "Now watch, it's not just the physical technique". I didn't say, "Just walk a bit down, have a curvature and throw your legs"! When his mind became sober he could jump from *Viparita Chakrasana* with the attention inwards.

These are the elements involved which cannot be written in the book. You see, I can teach you a devotional song to sing. I can teach you Patanjali *sloka* and say o.k., you sing or chant, but what has to come from inside - the feeling - that is something different. It cannot be written. You have to be devoted. You need to understand the depth of it. This is the thing which was lacking.

Also I noticed one thing, that perhaps the goal was to get the certificate. If you have to get a certificate you know there are certain *asanas* you should learn, that you should be able to present. So if it's a certificate oriented mind, learning yoga won't work. Certification is definitely needed because it organises the whole system. If you want to become an Iyengar Yoga teacher, at least minimum you should know 'this' much. If you

want a further certificate you should know maximum 'this' much. But that in itself is not Iyengar Yoga. Guruji is not teaching only that. He tried to channel it through certification so that people follow it in a proper way. While practising or to do certain corrections or to bring the depth in practitioners one needs to go inside. One's mind needs to penetrate. The person who goes inside, he himself is a religious person. Because when one learns to look into oneself, when one learns to look into one's own mistakes, one's own defects - physical, mental as well as intellectual defects - I would say that one has learning something.

So you can practise more advanced poses but you have to learn the technique first?

Geetaji: Absolutely.

Then you have to penetrate further, in the same way a beginner will learn Trikonasana, but also Trikonasana can be practised in a mature way.

Geetaji: A mature way, and you have to see that you are practising it to bring that inner change, the transformation. In spite of having physical problems the depth has to come in the practice. And if that depth comes, even in the diseased body it works to bring change. For instance, if I have a backache and I know that *Trikonasana* is good for that backache, there is a method of performing it. I have to concentrate on the painful area. I have to correct my positioning, and in that process of correcting the action I will be going within, and there it brings the religiosity. This happens with many people, for instance the cancer patient begins to think deeper inside to find out how to come out of it, how to get rid of it. Things become more clear about one's own nature, not only the disease. While teaching yoga this has to be taught by the teacher. The teachers have to make the students aware of all these things. They have to introduce the pupils not only to their bodies but mind, intelligence and consciousness. For example - *Padmasana*. The knee is not bending, the knee is painful - fine - but take the person a step ahead to see

when the person is avoiding Padmasana because the knee is painful. Then teach how to look into that knee, where it is failing, how it has to be worked. That means you are

training the other way. You are not working only on the painful knee but the very thoughts, how to be channelled. Your mind has to be attentive there. If I just say, "Oh! My knee is paining, I won't do it". It's not going to work,

and it's not good to the knee either. But if I look into the knee, at where it is paining, why it is paining, at what point it pains, at what degree of bending it is paining, how I have to move at that point, where I should force, where I should not force. This way of looking into, when it comes, then there will be maturity.

I wouldn't say I found difference as such. They were all doing whatever has been taught, but they were not knowing the art of penetration. Along with agility of the body, one needs to have stability of the mind and mobility of the intelligence too.

So when one is saying you are making the body a fit vehicle for the soul, it doesn't matter what state that body is in.

Geetaji: Absolutely, because everybody has got a right for self-realisation. Everybody has the right to have a god-realisation, whichever word you use. It is not that this diseased body doesn't reach. But one has to pay attention to a disease. One cannot neglect that disease.

For example today in the children's medical class, a boy hardly eleven years old who is partially blind, can

figure out though the vision is not really very clear. He has very poor vision. He looks from his left eye sharply. So each time he knows when I call him, he recognises

my voice but he responds from his left eye only. The very first asana - he was in Supta Virasana - I told his mother, "When you are asking him to look up - in supine posture he looks upwards towards the brain so the brain remains alert to focus the eyes but he looks from

his left eye, not from his right eye". I said that his left forehead is responding but not the right. I said, "Look at your mother with the right eye", and he tried. At the end of the class he came to say namaskar to me, and again he looked at me with the left eye. I said, "No, look with the right eye, do you know where I am"? And he tried to focus and he said, "Yes, right eye doesn't focus as much as the left eye, I can see better." At the end of the class he realised that he can see better with the left eye but not the right eye, so he put effort to open the right eye more in order to use it. Is it not the inner understanding of that boy who is just eleven years old? If he goes to the doctor he will say both eyes are blind, but what awareness came to him to see that he looks now with his right eye. Then I showed his mother when he is doing Sirsasana how he has to look from his right eye at her right hand so it brings the eye to focus.

So a teacher has to understand this depth. If we just train students to certificate level, saying that asana after asana you continue to do for your Introductory, Intermediate etc. then they will stick to that, whereas



this penetration has to come. But I'm certainly not stopping people if they do at the physical level. Let them first do. We went to the lower kindergarten, then upper kindergarten and then school, college and University. We may think that kindergarten is not a big education but yet it is a foundation for further education. The kindergarten school has given us some discipline to continue now. In yoga too, these categories exist.

Yoga practice is an activity one does essentially on one's own. Why is it so important to maintain an international yoga community?

Geetaji: Yes, practice is individual, it's not that you have to have an Iyengar Yoga community. You students have given the name Iyengar Yoga community. Guruji has never said that. What he teaches is Patanjali Yoga. But the methodology is given by Guruji so you call it Iyengar Yoga. For instance Patanjali rishi, who has given yogic philosophy in the form of aphorisms is recognised as Patanjala Yoga. But he has not expressed yogic science in a communal sense. Patanjali hasn't used the word "Hinduism" anywhere, he hasn't even used the word anywhere the name of the god. When he uses the word Ishvara it means God. It doesn't mean a particular god. The one who is all pervading, to whom everything belongs is Ishvara. That is the meaning, all pervading. If it has to be said in English you would say - all pervading. If it has to be said in Sanskrit - Ishvara. He doesn't say this god or that god, or particular god. So yoga is meant for all.

Now, why one community? - it is easier to have an access to communicate with. If any doubt arises we have to find the solution. Seeking the help of the Yoga Sutra. You are together there. All the students, the practitioners of yoga, when they are together then you are like one family. I might be in India and you might be in England and somebody else might be in U.S.A., but still we belong to one family in this sense. The community is required to have the exchange. Community members need to seek the help of each

other. Why do you need a society? You might say, "Why can't I live alone? I don't need society"! But who forms the society? Sociology says individuals coming together form the society. And what is society? It is the one where all individuals are individuals yet together. That is society. So what does community mean here? We want community in that manner. I'm not interfering in your kitchen or her kitchen. You have your own kitchen, you have your own food, similarly you practice on your own - fine! But what do we do when we say let us exchange, let us help each other. What I know, you might not be knowing. What you know, I might not be knowing. Let me know what you know and you say - yes - let me know what you know, so we learn much better. What is society then?

Strength and understanding?

Geetaji: Yes. It is also an organisation to protect each other. When you have got some neighbours in society you help each other. That is communication, you have friends. Why do you have the family? Because there is a communication. When somebody gets married it is two families coming together, trying to have understanding and you sanctify it. That is society. The marriage is recognised. Similarly, when you are given an Iyengar certificate, you are recognised.

Suppose you are a yoga teacher and you have not been certified. Today you may teach but tomorrow if somebody questions what will you answer? You have no certificate. You have not been recognised by any teacher. If tomorrow the question comes to you, on what basis are you teaching? Who are you to teach? How can we believe that what you are teaching is absolutely correct? What is the answer? When you have a certification you say here is my teacher and I have been taught. This is guru and sisya relationship in this manner. You are recognised as a student of Iyengar. He is your teacher. It is true that the recognition is required.

You can't call yourself a doctor unless you are certified. Why do you go to university, why do you take your

certification there and then put up a board with your name on that you are a doctor? Because you need to be recognised. You might know very well about medicines but who will recognise you if you haven't got the certificate? And that makes us understand how to keep that path and the method pure. If you are an Iyengar certified teacher, you will be following the method given by your teacher, your guru. The method that is inclusive of all that is taught by your guru, which includes the methodology, the principles, the technique, the behaviour, the character, the thoughts, the thinking process and the discipline. Then you cannot go on the wrong path. You will be questioned if you are on the wrong path since you are an Iyengar certified teacher. As an Iyengar teacher one cannot go on an immoral path. One has to be ethical. One has to have this bearing on the mind. In *Astadala Yogamala Vol 3*, which will be published very soon, Guruji says that the teachers are certified so that they have a chance to serve the society. He is giving you a certificate so that you can help those who are suffering. It is just the beginning to tread on the right path. It is not that you are a master. It is a chance given to you, a green signal. So you begin to learn, begin to study, begin to help. That is why the community is required. The association is required in order to protect the art, to protect the knowledge.

If I ask, who are you, you say you are so and so, your parents are so and so. That is how we recognise each other. That is how we identify each other. That is how

the community is formed. You don't come from nowhere. Nobody comes from nowhere. There is always an origin and one needs to trace that origin.

Individually each one has to practise individually, each one has to do yoga, but among the yoga community or a yoga society, there has to be inter-relationship. Community is required for that. More the individuality, more the knowledge will be scattered. It may get lost because of lack of communication. Who has to protect it? Something that is learnt, something that is understood has to be protected. In the scientific research what do we do? Don't we keep records of the research because it will be helpful at any time to



anyone. The research work in every field is preserved. The individual egoism may interfere to say that someone makes the particular discovery, yet it is preserved because it is for the sake of the whole of humanity, for the sake of the community.

So we have to see this when we are forming this community. We have to understand each other and not fight. Associations are not there to fight. Then it is not an association! What do you mean by association? You have to associate with each other. You have to come

together. When two people come together they may fight but in the fighting one has to sort out the problem too because they are associated. To quarrel or fight is human nature. The difference of opinion will be there but you form an association so that you come together. You sort out the problem, you communicate your opinions. Because of this one person, our Gurujji who has given so much to us, we come together under his umbrella. It is a kind of umbrella he has formed. He has given shelter so that we can protect ourselves. Whether it is for our health, or for our spirituality, or for our evolution, whatever, but come under one umbrella to work in this manner to give it to others. That is why there is a guru and sisya relationship. There has to be respect. It has to be given to the next generation. Who has to pass on the knowledge, the art. We all may perish, but art, science and philosophy do not die. It never happens. Therefore, it is better that we give it to someone else who will carry on. That is what has been said in the Taittiriya Upanishad. The guru says to the sisya, "Your study is over. Now you go and get married, have children. Why? So that you can pass on the knowledge. The thread of knowledge should not be broken." ☉



Short Workshop at the Victoria Yoga Centre

Menstruation

with Gwynneth Powell

Saturday, September 27, 1–3pm

Menstruation- how you practise can support healthy menstruation.

We will also look at what can be done during and between periods for common problems such as cramps, heavy flow or light flow.

\$30 +gst members

\$35 +gst non-members

*pre-requisite: all levels welcome



Avidya

by Karyn Woodland

Patanjali identifies *avidya* (lack of spiritual understanding or ignorance) as the root of confusion (sutra II.24). In his commentary on this sutra, Gurujji says that *vidya*, or discriminative knowledge, destroys ignorance and raises the question: What is right knowledge? In the following sutra (II.25), Patanjali says the destruction of ignorance leads to *kaivalya*, or emancipation. Patanjali goes on to say that the ceaseless flow of discriminative knowledge in thought, word and deed destroys ignorance, the source of pain (II.26). At teachers' meetings involving peer teaching or presentations to peers, the purpose of which is geared towards removing some of our layers of ignorance, many people fall victim to nervousness. *Why is there so much nervousness?*

Where does this come from?

What are its causes?

Is it helpful?

If not, how can it be overcome?

Do I want to remain ignorant? (Of course not, you will answer.)

Then, what is so intimidating about a process which will root out confusion and remove ignorance?

These are very thought-provoking questions and I have considered them at great length before answering here. This subject of 'nervousness' and of 'spiritual ignorance' could be addressed from a number of different perspectives: psychological, cultural, societal, philosophical; as well as from either a Western or an Eastern point of view.

The Western Perspective

Addressing the subject first from a Western perspective, we often hear that public speaking is the

number one fear of the majority. Is it not our fear that creates our nervousness? (Although rather than saying we "fall victim to nervousness," I might say we all have fears that create vulnerabilities.)

Where does this fear come from? Socially and culturally, we both live in and have inherited forms of organizational structure which are founded in hierarchy and presume a greater 'authority' outside ourselves; from the moment of birth we are subject to the 'authority' in our parents. Much of our young lives are spent trying to please them. (Sometimes much of our adult lives, too!)

As we develop in Western culture, not only do we have to 'answer to' our parents, we can find many examples of external authorities who influence (some might even say control) our lives: our religion, doctors, police officers, the government, our boss ... add your own!

These structures are so ingrained in our culture, we may not even recognize them. But have you ever done something just because you knew it would please your parents? Ever written a university paper hoping for the approval of the professor? Worked extra hours hoping for acknowledgement from your boss?

We (especially women!) are raised with a strong desire to please, to seek approval. There is, after all, pleasure in approval. (Although this is true also for men, I believe the patriarchal nature of our institutions have an especially strong influence over women.)

Much has been written in books of psychology about internal vs. external locus of control. Those who see themselves as powerless to external forces have less resilience, more 'victimizing' attitudes; while those who believe they control their destiny (i.e. have an internal locus of control, much like Victor Frankl in *Man's Search for Meaning*), have healthier psyches and happier lives.

Without a doubt 'internal locus of control' is

emphasized in class, especially when Shirley admonishes, "Who's knees are they anyway?!"

Many of us, I believe, take the yogic path in a desire to develop and follow this inner authority, to become the authors of our own stories, the authors of our own lives. This means shedding years of cultural, social and (sometimes) religious conditioning. This means letting go of the fear of judgment, letting go of the need for approval.

Allowing others control over your life is paramount to giving away your spirit suggests Carolyn Myss in *Sacred Contracts*. In her work as secretary to a group of competitive academics she learned a spiritual truth that she now relies on: "...when you do not seek or need external approval, you are at your most powerful. Nobody can disempower you emotionally or psychologically."

This spiritual security, Myss goes on to say, "gave me a liberated feeling that was practically euphoric. It made me appreciate why the famous line 'to thine own self be true' in Shakespeare's Hamlet is considered a spiritual commandment. You cannot live for prolonged periods of time within the polarity of being true to yourself and needing the approval of others. At some point you will realize that you are doing harm to yourself by being what you think you should be so that someone approves of you... compromising who you are to gain the approval of another is a very precise example of giving away a piece of your spirit."

Most yoga teachers know this instinctively. We are, as I mentioned earlier, on a path to uncover our inner authority, our essence, our soul, our Divinity.

So why the nervousness at peer teaching, or presentations, or teaching in front of senior teacher Shirley Daventry French?

Speaking from my own experience, it comes from years of conditioning, from the fear of inadequacy, of not being quite good enough, of not measuring up, and of knowing (or at least believing) that these inadequacies

will be unfavourably judged.

As students and teachers of a style of yoga that emphasizes precision and alignment, I believe Iyengar teachers strive for perfection. We have Guruji, and Geeta, and Shirley all of whom we know to have the highest of expectations, both of themselves and of their teachers and students; all of whom we know will challenge us to the very edge of our capabilities.

In the effort to create and sustain these teaching standards, the Iyengars have introduced certification and assessment which amount to individual examination and a judgment imposed by an external authority, the assessors!

An Eastern Perspective?

The paradoxical challenge is to live and function artfully within these externally imposed structures, without being attached to the results or rewards inherent in them!

Fear-based nervousness, it seems, is a symptom, a manifestation, of ego-based thinking. How will I do? Am I really good enough to be an Iyengar teacher (Who Do You Think You Are? asks Alice Munroe); will Shirley think less of me? Will I fail the assessment? This, Shirley has said, is the thinking of an 'inverted ego.' While the 'hungry ego' may appear overly-confident, boastful, or presumptuous, an inverted ego will appear undeserving. Flip sides of the same coin.

The ego, undoubtedly, is an obstacle on the path to enlightenment, or *kaivalya*.

Ego identification leads to avidya, or ignorance. And false identification (with the ego or with the material world) prevents the discernment that leads to true knowledge. Without discrimination, we cannot, as Mr. Iyengar says, break free of our attachment to the material world. We cannot cultivate the realization that we are spirit, not matter.

To overcome nervousness we must go beyond the ego, beyond the material world, beyond our need for

approval. This shift in perspective may be the greatest challenge on the yogic path!

As Ty Chandler observed at the last meeting; (when teaching) if you look outside (beyond) yourself and see instead the light within each individual (as sometimes pictured in the Bhagavad Gita), the nervousness subsides, becomes in fact irrelevant.

Adopting this perspective requires both unshakeable confidence in our abilities as teachers, along with profound humility in our role as teacher.

This constant interplay of effort and surrender, I believe, develops within one's self the ability to discriminate and to discern true knowledge. Our own practice, our devotion to this path, will eventually burn clean the residues of ignorance and confusion, allowing our own inner flame to shine more brightly. ☯

Friday Night Videos

Come be inspired by B.K.S. Iyengar

Sept. 19: Watch Mr. Iyengar's famous Rooftop Practice from 1975.

See a master in action.

Dec. 5: *Yoga the Ultimate Freedom* is an demonstration that B.K.S. Iyengar presented on a visit to the USA in the 70s. Mr. Iyengar explains some benefits of the asanas and gives the demo introduction and closing.

Movies are free and start at 6:45pm

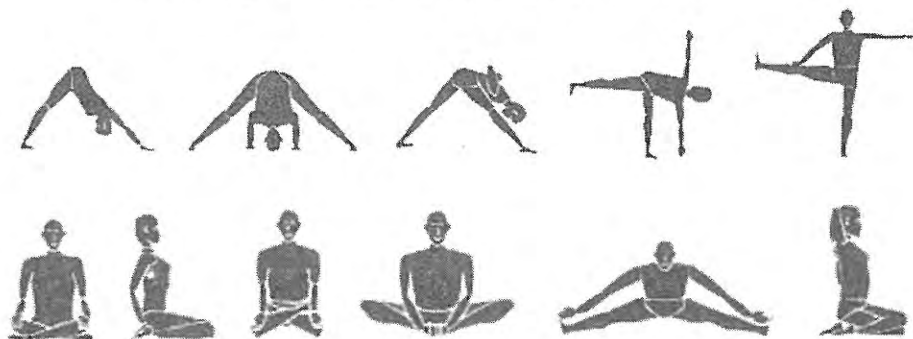
Bring your own popcorn

Menstruation and Asana Practice

by Melissa Worth

For the sake of clarity, the graphics included with "Clearing Doubts about Yoga Practice during Menstruation" by Geeta Iyengar, printed in the July/August 2003 issue of the Victoria Yoga Centre Newsletter, have been reproduced below.

The following asanas may be practiced during healthy menstruation:



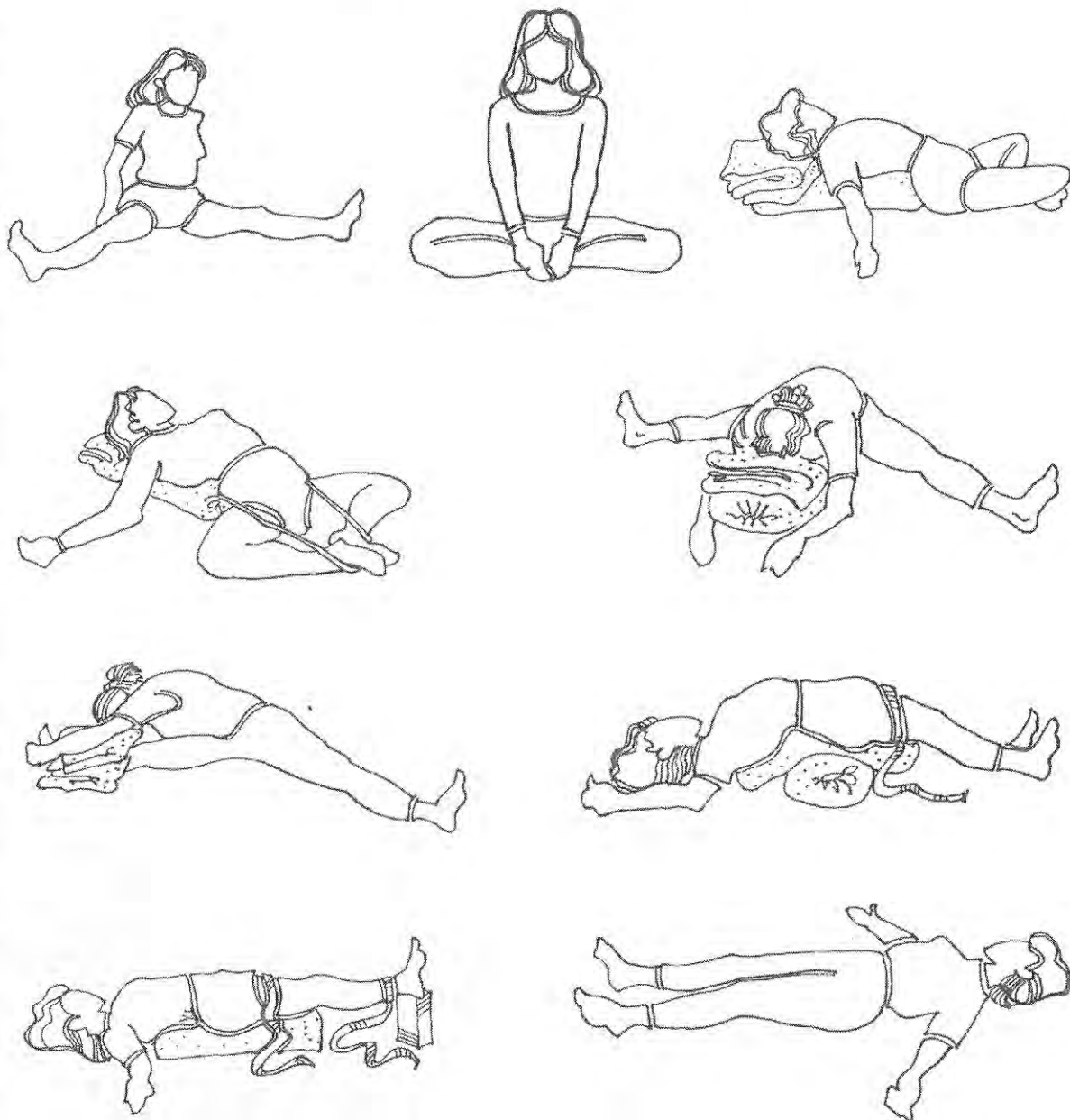
Do not practice the following asanas when menstruating:



Reasons for observing these modifications during menstruation are provided in Geeta's original article.



During menstruation, students of any level practice the sequence provided below. The poses included in the following sequences are not only beneficial to menstruating women, but also are a boon to men's health.



REVIEW WORKSHOP

The Path of Devotion

by Byron Smith

If you have spent time with Shirley Daventry French, you will understand what I am about to try to convey. If you haven't, imagine the sensation of standing in a crowded art gallery, looking at a portrait by one of the "Masters". The eyes look at you. They follow you. Of course, you realize that most everyone in the room is thinking the same thing. I feel this in Shirley's words and in the postures she chooses to teach. At the 19th annual Salt Spring Retreat this year, I was privileged to this and more. In a brief one-on-one discussion with Shirley, I learned about a part of my practice that had been neglected – my devotion.

Earlier in the week, I had been reading Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood's *How To Know God*, an agreeably accessible version of Patanjali's yoga sutras, when I came across the following passages:

I.23 Concentration may also be
attained
through devotion to Ishwara.

I.24 Ishwara is a special kind of
Being, untouched by ignorance
and the products of ignorance, not
subject to karmas or samskaras or
the results of action.

Here for the first time, Patanjali
introduces the idea of God...
Liberation... can be reached
without devotion to God. But this
is a subtle and dangerous path,
threading its way through the
pitfalls of ambition and pride.
(p. 52-53)

Certainly, I would not like to be on the more dangerous path to enlightenment – particularly if this is of my own choice! I was raised in a church-going family, but I couldn't hide from myself that for 10-plus years I had been shying away from all things Christian, including believing in and devoting myself to God. In a quick and reflexive self-check, my thoughts probably went like this:

"Am I devoted?" (worried)

"Maybe not!" (anxious)

"Well then, what am I? I must be something!" (panic)

"I think I'm committed to yoga." (aha!)

"That's pretty good. It's probably on the path to devotion. I'll get there in time." (relief)

I didn't give it another thought until Salt Spring, when Shirley spoke in class about the Light and its synonymy with each religion's particular icon. She spoke about the universality of yoga and its boundless ability to apply to all religious persons. Yoga accepts all religions and is open to all religious beliefs. The Light, God, Ishwara, they are one and the same.

I had heard these ideas before, but this time I was more



ready to process them. The two events – the writing and the word – were combining in my head, approaching a complete thought. “But what if I don’t subscribe to any religion? Am I necessarily on the slow train to enlightenment if I cannot name that to which I am devoted?”

Now, suddenly and for the first time, I felt a little Godless.

After the class, and after lunch, I was trying to find those sutras again when Shirley sat down in the chair next to me. After several false starts I still hadn’t expressed my question properly, but Shirley spoke to me about her own devotion.

“Many people are attracted to Krishna or Tara,” she said. “I have always felt attracted to Shiva, the destroyer...” (my eyebrows shot up) “...of obstacles” (I smiled).

She explained that each person will find their own object of devotion, be it God, Christ, Krishna, The Light, whatever, or whomever – so long as it is good.



As little as I understand, I now understand this much; the key part of these ideas is the devotion itself. Devotion to something larger and greater than oneself brings with it focus, guidance, humility, respect for others. The path of devotion is everywhere in a multitude of

expressions, all of which may be revered for their own reasons.

That evening, the residents and volunteers at the Salt Spring Centre led everyone in a Satsang. Being devotees of Baba Hari Das, this musical expression of their devotion is a large part of their spiritual practice. We were skillfully accompanied by simple percussion, a harmonium, and a tambura – rattles, tambourines, and bells were handed out to those who asked. The greatest instruments in the room, however, were the peoples’ voices - the more I sang, the more I wanted to sing. Kishori, a Salt Spring Centre resident, sang with such passion and joy that, as I watched her, I couldn’t help but think about the Light. I thought about how it is



present, in everyone, and it will beam and shine if you are willing to follow the path to strengthen and release it.

This was my second visit to the Salt Spring Centre. Shirley, on the other hand, has led 19 of these annual retreats in as many years. I am thankful that Shirley is devoted to yoga and has been so dedicated to continuing this tradition for so long. And I am thankful to be a part of a yoga community in which I see the fruits of so much devotion. ☯



Short Workshop at the Victoria Yoga Centre

Yoga Karunta

with Ann Kilbertus

Saturday, Oct.18, 1-3pm

Yoga Karunta –a focus on standing poses
and shoulder work in the ropes

\$30 +gst members

\$35 +gst non-members

*pre-requisite: all levels welcome

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

-to Faeq Biria for his incredible generosity of time and for sharing with us his vast knowledge of yoga. Faeq not only spoke highly of our centre and our teacher, Shirley Daventry French, but also showed his support by donating a portion of his workshop fees back to our non-profit society.

-to Bruce Cox for not only putting in the baseboards in July but for all his other help around the centre.

-to Rosemary and Tom Barritt who spent a beautiful July weekend on their hands and knees in Cedar Studio repairing the new floor.

-to Silvia Vilches and Lori Wanamaker for helping define our book keeping needs and attending several meetings to do so.

-to Bonnie Light for her advertising advice and for helping us make a clear and concise plan.

-to our on-going Special Needs Volunteers who make the classes possible: Debra, Keiko, Britta, Wendy, Joanna, Corrine, Veronica.

-to Penny Hocking and David Gartrel for our Moss Street Paint-In Space. They let us use their front lawn so we could advertise our Centre.

-to Cathie Street for donating several yoga books and a host of magazines.

REVIEW WORKSHOP

Summer Sadhana Helps Put the Pieces Together

by Silvia and Lori Wanachez

"All the important texts on yoga lay great emphasis on sadhana or abhysasa (constant practice)," explains Mr. Iyengar in *Light on Yoga* (p. 29). From July 2–6, Lori and I had the opportunity to experience a guided *sadhana* under the tutelage of Ann Kilbertus. After enjoying (and surviving!) our experience at the Salt Spring retreat this seemed like the perfect opportunity to sink our teeth into another extended practice.

I came with many questions because, as a student who has recently moved to Level II classes, I have been discovering that I cannot practice everything I know at once! This is a delightful dilemma but challenges me to construct practices out of the various asanas I have been learning.

Ann took us through a sequence that both moved through a different practice focus each day, as well as through a five day cycle. The first day we focussed on standing poses, the second on forward bends and inversions, the third on backbends and twists, culminating on the fifth day in a deep

restorative practice. This cycle, she explained, can be done as is, in a five-day rotation, or it can be extended over a longer period of time, spending a week on each focus.

It was great to make the time and the space to practise every day in our busy lives. As a result of this regular practice, there was a much deeper understanding of the asanas and ourselves in the asanas. Lori commented that "it was like waking up little bits of my body – like feeling a really good rotation to a twist, or really feeling my shoulder blades in head stand. By practising every day, there were little glimpses of alignment, not just

body alignment, but mind alignment."

I experienced an additional insight because I began menstruating midway through the *sadhana* and began the menstrual practice. I asked whether I should pick up where the class left off once I finished menstruating. Ann explained that it is not good to move directly either into vigorous backbends nor inversions afterwards. She suggested moving into gentle inversions to start with, like *Adho mukha svanasana*, *Prasarita padottanasana*, and *Halasana*.¹ If the period had been heavy, she

recommended holding *Sarvangasana* for briefer periods of time at first. She also noted that her own practice tends to follow a monthly cycle, starting with restorative, working up to two weeks on more vigorous and strenuous asanas, and then moving back into



restorative.

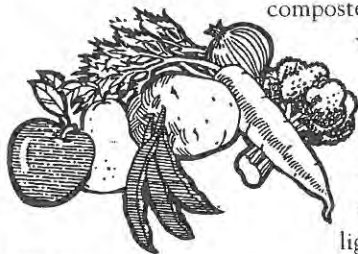
Ann also talked a little about yoga philosophy each day. Although I have heard of Ashtanga Yoga as a style or discipline of yoga practice, Ann explained that in the original yoga teachings *ashtanga* refers to the eight limbs (or branches) of yoga: *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi*. For further guidance, Ann referred us to *Sadhana Padha*, the second chapter in *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, which focuses on practice or, in Mr. Iyengar's words, "the means."

As new *sadhakas*, or aspirants, we look forward to the next opportunity to experience an extended *sadhana* at the Victoria Yoga Centre.

1. See Geeta Iyengar's book *Yoga: A Gem for Women* for further information on asanas to practice following menstruation. ☯

"It's a dirty job, but some worm's gotta do it!"

The Victoria Yoga Centre is now the proud owner of a vermiculture bin, also known as a worm composter! Using red



wiggler worms to eat up food scraps is a great way to reduce our waste and tread a little lighter on the earth.

With regular maintenance of our composter, there should be no odour and a good supply of compost for any yogis who also like to garden. For more information on our vermiculture at the VYC, talk to Heather at the front desk.



VICTORIA
YOGA CENTRE'S

Friday Night Gathering

Date: Friday, Oct. 24
at the Victoria Yoga Centre
202-919 Fort Street

Asana Practice 6pm

6:30pm hors d'oeuvres/ fingerfood/
dessert potluck-social
Bring food to share

7:15pm live musical performance
(check office for details)

*Everyone is welcome to join us.
Bring a friend, partner or family member.
Suggested donation \$5 for musical performance*

Mark your calendars for our next gathering on November 14 at 6pm. Start the evening with a group practice. Afterwards there'll be a Teacher's Asana Demonstration and then the evening will move onto a pot-luck dinner with a chance to meet the teachers and the Board of Directors. See you there!

Name the Studios Contest

by Leslie Hogya

The idea of celebrating a new studio downstairs was quickly taken on as a special project by Corrine, our manager, along with the office staff. Food, decorations and flowers were planned. Naming the studios also seemed like a good idea. As Heather said, we can do better than calling our studios A, B and C! I was at the meeting when we decided to really encourage participation in a contest to name our studios by having the first prize be a trip to our annual Salt Spring retreat. I suggested then that Shirley Daventry French choose the winner, since she gets to go anyway. And knowing Shirley, I trusted her taste and instinct to pick names that would be appropriate.

She teased us occasionally saying she would name them *Ted*, *Carol* and *Alice* if we didn't submit ideas. She need not have worried, the box holding the ballots was overflowing by the deadline and Shirley soon found herself mulling over the multitude of suggestions. She said they fell into several categories. The entries ranged from the names of people such as *Guruji*, *Prashant* and *Geeta*, to the names of her own children. There was also an array of Sanskrit names and terms, Gods and Goddesses as well as names such as *Ananada*, which means joy. A few people stuck with initials of A, B, and C. Others suggested B, K and S. But it was the names of trees that won out over all other ideas. The runners up,

Wayne Unger and his wife Elizabeth stated that a tree is stately and would be a serious name. The winning names, submitted in two separate entries, are *Arbutus*, *Birch* and *Cedar*. Diana Turk and Janet Henshaw will share the scholarship to the 2004 Salt Spring retreat.

One of Mr. Iyengar's books on yoga philosophy is called the *Tree of Yoga*. He compares the seed of yoga to the tree. The roots of the tree are the *yamas* – or disciplines such as *ahimsa* (non-violence) – these control the organs of action. The trunk corresponds to the *niyamas*,

which include observances such as *saucha* (cleanliness), *svadhyaya* (self-study), and *pranidhana* (devotion). From the trunk grow branches or the *asanas*. On the branches grow the leaves, which correspond to *pranayama*, the science of breath. The inward journey of yoga relates to the bark, the sap, without which the tree cannot flower and fruit. "As the essence of the tree is in the fruit, so the essence of the practice of yoga is in the freedom, poise, peace and beatitude of Samadhi where the body, the mind and the soul are united and merge with the Universal Spirit" (*Tree of Yoga*, p. 8).

Naming the studios for these three trees, which are prevalent in Canada, does seem fitting. At a recent board meeting Corrine asked if we could find someone to make plaques for each door out of the appropriate piece of wood. Greg Sly immediately took up the challenge.

For those of you readers from places outside Canada, you may not be familiar with these trees. The *arbutus* is a unique tree to the west coast. It is an evergreen, but



Ty Chandler plays the VYC's new harmonium for its inaugural performance.

it has leaves not needles (in the U.S. it is called the madrona). The bark can be red, yellow and brown. The bark peels and curls off. It grows on the rocky cliffs of



Shirley Daventry French chooses the studios' new names - Arbutus, Birch and Cedar.

the Pacific coast and the trunk twists and bends at interesting angles. The birch tree grows across the continent and also has a unique black and white bark. The cedar is a very special tree to the First Nation's people of the Pacific coast. The cedar tree provided most needs for building materials for the coastal peoples. The bark was pounded and woven into rain

repellent garments. The trunks were carved into canoes and split into long boards which were then used to build their houses. The cedar tree is resistant to insect and moisture damage. Cedar can be easily carved or shaped or bent for many purposes such as mask-making and creating feast bowls used in ceremonies. Old stands of cedar, of which few remain, tower into the sky with mammoth girth. Some are 300 years old and more.

Interesting that bark is important to all three of these trees. And each one is so completely different from the other. In *Tree of Yoga*, Mr. Iyengar relates the bark of the tree to *pratyahara*, the withdrawal of the senses. Yoga is an inward journey to the soul and *pratyahara* – withdrawing inwards, is what we learn in our practice. Standing in *Vrksasana*, the tree pose, can be the first step in that inward journey. It is a first balancing pose. As the student learns to be silent, to be steady, balance comes.

Thank you to all who put your creativity to work. Thank you Shirley for your choices. Thanks again to Corrine, Britta, Heather, Monica, Karin and Christine for the festive atmosphere. Shirley, thank you for a huge group practice; Ty for the chanting. ☺

Upcoming CIYTA Assessment Dates

Oct. 17-19, 2003	Introductory I & II	Winnipeg
Nov. 14-16, 2003	Junior Intermediate I	Ottawa
Jan. 16-18, 2004	Junior Intermediate III	Victoria

Please note:

The Introductory 1 & 2 Assessments are held annually on the third weekend of both June and October.

Congratulations

The following teachers achieved certifications in Edmonton this past June:

Introductory Level II Certification

Fay Gashcho	Petersburg
Drew Perry	Winnipeg
Gwynneth Powell	Victoria
Robert Power	Fredericton
Gerie Primerano	Vancouver
Melissa Schoales	Halifax

Introductory Level I enabling letter

Brigitta Ortner	Toronto
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Participants in the Victoria Yoga Centre Introductory Level I/II Teacher Training Intensive July 2003.

At the Introductory Level I/II Teacher Training Intensive held in July, trainees reflected on four of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras:

I.30 These obstacles are disease, inertia, doubt, heedlessness, laziness, indiscipline of the senses, erroneous views, lack of perseverance, and backsliding.

I.31 Sorrow, despair, unsteadiness of the body and irregular breathing further distract the citta.

I.32 Adherence to single-minded effort prevents these impediments.

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

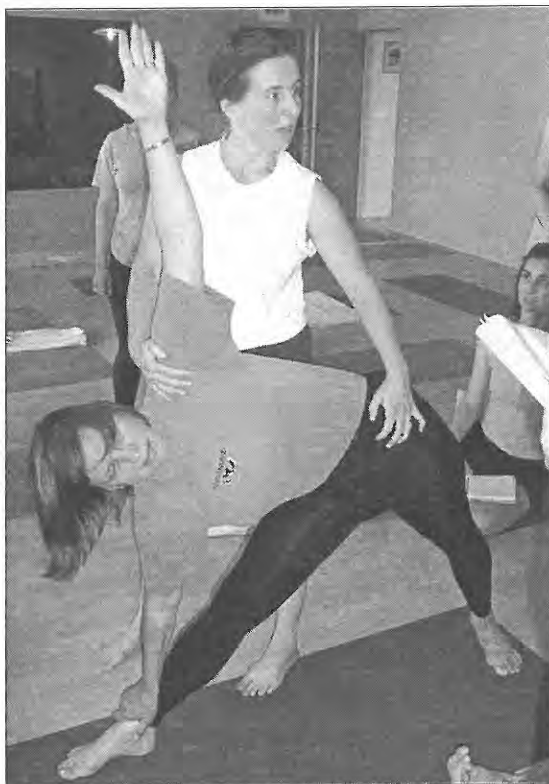
As a result of this reflection, participants created skits, drawings, songs, poems and prose in order to convey their understanding of these sutras. Many teachers-in-training recognized samsaya¹ as a particularly significant obstacle at this point in their lives as they continue on the yogic path. Below we have printed two pieces of writing resulting from reflection on doubt.

When a Weed Grows, a Garden Doesn't

by Laurie Ankenman

Self-inflicted, *samsaya* blows in (sometimes as a breeze other times as a gust) on an asana that is a challenge for me. It creeps in under the skin, seeps into the consciousness, all the while feeling anxiety like a poison into my inner garden and creating a cycle of *samsara*². Doubt for me is like a mist or long shadow; it descends to scatter my consciousness – thoughts blur – and *himsa* becomes apparent in self-judgments of my asana no longer supported due to a lack of clarity – an uncertainty, a wavering mind. When not checked, *samsaya* is like a weed that spreads. The inner garden struggles to flourish and the light within flickers with uncertainty.

But weeds can be brought under control by planting flowers: flowers of friendliness towards the self, flowers of compassion towards the self, of joy for one's life, my life. In his translation of sutra I.33, B.K.S. Iyengar describes the cultivation of these flowers (or qualities) as a mental adjustment to return the consciousness to a serene and benevolent place. I liken this to reclaiming



**Ann Kilbertus demonstrates how to
make safe adjustments**

my inner garden.

In living consistently by the principles of the *yamas*, particularly *ahimsa* (non-violence towards myself and all other beings), and the *niyamas*, doubt may be overcome.

With a committed practice of *asana* and *pranayama* comes *santosa* (contentment) and the knowledge that "On this path effort never goes to waste and there is no failure" (*Bhagavad Gita*, II.40) – the flame of *tapas* is ignited (sutra II.42).

In this way I am able to move out of doubt, ridding myself of the weeds and create a flourishing inner garden of friendliness, compassion and certainty that I can continue to build a strong, life enhancing personal

practice and become a teacher who shines with a very bright inner light – clear (not fuzzy), steady (not wavering), enduring and joyful.

1. doubt, indecision
2. imperical existence, the wheel of birth and death, transmigration

Studio D

by Lee Elliott

Joan Work and Charles Dodd practice *Savasana* beside me, undisturbed by my pen scratching this paper.

They've been holding this pose long enough for someone to plant grass above them, build stone monuments for lovers to lean against. Enough time for earth's prana to begin exhaling their being.

Charles' age is already gone though we can know he began the pose in 1860. Joan was already 70 when she lay down – almost three of my lifetimes ago.

When theirs is the only pose I'll ever master, why do I practice the others? And will my last *Savasana* be any better for the practice? ☯



**The practice of yoga is to remove weeds
from the body so the garden can grow.**

B.K.S. Iyengar



Victoria Yoga Centre
presents

The Heart of Yoga

An Intermediate Workshop
with
Shirley Daventry French

January 30, 31,
& February 1

Shirley Daventry French is a longtime student of B.K.S. Iyengar and has travelled to India many times to study with the Iyengars, most recently in February 2002.

Shirley's significant understanding of the teaching comes through in her direct approach.

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

Workshop times:

Friday 6:30 - 8:30pm

Saturday 10:30 - 1:30pm

and 2:30 - 4:30pm

lite lunch provided on Saturday

Sunday 10:30 - 1:30pm

Registration opens:

December 8 for members

(Dec. 15 for non-members)

Light on Questions

by Ty Chandler

Q

Why does yoga cause next day muscle soreness? What do you recommend to minimize, prevent or recover from DOMS? Nathan Bernshaw

A

Thank you for your question Nathan, something most who have tried yoga will have experienced to varying degrees.

"DOMS or Delayed Onset Muscle Soreness is a common result of physical activity that stresses the muscle tissue beyond what it is accustomed to," says David O. Draper, professor and director of the graduate program in sports medicine/athletic training at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. "DOMS occurs when the muscle is performing an eccentric or a lengthening contraction. Small microscopic tears occur in the muscle."

The microscopic damage to the muscle fibers along with inflammation that accompanies the tears is what causes the feeling of soreness and stiffness. This research challenges the old belief of DOMS being caused by a build up of lactic acid in the muscle.

Gabe Mirkin, M.D. adds, "Stretching does not prevent soreness either, since post exercise soreness is not due to contracted muscle fibers." This remark would certainly resonate with yogis especially if one has ever tried a weekend workshop or intensive.

From a yogic perspective these sensations during and after practice have been coined as 'newness.' Ann Kilbertus, Junior Intermediate 3 Iyengar Yoga teacher at the Victoria Yoga Centre adds, "When the muscles that have not been used in a while are engaged via the work in asana, the soreness could indicate an awakening of sorts...a coming to life! In our day-to-day activities, we don't use all of our muscle groups. We usually operate in specific patterns of functional use that work for us and keep us in a comfort zone

(other wise known as *samskara*). Yoga helps to break us out of the *samskara* and in doing there may be some initial muscle soreness.”

Researching this article reminded me of when I first started level 4 classes at the YM/YWCA with Shirley Daventry French, Senior Intermediate 3 Iyengar Yoga teacher and a founding member of the Victoria Yoga Centre. In retrospect it would have been wise to study in level 3 for a while longer because the day after level 4 classes I would look at a flight of stairs with sheer dread of having to lift a leg up and take a step! I look back on this now as ‘exploring newness’ but also as a lack of awareness on my part on how to play the edge of a stretch. I also

did not have the physical endurance to hold the pose, the mental concentration to process the information I was receiving in the posture and the maturity to respond to the information. Here lays a place to practice the second limb (*Niyama*) of Ashtanga Yoga – *Svadyaya*, self study. If one goes too far in the stretch the risk of injury is probable, and on the contrary if one does not go far enough there is no change. And so there is the myriad of information and adjustments to incorporate in between. This is part of the art of yoga and in learning how to tune your body to the degree of stretch may help in the prevention of DOMS.



In Pune during the summer of 2001 I was under the tutelage of Geeta and Prashant Iyengar. There I worked

harder, deeper, longer than I ever thought possible and to my surprise... I did not experience DOMS! This was class after class of newness but with complete recovery and more energy than ever before. Granted the heat and lifestyle completely centered on yoga probably helped, but when I talked with Shirley about this the word ‘surrender’ quickly came up. Could it be that when the ego has surrendered and the transmission is clear there is no residue left in the body or mind, allowing the soul to roam freely?

Resources:

WebMD Feature, Barbara Russi Sarnataro, June 16/03

What Causes Muscle Soreness? Gabe Mirdin, M.D.
www.drmirkin.com/fitness/1346.html, Feb.9/02

Thank you to: Linda Benn, Ann Kilbertus, Gwynneth Powell and Shirley Daventry French.

Please send your questions about yoga to:
Ty Chandler,
c/o The Victoria Yoga Centre
Suite 202-919 Fort St.
Victoria, B.C. V8V 3K3 ☯

A Word of Thanks

by Heather Hobbs

As Corrine prepares to leave her role as manager of the Victoria Yoga Centre to embark on continuing her studies at UVic, I wish to express my gratitude to Corrine Lowen with whom I have been working during my short time at our centre.



Corrine, in her capacity as manager, has been much more than just a supervisor to me. One of the reasons I so enjoy my time at our centre is due to the interaction that I have with my fellow staff. Our staff meetings are filled with laughter, good food and gratitude for our time together. I feel supported and respected as a

valuable contributor to our team. It always feels great to walk into "work" (many days it does not feel like work) and be greeted by friendly hellos and genuine smiles. Much of this atmosphere has been due to Corrine's leadership. Not only has Corrine provided me with regular positive feedback on my work, but also she has been supportive of me as a human being. I can recall more than one conversation we have had as Corrine has had to dash off to meet her husband Don for dinner, before which she took the time to listen to my news and offer words of encouragement. I am thankful to have come to know Corrine, to have worked with her and to have learned from her. I will miss her as manager, but look forward to seeing her both in the yoga studio and in the halls of UVic. ☺

YOGA PROPS FOR SALE

(All prices subject to 7%GST and 7.5% PST)

Blankets (Grey Wool)	\$40.00	(\$45.80)
Blankets (White Cotton)	\$30.00	(\$34.35)
Bolsters	\$55.00	(\$62.98)
Eye bags (Flax)	\$10.00	(\$11.45)
Foam Blocks	\$7.50	(\$8.59)
Sandbags	\$20.00	(\$22.90)
Sticky Mats		
(Blue, Green, Purple)	\$40.00	(\$45.80)
Sticky Mats (Body Flux)	\$29.98	(\$34.33)
Straps (Long)	\$15.00	(\$17.18)
Straps (Regular Length)	\$10.00	(\$11.45)
Wooden Blocks	\$25.00	(\$28.63)
Yoga Chairs	\$30.00	(\$34.35)
Yoga Totes (Nylon)	\$20.00	(\$21.40)
Yoga Totes (Hand-painted)	\$39.95	(\$45.75)

T-Shirts are \$ 20.00 including tax



Short Workshop at the Victoria Yoga Centre

Backbending
with Marlene Miller
Saturday, Nov. 15, 1-3pm

Opening the chest helps to banish the fear complex of life. This invigorating workshop will explore the ultimate chest opening found in backbending asanas.

\$30 +gst members

\$35 +gst non-members

*pre-requisite: at least 2 terms of
Iyengar Yoga level I



The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

Program of Classes in the Iyengar Approach to Yoga

Term 1: Sept. 8-Nov. 2, 2003
(Term II: Nov. 3-Dec.12, 2003)

Note: Some classes may be adjusted due to special workshops or holidays.

Introduction to Iyengar Yoga - 4 weeks

Day	Time	Instructor
Wed.	6:30-8:00 pm	Britta Poisson

Level 1

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	6:30-7:30 am	Doug Hart
Mon.	12:00-1:30 pm	Lauren Cox
Mon.	3:45-5:15 pm	Jo Anna Hope
Mon.	7:30-9:00 pm	Ann Kilbertus
Tues.	10:00-11:30 am	Leslie Hogle
Tues.	4:45-6:15 pm	Melissa Worth
Tues.	7:00-8:30 pm	Wies Pukesh
Wed.	6:30-7:30 am	Corrine Lowen
Wed.	6:00-7:30 pm	Gwynneth Powell
Thurs.	8:30-10:00 am	Linda Benn
Thurs.	5:30-7:00 pm	Wendy Boyer
Thurs.	6:30-8:00 pm	Jeannette Merryfield
Fri.	10:30-12:00 pm	Linda Benn
Fri.	5:00-6:30 pm	Gwynneth Powell
Sat.	9:30-11:00 am	Corrine Lowen
Sun.	10:30-12:00 pm	Ty Chandler
Sun.	3:00-4:30 pm	Christine Dimofski

Level 1/2

Day	Time	Instructor
Wed.	9:00-10:30 am	Ty Chandler
Wed.	7:30-9:00 pm	Melissa Worth

Level 2

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	7:30-9:00 pm	James Currie-Johnson
Tues.	10:00-11:30 am	Robin Cantor
Tues.	5:15-7:00 pm	Leslie Hogle
Tues.	6:30-8:00 pm	Melissa Worth
Wed.	7:45-9:15 pm	Gwynneth Powell
Thurs.	4:30-6:00 pm	Ann Kilbertus
Fri.	7:00-8:00 am	Christine Dimofski
Fri.	9:00-10:30 am	Linda Benn
Fri.	5:00-6:30 pm	Wendy Boyer
Sat.	8:00-9:30 am	Corrine Lowen
Sun.	9:00-10:30 am	Ty Chandler
Sun.	4:30-6:00 pm	Christine Dimofski

Level 2/3

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	10:00 -12:00pm	Lauren Cox
Wed.	6:00-7:30pm	Ty Chandler

Level 3

Day	Time	Instructor
Thurs.	10:00-12:00 pm	Shirley Daventry French Linda Benn
Thurs.	6:00-8:00 pm	Ann Kilbertus, Leslie Hogle
Sat.	9:00-11:00 am	Marlene Miller

Level 4

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	5:15 -7:15pm	Shirley Daventry French & senior teachers

Noon Hour Classes

Day	Time	Instructor
Tues.	12:00-1:00pm	Jeannette Merryfield
Wed.	12:00-1:00pm	Wendy Boyer
Thurs.	12:00-1:00pm	Lauren Cox
Fri.	12:00-1:00pm	Ty Chandler

The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE #202, 919 Fort St. 386-YOGA (9642)

Term 1: Sept. 8 - Nov. 2, 2003

Timed Practice

Tues. 5:30-7:00 pm Ty Chandler

Restorative(registered and drop-in)

Wed. 5:30-6:30 pm James Currie-Johnson

Introduction to Pranayama (Level 2 required)

Wed. 7:00-8:00 am Ann Kilbertus
Nov 5, 12, 19, 26

Thurs. 5:00-6:00 pm Leslie Hogya
Sep 11, 18, 25, Oct 2

Pranayama (Level 3 or 4 teacher's permission requir.)

Thurs. 7:00-8:00 am Shirley Daventry French
Oct 2, 9, 16, 23

Introduction to Yoga Philosophy

Thurs. 5:00-6:00 pm Leslie Hogya
October 9, 16, 23, 30

Sutra Recitation (free for Yoga Centre members)

Wed. 5:00-5:30 pm James Currie-Johnson

Men's Yoga

Thurs. 7:00-8:30 pm Greg Sly

Focus on Women

Fri. 9:30-11:00 am Christine Dimofski

Pre-Natal

Mon. 7:30-9:00 pm Robin Cantor

Sat. 3:00-4:30 pm Lauren Cox

55 & Better

Wed. 10:30-12:00 pm Leslie Hogya (continuing)

Fri. 10:30-12:00 pm Wendy Boyer (Level 1)

Special Needs

Wed. 4:30-6:00 pm Shirley Daventry French,
Ann Kilbertus, Leslie Hogya, Lauren Cox

Thurs. 1:15-2:30 pm Linda Benn, Ann Kilbertus

(more classes next column)

The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

Term 1: Sept. 8 - Nov. 2, 2003

Back Care

Mon. 4:00-5:15 pm Linda Benn

Family Yoga

Wed. 3:30-4:30 pm Wendy Boyer

Ty's Yoga Kids (ages 10-14)

Fri. 4:00-5:00 pm Ty Chandler

Highschool Yoga (age 14 +)

Fri. 3:30-4:45pm Gwynneth Powell



Yoga in Mexico

Feb. 14-21 &
Feb 21-28, 2004



Shirley Daventry French will be teaching two
1-week courses in Puerto Vallarta for
intermediate students.

For brochure & information contact:

Margo Kitchen (403) 243-1078,
email margokitchen@shaw.ca

or David McAmmond (403) 244-5894,
email yogidave@yogamat.com

**Yoga is nothing if it is not perfect
harmony of the body, senses, mind and
intellect, reason, consciousness and self.**

**When all these are integrated
that is true Yoga.**

-B.K.S. Iyengar

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers help with all kinds of things at the Victoria Yoga Centre. This column introduces some of the people who give a great deal to our community.

Coming Out Taller

by Jane Munro

She complains that her arms are short, but Linda Benn is far from a small person. One of the four Victoria Yoga Centre teachers to earn their (very challenging) Junior Intermediate Certification this spring, Linda juggles teaching (up to ten classes a week), maintaining her own practice, caring for her family, and making an enormous contribution to the VYC as a volunteer. She's often at her computer at 9:30 at night. Sometimes it's exhausting, but she emphasizes how much she's gained from her involvement in the yoga community, and says there's always a place for someone to start: her first volunteer job, in 1984, was collating the newsletter.

Linda's an activist from way back. As a member of the radical student movement, she couldn't study political science without taking action. When academics seemed dry she entered education, which she left to marry a widower with four young children. *It's amazing what we do for love*, she says. A year later, she gave birth to a son, their fifth child. She's had a lot of experience responding to needs.

Linda joined the VYC 20 years ago and has served it in numerous ways. For many years at the YWCA she was program coordinator. Now, in consultation with Leslie

Hogya, Shirley French and others, she manages the VYC teaching schedule. Linda also sits on the teacher training committee, organizes monthly meetings for the teachers and trainees, supervises five trainees, is a member of the VYC Board, and does other things as needed.

There are now close to 20 teachers teaching almost 50 classes per week at the VYC. Students ask for classes through the suggestion box; front desk staff pass on

requests; teachers offer ideas; and Linda fits the pieces together. Around 1986 Shirley invited her to begin teacher training. Linda has followed that path for 17 years. She finds Iyengar yoga's standards and structured certification program reassuring and motivating. *Every step I've taken in that journey, and I've often been very nervous...I've gained more wisdom and self-confidence, and I see this as well in the younger teachers. They come out ...taller...it's wonderful!*

What keeps her going? *Yoga's made me a better person; I've learned a great deal about myself. This community's important to me—the students, the teachers.* She also mentions the patience and

support of her husband, Don. They lost a daughter to cancer in her early 20s, and Linda went through breast cancer in 1996-97. She says, *standing beside many yoga women there are wonderful men.*

Faeq Biria made a comment in his recent workshop that's stuck with her—*there's no such thing as an innocent action*. The body responds emotionally to thoughts, and even acts we consider inconsequential have their effect. More and more, Linda views her volunteer work as part of her yoga practice. ☯



Linda in Krounhasana



Radha Yoga Centre

Timeless classics presents...

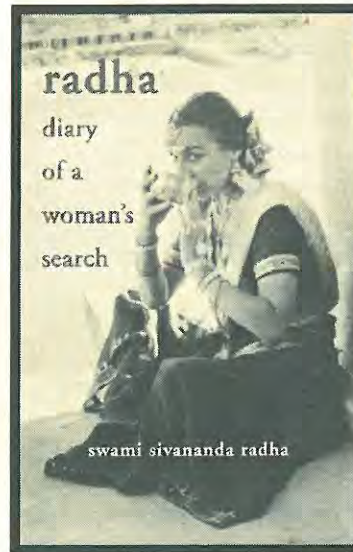
Radha, Diary of a Woman's Search

Since 1978, Timeless Books has been publishing print, audio and video media which bring alive an ancient lineage of yogic teachings. The publications present a variety of practical and inspired tools for daily living, ranging from

Hatha Yoga to Mantra, Kundalini and Dream Yoga, providing an intelligent, involved perspective on yoga for those seeking deeper understanding in modern life.

Radha, Diary of a Woman's Search is a book about putting one foot in front of the other, a true account of one woman's first steps on a life long spiritual pilgrimage. This book traces Sylvia's journey from Montreal, Canada to the banks of the Ganges, to the feet of her Guru where she was transformed into Swami Radha, now one of the foremost yoginis in the Western world. Illustrating the intimate relationship between Guru and disciple, this book paints a colourful portrait of Swami Radha's life in Sivananda Ashram. Filled with humorous anecdotes and inspired personal reflection, *Diary of a Woman's Search* has all the elements of a good travel tale; yet, Swami Radha's revelations are for a purpose, to uplift all those walking the spiritual path. This diary accounts for all the steps on her journey, those taken in fear and in faith, in success and in set back.

As she receives the six months of intensive yogic training which would serve as the foundation for her own teachings, the reader is presented with a rare opportunity to follow the course of a great spiritual



teacher's evolution. Although Swami Radha receives great guidance under the tutelage of Sivananda, this book is also the story of learning to walk the path on your own two feet. Yet, Sivananda reminds Radha, I promise I will be ever with you. If you turn to your right I will be on

your right side. If you turn to your left I will be on your left. But go ahead because I will be right in front of you.

Filled with honesty, sincerity and insight, *Radha: Diary of a Woman's Search* is biographical inspiration for all pilgrims, sojourners and soul searchers.

*New editions of Timeless classics available
at Radha Yoga Centre*

Also available now, the newly revised edition
of the Divine Light Invocation book.

Coming soon, Divine Light Invocation CD,
Divine Light Invocation video and new edition of
Realities of the Dreaming Mind.

For new class and workshop schedule, please
call or email for brochure <rycvic@island.net>

Radha House Victoria • 1500 Shasta Place (off St. Charles, south of Fort) • 250-595-0177

YOGA CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 2003

- 19 Video Night 6:45pm
B.K.S. Iyengar's "Rooftop Practice"
- 20 Teacher's Meeting
- 13 Sun Salutation wkshp
- 27 Menstruation wkshp

OCTOBER 2003

- 3 Yoga Sutras Seminar
- 4, 5 Going Deeper Workshop
- 18 Yoga Karunta (ropes) wkshp
- 17-19 Assessment-Introductory I/II, Winnipeg
- 24 Friday Night Gathering
- 25 VIIYTA- Teacher's Meeting
- 31 Chris Saudek wkshp begins

NOVEMBER 2003

- 1-2 Chris Saudek wkshp
- 14 Friday Night Gathering
- 14-16 Assessment-Junior Intermed. I, Ottawa
- 15 Backbending wkshp
- 22 VIIYTA- Teacher's Meeting

DECEMBER 2003

- 5 Friday Night Video
- 14 Light on Yoga - Gururji's 85th
birthday celebration

JANUARY 2004

- 16-18 Assessment- Junior Intermediate
III, Victoria
- 30-Feb 1 Heart of Yoga

FEBRUARY 2004

- 14 - 21 Mexico Intermediate Wkshp-
with Shirley Daventry French
- 21 - 28 Mexico, second workshop
(same as above)

MARCH 2004

- 12-14 Marlene Mawhinney

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION FORM:

Please complete this form and send it with your cheque or money order to the Victoria Yoga Centre Society,
c/o Constance Barker, 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3

Membership/Subscription fee is \$30 and renewable each January

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Postal Code: _____ Country: _____ Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

☐ Do not mail me my newsletter during sessions, I'll pick one up at my class.

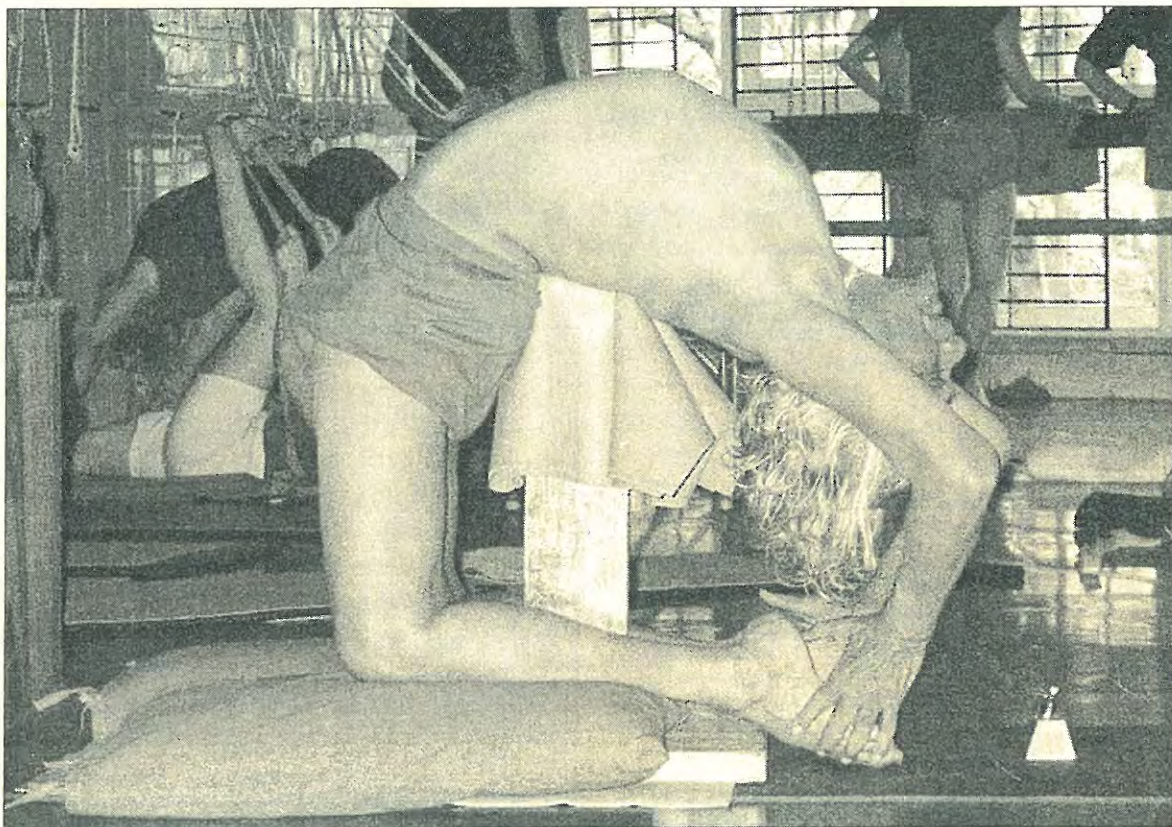
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VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE NEWSLETTER

Nov/Dec 2003



Subscribe Now



Best wishes to Guruji on his 85th birthday on December 14

In the Light of Yoga

a special benefit workshop in celebration of the
85th birthday of Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar

Sunday, December 14, 2003

at The Victoria Yoga Centre
202 - 919 Fort Street

1:00 - 2:30pm

All Levels asana practice led by Ann Kilbertus

2:30 - 3:30pm

Restorative practice led by Leslie Hogya

3:30 - 4:00pm

Refreshments

Teachers

The teachers: Ann Kilbertus and Leslie Hogya are accomplished teachers in the Iyengar Yoga tradition. Both have travelled to India to study at the source of this practice many times. Both are presently instructors at the Victoria Yoga Centre's Teacher Training Program.

Cost:

Members \$45 + GST,
non-members \$55 + GST

Register at:

#202-919 Fort St., Victoria, BC V8V 3K3
phone: (250) 386-YOGA (9642)
www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca



Dear Yoga Centre members,

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

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

Namaste, Leslie Hogya

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

Editor: Melissa Worth

Newsletter Committee: Shirley Daventry French,
Lauren Cox, Gwynneth Powell, Greg Sly, Jane Munro,
Tami Mulder, Susan Robinson

Layout & Production: Marion Stoodley—
Page Perfect Design & Type

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(photography: Donna Fornelli)

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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 persons of the society at large by the study and discipline of Yoga." The Society owes its inspiration to Swami Sivananda Radha and Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

The Society Newsletter is published regularly, providing current information on events concerning yoga in the Victoria area and the Yasodhara Ashram. Published by the VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY.

Anyone wishing to contribute articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions may contact the

Victoria Yoga Centre Newsletter:

202 – 919 Fort Street

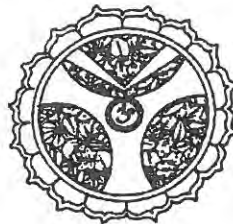
Victoria BC V8V 3K3

For more information on Victoria Yoga Centre activities and events, please call 386-YOGA (9642) or visit our website: www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca

Deadline for next issue: November 15, 2003

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Note: The editor/newsletter committee hold the right to edit all articles at their discretion. It should also be noted that not all articles submitted are printed in the newsletter due to space and other considerations.

Happy Birthday, Guruji

December 2003 marks your 85th birthday. We are pleased to send you our warmest greetings from Victoria in Canada on this auspicious day.

Around our yoga centre there is evidence of your work. Photos of you in your practice grace our walls and inspire us on the path of yoga. Your books, which line the library shelves and sit in each studio for

quick reference, provide us with clarity and guidance. In our lobby we have hung a framed copy of the letter you sent when we opened our centre which contains your beautiful words of encouragement.

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

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



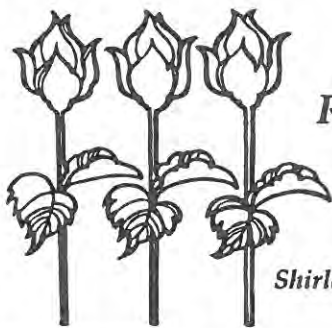
Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute.

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

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

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

Love from the Victoria Yoga Centre teachers and students



Reflections

by
Shirley Daventry French



Do you stand on your head?
Can you do lotus? In the early seventies these questions were inevitable if you mentioned that you were doing yoga. And if you were going to be photographed for an article or a brochure about yoga it was obligatory to be in one of these postures with a

bias towards *Padmasana* (lotus)
Generally the photographer would not be satisfied until you had brought your hands together in the mudra of *namaste* and endeavoured to look holy!



Padmasana

For one photo shoot to promote the Y yoga program in which I was teaching at that time, they wanted two for one: *Padmasana* in *Sirsasana*. Just back from an extended stay in Pune, I was happy to oblige, but there was a problem. Rather than the t-shirt and shorts I wore in India, or the t-shirt and tights which I usually wore in Canada's colder climes, they wanted me in a leotard and tights of



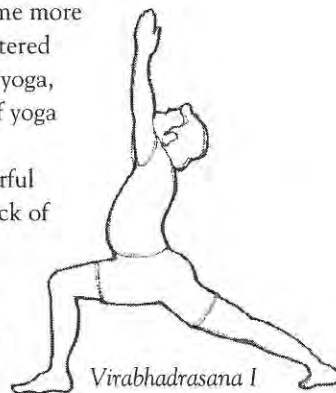
Padmasana in
Sirsasana

matching colour. Somewhere I had some old leotards left over from when I attended dance classes, and which I had worn in my first yoga classes. It was not until the advent of Iyengar Yoga when we began to hold postures longer and required firm support in *Sarvangasana* that we tossed our leotards aside. With a t-shirt you could pull it up and find a patch of bare back so your hands would not slip.

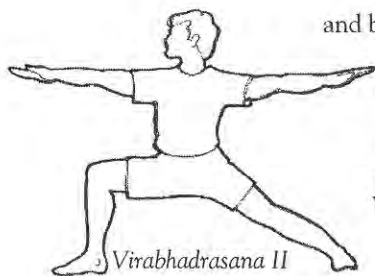
I searched my drawers for a leotard to wear in this photograph. Many of them were baggy and stretched out of shape, but I found a sleeveless one in navy blue which was not too bad and I did have tights to match, so that is what I wore. During the shoot I was a little cold but the photographer was excellent and we got through it fairly quickly. The photos were not bad with one exception, gravity had contributed to the revelation of more of my breasts than I felt really comfortable with. By today's standards where many models are dressed in what looks like their underwear, it was pretty modest.

My sleeveless leotard and cleavage contrasted with the loose t-shirts I generally wore and this photograph was the subject of many joking remarks, but it was a striking photograph and the editor of this newsletter wanted to use it on the cover. I vetoed this idea, and just in case anyone should be curious, I have no idea what happened to it!

As Iyengar Yoga became more popular and vigour entered into North American yoga, the prevalent image of yoga changed to that of *Virabhadhra*, the powerful hero created from a lock of Lord Siva's hair. The warrior spirit had awakened in the form of *Virabhadrasana I, II and III* symbolising power, poise, purpose



Virabhadrasana I



Virabhadrasana II

and balance. Iyengar
Yoga is the original
power yoga!

Photographs and
graphics of
Virabhadrasana
accompanied
articles and
appeared on

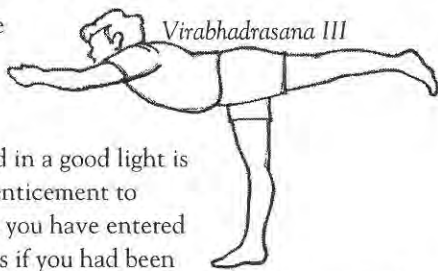
brochures and in advertisements everywhere. At first they were a symbol of Iyengar Yoga but gradually the image (and possibly the concept) of Virabhadra was adopted by other types of yoga.

An attractive
person in a
well posed
asana

photographed in a good light is
an effective enticement to
yoga. Would you have entered
your first class if you had been

told that if you practise yoga your life will be turned upside down, you will become very confused, that you will have to experience pain to go beyond pain, and that to create lasting change you will have to give up many of your most cherished beliefs? Self-discipline, self-study and surrender! This is yoga, and such will be demanded of you by any yoga teacher worth their salt. The purpose of yoga is not to make you feel better but to enlighten you. As a teacher, even if you remain true to the teachings of yoga, you will still not retain all of your students. Many a student having glimpsed the light, decides that he or she is not ready for this and turns away. A yoga teacher frequently has to make the choice to please students or to teach them.

When I started yoga one of the most popular books on the market was *Yoga, Youth and Reincarnation* by Jess O. It was not the first yoga book I read, but one of the first. It is not a book I would recommend to anyone

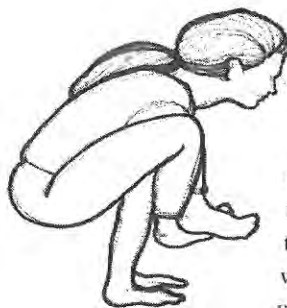


Virabhadrasana III

today, but many a student who has been practising yoga for twenty or thirty years has told me that this was the first yoga book they read and it encouraged them to dig further. It was a book well suited to its time in North America but not, I think, destined to become a classic.

My first yoga book was *The Complete Illustrated Book of Yoga* by Swami Vishnu Devananda followed closely by *Autobiography of a Yogi* by Swami Paramahansa Yogananda. *Light on Yoga* came into my hands not long after that when my first yoga teacher recommended it as the best book on yoga on the market today. Although I appreciated it then, I had no idea of the depth of knowledge it contained, depths I could not probe because of my inexperience. Now several editions grace our bookshelves and a copy is always available at the yoga centre and in our yoga room at home for frequent reference.

The catalyst that brings us into our first yoga class or to our first lecture on yoga will vary from person to person. As Swami Radha used to say, Lord Krishnas flute plays many tunes to attract us to the light. The challenge is to stay focused on the light and not become diverted.



Bhujapidasana

In today's yoga market, there is a plethora of pictures of arm balancing asanas. If the model is a man he is likely to be muscular and often heavily tattooed. If the model is a woman she is scantily clad, youthful, beautiful and slender. Despite the focus on

balancing postures, balance is sadly lacking in much of the current presentation of yoga. Forgotten, apparently, is the fact that yoga-asana encompasses the entire range of human movement, just as yoga teachings address the whole range of human behaviour and are intended for all members of the human race. Forgotten

also seems to be the fact that yoga is a spiritual practice.

What rules these days in yoga is image. How you look, what you wear, your physical prowess. So much so, that many people do their entire practice looking at their image in a mirror. Strange, when the whole purpose of yoga is to remove the common misunderstanding that that which reflects the light is the light. This is the prime purpose of yoga, unknown to large numbers of students taking classes these days because of the image which is being sold to the public.

I have a small full length mirror in my yoga room at home. It is a basement room with small windows and this mirror serves the purpose of making the room look larger and lighter because it reflects the natural light. It



Sirsasana

was also put up to cover an unsightly window blocked off when a concrete supporting wall was built to support an addition to the original house. My mirror was put there for a purpose which it serves very well, but its important to remember its purpose. While a mirror can be helpful from time to time, for instance when checking your alignment in *Sirsasana* and some of its variations, it can also be a tremendous distraction. Once I fell down in *Utthita Trikonasana*, literally fell down completely, because I was focusing on my image in the mirror and adjusting that. A metaphor for what was going on in my life at that time!

How much of my life has been wasted adjusting my image? A good question for all aspiring yogis!

I have been teaching yoga for thirty two years, and it

took me a long time to feel comfortable answering the perennial question: *what do you do?* Was I ashamed of being a yoga teacher? No, but I did not like the response my answer often generated which was to see me in a completely different way, determined by that

person's image of yoga or, more often, by that person's ignorance of yoga. This happened even in India! Once I was in Pune staying in a hotel mostly filled with business people. One day as I waited for a friend in

the hotel lobby, an Indian man started speaking to me, asking where I came from and what had brought me to Pune. When I told him I was there to study yoga, he looked astonished and said: why would you do that, you come from such a nice rational society?

Because of the image of yoga which is out there at present, I am even more reluctant to speak about what it is that I do unless I am convinced that the questioner has a real interest in yoga. What I do as a teacher trained by B.K.S. Iyengar and how much is demanded of me as a student is so far from this common image that it takes skill, effort, energy and time to bridge that gulf.

I saw a movie the other day on TV. A writer falls in love with a much younger man and finds herself at a party with other young people where she is bored, drinks too much and finds herself sitting next to a sweet young thing who starts to talk to her. The young woman is friendly and eager portrayed as bright eyed but not very intelligent. The older woman is depicted as suave and smart, but bitter and sarcastic. When asked what she does (meaning for a living) she admits to being a writer. What about you? she asks the younger woman. I'm an aerobics and yoga instructor is the reply, at which the older woman rolls her eyes and grabs another martini from a passing waiter.

"...the whole purpose of yoga is to remove the common misunderstanding that that which reflects the light is the light."

Recently I went with Derek to see our lawyer to sign an updated copy of our wills, always a sober occasion. Our lawyer is an amiable man who made light of the occasion by being warm and friendly alluding to our association in times past and enquiring about the present. Was Derek still working? Yes! Turning to me he enquired: and what about you? Yes! And what is that you do? He had had no need to ask Derek that question remembering that he was a physician. When I replied that I teach yoga, he said: Oh. Then, after holding my gaze silently for a few more moments, he smiled as he turned away and spoke to Derek about his work, one professional to another.

There are many disagreements about whether yoga can be called a profession. I have heard Guruji's son Prashant say that yoga should never be viewed as a profession. Perhaps it is a question of semantics. Prashant was warning about the commercialization of yoga and the danger of depending on teaching yoga as your sole source of income. Unless you are very vigilant and ethical, this can lead to accommodations and adjustments, first to attract students and then to hold on to them. It can also lead to the temptation to please rather than teach. Sadly, I feel it has also led to greed among some of the stars on the firmament of teachers in North America.

With my colleagues in Canada, when we speak about professionalism, we are speaking about integrity, about in-depth and ongoing study of the subject which we are teaching, about adherence to the principles of yoga and the tenets of B.K.S. Iyengar. Derek and I often discuss this topic and the importance of approaching the teaching of yoga with the same professionalism which he brings to his practice of medicine. Yoga is an art and science. Medicine is an art and science. More than an occupation, it is often described as a calling. It happens to be one which is well respected and well compensated, but a physician can face many of the same temptations as a yoga teacher. The best doctors are not always the most popular and they must learn to

renounce this temptation. So it is with yoga teachers. The best doctors are not always the most successful because many patients want to get rid of their pain without making any changes in their way of life. And so it is with yoga teachers.

It is not surprising that these thoughts about image and integrity in the teaching of yoga are at the forefront of my mind as we approach December and the eighty fifth birthday of B.K.S. Iyengar, a consummate master of yoga revered and respected throughout the world. A revolutionary who has illuminated many lives. Like many a great man, he has faced and continues to face criticism by those who have rejected his teaching. Like many a great man, in his early years he faced incredible deprivation and hardship. Like all great men, he had a vision and purpose from which he was not deterred. Guruji embodies Shakespeare's adage: To thine own self be true, an axiom he imbues in all those fortunate enough to number among his students.

This above all to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

Polonius to his son Laertes: Hamlet, Act 1, Scene 3

With deepest gratitude, Guruji,
for the light of your life and work,
and Happy Birthday! ☺

Congratulations

to the Peninsula Yoga Society on finding a new home at Mary Winspear Centre in Sidney, BC, offering classes in the tradition of Iyengar Yoga.

Phone: (250) 656-9493

Victoria Yoga Centre presents



The Heart of Yoga

An Intermediate Workshop
with *Shirley Daventry French*

Friday, January 30–Sunday, February 1, 2004

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

Shirley Daventry French is a longtime student of B.K.S. Iyengar and has travelled to India many times to study with the Iyengars, most recently in February 2002. Shirley's significant understanding of the teaching comes through in her direct approach.



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

Times

Friday 6:30-8:30pm

Saturday 10:30-1:30pm, 2:30-4:30pm

Sunday 10:30am-1:30pm

A light lunch will be provided on Saturday

Cost

Members: \$175 + gst

Non-Members: \$205 + gst

Registration

for members opens Dec. 8

for non-members opens Dec. 15

Register at

#202-919 Fort St., Victoria, BC V8V 3K3

phone: 250-386 YOGA (9642)

www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca

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

Following Dr Geeta S. Iyengar's European Tour in April and May 2002, Judith Jones interviewed her for Iyengar

Yoga News, a joint magazine of the Light on Yoga Association (UK) and the BKS Iyengar Yoga Teachers' Association. The interview took place on 25th August 2002 in the library of the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute in Pune, India. Thank you to IYN and to Geetaji for kindly granting us permission to reprint it here.

An Interview with Geetaji: Part 11

Some people do not want to do yoga since they believe it is a religion: it is in Sanskrit, etc.

Geetaji: Guruji has often said that Yoga is *sanatana dharma*. It is not Hinduism, or any other ism. It is something eternal. Sanatana means eternal. Dharma is religion which uplifts human beings. This eternal knowledge was there always. It was always existing and which is now expressed in different languages. Patanjali has to express it in Sanskrit, as the Bible is in Hebrew. And who knows tomorrow English will vanish, Sanskrit will vanish and some other language may come. How do we know?! You know there is a vast difference between old English and new English. Another few million years have to go to tell us, "Yes! There was some English language in those days!" Now we know that Latin is closer to Sanskrit and the origin of English is Latin. If you have broader mind, think in that manner so it is not my language or your language. We all have forgotten the ancient language. There is not Indian cloud or British cloud or my cloud or your cloud. Everything is the same. Everywhere clouds are the same. Land is the same - only geographically we divide. The land is one. We have demarcated and differentiated. So we fight. The man-made countries fight. We need that broad mindedness and nothing else.

And generosity?

Geetaji: Absolutely. It is the chance given to learn

yoga. Do we not learn modern medical science? If you have a great chance in any field, learn. We can study all the religions. Nobody stops us from learning. Our life is so small and knowledge is so vast that we cannot learn everything. That's why at the end Upanishad says, life is so small, the knowledge is so vast, so let us have that faith and proceed with that understanding. Yoga is the subject which makes you to understand the very self, the soul. The origin, the base, the foundation. What we need is a broad frame for mind.

There are so many similarities and nearness to all the religions, but we miss to see that. When you begin to study and compare you feel somewhere they are very close to each other. You will find the foundation is the same. Christ talks about the Ten Commandments which are very close to *yama* and *niyama*. He didn't say,

**Yoga is the subject which makes you
to understand the very self, the soul.**

"Be violent." Otherwise he would have taken the opposite step. He says be non-violent and Patanjali too says be non-violent. To be humanitarian we have to be non-violent otherwise we will end up with the destruction only.

Human beings are the same, their emotions are the same. The six enemies of every human being are the same, to whichever class, caste, country, religion belongs to. Anger, desire, delusion, greed, pride, jealousy, all these are common in everyone. If you have anger you are going to have high blood pressure, you are going to have a cardiac problem. You are going to have family problems because it's your anger. You fight with each other. Does the anger say that you belong to this country or that sect so it would not affect you? So the human problems are the same, which are invited by us.

And we mistrust each other?

Geetaji: Yes. We don't trust each other. We have no faith in each other. If we don't trust people, we are going to land up with all the problems. Somewhere you need to have love. Somewhere you need to have trust.

Somewhere you need to have faith, friendliness. So if you have an association, fight but be friendly! That's all at the end of the day, we have to conclude. Fight! It doesn't matter. But the fighting should be constructive. Because that brings the inner hidden

misunderstandings to the surface. It brings more transparency and then you are friendly. That's maturity. And the maturity terminates into proper solution.

So yoga teaches this maturity. To whichever religion one belongs to, yoga teaches us to be friendly, compassionate, kind, happy. It teaches us to be indifferent and unattached when there is a wrong approach like dishonesty, mistrust etc.

Today if you only have four people in the association the four will work in such a manner that there is no tussle. There is no fight. But then as the association grows bigger and bigger in its size we need to have some laws and regulations so that it brings harmony.

In the early days recognised teachers were very few. Even I was recognised as a teacher. I was not a master when I was recognised in 1961. Officially I became a teacher in 1961. It was not in 1961 that I was absolutely a mature yoga teacher and that I knew everything. But Guruji trusted. He told me that up to a

certain point I can teach. He was guiding me. If a person had the problem, if it was within my capacity, he would say, "Teach," but if a person had a serious problem, then he would teach. So similarly when a small group in U.K. was there, he said ok - teach,

because somewhere it has to reach the people. One person cannot go on. But where there were problems he said not to touch such people.

They had to wait for Guruji to come and teach. So in those days he had to recognise the teacher in that manner. Now we have to filter to a great extent. Now there are too many teachers, so we need to filter

because they come with the ambition to become a yoga teacher and get the certificate. More than the devotion there is ambition. They are not basically devoted to yoga. They just want certificates. So we have to filter saying unless you are devoted, dedicated to this - we won't. And now Guruji has lessened the period between two levels. He says youngsters are taking interest so let us not give a big gap because when youngsters want to pick up let us have a small gap. Let them get the certificate. If at the age of twenty-five they want to have Intermediate Junior or Senior - fine. If they are performing well let us give them a certificate. But at the same time Guruji is the one who is saying that the certificate is not the end of it. Certificate is the beginning of knowledge. You are certified to foster the knowledge and experience, because if you are not a certified teacher you are just a student. Fine - I will say you are just a student, you learn this much, that is enough for you. But if you are a teacher you need to have this knowledge. So it's the



beginning of knowledge. So you can inform them like that, those who argue with you!

And why that kind of binding is required?

Yes, always you have to have a binding with a guru to know the origin of it. You know junk food is bad. You know that fast food is bad for the health. You understand that junk food, fast food, is harmful to the body. You want to have fresh food. You want to have good food, rightly balanced food, etc. Then is it not needed in yoga too? Suppose if they are certified through Iyengar and also certified by someone else. Are they not making junk food there? Is it not just a fast food there that you have got a certificate from Iyengar and you have a certificate from someone else?

Certification courses are given everywhere, so you may gather another ten certificates. Are you not going to make a junk of it and land up with all the problems, because nothing is clear to you though you are certified? And even if you are not given certificates the same is going to happen. So if you want to have the certificate you have to go through this whole subject thoroughly, the whole method thoroughly, otherwise it can harm like fast food, junk food, mixed food and old food. Nothing will be digested. You need to have the intelligence to connect and co-ordinate whatever you

learn and experience. That's how it has to be. So you can definitely tell those people who are talking about certification, the Certification Mark, that the purity has to be maintained.

You see, it is simple. You have been given a name "Judith" and by mistake I call you Stephanie. You don't like it! You say, "I'm not Stephanie," right? Why you say so? Because you know that you are recognised by your name and Stephanie is recognised by her name. And then I have to say I am sorry because it's my fault calling you Stephanie, because you are not she. So this is how the recognition is required. So if you are following Iyengar way it means you are recognised, on that line. Guruji hasn't said that this is his method, but certainly something special came of his way of teaching and imparting. One day it may become universal, who knows, what he has worked out, what he has thought over, his vision. It becomes universal one day. The question doesn't arise then whether it's Iyengar. People will say this is Yoga! Then the question of name doesn't arise. For instance, we say "Newton's Law" - yes? We give credit to him. Every physicist will be agreeing that it is Newton's Law because he was the first thinker to think in that manner. So similarly it is Guruji who thought in a certain way, so it became the "Iyengar way". He hasn't specially created his way. He

has not said that, "This is his way and you follow". He has never said that. On the contrary, every time he says that this is what Patanjali has said. Only Guruji gave us a vision to look. Newton gave us vision to look. That is how one has to understand. He never said that it is his yoga. But now believe me in 1960-61 these *asanas* that Guruji does were not known to anyone.

When Guruji came to the U.K. do you mean that people were



knowing the asanas?

Geetaji: They may have known head balance, shoulder stand. But, Standing poses were unknown, except *Trikonasana*. Triangle pose was known to everyone, in whichever way, different styles, different ways but people were doing triangle pose. Now they know *Parsvakonasana*, they know *Virabhadrasana*, *Parsvottanasana*. *Uttanasana* was known, but *Padangustasana* was not known, *Pada Hastasana* was unknown. In the lecture in the States I also mentioned about this. These *asanas* were unknown. It is Guruji who made people to know about the *asanas*. The book *Light on Yoga* came and people started recognising those *asanas*. Nobody knew balancing except *Bhujapidasana* and *Bakasana*. Now everyone does *Urdhva Kukkutasana*, everybody picks up *Parsva Kukkutasana*, although they may be belonging to different schools. *Urdhva Dhanurasana* and *Salabhasana* were the only backbends known. Now everyone does *Viparita Chakrasana*. Everyone does *Natarajasana*. So how did it come into the foreground?

Often I say that now the next generation will not know about it. They will think the *asanas* were known. Of course they were existing, undoubtedly, but the world was not knowing it. It was not known, it was hidden, the knowledge was hidden until Guruji started travelling and brought them to the forefront. True that to Guruji it was transferred through Guru Krishnamacharya. But when Guru Krishnamacharya taught Guruji he was not doing all these *asanas* at that moment. Since Guruji was young he taught him and Guruji started doing them and continued to do them. Now, everyone has adopted them irrespective of whichever school they belong to or the method they follow. The students of Iyengar doing them is one thing, but like Newton's Law it has been accepted, is also the fact. So now everybody has accepted these *asanas*, the varieties of *pranayama*. If Guruji decides to write on *dhyana*, I am sure it will be well received. Yoga



is a universal subject. It has to become a universal subject. But as the pupils of Guruji, we should be able to at least inform people that the source is here who made people to recognise, understand and appreciate the art of yoga.

It's not just that he taught yoga to the West. It is more that he opened yoga to human consciousness.

That is exactly what we as pupils have to understand. So now the word yoga has become close, familiar and popular to everyone because he made that subject to come to this level.

Last Sunday we gave a demonstration. The explanation was in Marathi for Maharashtrians. Guruji said that when he came in 1937 to Pune, there were hardly four yoga teachers who were known in those days in the whole of India.

There were only a few yoga teachers. In those days nobody really knew anyone as yoga teachers. Even the subject was unknown. Very few, who had studied the philosophy were aware of the subject. And now in every lane you find the yoga teachers. That also I mentioned the other day in that lecture. Now is the time to recognise which is the genuine yoga, because anyone can put up a board. Anyone can open the

classes. And it is true that every lane now you find yoga teachers, even in this small area. So how did this subject come to recognition in that manner?

Now, why the Iyengar community has to be there? - to protect the purity and give knowledge. Let us not make a market of it. Something which is easily saleable in the market - "Let us sell" - is the attitude of the modern world. That should not be our attitude. That should not be the aim. We have to see that the purity is maintained. That is why community is required, that is why certification is required. That is why *guru-sisya* relationship is required. You should be able to link your knowledge and your experience with the origin. The teacher leads you to trace the origin. All these things are interlinked. They are not separate issues. They are not even issues to fight. It is just to understand. It is an evolving process. Yoga is not a stagnated subject. The journey ends only when one reaches the ultimate goal. It is a process to maintain the purity, to continue with the purity. The method cannot be changed according to one's whim and fancy. It cannot be changed just to satisfy someone. The purity and sanctity of the subject needs to be maintained. These days anything goes in the name of self-realisation. Even sex now is labelled in the name of self-realisation. How can it be? These are the things one should know. This is thought pollution. Pollution in thought; pollution in behaviour; pollution in character. So to maintain the purity you have to observe all these things. One may argue. Verbal argument is possible in any way, in any direction. It is said that *dharma* (duty), *artha* (means of livelihood), *kama* (worldly enjoyment), *moksa* (freedom), are the four *purusarthas* (the objectives of human-beings). It is a very clear demarcation. Otherwise *kama* and *moksa*, the worldly enjoyment and liberation or self-realisation become one [ref. Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali

Moral and ethical behaviour is a duty. To live a spiritual life is a duty. It is our duty to find out for what sake we are existing.

p.35]. All four aspects are indicated as separate - *dharma*, *artha*, *kama*, *moksa*. That is why Guruji has said very clearly that *dharma* and *moksa* are like two banks of the river. *Kama* and *artha* are like the river flowing between the two banks. Like the river which flows and floods whenever it rains, these two never end. Our desires never end. The money mindedness never ends. The mind hankers all the time after enjoyments. The desires "I want this and I want that", continues. That is human nature. So Guruji says to put a borderline to *artha* and *kama* with *dharma* and *moksa*. When we say duty, this is the duty - *dharma*. Moral and ethical behaviour is a duty. To live a spiritual life is a duty. It is our duty to find out for what sake we are existing. We have to find out the root cause of living. You may have given the word spirituality. What is spirituality? We call it *adhyatma vidya*, the one which is covering the soul. What is the *adhyatma*. The one which covers the *atma* (soul) is *adhyatma*. We need to know these coverings these sheaths so that we can remove them to see the soul.

The body, the mind, intelligence, consciousness, all these cover the soul. One needs to realise these sheaths to uncover the soul. Suppose if God blesses us to say we are going to live longer and longer. Are we going to be happy? The death is a blessing given to us. In the Mahabharata there is a story. The father asks the son to give his life so that he remains young while the son becomes old. The son takes the old age of the father by giving him his youth. Then one day the father realises, there is no point in remaining young. How long can one enjoy the sexual life? At some point it ends. Love is beyond sex. One has to see that at some point the *kama* ends, the desire ends, and a pure love and pure devotion begins. If one is all the time indulging in sensual and sexual pleasures we say there is something wrong with that person. We say that treatment is needed for this because it is an unusual thing to

happen. It's abnormal. Even some of the marriages are broken because of that, because it is an abnormality. One has to know which is normal, which is abnormal, so that indulgence cannot be there. Similar to *dharma*, *artha*, *kama*, and *moksha*, we talk about four *ashramas*, or four stages of life. These four aims of the human beings are fulfilled in four stages. Earlier in *brahmacharyashrama* in which one studies for 20 years with the guru to have the knowledge. That's why the guru towards the end of the course, blesses and says, "Go, your *brahmacharyashrama* is over. Twenty five years you have studied with me. Now the next twenty five years be a *grihasthashrami* and give the knowledge to others because it has to be protected. That is why you need to have a family to continue with the knowledge. Then after the marriage and family life there is *vanaprasthashrama* in which one takes off the mind from the family and proceeds towards *sannyasashrama* in which one sacrifices and abandons every thing and proceeds towards the self realisation and freedom. That's why we say that we should not have *apamrutyu*. We should not die before time. The death also has to come majestically at the right time. Dying in the middle of life shows incompleteness. Therefore the Upanishads say to live for a hundred years. To die at an early age is considered as a tragedy. Because the link is broken, the duty is broken.

So the certification is to keep the linkage. The certification mark is like taking an oath to be honest to the guru. The certification holders and certification mark holders have to remember that they have to follow the yogic path having the fencing of *dharma* and *moksha* on both sides. They have to do the study aiming at liberation. They have to pass on the knowledge to the next generation. In between these two fences the *artha* and *kama* has to be well planned. They have to carry the message correctly. They have to organise. The association is required for this purpose. Why does there have to be an ethics committee? It is meant for this purpose to see that *artha* and *kama* does not go distorted. It does not become the soul and goal

of Yoga practitioners. Associations are to help the followers of Yoga and to have a check on them. So they also need to be honest and modest. Associations are not meant to boss over but rather bring people together for good understanding and "Give and Take." ☉

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

To **Rachelle Ray** who has for the past several years set up and updated our web site. We get positive feedback all the time. A woman called the other day and said: "Wow, I just looked at your web site, it is fantastic!" Rachelle is moving to other family business pursuits.

Thank you Rachelle!

To **Jo Anna Hope** for taking on the job of coordinating our Special Needs volunteers this year. This is always an ad hoc group, and we are never sure who will come or how many volunteers we will get.

To **Bonnie Light**, one of our talented members and volunteers who designed the ads that have been appearing around town in local publications such as Monday Magazine, Focus on Women and Times Colonist. See example on bulletin board in the lobby. Thank you Bonnie for your ideas and energy!

Many thanks to all those who helped at the front desk and the big clean up the week before classes resumed in September: **Lyn Langford, Karin Holtkamp, Krysha Strawczynski, Sue Riddell, Rosemary Barritt, Karin Dayton, Leslie Hogya, Wendy Boyer, Doug Hart, Joan Douglas** and anybody else I left out!

YOGA PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

BOOKS

(all book prices subject to GST)

Back Care Basics – Mary P. Schatz (1992)	\$30.00
How to Use Yoga – Mira Mehta (1994)	\$25.00
Laminated practice sheets – Chris Saudek	\$ 8.50
Light on Pranayama – BKS Iyengar (1981)	\$30.00
Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali – BKS Iyengar (1993)	\$25.00
Light on Yoga – BKS Iyengar (1966, 1976)	\$30.00
Relax and Renew – Judith Lasater (1995)	\$30.00
The New Yoga for People Over 50 – Suza Francina (1997)	\$20.00
The Runners Yoga Book – Jean Couch (1990)	\$30.00
The Tree of Yoga – BKS Iyengar (1988)	\$20.00
The Yoga of Breath – Richard Rosen	\$25.00
Women's Book of Yoga and Health – L. Sparrow, P. Walden (2003)	\$34.95
Yoga A Gem for Women – Geeta Iyengar (1983)	\$15.00
Yoga for Children – Sandra Jordan (1987)	\$20.00
Yoga for Pregnancy – Sandra Jordan (1987)	\$28.00
Yoga in Action: A Preliminary Course – Geeta Iyengar (2000)	\$15.00
Yoga Kurunta – Chris Saudek	\$25.00
Yoga the Iyengar Way – Silva, Mira, and Shyam Mehta (1990)	\$35.00
Yoga: The Path to Holistic Health – BKS Iyengar (2001)	\$50.00

AUDIO/VIDEO

(All audio/video prices subject to 7% GST and 7.5% PST)

Introduction to Yoga (video) – Patricia Walden	\$29.00
Pranayama: The Art of Breathing (audio) – Felicity Green	\$30.00
Silence of the Spirit (audio) – Fr. Joe Pereira	\$10.00
Standing Poses: Upright and Inverted (audio) – John Schumacher	\$18.00
Yoga, A Basic Daily Routine (audio) – John Schumacher	\$18.00
Yoga Sutras of Patanjali (audio) – Sri Nagarraj/BKS Iyengar	\$10.00

Pranayama & 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.

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 muco-ciliary 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

Scheduled Practice Space for VYC Members



Wednesdays 1-4pm
Sundays 12-3pm
Schedule is subject to change

Please note:

The supervising teacher is not there
to teach or lead a practice.

Bring your own practice sequence or find
a sequence in one of the available books.

The door may be locked, just knock loudly.

Time to Renew!

This is a reminder that the VYC
membership expires on December 31, 2003.
The membership subscription fee is
\$32 and renewable each January.

Membership benefits include:

- 5% discount on all classes
- free practice times at the VYC
- timed practices
- having the option of getting the newsletter mailed to you
- early registration and discount for workshops
- borrowing privileges in our library
- eligibility to become a board member
- eligibility for scholarships for workshops and intensives.

To renew your membership, please fill
in the membership subscription form
enclosed in this newsletter.

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. ☯



Victoria Yoga Centre Society

Annual General Meeting

Friday 6th February 2004

6:00pm meeting in Cedar studio

7:00pm potluck dinner in Arbutus studio

At the Victoria Yoga Centre
202-919 Fort Street, Victoria V8V 3K3

Please forward nominations in writing to
Leslie Hogya at the above address

All members are welcome

Friday Night Videos

Come be inspired by B.K.S. Iyengar

Dec. 5: *Yoga the Ultimate Freedom* is a demonstration that B.K.S. Iyengar presented on a visit to the USA in the 70s. Mr. Iyengar explains some benefits of the asanas and gives the demo introduction and closing.

Jan. 9: Movie to be announced

Movies are free and start at 6:45pm

Bring your own popcorn

Zubin Zartoshtimanesh is a devoted student of B.K.S. Iyengar from Mumbai, India where he lives with his wife and two-year old daughter. Zubin teaches yoga at the recently opened Iyengar Yogashraya and in his own centre, Iyengar Yogabhyasa in central Mumbai.

Zubin is well known to Canadians because he accompanied Guruji on several of his visits to Canada. He also participated as a student in the Canadian Intensive held at the Ramamani Iyengar Yoga Memorial Yoga Institute in July 1997. Many others have met him in Pune which he visits frequently. Zubin writes on yoga for many publications, and we are grateful for his permission to publish the following article in our newsletter.

Shirley Daventry French

Flight of the Flamingoes to the Flight of the Imagination

or

Taming the Beast Within

by Zubin Zartoshtimanesh

Say *asana*, and chances are people will either blurt out *Padmasana* or *Shirsasana* or a dynamic set of postures known as the *Surya Namaskars*. These poses are ingrained in the popular imagination so much that these few postures are considered to be the be-all and end-all of yogic practices. Due to an overt stress on these popular *asanas* in the media, many a layperson has come to identify the whole of yoga with them. This is far from the truth.

There are approximately 250 *yogasanas* discovered by our sages and rishis and a significant portion of them are dedicated to the birds and animals found on our planet.

Our species often indulge in name-calling and funnily enough when the most damaging insult is sought to be made, it is invariably the poor animals that, we

humans, invoke. For example, we refer to someone whom we particularly distrust as 'like a snake.' Again, we say that he or she is as 'dumb as a donkey', bull-headed, hen-pecked, a chauvinistic pig, bird-brained, hare-brained, a white elephant, and even refer to an untested, inferior performer as an underdog. We also describe a pitiful life as 'a dog's life.' I fail to understand why in the world have we 'pigeon-holed' these animals and made them into 'sitting ducks' and 'scapegoats' for our selfish pleasures?

Strangely, these phrases have become a part and parcel of the English language as well as our daily lexicon. As the saying goes, it's truly a jungle, a rat race and a dog-eat-dog world out there! However, let me once and for all put it on record: humans are the most dangerous beasts of them all. We have the nerve of invoking the names of these high-minded animals when all the time they are true to their calling and natures. Think it over, it would be more insulting to call a snake a man than the other way round. The snake, as we all know, is cold-blooded, slithers and has poisonous fangs. But what makes man more dangerous is the presence of a poisonous gland more lethal than the snake can ever have - his own mind. Man's mind is more difficult to predict than the snake's slithering movement. And hence if anything, it is the snake that should fear man as his poison is far more destructive.

The *yogasanas* are not merely muscular contortions or distortions as mistakenly presumed. *Asanas* are, in fact, principles of nature applied to human beings. Our sages observed nature very scientifically and artistically, patiently studying and gathering its secrets. This deep knowledge was then applied to develop perfect postures (*asanas*) which would mould and evolve each and every part and particle of the human body. Thus was born *Bakasana*, which takes its name from the heron (*baka* in Sanskrit means a heron). By observing the flight of the flamingoes and the slender grace of the birds (like the heron), the rishis created *asanas* like *Bakasana*, *Parsva bakasana* and *Ekapada bakasana*. Thus, nature, including birds and animals, taught them the

flight of the imagination. The beautiful peacock inspired them to create *Mayurasana*, the camel *Ustrasana*, the dog *Adho* and *Urdhvamukhasvanasana*, the horse *Vatayanasana*, the pigeon *Rajakapotasana*, the lion *Simhasana*, the frog *Bhekasana*, the fish *Matsyasana*, the scorpion *Vrischikasana*, the tortoise *Kurmasana*, the crocodile *Nakrasana*, the trees *Vrikshasana*, the bow *Dhanurasana*, the plough *Halasana*, the moon *Ardha chandrasana* and the sun, the *Surya namaskars*.



An *asana* practice is thus a powerful medium to develop and nurture the strength and qualities of the nature and creation around us. Practising *Bakasana* is to emulate the grace and flight of the flamingoes. Practising *Kurmasana*, the tortoise pose, is to cultivate the act of renunciation (*vairagya*) and learn the art of withdrawing the senses inwards (*pratyahara*) towards the inner core (shell) of the being. Practising *Vrischikasana*, the scorpion pose, is to humble the ego. In *Vrischikasana*, the practitioner stamps the feet on the head (the seat of the poisonous ego) signifying the sting of the scorpion's poisonous tail. The 'sixth sense' for us humans is only a fictionalised, Hollywood movie

but in horses (and other animals) it is an actual sharpened instinct guiding them in the art of survival. There are many such skills that we humans aspire for but lack the knowledge to gain. But there is hope if we learn the true value of having an 'elephantine memory', some 'horse sense' and an 'eagle eye' for things around us. (Also read the Amazing Facts.)

Our sages and rishis definitely had the wisdom and acumen to understand the greatness of the animal kingdom. It is for this reason that they observed these animals and tried to mould their bodies and minds to adapt better to their harsh surroundings. Thus were created these *asanas* born of their lifelong observations. There are many *asanas* inspired by the birds and animals (for a complete list refer to 'Light on Yoga' by our Guruji B.K.S. Iyengar).

Through these dynamic poses, our sages got tremendous insight into the workings of the human body. They understood that divinity is present in each and every being and through these *asanas* they tried to assimilate the best from the birds and animals

to perfect their own form. As yoga maestro Prashant Iyengar wittily put it, "They reached G-O-D, while practising the D-O-G pose." The *yogasanas* are living truths which help cultivate and refine the body, mind, breath and the very consciousness to develop healthily and correctly. Their practice sculpts the entire personality of the human being and bestows qualities (as listed by Sage Patanjali in the third chapter) like beauty of form, shape, grace, elegance, strength, sharpness and compactness.

Dear reader, try these poses for yourself sometime. These *asanas* have the potential of taming the beast within and bringing out your true beauty.

SUPERIOR ANIMALS

- We share some 98 percent of our DNA with chimpanzees. We share basic bodily substances such as endorphins, natural opiates that contribute to certain 'highs' with earthworms. In fact, only a mere 50 or so genes make us 'human'.
- Turtles and whales can stay underwater for several hours while birds such as ducks and penguins can stay submerged for up to 15 minutes. We humans cannot hold our breath underwater for more than about two to three minutes.
- The rhinoceros beetles, which are among the largest insects, can withstand 850 times their own weight placed on their backs. Even spiders can withstand loads eight times their own body weight. Human weightlifting records achieve no more than about twice the lifter's body weight by comparison.
- A caterpillar (as per its body weight) has four times more muscles than a human being.
- An average adult needs more than 1.7 litres of water a day, not necessarily to drink but as a component of all foodstuffs. Without water people die within 3 to 4 days, but can live for several weeks without food. An Arabian (one-humped) camel can live without water for up to 10 months. It's hump stores food in the form of fat and is not a water store as is popularly imagined.
- Insects can easily see movement that takes place in as little as a thousandth of a second. They can easily see a light bulb flashing on and off 50 times a second.

DANGEROUS MAN:

- The World Health Organisation estimates that 700,000 deaths in developing countries could be prevented every year if the three pollutants - lead, particle matter (or soot) and carbon monoxide - were reduced. But that is not likely to happen soon.
- During the 1991 Gulf War, US Army tanks fired 14,000 rounds of DU or depleted-uranium-enhanced ammunition. Now, the deserts in Iraq and Kuwait will be contaminated for the next 4.5 billion years.
- The pigeons within a 16 km radius of the Sellafield nuclear power station in UK have become radioactive while roosting in the station's contaminated buildings. Analysis of the pigeons' droppings have revealed levels of plutonium up to 800 times the norm. ☹

Upcoming CIYTA Assessment Dates:

2003

Nov. 14-16	Junior Intermediate 1	Ottawa
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2004

Jan. 16-18	Junior Intermediate III	Victoria
June 18-20	Introductory I & II	Kelowna
Oct. 15-17	Introductory I & II	Halifax
Nov. 19-21	Junior Intermediate I	Vancouver

Please note:

The Introductory Level 1 & II Assessments are held annually the third weekend of June and the third weekend of October.

Delving into Patanjali's Yoga Sutras

by Leslie Hogya

Chapter II. 37

Satya pratisthayam kriya phalah asrayatvam

In *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, B.K.S. Iyengar comments on this sutra as follows: "When the *sadhaka* is firmly established in the practice of truth, his words become so potent that whatever he says comes to realization." He goes on to say that we take truth fairly casually. I recently spent time reflecting on this sutra. What does it look like when I live my own truth? Whose truth would I be living, if not my own? What is my truth?

People that I am drawn to are usually living in truth. They walk in harmony, their thoughts, words, and actions are congruent. Mr. Iyengar is such a person and being at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute in Pune inspires me to do the same. When I am able to be in that place of harmony, it is a great relief; my thoughts, actions and words are congruent. This congruency is restful, it is healing. I often find at those times of balance that I have vast resources of energy because one part of me is not trying to justify something with another part that doesn't quite fit.

I believe that most people are in some way searching for a connection with a greater truth, a divine aspect. That is why we are drawn to yoga or other spiritual teaching and why it has more staying power than mere physical exercise.

So if I recognize and remember that each person I meet has that divine spark, I treat each person as part of myself. Do unto others as I would have them do unto me. The Christian teaching is very similar to saying *Namaste*, the divine in me salutes the divine in you.

When I am living my truth, I am clear. There is clarity



around me and in all that I do. When others have a different opinion than I do, I can listen to them. Some things they say might be helpful, others may seem to be incorrect at this time. Some of their ideas might be different but can expand my horizon. I might even change my mind.

When in doubt, I can write, reflect, and then, if it is important, act. Let love, tolerance and patience be my guide. When I had teenagers, this was constantly being tested. My high and lofty goals get tempered in the world of people and events. I can be magnanimous with the iris, and the columbine.

Everyone around me is a reflection of the divine. The people that irritate me are usually manifesting traits I have myself. Living with others gives me daily

opportunities to test my beliefs. It is a field study of ultimate proportions, up for constant observation, learning and growth. The irritations are not usually big things. I can look at those irritations and see what would be the opposite, and that is not usually any more desirable! For example, I get irritated at the amount of laundry generated in my household -and it does seem excessive. But would I want my family to smell of old socks? No-that would be much more of an irritation.

When I get along with others, its easy to be kind, to be thoughtful. When there are conflicts, then it is more of a challenge to stay centered. I do not have to choose that person as a friend, but I can show respect. I can treat them and myself with dignity. I can listen and learn. I must ask what is the trigger?

One truth I have had to examine was the truth my parents lived. Their truth has definitely shaped me. They were themselves shaped by ultra conservative parents, world war, depression. After their difficulties they went on to raise a family in prosperous times of the 50s and 60s, as a young teenager that was all I saw. I wanted more altruism and less commercialism in my life. I joined the Peace Corps out of my idealistic views. My husband and I went to teach in Nigeria. After I returned, I was a new mother, and within a year, I became involved in yoga which was not in line with my Christian up bringing, or any of the traditional ways of living I had seen as a girl.

Living my own truth led me to Swami Radha's teaching. She asks me to examine all my beliefs. One way to live my own truth is to be in sync with my inner goals and higher purpose. The inner me is on the yoga path towards harmony, balance, and the union of body mind and soul. Living with and around people is when the inner goals are brought into the Light. Interactions that don't go my way are a test of this goal. ☯



Victoria Yoga Centre
presents

Marlene Mawhinney

An All levels Workshop

March 12-14, 2004

Marlene Mawhinney is one of Canada's most experienced teachers. Director of Yoga Centre Toronto, chair of the Professional Development Committee of the Canadian Iyengar Yoga Teachers Association, Marlene has been to India to study many times and brings a depth of understanding to her teaching.

Workshop times:

Friday 6:30 - 8:30pm

Saturday 10:30 - 1:30pm
and 3:00 - 5:00pm

Sunday 11:00am - 2:00pm

Registration opens:

January 19 for members

January 26 for non-members

Register at:

#202-919 Fort St., Victoria, BC V8V 3K3

phone: (250) 386-YOGA (9642)

www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca

Cost:

Members \$175 + GST

Non-members \$205 + GST

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

Towards Sattva

by Yvonne Kipp

Sutra II.24: *Lack of spiritual understanding (avidya) is the cause of the false identification of the seer with the seen.*

Sutra II.25: *The destruction of ignorance through right knowledge breaks the link binding the seer to the seen. This is kaivalya, emancipation.*

Sutra II.26: *The ceaseless flow of discriminative knowledge in thought, word and deed destroys ignorance, the source of pain.*

That quiet voice of the soul when cultivated and observed is the light that shines out to the world through the lens of consciousness. The personality has no true identity and must reflect heaven through the soul or earth through the mind and the senses. As we become more and more entangled in our lives on earth the lens through which the light shines becomes obscured by the grit and grime of interaction and exploration in the world of the ego. Ego becomes attached. Ego becomes repelled. Ego wants and doesn't want. Ego is proud and wants to be seen a god in its own right with all attendant glory and honour. Ego clings to life, closes fast around what it knows and holds on tight to the known.

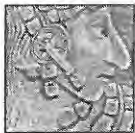
Of all the *klesas* (afflictions) that contribute to our

confusion of being in the world and not of the world *abinivesah* (clinging to life) is the most obscure. *Abinivesah* creeps in when confronted with a situation like having to teach in front of one's peers, to stand up on the spot and truly reveal who we are and what we actually understand about our subject. Is our understanding of and work in yoga superficial and therefore not connected to our inner knowing or have we managed with diligent practice to penetrate our worldly armour? Guruji, in *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, in his discussion of sutra II.3, comments that *abinivesah* is connected with the 'old' brain or back brain which is also known as the unconscious brain, as it retains past subliminal impressions, or *samskaras*. Clinging to life stands as a prominent obstacle to *avidya*. That which I have inherited from my ancestors, the scars I carry from the past, the shame, pride, misunderstandings and wounds have been carried from mother to mother to mother. The sins of the mother are carried forward by the daughter until such time as the one who lives now is able to break a cycle of ignorance and blow the scar tissue away.



The mind is a friend and an enemy and will turn more easily to the world available to the senses to that what we hear, see, touch, taste and smell. Through evolution we have developed these senses for survival and anything that threatens our survival will be seen as a threat stimulating a “fight or flight” response depending on our environmental influences such our home, school and community during our youth. *Klista*, a condition that is associated in our minds with past experiences of pain, explains Guruji, is like a live coal covered with ash, laying dormant, quiet obscured and buried out of sight. If we touch this live coal we are burned. Pains, scars and patterns of survival created from growing up in a world fraught with dangers and delights may remain latent for some time until they surface, until we are touched.

When we are under stress we lose touch with our equanimity, we lose touch with the present moment, and we revert to previous experiences in this life or former lives and panic. In a state of nervousness we have an opportunity to rise to the occasion, see the events before us for what they are, and remain in the present. In the steady practice of yoga we can hold the past, the present and the future in balance; we may be *tadasic*, in the now, and manage the flow of life towards *sattva*, towards freedom. ☯



Yoga in Mexico

Feb. 14-21 &
Feb 21-28, 2004



Next winter Shirley Daventry French will be teaching two 1-week courses in Puerta Vallarta for intermediate students.

For brochure & information contact:

Margo Kitchen (403) 243-1078,
email margotkitchen@shaw.ca

or David McAmmond (403) 244-5894,
email yogidave@yogamat.com

Return to India

by Marlene Miller

This past June, I had the opportunity to return to the Ramanani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute in Pune, India. It was my 5th visit, but this time was quite different. The previous times had always been to take the intensive. As these three-week intensives are no longer offered, I applied 3 years ago to attend public classes for the month of June. The classes and practice times at the institute were fabulous, and I was very grateful that India was good to me – being well the entire time.

The schedule I followed consisted of attending daily classes taught by Geetaji – two hour classes each except for Thursday pranayama. Classes were not held on Sundays. I enjoyed one class a week with Prashant, the opportunity to observe his other classes and the fortune to assist in medical classes. Two hours were scheduled each day to practice at the institute when Geeta and Mr. Iyengar were doing their practice. The rest of the time was devoted to finding a place to have a meal, do some shopping, check e-mails, time to lie on my bed each day for a rest, to read or to go to the institute's library for research and study.

Geeta's teaching brought life and newness to all students' poses, no matter the level, with her logical sequence of instructions and emphasis on precise points. How many times had I done standing poses and still not penetrated in many places? Instructions flowed from Geeta with directions of how to achieve greater depths in the body/mind/breath. This happened frequently at the same time as she assisted and instructed several students at the outer edges of the hall requiring attention equivalent to what is given in a medical class. Geeta amazingly knows what the individual needs at the same moment knowing what is the energy and movement of the class as a whole.

Prashant taught the penetration of poses in a different manner. He had us find the connections, cooperation

and interaction of each part of our body/mind/breath with another. He instructed to investigate and “acknowledge each part’s contribution” to the whole pose, including the mat, the room, other students, and the teacher. “Develop gratitude through acknowledgement” in order to help conquer ego and pride. “When an action is not coming” he taught, “use imagination then you will be 1% better”! One series of instructions was to first observe the spine’s action then “spine-ize” each part of the body to harmonize the pose. I thoroughly enjoyed being able to observe and take notes during Prashant’s classes as I felt to be attending a lecture. I could not write fast enough to catch his phrasing and at other times was drawn to only listen!

It was very inspiring to practice with Mr. Iyengar and Geeta in the studio with us. There were approximately 30 foreign students and teachers at the institute in June with the majority from the US, several from

Australia, others from Germany, Switzerland, Spain, and two of us from Canada. The group practices were very valuable. It was an opportunity to not only review what had been taught in the classes, but to explore ways of using the equipment to increase awareness in the dull parts of the body. I came to realize my practices had become dull and *tamasic* prior to returning to the institute, that I had been holding back from exploring many poses.

During this year’s annual closure, the institute was renovated. The balcony is gone, the old windows removed and enclosed to fully be part of the main hall. There are new sliding windows, and all props are at the side now. The infamous prop room door is gone! The area for props is larger with new shelving. The space is opened up to the width and height of the old balcony. The Institute has been painted inside and out. Prashant’s instruction was to put away props as if in a showroom, not a storeroom! ☺

**Balance is the
state of the
present – the
here and now.
If you balance
in the present
you are living
in eternity.**

-B.K.S. Iyengar



Contemplation on Props

by Sue "the Mat Lady" Riddell

I look forward to my weekly opportunity to commune with the yoga props at our Victoria Yoga Center most Monday afternoons between classes. The short period of time available flies by generally before the job is accomplished. Monica, the receptionist, is close by to offer assistance which is most appreciated. She only teases me a little about wanting the blankets all folded and stacked in a particular fashion.

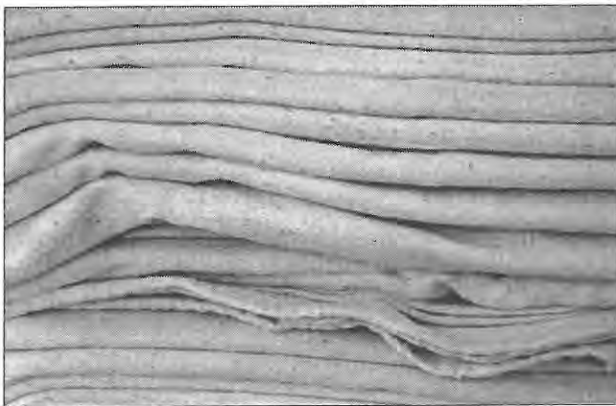
Thoughts come and go in the sunny silence...

Remembering how the blankets support us in *Salamba sarvangasana*, the contentment I feel when resting on the floor after the asana has been completed making me feel good all over again. The thought occurs that each blanket is like each day in your life that you practise yoga. Smoothing out the wrinkles in each blanket compares to stilling the *vrttis*, or fluctuations, in our consciousness each day, building a calm and happy life one day at a time.

Wood blocks bring back the memory of *Setubandha sarvangasana*. B.K.S. Iyengar's book "The Path to Holistic Health" lists some benefits of this pose: "combats depression by soothing the brain and expanding the chest." No wonder this is one of my favourites.

Thank you goes to the slant boards for giving me the

courage to kick up into *Adho mukha vrksasana* knowing my hands were placed the correct distance from the wall. The boards fit together in the storage shelf like pieces in a jigsaw puzzle, most satisfying!



And so it goes – from the straps to the sand bags, from the eye bags to the bolsters – many opportunities to reflect on the numerous benefits of this life transforming practice. When Leslie Hogya joked in my first Gentle Yoga class back in 1998 that we should go to blanket folding school, little did I realize the many benefits of the

Iyengar Yoga system – thank you Leslie. And thank you, Mr. Iyengar, for sharing your knowledge and skill with your many students world-wide. ☺

Scholarships and Bursaries

Member's Scholarships are available for all long workshops and intensives.

Please apply in writing at least one month prior to the workshop you are interested in.

See Calendar on back page for dates.

Student Bursaries are available to all students presently enrolled in classes. To subsidize your term fees please apply 3 weeks prior to term.

Applications and details for both are available at the reception desk.



Canadian Iyengar Yoga Teachers' Association assessors:

Back row: Mahyar Raz-Khorzad, Bev Winsor, Ann Kilbertus, Marlene Mawhinney, Marie-Andree Morin, Sheri Berkowitz, Margot Kitchen
Front row: Leslie Hogya, Donna Fornelli, Shirley Daventry French, Ingelise Nherlan

Absent assessors: Marlene Miller, Barbara Yates, Pamela Stewart.
 Linda Benn took the photo.

Light on Questions

by Ty Chandler

This letter from Shirley Daventry French was written in response to a series of questions I posed about how certification came about in Canada.

Dear Ty,

Perhaps it's too late to answer your questions, but here goes. Yes, it was in at the conference in Toronto in 1993 that Guruji, quite out of the blue, announced what came to be known as "Guruji's directive". It was

that we:

- 1) Form a national association
- 2) Establish a syllabus
- 3) Implement a certification and assessment process.

His announcement was first made one morning in the office at the conference site as we waited to go into the classroom where he was going to teach. There was a group of people there, and all of us stood stock still with mouths open. Lest we had not understood what he wanted, he repeated this at lunch that day and several other times during the conference. On all occasions there were several people present, and once someone was actually videoing him, so it was recorded for posterity. Despite this, some longtime students of Guruji who had not gone to the conference and who were against any certification process, insisted he could not

have said what he said. When confronted with the evidence of the video, they then said that Guruji had been coerced into making this announcement. For anyone who knows Guruji (which most of them did) this is so ridiculous that it was not worth responding to. There resulted a split across the country. Those who accepted Guruji's directive and wanted to get on with it and those who did everything they could to subvert the process. There was a lot of anger and distrust and some vituperative letter writing. Guruji must have felt like disowning us, but he waited patiently while those of us to whom he had spoken in Toronto persevered

with the process of setting up a viable association and putting in place the framework for certification. By 1997 we had this framework in place, and Guruji

Guruji must have felt like disowning us, but he waited patiently while those of us to whom he had spoken in Toronto persevered with the process of setting up a viable association and putting in place the framework for certification.

issued the first certificates during the Canadian Intensive in Pune in October 1997 to those with the experience to act as the first assessors on his behalf. He issued eleven certificates at that time. One of these eleven refused to participate from the beginning. Another dropped out after one assessment not being comfortable with the process. A third had to resign because of ill health. The other 8 are still assessing, joined now by two assessors who received their certification in other countries, and a new group of assessors trained in Canada. ☯



Shirley Daventry French teaches Urdhva danurasana at the Junior Intermediate Teacher Training Intensive in August 2003



VICTORIA
YOGA CENTRE'S



Friday Night Gathering



Meet the Teachers

Date: Friday, November 14

at the Victoria Yoga Centre
202-919 Fort Street

6pm: Asana practice

**7pm: Teachers'
asana demonstration**

**7:30pm: Potluck dinner—
bring food to share**

*Everyone is welcome to join us.
Bring a friend, partner or family member.*

By donation, free for members.



The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE

Program of Classes in the Iyengar Approach to Yoga

Term II: Nov. 3-Dec.12, 2003

Note: Some classes may be adjusted due to special workshops or holidays.

Introduction to Iyengar Yoga - 4 weeks

Day	Time	Instructor
Wed.	6:30-8:00 pm	Britta Poisson

Level 1

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	12:00-1:30 pm	Lauren Cox
Mon.	4:00-5:30 pm	Jo Anna Hope
Mon.	7:30-9:00 pm	Ann Kilbertus
Tues.	10:00-11:30 am	Leslie Hogya
Tues.	4:45-6:15 pm	Melissa Worth
Tues.	7:00-8:30 pm	Wies Pukesh
Wed.	6:00-7:30 pm	Gwynneth Powell
Thurs.	8:30-10:00 am	Linda Benn
Thurs.	5:30-7:00 pm	Wendy Boyer
Thurs.	6:30-8:00 pm	Jeannette Merryfield
Fri.	10:30-12:00 pm	Linda Benn
Fri.	5:00-6:30 pm	Gwynneth Powell
Sat.	9:30-11:00 am	Corrine Lowen
Sun.	10:30-12:00 pm	Ty Chandler
Sun.	3:00-4:30 pm	Christine Dimofski

Level 1/2

Day	Time	Instructor
Wed.	9:00-10:30 am	Ty Chandler
Wed.	7:30-9:00 pm	Melissa Worth
Thurs.	7:00-8:30 pm	Greg Sly

Level 2

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	7:30-9:00 pm	James Currie-Johnson
Tues.	10:00-11:30 am	Robin Cantor
Tues.	5:15-7:00 pm	Leslie Hogya
Tues.	6:30-8:00 pm	Melissa Worth
Wed.	7:45-9:15 pm	Gwynneth Powell
Thurs.	4:30-6:00 pm	Ann Kilbertus
Fri.	7:00-8:00 am	Christine Dimofski
Fri.	9:00-10:30 am	Linda Benn
Fri.	5:00-6:30 pm	Wendy Boyer
Sat.	8:00-9:30 am	Corrine Lowen
Sun.	9:00-10:30 am	Ty Chandler
Sun.	4:30-6:00 pm	Christine Dimofski

Level 2/3

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	10:00 -12:00pm	Lauren Cox
Wed.	6:00-7:30pm	Ty Chandler

Level 3

Day	Time	Instructor
Thurs.	10:00-12:00 pm	Shirley Daventry French Linda Benn
Thurs.	6:00-8:00 pm	Ann Kilbertus, Leslie Hogya
Sat.	9:00-11:00 am	Marlene Miller

Level 4

Day	Time	Instructor
Mon.	5:30 -7:30pm	Shirley Daventry French & senior teachers

Noon Hour Classes

Day	Time	Instructor
Tues.	12:00-1:00pm	Jeannette Merryfield
Wed.	12:00-1:00pm	Wendy Boyer
Thurs.	12:00-1:00pm	Lauren Cox
Fri.	12:00-1:00pm	Ty Chandler

The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE #202 - 919 Fort St. 386-YOGA (9642)

Term II: Nov.3 - Dec.21, 2003

Timed Practice

Tues. 5:30-7:00 pm Ty Chandler

Restorative(registered and drop-in)

Wed. 5:30-6:30 pm James Currie-Johnson

Introduction to Pranayama (Level 2 required)

Wed. 7:00-8:00 am Ann Kilbertus
Nov 5, 12, 19, 26

Thurs. 5:00-6:00 pm Leslie Hogya
Nov.6, 13, 20

Sutra Recitation (free for Yoga Centre members)

Wed. 5:00-5:30 pm James Currie-Johnson

Focus on Women

Fri. 9:30-11:00 am Christine Dimofski

Pre-Natal

Mon. 7:30-9:00 pm Robin Cantor

Sat. 3:00-4:30 pm Lauren Cox

55 & Better

Wed. (continuing) 10:30-12:00 pm Leslie Hogya

Fri. (Level 1) 10:30-12:00 pm Wendy Boyer

Special Needs

Wed. 4:30-6:00 pm Shirley Daventry French,
Ann Kilbertus, Leslie
Hogya, Lauren Cox

Thurs. 1:15-2:30 pm Linda Benn, Ann Kilbertus

Back Care

Mon. 4:00-5:15 pm Linda Benn

Family Yoga

Wed. 3:30-4:30 pm Wendy Boyer

Ty's Yoga Kids (ages 10-14)

Fri. 4:00-5:00 pm Ty Chandler

Highschool Yoga (age 14 +)

Fri. 3:30-4:45pm Gwynneth Powell

The VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE



*Yoga is a Darsana, a mirror to
look at ourselves from within.
Control of the mind is Yoga. When
the mind is controlled, stilled and
silenced, what remains is the soul.
It is the quest of the soul, the
spark of divinity within us, which
is the very purpose of Yoga.*

-B.K.S. Iyengar

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers help with all kinds of things at the Victoria Yoga Centre. This column introduces some of the people who give a great deal to our community.

Making Things New

by Jane Munro

Last January, I quit my job - after 22 years - finally found the courage to listen to myself - and that coincided with the Yoga Centre undergoing renovations and needing some work done. It was perfect timing.

Bruce Cox says he's still observing what's happened as a result of this change. He told himself that he didn't even want to look for work until the fall. What he wanted to do was volunteer, help people out. Since his wife, Lauren, is a teacher at the Victoria Yoga Centre, he'd been on its periphery for years. In the past, he felt he didn't have time to contribute much. But, his father and mother, now 82, are life-long volunteers. He's watched his father do things that needed doing, cheer people up, and in a quiet way, take pleasure from his interactions with others. Like his parents, it's part of Bruce's identity to be useful. He enjoys building things, fixing things, making things look new. Once he'd left his desk job, it was a joy to come to the Victoria Yoga Centre - *it's such a nice group of people* - and have someone greet him with, *oh, it's so good to see you* - or, *there's something we need you to look at*.



Over the past eight months Bruce has said *Sure* to many tasks. He's built shelves for the new studio, put in baseboards, created an altar, made *Halasana* benches and stools. As well, he's the source for wooden blocks - both those used in classes, and those the Centre sells. That's something he charges for, but he does other things for free.

He's not a carpenter by training. His first challenge is planning his work. He takes a good look, makes some drawings, talks to people, comes up with ideas, and gets started. Then, he just keeps at it until he's satisfied he's

got it right. He appreciates tools. I like keeping them working well - they're a help - I could never treat them badly. When the project is finished, he has the pleasure of seeing people use what he's created.

Bruce believes a group of people who are happy and work well together can do almost anything. He's attracted by the commitment and enthusiasm he finds at the Yoga Centre, though he says he's only a sometime yoga student. He uses yoga to fix himself - *like a tool*, he laughs - *yoga's such a huge package, but it does work, even for a beginner like me*. What he finds now in this transitional period is that he has to be disciplined. *I have to be responsible to myself. It feels uncomfortably indulgent - but when the day's gone I ask myself, what did I do today?*

Often, his answer includes making renovations - in his own life and at the Victoria Yoga Centre. ☺



Radha Yoga Centre

Classes at Radha Yoga Centre

Work as Spiritual Practice

Through the practice of the Divine Light Invocation and reflection, you can use the symbolism of your current work situation to learn the practice of karma yoga, selfless service.

Hidden Language Hatha

Hidden Language unites body, mind and speech. Discover how the symbolism of poses can open and take on personal meaning, leading to intuitive insights. Bring a journal.

Kundalini

Learn how the chakra system functions in your life. In weekly classes you will be introduced to life-changing spiritual practices and questions that encourage clarity and self-understanding.

For more information on these classes and Swami Radha's teachings, please check our website at www.radha.org

Divine Light Invocation Video Launch & Solstice Party

December 21

Celebrate the return of the light with the healing practice of the Divine Light Invocation, and the new video of Sw Radhananda teaching the practice. Please call for details. All welcome, free.

The myth of perfection

In the imperfect there is perfection. Often people don't recognize their own Light. When they begin to step over the hurdle of criticism, and learn to trust themselves, life opens up. Recently, an older student in teacher training felt that she couldn't teach, that she wouldn't be able to do the poses perfectly. But she followed her body as it was, drawing on her many years of wisdom, and she now radiates Light. Her students can appreciate what she has to offer because she has an understanding of how to approach them from her own experience.



Swami Radha

The nourishment for continuing on the path is in the small details of quality and joy and usefulness in everyday life. By recognizing these details you will develop faith in the presence of the Divine in your heart. This deepening of faith helps in facing the reality of your situation.

- Swami Radhananda

Excerpted from "The Myth of Perfection (overcoming a major obstacle on the path to liberation)," originally published in ASCENT MAGAZINE (issue #19, Fall 2003). Swami Radhananda is the spiritual director of Yasodhara Ashram.

YOGA CALENDAR

NOVEMBER 2003

Oct. 31-
Nov. 2 Chris Saudek workshop
14 Friday Night Gathering
14-16 Assessment-Junior Intermed. I, Ottawa
22 VIIYTA- Teacher's Meeting

DECEMBER 2003

5 Friday Night Video
14 Light on Yoga - Guruji's 85th
birthday celebration

JANUARY 2004

9 Friday Night Video
16-18 Junior Intermediate III Assessment
in Victoria
30-Feb 1 Heart of Yoga Workshop

FEBRUARY 2004

14 Back bending workshop
with Marlene Miller
14-21 Intermediate Workshop with
Shirley Daventry French in Mexico
21-28 Intermediate Workshop with
Shirley Daventry French in Mexico

MARCH 2004

12-14 Marlene Mawhinney

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION FORM:

Please complete this form and send it with your cheque or money order to the Victoria Yoga Centre Society,
c/o Constance Barker, 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3

Membership/Subscription fee is \$32 and renewable each January

Name: _____

Address: _____ City _____

Postal Code: _____ Country: _____ Phone _____

E-mail _____

☐ Do not mail me my newsletter during sessions, I'll pick one up at my class.

☐ Receipt Required.