

January / February 2005



VICTORIA

yoga centre

NEWSLETTER



Yoga is the music of the soul. So do continue and the gates of the soul will open.

– B.K.S. Iyengar



VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE PRESENTS

The Heart of Yoga

**An Intermediate Workshop
with Shirley Daventry French**

January 28-30, 2005

**For Levels 3 and 4 students or Level 2 students
who have completed at least 2 terms**

**Friday, January 28, 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Saturday, January 29, 11 am - 2 pm, 3:30 - 5:30 pm
Sunday, January 30, noon - 3 pm**

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 December 2004. Shirley's significant understanding of the teaching comes through in her direct approach.

Giving workshops at both the 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.

Fees:

\$185 + GST members

\$205 + GST non members

Registration opens:

Dec. 8, '04 - members,

Dec.13, '04 - non members

To register,

drop in or phone

Victoria Yoga Centre

202, 919 Fort Street

Victoria, BC

(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.

Saturday 5th February 2005

VYC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Yoga Practice 4-5pm

Meeting 5-6pm followed by potluck

All Victoria Yoga Centre members are welcome to attend the AGM.

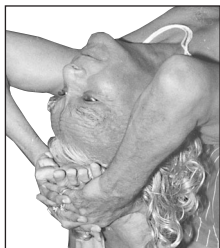
If you are interested in helping to serve on the board of directors, please apply at the front desk.

Come to the Annual General Meeting to choose the new board.

There will be a resolution to raise membership fees to \$40. This is necessary to meet our increased costs.

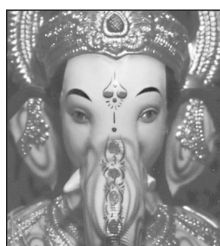
**202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8V 3K3
250 386-YOGA(9642)**

contents



2 Reflections

by Shirley Daventry French



6 The "System" of Iyengar Yoga

by Prashant S. Iyengar

10 From the Physical to the Divine

by Melissa Worth

12 Going Deeper: Comments from an Observer

by Karyn Woodland



13 Going Deeper into Dishes

by Joan Douglas

15 Yoganga – Shikshaka – Chakravarti

by Chris Beach



17 Sailing Home is a Breeze

By Sue Riddell

18 Canadian Yogini in Pune

Dr. Vasudha Joshi

Newsletter Advertising Policy (Adopted February 20, 2004)

In keeping with the mandate of the Victoria Yoga Centre Society Directors, 2004, to update, review and document policies and procedures, the newsletter committee submitted a policy which is a revision of the 1996 policy and has been adopted by the Board of Directors as follows:

1. Advertisements must not conflict with the aims of the newsletter of the VYCS.
2. Advertisements must be only for Iyengar Yoga
3. Priority given to advertisements regarding:
 - VYC events
 - VYC sponsored events
 - CIYTA events
 - Radha House/ Yasodhara Ashram

COURSE REGISTRATION:

Drop in:

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

Phone:

250 386-YOGA(9642)

Refund policy:

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.



VICTORIA yoga centre NEWSLETTER

EDITOR Melissa Worth

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Shirley Daventry French, Lauren Cox,
Gwynneth Powell, Greg Sly, Jane Munro,
Taimi Mulder, Susan Robinson,
Nancy Searing

DESIGN / PRODUCTION Cady Graphics

PHOTOGRAPHY Melissa Worth, Ann
Kilbertus, Corrine Lowen, Soni Studios

ADS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lauren Cox, Leslie Hogya

ILLUSTRATIONS Lauren Cox

SCANNING Byron Smith

DISTRIBUTION Keiko Alkire,
Rosemary Barritt, Krysia Strawczynski

MEMBERSHIP / MAILING LIST

Karin Holtkamp

PRINTING Hillside Printing

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

January 15, 2005

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY

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

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

Send contributions, articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions to the Victoria Yoga Centre Newsletter:

202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3.

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

Permission is hereby granted to reprint any of our material, except that copyrighted by the author or artists. When reprinting, please credit this Newsletter and send us two copies of the publication containing our material. Copyright material is only available with written permission.

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



SHIRLEY DAVENTRY FRENCH WAS AWARDED SENIOR CERTIFICATION FROM B.K.S. IYENGAR. SHE HAS BEEN TEACHING SINCE 1972 AND FOUNDED THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE IN 1976. SHIRLEY LIVES IN VICTORIA AND TEACHES WORLDWIDE.

*What we are today comes from our thoughts
of yesterday, and our present thoughts build our life
of tomorrow: our life is the creation of our mind.*

The Dhammapada, chapter 1, verse 1, translated by Juan Mascaro

At a teacher training course I was giving recently I promoted a book which I have found most inspiring: *God in All Worlds* an anthology of contemporary spiritual writing compiled and edited by Lucinda Vardey. It contains writing from all spiritual traditions; short pieces, long pieces, excerpts. "If I were going to be marooned somewhere and could take just one book," I told them, "this would be the one!" Jokingly, I added that "if I were allowed two, the second would be *War and Peace*!"

My first statement was serious. *God in All Worlds* is one of the most influential and inspiring books I have read, and has been a constant companion on my bedside table since I first discovered it by chance years ago. I have bought countless copies and given them to friends as gifts. Without a doubt it is one of the significant books in my life.

War and Peace is one of the greatest novels I have ever read. However, since the summer many years ago when I made it a goal to read this book, it has rested on my book shelf and I have not taken it out to reread. On the other hand I have read Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* countless times; generally in periods when life has speeded up too much and I seek to slow down my thoughts and actions. Wouldn't *Pride and Prejudice* be a better companion on my desert island?

If I were allowed to have only two books, would I take a novel at all? Probably not. Still unfinished is my reading of Bertrand Russell's *A History of Western Philosophy*, which I began in Hawaii several years ago, found provocative

and informative, but put aside as I returned to my practice and study of Eastern philosophy. So what about Eastern spiritual texts? After all, these are what I refer to, peruse and study day after day? What about my own teacher, B.K.S. Iyengar's books, particularly the epic *Light on Yoga*, a book which seems to have been rewritten and revised every time I open it to discover some significant point or principle previously overlooked? *Light on the Yoga-sutras of Patanjali* would also be a good choice, with its timeless wisdom for all eventualities.

As I consider my short list, I recall something I read yesterday in an outline of a course on the Philosophy of Yoga by Foster Walker Ph.D. of Calgary. Dr. Walker had geared this course to teachers and potential teachers of yoga. It was offered recently at the yoga studio of Dr. Walker's brother Robert, who is a certified Iyengar Yoga teacher. Dr. Walker hoped participants would find the course not only enjoyable and informative, but also that it would bring about an expansion of their understanding of yoga and of themselves which would affect their practice, their lives and consequently their teaching. Two texts would form the basis of these studies: *The Bhagavad Gita* and Patanjali's *Yoga-Sutras*.

Dr. Walker had some interesting advice about the reading and study to be undertaken in this course. Beyond the provision of information, beliefs or stories, he hoped it would develop a sense of wonder about the incredible mystery of life and the world around us. In his words, classical yoga literature is "*contemplative, inspirational and visionary*,"

meant to inspire you with the energy of fundamental insights and slow you down to the precision of definite observations in *your* life, and life as a whole.”

Derek and I are on our annual pilgrimage to the west coast of Vancouver Island which provides us not only with some of the purest air on the planet full of negative ions from the open Pacific, but time for contemplation, reading and (in my case) writing, in the comfort of a pleasant apartment on a pristine beach in the midst of the rainforest. When packing for this trip our first priority is finding a box for the eclectic selection of books we wish to take - a number far in excess of two! With the luxury of time to read, we like to give ourselves some freedom of choice according to mood.

My choices included a book of English grammar, two travel books on the antipodes because we are considering a trip to Australia and New Zealand with our grandson, two books about the Second World War, a renowned biography of two English sisters who emigrated to Canada in the nineteenth century, and a prizewinning contemporary novel. At the last minute, remembering that in Hong Kong (where I will be travelling immediately after this trip) I am to give a talk on the yoga-sutras, I included B.K.S. Iyengar's commentary on the sutras and a file of notes and papers.

I also threw in Foster Walker's outline because I had been in Calgary recently and although I have not met him, his brother had spoken highly of him and his manner of teaching yoga philosophy. What Dr. Walker had to say fitted well with my concerns that yoga is taught in its entirety and not in bits and pieces. So much yoga teaching and teacher training these days is being done in the absence and ignorance of the philosophy on which these practices are based.

I was fortunate to be taught from the start that whatever branch of yoga I pursued would involve body and mind as spiritual tools, that mind inhabited every part of the body and, in fact, body was mind made manifest. I learned that while I had little control over how the outside world functioned I was completely in charge of my responses. I came to understand

There are built in safeguards in the system of yoga, particularly when studies are pursued under the guidance of a Master; someone who will know when we need pushing or prodding, or when we need to apply the brakes, slow down, digest and consolidate.

that even in the most difficult of circumstances, I had choices. I became aware of the value of developing my rational mind, and that before I could trust my intuition I must check it out and make sure it was not my self-will imposing itself. I was encouraged to refine my feelings and lessen the disturbance and tyranny of unbridled emotion. I began to see how my patterns of speech, thought and deed defined me and my life, and that my mind does indeed play a significant role in the creation of my world.

On this path of yoga we have to observe the mind, develop the mind, refine the mind, hone the mind as a penetrating spiritual tool and make use of it to go beyond the mind. But this last step cannot be hastened or taken too soon or we would become like an idiot savant, knowledgeable but without an understanding of its value. This is where the discipline of yoga has an important role to play in helping us systematically develop the strength and maturity to make appropriate use of any knowledge and power we acquire. There are built in safeguards in the system of yoga, particularly when studies are pursued under the guidance of a Master; someone who will know when we need pushing or prodding, or when we need to apply the brakes, slow down, digest and consolidate.

Self-discipline and self-study, are the first two of the three practices of *Kriya Yoga*, the Yoga of Action. The third is devotion. Devotion to what? I can hear Swami Radha's voice asking: *What do you worship?* She posed this question to a group of us the first time I met her. What a strange question, I thought, dismissing the idea that I worshipped anything; after all I was not religious. *Take time to be Holy!* This was another curious statement

A Yoga Master does not try to make us into anything we are not, but to bring out that which is within us, show us how to refine this, and point us in a direction where it can be put to good use.

which came from Swami Radha's lips at that same group. The word 'holy' hardly existed in my vocabulary at that time, and was certainly not what I had in mind when I entered my first yoga class!

Gradually, over time, I came to understand that when I went beyond a limited and superficial understanding of the words 'worship' and 'holy' and, most important of all, beyond my emotional response to these words, there was something significant for me to investigate here. The words I use and my reactions to the words of others are a powerful force in defining myself and my life, and I have been struggling to refine my speech and lessen the pull of my emotions since my introduction to yoga thirty five years ago.

This has been one of my greatest challenges. Coming from a family which loved to argue and a culture which valued eloquence and facility with words, I prided myself on my ability to express myself verbally, quickly and forcefully. In one of the English grammar courses at my school, taught by the eccentric headmaster, he peppered us with verbal questions which we had to answer immediately. Any hesitation gained you a mark of zero, a wrong answer gained you a mark of zero, but for those who had the confidence and presence of mind to stand up and deliver a correct answer without hesitation, a mark of ten awaited you. Not intimidated by this rather tyrannical man, and imbued in my family with a love of language, my marks were always high in English grammar.

Not so in English literature. I loved to read, and loved to write, but somehow my interpretation of the classics did not always meet with the approval of my

English mistress (as she was called in those days). Excited by a paragraph of Shakespeare or a beautiful poem, I would complete my assignment eager to convey in my own words what this passage had meant to me. This excitement quickly evaporated when I learned that original thought was not encouraged and what my teacher sought was regurgitation of her own ideas or ones commonly accepted by other experts. Understanding this, I produced the minimum which would get me through the course. For myself I read voraciously, discussed my ideas passionately with family and friends, defended them vehemently, and, in the process, learned that my arguments and premises were often full of holes. I also learned the valuable lesson that to develop one had to speak out and take risks.

This latter point was emphasised in a course conducted by Swami Radha at Yasodhara Ashram when I first went there to study. Swami Radha was a teacher of *Jnana Yoga* and we were taking a course called *Workshop of the Mind*. There was a young woman there who constantly interrupted with irrelevant and sometimes very tiresome questions. Swami Radha tolerated this for a while, giving short answers or deflecting the questions. Eventually, having had enough, Swami Radha tore into this young woman about her selfishness, her lack of consideration for the rest of us there, and lack of respect for the teachings which Swami Radha was trying to bring to our attention. There were about a dozen other students, all of them like me pleased that at last someone with authority was telling this young woman what a nuisance she was, how annoying

her intrusions were. Having said what she felt this young woman needed to hear, Swami Radha then turned to the rest of us sitting there in our self-righteousness and put us firmly in our place. Pointing to the young woman and looking at us, she said: *but she will learn because she takes risks!* When you take risks in the present of a great spiritual teacher you sometimes incur their wrath, but without those risks you will learn little or nothing. There is nothing to be gained by playing it safe. On the other hand you do have to learn when it is appropriate to be quiet and listen, and when it is important to speak up and speak out. Discrimination lies at the heart of yoga, which teaches us to diversify our options.

Before the workshop mentioned above, I had already had my own experience of Swami Radha's directness on our very first meeting. This was in a *Straightwalk* workshop where we had to take a walk in various directions for a certain duration of time, reflect on this process and write a short paper to be read out loud. Having completed this assignment I was eager to read out my paper, but the Divine had other ideas and I had to wait until last. After hearing someone's paper, Swami Radha would question them about the words they used and the meaning they wished to convey. Did they understand what they were saying? What lay behind the words used? Were they serving their intended purpose? What was their purpose? Sometimes she would invite members of the group to ask questions or give feedback. In these cases I was almost always ready with some comments, and whenever we had a break others would come up and congratulate me on my articulateness and courage in speaking out.

Finally it was my turn. Others had mumbled as they reluctantly read out their papers, but I read mine with the expressiveness and voice modulation of a former actress and awaited Swami Radha's response. Not entirely stupid, I

had seen that the previous papers had all generated some challenging questions and anticipated no less for myself. As I finished, I looked up to find Swami Radha looking me straight in the eyes. She asked me a question and I answered confidently and immediately. There was a pause. I waited. Then, slowly and deliberately, still maintaining eye contact, she said: *you are very quick with words!* And there was not a shadow of doubt in my mind that this was not intended as a compliment! Here began the first of many interesting lessons about my thoughts, words and deeds and their role in the creation of my life.

Did I get me to a nunnery, or take a vow of silence? Obviously not, since here I am thirty five years later still writing, still talking, still reading, still forcefully expressing opinions. Swami Radha's assessment of my quickness with words was neither negative nor positive, simply a statement of fact. What she did was stop

me in my tracks and make me look at this faculty, what effect it was having on me and those around me, and what I would like to do with it in the rest of my life.

A Yoga Master will encourage students to make use of their talents, not for name and fame, but for the discovery of their higher self and the greater good of mankind. This is what we mean at the Victoria Yoga Centre when we talk about "the work" which can include any and everything from sweeping the floor after classes, to emptying the garbage, to standing in front of a class and teaching, to serving on the board of directors or various committees, to manning the front desk, to working in the office, to editing and writing in this newsletter, and more.

As I have persevered and stumbled along my own spiritual path, under the guidance of my teachers I have been fortunate to turn my quickness and love of words into a spiritual tool to teach,

talk and write about yoga including the privilege of editing for B.K.S. Iyengar. Above all I have been able to use this tool to know myself! A Yoga Master does not try to make us into anything we are not, but to bring out that which is within us, show us how to refine this, and point us in a direction where it can be put to good use. In the process my mind and as a result my life, has gone in directions which hitherto I could not possibly conceive.

My nature being what it is, I still have to be vigilant and practise restraint over a tendency to use wit and words for the momentary high of a clever rejoinder or to reveal another's perceived ignorance. I have enough ignorance of my own to overcome to keep me busy for the rest of this lifetime. May my energy, talents and abilities be used to this end.

Om namah Sivaya. ॐ

April 15-17, 2005

Basics to Refinement with Ingelise Nherlan

FRIDAY, APRIL 15, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 11:00 am – 1:30 pm, 3:00 – 5:00 pm

SUNDAY, APRIL 17, Noon – 3:00 pm

Fees: \$190 +GST for members | \$210 +GST for non-members

Registration opens for members February 7, 2005

For non-members February 14, 2005

Ingelise Nherlan is a dynamic and inspiring teacher. She has studied yoga for 30 years and was awarded a Senior Intermediate Teaching Certificate by her teacher B.K.S. Iyengar. She has studied directly with the Iyengars at the Institute in Pune, India several times.

Ingelise teaches and practices from the point of view that all learning is

- 1. present knowledge**
- 2. exploration of that which still remains to be discovered**

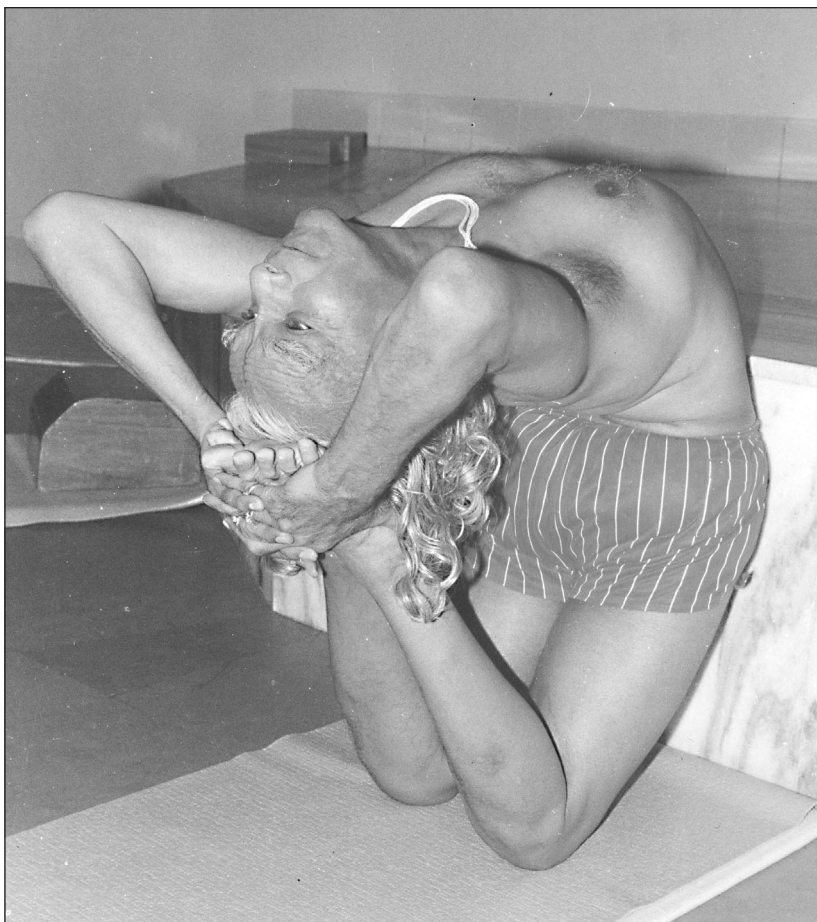
"Combine the two and we can move from basics to the refined."

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

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

The "System" of Iyengar Yoga

Prashant S. Iyengar



Guruji in Kapotasana

The following article was first published in Yoga Rahasya, Vol.9, No.2, 2002 pp. 9-17

Today, the way Guruji teaches yoga is identified as "Iyengar Yoga". It has evolved from its rudiments in 1930s and started getting crystallised after the publication of *Light on Yoga*. This system is such that it can befit anyone and everyone irrespective of class, caste, creed, gender, status, stature, stage of life, ethnic background, ethos. That is why, this yoga is multi-faceted.

Most people take to yoga for certain material gains such as remedial expectations or something very mundane such as a sense of physical and mental well being. A raw beginner does not even know what is a sense of well being but he still expects it and therefore takes to Iyengar Yoga.

Children and teenagers have no aspirations to do yoga. The innocent children are sent by their parents, they get joy doing it and then they continue to do it. They do not do it for the sake of joy but they do get joy. As man grows, his requirements on the plane of the body, mind, emotions and the whole life keeps on changing and he then tries to get something out of Iyengar yoga.

This system was not so comprehensive when Guruji started teaching in the 1930's and 1940's. It has evolved over a period of time. Guruji commenced his practice and also teaching on a very rudimentary plane. His dedication, involvement and most importantly his grace led to the complete evolution of the system. This system now conforms to scriptural, textual yoga.

You all recognise this as an Iyengar Yoga System. A system implies that it must be a science, whereas the so-called Iyengar

Yoga is getting disseminated not as a system but as a mode or a form of yoga.

If you come across a board stating Iyengar Yoga Studio/Centre and if it has the wall and ceiling ropes, belts, chairs, trestlers, bricks, then one thinks that this is Iyengar Yoga. If you see some displays of Guruji's postures from *Light on Yoga* then from this you identify it as Iyengar Yoga. This is not a rational way of identifying Guruji's system because all these are modes and Guruji's mode of teaching has changed from decade to decade. It was one in the 40's and early 50's and later changed in the 60's, 70's and 80's. The mode of teaching depends on the form of teaching.

In the early days, Guruji taught on a one to one basis. He naturally used his own body, his hands, legs, head, everything from the toe to the head to make the student do the *asana*. Guruji developed physical precision in the posture

and conveyed that to his students. He used his own body as props. Guruji would adjust *Trikonasana* with his legs, with his hands, gripping between his two thighs, he would adjust the back. Like we do *Setu Bandha Sarvangasana* on a brick, he used to make them do it on his knee. He would place his knee under the tailbone of the student and make them do all the variations of *Sarvangasana*.

While making the students do *Kandasana*, he would hold the knees of the students, and place the crown of his head to their feet and then push their feet to the chest. Today we do *Viparita Dandasana* on the chair. He would become a stool himself and make his students do *Viparita Dandasana* upon on that. Today, props are extensively being used. It is a mode of teaching Iyengar Yoga and should not be identified with the System of Iyengar Yoga.

Some may even use words used by Guruji. This should also not be identified as the system of Iyengar Yoga. For example, Guruji often says, "No pain No gain." A student/teacher should have the moral or ethical qualification and cannot use these words just because Guruji says them. If I am protecting myself from pain then I have no right to say, "no pain no gain."

Guruji's language, Guruji's expression are all a mode of teaching and not a system. Guruji has the moral, ethical qualification to say something about you to you but I cannot claim to be saying exactly the same thing even if I repeat the words. I have to use my words because I am qualified for my language.

Take another example, Guruji may correct someone by giving a kick or a bang on the back or the buttocks. I cannot come and do the same thing and say that I did what Guruji did. I must be qualified to kick the person.

Props, Guruji's language and mannerisms are all Guruji's modes of teaching. He can create a particular ethos in the class just by his presence. One cannot repeat these modes like a

Props, Guruji's language and mannerisms are all Guruji's modes of teaching. He can create a particular ethos in the class just by his presence. One cannot repeat these modes like a puppet and say that one is teaching Guruji's system.

puppet and say that one is teaching Guruji's system.

There are several modes of teaching that Guruji has evolved. There are different ways of teaching children, teenagers, college students or the general public. The mode of teaching depends upon whom are you teaching and how long you are going to teach. The teaching for a short 3 to 8 day workshop will be different from a regular long-term class. The mode also depends upon the conditions under which one teaches. Guruji's mode also depended upon the background of his students. It would be different for children from affluent families who would be hot headed, comfort-seeking and less tolerant as compared to the poorer children.

Guruji has taught people of varying age groups under different conditions and in different states of life. Guruji has taught rickshawallas and tongawallas in 1939-40's to J. Krishnamurthy, Aldous Huxley and Yehudi Menuhin. Obviously he did not use the same mode for all of them. If Yehudi Menuhin and a porter, both of whom Guruji has taught were to exchange notes on Guruji's system then what would be the result?

Never try to characterise a system by the mode of teaching.

Guruji's mode of teaching changed slightly when he started teaching 30 to 40 people. Then later as he took mega classes of 300 to 700 students, his mode changed further. Initially, he would physically help each student to do *Paripurna Matsyendrasana* but do you think that would be possible if he were to teach 700 students? So the mode

became effective articulation. He did not need to articulate when he was teaching one to one.

While teaching on a one to one basis, he developed tremendous insight into human anatomy. But he could not talk only on the anatomical aspects if he were to teach a philosopher and intellectual. He could not teach *Tadasana* to a philosopher as he taught a sportsman even assuming that they were the same age. The mode of teaching is also fluid. The system is one but the modes can be different.

Now what is the system about Iyengar Yoga? *Light on Yoga* is not a book on the Iyengar Yoga System. Just open the page on *Trikonasana* in *Light on Yoga*. A technique has been given and then Guruji evolves on a course. Do you expect a student to do the pose using these techniques after 300 weeks? The mode will change when you do it for the first time and when you do it in your 10th, 20th or 40th year. There are several hierarchies in our system. Beginners *Trikonasana*, intermediate level *Trikonasana*, advanced *Trikonasana*. There are several hierarchies, which do not exist in any other school. Guruji has never repeated a class. Every class has some different perspective. Whereas if you open *Light on Yoga* what do you see? There are a certain number of techniques for every posture. I hope you are no longer surprised with my statement that *Light on Yoga* is not a book on Guruji's system. Guruji's system is not so limited. It has different perspectives, it has hierarchies which cannot be put forth in the form of a book. *Light on Yoga* was

written in 1960's. Do you mean to say Guruji now teaches exactly what he taught in the 1960s? There is a book on the Iyengar system not written by B.K.S. Iyengar or any of the Iyengars. The system is articulated in the ancient text of yoga, the *Patanjali Yoga Sutras*. This text was his direction.

In this system, the *asanas* are not just done on the skeletal and muscular systems or just the anatomical or physiological systems of the human body. The *asanas* are effectively done on all the constituents of the human body. These are the seven elements (*sapta dhatus- twac, charma, mamsa, rudhira, asthi, meda, majja*); *pancamahabhutah, pancaprana, dashmendriya* and *trigunas*.

The course that Guruji conducted in Panchgani on his 75th birthday was taught on the principle of these elements, which have their locus in the *chakra*, which are in turn governed by the *pancaprana*. Thus, his teaching becomes a science of man making. This system is articulated in *Patanjali Yoga Sutras*. There is a definition of *asanas*, there is the effect of *asanas*, and the process of *asanas*.

The *asanas* do much more than work on the joints and the muscles. How many times has Guruji said, "*asanas* are my meditation. *Asanas* are my prayers?" And, the process to evolve the *asanas* from skeletal-muscular-physical plane to a meditative plane to a plane of religiosity is very profound. The *Light on Yoga* cannot give the technicalities of performing *asanas* in a meditative state but Guruji has taught these aspects too.

Asanas have *yama, niyama, asana* and *pranayama*. Unless it has *pranayama*, how can it have meditation? The technique of meditation clearly mentions that without

pranayama there is no meditation. *Dharanasu ca yogyata manasah*. The mind is made fit for meditation by *pranayama*. So, if you have to understand Iyengar Yoga as a system or as a science then it is articulated in the yoga sutras.

In the early period of his teaching, Guruji used masonry bricks and mortar stones. Today, you have wooden bricks and cushioned weights. He used broomsticks or whatever household things that were available. Now in what way were these required for performing *asanas* as meditation or as prayers?

But Patanjali's system is an integral system. It is as *astanga yoga*. *Ariga* means integral parts and not disjointed parts as we understand. There is no appropriate word for *ariga* in English. All the eight limbs of *astanga yoga* are integral. Guruji has beautifully brought together everything from *ahimsa* and *satya* to *Isvara pranidhana*. That is authentic yoga.

So, if the system is to be articulated, then you will have to explain how *asanas* touch every aspect from the skeletal, muscular, physical body to the *pranic* body, mental body and the so-called spiritual body. So, you will have to write volumes of *Light on Yoga* for just one *Trikonasana* to describe the different modes taught to children, taught to teenagers, youth, adults, old, diseased; taught to the *rajasic*, the *tamasic*, *sattvic*; taught to someone who is very empirical, material minded, profane and to someone with a highly evolved religious consciousness. There would be 25 volumes on just one *Trikonasana* with so many differences with reference to sequencing, the various climatic conditions, various states of mind. How many modes are you going to describe in a book?

So, this is the Iyengar system and you have to understand it in its total perspective. There is also a hierarchy. Your knees are straight in *Trikonasana*. When Guruji does *Trikonasana*, his knees are also straight; you open your chest, he also opens his chest; you rotate your waist, he also rotates his waist but do you mean to say it's all the same. You will not come across these hierarchies in any other school of yoga.

So, in a nutshell our system means *Trikonasana* must be holistic. Now this term has to be opened out. What is holistic? Not just *apad tala mastak* (from the feet to the crown of the head) that's not the whole of man. So, there is the physical aspect, physiological aspect, psychological aspect, mental, intellectual, emotional aspect, elemental aspect and that's how the system is spelt out. There are different perspectives and all perspectives are available. That is why a raw beginner will do *Trikonasana* and Guruji will also do *Trikonasana* till today. He doesn't do it just as a practice. Every time there is an exploration. Every time he is experiencing something new.

Why is it that when we see a mirror we look at our reflections although we do not change everyday? Even an ugly person looks into the mirror. He never says, "I am ugly, I don't want to look". That's a *darasana*. So, our system is exploration, experiencing. We never say I have been eating since the last 10 years so I do not want to eat. We want to experience it often. We sleep everyday but we never say I am fed up with sleeping. Last 25 years I have been sleeping. We want subjective experience.

You might say that I am seeing this object for several years now I do not want to see it so throw it out. You can get disgusted with an object but not with subjective experience.

Do not confuse the modes of the system with the system itself. A system is a science and wherever you go it is the same. The conclusions are same.

The asanas do much more than work on the joints and the muscles. How many times has Guruji said, "asanas are my meditation. Asanas are my prayers?"

Asthanga is an integral system. So, Patanjali has postulated and presented an integrated system and the *asanas* are part of the integral system and that is why the *asanas* take you to a mental state. Patanjali says: "Tato dvandvanabhighatah" Effects of *asanas* is to attain a duality free state, neutral state, an insulated state. Patanjali does not say that by *asanas* you develop strong legs, strong limbs, no arthritis. He has not said that you will acquire free movements of the joints in the body, he has not said that you'll have a flexible body. He has not said that you will have a strong body.

Do not mistake that *sutra, rupa lavanya bala vajra samhananatvani kayasampat*; he does not say that you will develop a strong body like that of a wrestler. A strong body is one that is not vulnerable to dualities. If a fly hits you, what happens to you? Nothing happens

to you. But if an elephant knocks you down then what happens to you? So, there are so many things from tiny flies to elephants in our mental life. If you are tense the body is affected, if you are panicky the body is affected. That means the body is susceptible to all such radiation. A strong body is that which is not susceptible to the anguish currents surrounding it. Patanjali has related *asanas* to a meditative state while some of the yoga institutions who have research laboratories have gone to the extent of saying that *asanas* work only on the physical body and *pranayama* works on physiological body. *Pranayama* can work on the mind. *Asanas* cannot work on the mind. *Asanas* can give only a fit body. That means they have not understood Patanjali's system.

Asanas in our system work on the whole human being. They are the science of man making. So, I hope your

thoughts are crystallised now on what the system of Iyengar Yoga is. If you just restrict your practice to *asanas* it is man-making, if it is *pranayama* it is man-making, if it is any meditative aspect, it is man making.

And that is why Gururji's system of *asanas* has evolved into something like a temple. This is what Patanjali has said, "Infinitude of the mind and absorption in infinitude". That's the ultimate perspective, which is to be achieved through the Iyengar System.

Extension means creation of space

Space leads to freedom

Freedom brings precision

Precision leads to perfection

Perfection is truth

Truth is God. ॐ

— B.K.S. Iyengar

Shirley Daventry French

seeing *Q* correcting

Join Shirley Daventry French, senior teacher in Canada, for an inspiring teacher training workshop. Shirley has traveled to Pune many times and has observed firsthand this most challenging aspect of teaching. This one day interactive workshop will help hone your skills of observation and correction.

Saturday May 7, 2005 11am-5pm

Bring your own snack.

Fees: \$ 95 + GST for members

\$105 + GST for non-members

Registration opens

March 7 for members

March 14 for non-members

To register, drop in or phone:

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

250 386-YOGA(9642)

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

inspirations
from India

WITH LESLIE HOGYA

May 13 & 14, 2005

Friday, 6:30-8:30pm

Saturday 11am-5pm with lunch break

Fees:

\$105+GST for members

\$115+GST for non-member

Prerequisite: 3 month experience

Registration opens March 14 for members
March 21 for non-members

To register, drop in or phone:

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

250 386-YOGA(9642)

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

Saltspring is Coming!

**Annual Saltspring Retreat
June 3-5, 2005**

Have you always wanted to attend the annual retreat at the beautiful Saltspring Centre and participate in a weekend of yoga with Shirley Daventry French? If you have, please remember to renew your Victoria Yoga Centre membership so you can be in the front of the line for an opportunity to participate in this wonderful retreat.

Registration will open for paid VYC members on March 14, 2005. If there are any spaces left, non-members may register by March 21, 2005.

Members Price

\$340 shared accommodation in house
\$300 to camp, \$265 for commuters

Non-member

Add \$35. All prices include GST.

From the Physical to the Divine

Melissa Worth

MELISSA WORTH STUDIES YOGA AT THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE AND AT HOME. SHE RECENTLY RETURNED FROM RIMYI AND LOOKS FORWARD TO ATTENDING CLASSES THERE AGAIN SOON.

Vinayaka Chaturthi is the festival celebrating the birthday of Lord Ganesha, son of Shiva, the elephant-headed god of all good beginnings and success. This ten day long event is held annually in South India especially with great fervour in *Maharashtra*, the state in which Pune is located. This year, the festival took place during the last two weeks in September.

Ganapati is an important Hindu deity and

has different names and manifestations. He is the god of knowledge, wisdom and the remover of obstacles – *Vignaharta*; hence he is also called *Vigneswar*. He is invoked at the beginning of every major venture.

On the occasion of the Ganapati festival, a large number of images are made of clay, metal and plastic of various sizes, some towering as high as twenty feet. Many people install these images in their houses, in market places and street corners; they are worshipped for one and a half, five, seven, or ten days, after which the images are taken out ceremoniously, carried in a procession through the streets of the town and thrown into the river, sea or well for immersion or *Visarjan*. During immersion, celebrants chant *Ganpati bappa Morya, Agle baras to jaldi aa*: “Father Ganapati, Come again soon next year.”

A cultural feast is held to coincide with Ganesh Chaturthi in Maharashtra especially at Pune. The Pune Festival is attended by many famous Indians and is a well-known event across India. Classical dance, music performances, poetry recitations, folk dances, theatre and film festival are the main features of this celebration.

I was fortunate enough to be in Pune attending classes at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute during the Ganapati festival and, by generous arrangement of the Institute I, and many other students, attended the Pune Festival. It was a glorious event – one which I will never forget (and we only stayed for the opening, which is another story altogether). Two other significant events, Teachers’ Day and Lord Krishna’s birthday, were also celebrated in early September, both of which stimulated discussions, celebrations and devotional activities.

These festivals serve as a constant reminder of one’s spiritual path. They are an opportu-



Statue of Lord Ganesha located in a market area in Pune

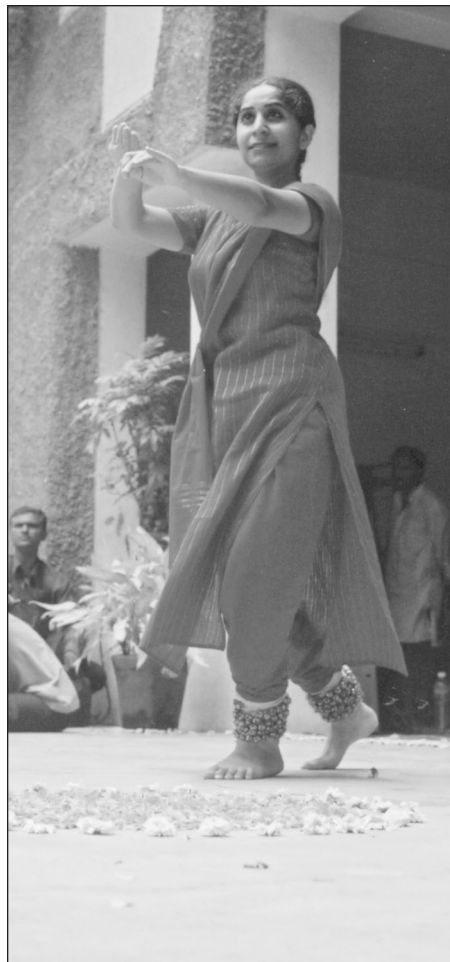
nity to express one's devotion publicly and communally.

Attending classes and practising daily at the institute served a similar purpose for me. There is no doubt that the Light of yoga shines brightly at the institute where Guruji and his children, Geeta and Prashant, live and practise. I was able to devote my days to practice, study and reflection. I was able to choose from thousands of books on yoga in the library, practise *asanas* for three hours daily, attend two-hour classes daily and at any other time observe medical and other classes. The path is free of obstacles, or at least less painful to face, at the institute. Our duties are made clear and if we forgot, Guruji, Geetaji or Prashantji did not hesitate for one moment to remind us.

It is difficult to maintain this perspective back in Victoria with a lack of reminders around us. We are surrounded not by spiritual festivals but by commercial slogans encouraging us to spend our money. It is the beginning of the Christmas season, the shopping season, and walking home from work one evening I could not help but notice many signs warning that the number of shopping days until Christmas is quickly dwindling. I once saw a banner declaring simply that "Shopping is Good." Is shopping going to help us along the path of yoga? Probably not.

As I search for some external beacon of light, I remember Prashant's words that we must not become followers of a teacher or a type of yoga, we must not become sycophants and worshippers. He encouraged us not to become dogmatic, not to become point takers, not to practise (or teach for that matter) mechanically, cerebrally. The light of yoga is within the heart, not the head.

We must learn *yoga*, study *yoga*, follow *yoga*, practise *yoga*, explore *yoga*, experience *yoga*. This is what the Iyengars are teaching us – to become our own teacher. To practice not for endurance, not for strength, not so that we can do



Dancer at a Pune cultural centre during Ganesh celebrations



Rope Sirsasana in the main hall at RIMYI

These festivals serve as a constant reminder of one's spiritual path. They are an opportunity to express one's devotion publicly and communally.

advanced poses, not for teacher training assessment, not for teaching, this may certainly be a secondary result, but ultimately we practise for our Self – to know your Self, to know your legs, your spine, your spleen, your kidneys, your liver, to learn more and to go on learning. Prashant encouraged us to become our own gastroenterologists, to do *asanas* as if to perform surgery on our abdomen, to clean our pelvis, to bring health to the spine. Yoga is experiential, not intellectual. It is all too easy, however, to confuse the secondary results for the goal. But when you do one thing in yoga, several things result. Your aim is one but several things result. By doing one, you do everything. Yoga is multifaceted. Yoga then moves us beyond physical health to spiritual health.

It did not take me one week to renounce teaching – when sitting at the feet of the master, one's ignorance is quickly made apparent. I wanted to practise. Guruji says we call ourselves teachers first, we say we are teachers of yoga – but are we learners, are we students of yoga? Evolution has to start with the body. Guruji practises to evolve further. He does not call himself a teacher but a student. Since returning to Victoria, I am teaching again, but less so and seeking opportunities to learn more. It is difficult to stay steady on the path of yoga in a cultural environment that lacks festivals and other overt spiritual reminders. But, ultimately, yoga is a journey of one's own and as such provides us with tools to delve deeper, to learn more and to know one's Self. ॐ

Going Deeper: Comments from an Observer

Karyn Woodland

KARYN WOODLAND IS A TEACHER-IN-TRAINING
AT THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE.

Being a *pitta* type, I find it difficult to watch as others do especially over the course of a weekend workshop. Yet I was unusually content to sit and observe Shirley Daventry French's teaching during her *Going Deeper* workshop in October.

It is a privilege to "sit at the foot of a master". All of us in Victoria know we are lucky indeed to be able to study with, and learn from Shirley, a long-time student of B.K.S. Iyengar.

I have been a student of Shirley's since the late '70s, yet I am always amazed at how much I can, and do, continue to learn from her! Each class and workshop takes me to a new place of understanding (a little like each reading of *Light on Yoga*).

This review focuses on the pearls of wisdom I harvested that weekend: some culled from Shirley's instructions during *asana* practice; others from her comments at the beginning of each practice (what I call the "chant and chat" sections of the workshop). The review concludes with her recommendations, that weekend, for further study.

On the theme of What is yoga?

- Yoga is popular today for fitness reasons, but we must not lose track of its roots.
- Physical benefits are an aside—self-study is the essence of yoga.
- Postures have physical, mental, spiritual, *and* mystical benefits.
- The mysteries of yoga come from concentration of the mind. They are not mysteries when you understand them.
- Yoga is like ballet—the beauty comes from the discipline *and* the practice!
- The practice of yoga creates pathways that take us to our Selves, from which we can observe life.



Urdhva Mukha Svanasana



Utthita Parsvakonasana

Some general tips for *asana* practice:

- The muscles move the bones getting into the posture. But when holding the posture, look for the support of the structure (alignment), so that the muscles do not have to work as hard.
- If you get tired it's because you're using your arms and legs; if you get cross, it's because you're holding your breath!
- Before making an effort, *breathe*, and make the effort on the exhalation.
- If you're always doing, doing, doing it never happens; sometimes you have to hold and penetrate.
- Notice when you are forcing. Notice when your effort becomes hard, rather than intense. At that point change.
- Strong arms, strong legs, *then* the quietness of the pose is experienced at its core.
- Even if you're not flexible and can't go forward in the pose, you can be quiet.

Staying Present

- Sometimes closing the eyes is an excuse for the mind to become more busy.
- Yogis call the throat the seat of self will.
- Stay in the present and see what emerges in terms of self-understanding.
- When the body, mind and self come together, then you can experience a moment of transcendence.
- What we are today comes from our thoughts of yesterday, and our present thoughts create our tomorrow.

Recommended books (Shirley's picks):

1. *The Tree of Yoga*, B.K.S. Iyengar (connection between *asana*, *pranayama* and philosophy)
2. *Yoga*, Georg Feuerstein
3. *The Teachings of Yoga*, Georg Feuerstein
4. *Bhagavad-Gita* (translation by Juan Mascaró)
5. *God in All Worlds*, Lucinda Vardey (about obstacles)
6. *Many Mansions*, Gina Cheminara

Going Deeper into Dishes

Joan Douglas

JOAN DOUGLAS STUDIES YOGA AT THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE AND SERVES AS SECRETARY ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

This is the second time I have attended Shirley's *Going Deeper* workshop. For a mother with a continuously busy life, the rare opportunity to have a total retreat becomes especially intense. At this year's *Going Deeper* workshop I experienced some sudden insights and synchronous events. My experience last year was focused more on the physical work of achieving an *asana*. This year, I had some realization of the philosophic and spiritual foundations of *asana* practice.



Salamba Sarvangasana

Both years I attended Shirley's discussion of the *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*. I used to see the *sutras* as probably containing profound wisdom but esoteric and remote from my own life. Shirley,

however, stressed the immediate practicality of the *sutras*. For the first time I see how these terse aphorisms register not just in the mind but in the whole experience of body, mind and soul. I had

to be practising regularly to get that realization.

Shirley asked us a series of questions prompting us to reflect on what is our true self, and what is our false or illusory self. An important lesson for me is humility and detachment, which mean letting go of ego. This is as important in yoga practice, perhaps by doing a less favourite pose in order to learn its lesson, as it is in parenting, by allowing your child to learn from natural consequences.

Shirley's discussion of devotion resounded most deeply. The devoted practice of mindful concentration in a repeated act seems to be fundamental to *samadhi*, whether it is the repetition of a pose, of our name for God, or washing dishes.

Dishes, you ask? This is my most regular daily practice. Thich Nhat Hanh says washing the dishes is like bathing a baby Buddha. It is either extreme monkey-mind or extreme concentration.

For the first time I see how these terse aphorisms register not just in the mind but in the whole experience of body, mind and soul.

Washing dishes is a perfect *karma* service, performed to sustain others. Scrubbed in peace with love and gratefulness, will those plates yield greater nourishment? Could I wash dishes with devotion and renounce my aversion and resentment? I tried it out after the potluck and happily washed several sinks full. Back at home, I remember Shirley's words on *aparigraha*. I could renounce my attachment to washing dishes, and ask someone else to do them! ॐ



Virabhadrasana II



Shirley makes an adjustment in Parivrtta Trikonasana

The devoted practice of mindful concentration in a repeated act seems to be fundamental to samadhi, whether it is the repetition of a pose, of our name for God, or washing dishes.

Yoganga – Shikshaka – Chakravarti –

“Emperor of Teachers of Yoga”

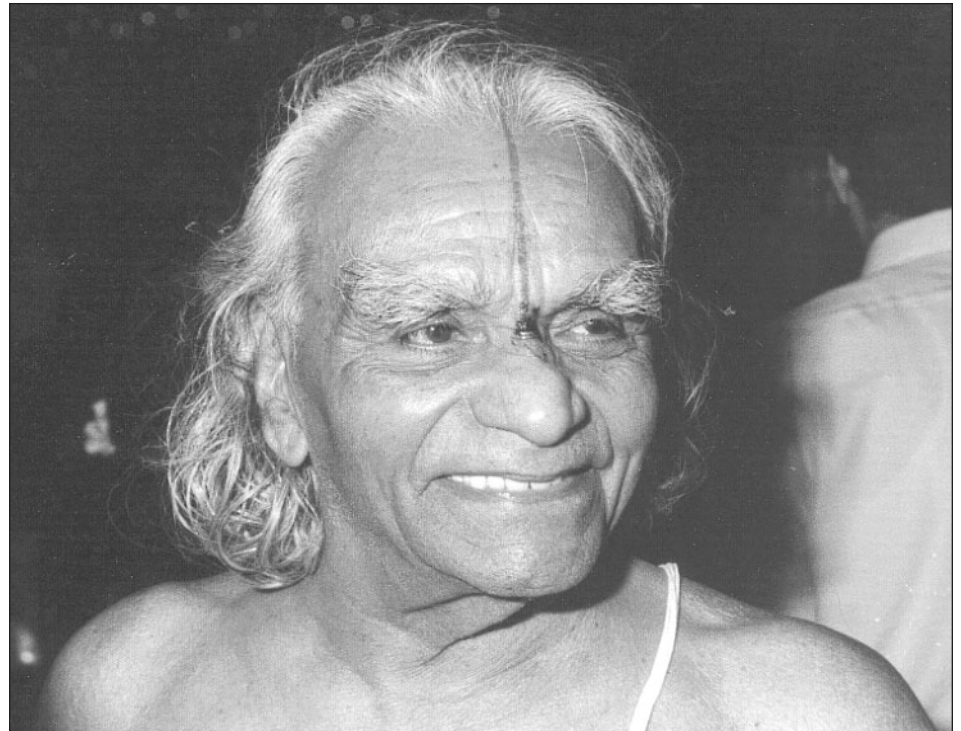
PART I

Chris Beach

The Victoria Yoga Centre would like to express its gratitude to Chris Beach and Jean Smith for giving us permission to reprint this two-part article which was first published in the Orange County Iyengar Yoga Newsletter, Vol. 1, No. 7, August 2004. We will publish the second part in the next VYC Newsletter.

Most of us who practice the method known as Iyengar Yoga have never had the opportunity to study directly with our Guruji, B. K. S. Iyengar. Those fortunate enough to have gone to Pune when Mr. Iyengar was still teaching regular classes, or to have studied with him at an intensive either in India or in the United States, have experienced Guruji's teaching in the most direct form. This two-part essay is an effort to convey a sense of Guruji's teaching to those who have never had the chance to be taught by him. The first part will be an overview of Mr. Iyengar's inspiring career as a teacher and his contributions to the teaching of yoga; the second part will include some quotations from those who have had the opportunity to study with him.

When my students ask me to explain the contribution made by B. K. S. Iyengar to the teaching of yoga, it is difficult for me to give a concise answer. My response always feels inadequate, since in order to do justice to his immense contribution I would have to interrupt the class for a lengthy lecture on the subject. Some of the most important things he has given us are the refinement and precision in the practice



of the *asanas*, the sequencing of *asanas* to produce the most beneficial effect, the use of props to make the *asanas* accessible for more people, the more complete understanding of the effects of the *asanas* on the physical and emotional body, and the therapeutic use of yoga to help those with a wide range of physical and psychological ailments. But this list only gives a superficial idea of what Mr. Iyengar has given us as teachers and as students.

B. K. S. Iyengar began the study of yoga at the age of fifteen when his brother-in-law, T. Krishnamacharya, brought him to Mysore, where he was the personal yoga teacher for the Maharaja of Mysore and his family. Two years later, Mr. Iyengar's own career as a teacher began under somewhat unusual

circumstances. In India in the 1930s, women were not allowed to attend classes with men. When several women asked Krishnamacharya for instruction in yoga, he told his senior students to teach them. Since Iyengar was younger than the other senior students, the women felt more comfortable learning from him than from the others. Krishnamacharya allowed him to teach the ladies class, and this experience “ignited my interest in teaching yoga.”

At the age of eighteen, Guruji was sent to Pune to teach yoga in some of the schools, colleges, and sports centers there. This presented a new challenge, since many of the students at the colleges were not only older than he was, but also more educated and cultured. The young Iyengar had to impress his students by

demonstrating his skills at *asana*; when they saw the exceptional strength and dedication of his practice, they readily accepted him as a teacher. Since his own guru was no longer available to teach him, he began to study on his own. His first discovery was that he could not learn the subject of yoga from books, since each book showed a different version of the poses. The only way to learn was by trial and error, a method that put him on a lifelong course of self-study (*svadhyaya*) and self-discovery.

I believe it was this method of yoga as self-study, as a continual path toward self-realization that made Mr. Iyengar unique as a practitioner and teacher of yoga. The Iyengar method insists that those of us who teach yoga are also practising on a regular basis, since it is in our personal practice that we achieve self-study, one of the five personal and spiritual disciplines (*niyamas*) according to Patanjali. "You must practice what you teach," Mr. Iyengar kept reminding us at his birthday celebrations. "When I have not practiced, what right have I to teach others?"

Another aspect of Gururji's teaching that has been extremely important is the emphasis on certain fundamental principles in teaching and practising the *asanas*. Two of these principles are always starting from the base of the pose, and moving from the outer body to the inner body (the periphery to the center). Those of us who were at the birthday celebrations saw a brilliant illustration of this method, as Mr. Iyengar taught *Utthita Trikonasana* progressively over six days, beginning with the feet and legs, then moving to the upper body, and then finally moving inward to the heart center. The understanding of the more subtle aspects of the pose could only be grasped once the foundation of the pose and basic structure had been achieved.

When I was doing my teacher training with Karin O'Bannon, she told us that there is a difference between

leading a class and teaching a class. Leading a class is just saying the names of the poses and telling the students when to go in and come out. Teaching a class involves far more than that; there is the guidance in the proper way to do the poses, the linking of the actions of different poses, and the correction of the poses. The integrity of this method of teaching comes from Mr. Iyengar's insistence on giving precise instructions, even to beginning students. When his senior students would ask him why he bothered giving precise instructions to beginners, he would answer: "A good teacher is one who puts his finger correctly on a mistake - gross or subtle." The teacher must always be observing the students, seeing whether they are doing the poses correctly and finding ways to improve the poses. The beginning student may not grasp all the instructions at first, but she gains an overall sense that there is a more subtle level on which the poses can be performed and understood.

In a lecture given in 1987 and published in *70 Glorious Years of Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar*, Geeta Iyengar gave an eloquent summary of how her father's method differed from that of earlier yogis, including Krishnamacharya. "Gururji evolved the method; he brought changes. He realized that attempting certain *asanas* suddenly without preparation can harm the body and the mind too. So he evolved the sequences of *asanas* scientifically ... he developed a progressive approach from simple *asanas* to difficult and complicated *asanas*. He categorized them by their effects, as being purifying, pacifying, stimulative, nourishing, or cleansing."

Calling Mr. Iyengar a yoga teacher is a bit like calling Albert Einstein a science teacher, for he is a true genius in the art and science of yoga, one who has seemingly mastered every aspect of yogic practice and philosophy. One final anecdote will illustrate how the perfec-

tion of Gururji's teaching won over even his toughest critic: Krishnamacharya himself. One day in 1961, Krishnamacharya was in Pune watching Mr. Iyengar giving instructions and corrections to both Geeta and Krishnamacharya's son, Desikachar, as they prepared for a demonstration. After observing Mr. Iyengar's explanations of the *asanas*, Krishnamacharya went to a local goldsmith and had him engrave a gold medal with the inscription "Yoganga-Shikshaka-Chakravarti," meaning "Emperor of Teachers of Yoga." For an Indian guru to praise his own student as an "Emperor" was an extraordinary act of recognition, and perhaps the highest compliment that could be bestowed on any yoga teacher.

By learning you will teach, by teaching you will learn.

— Latin Proverb

Learning is as much an art as teaching. ॐ

Thank you!
Thank you!
Thank you!

Thank you to Krysia, Coral and Vicki for helping out at the front desk.

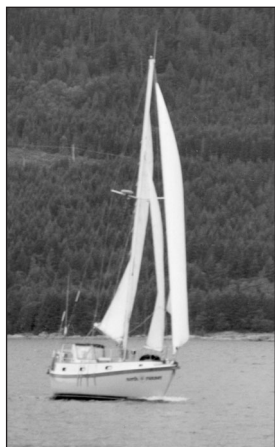
Thank you to Glenda Hingley for 2 copies of Sri Swami Satchiananda's translation and commentary of *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* for our library.

Welcome to Tina Phillips, a new helper in the Special Needs Class.

Thank you to Hilary McPhail and Alisa Kage-McCaig for volunteering on Friday afternoons at the front desk. ॐ

Sailing home is a breeze

Sue Riddell



We must like challenges; here my husband Jim and I were sailing to Cortez Island this summer to attend an Iyengar Yoga workshop with Shirley Daventry French. Most people think sailing is peaceful when they view a sailboat from the shore, its white sails glinting in the sunshine but the exact opposite is the truth. This fact always tends to annoy me when experiencing rough weather when we

are bashing around with the spray flying, blocks banging, lines becoming wild things refusing to do what you want. What does this remind me of? Then I had it; this is comparable to people's response when finding out we are yoga practitioners – of course, *yoga makes you so peaceful!* Since this discovery, a number of other comparisons have come to mind between yoga and sailing and I have been encouraged to share them with you.

When taking a sailing trip of any length, first comes the planning for anticipated meals and also for any emergencies, stocking up on food and spares in case anything may go wrong (and did) on the boat during the voyage. Next, comes transporting all the paraphernalia to the boat at the marina in endless bags and boxes and storing them carefully below.

Finally we were underway. One day at the helm, Jim had gone forward to make a minor sail adjustment which increased our speed and made the boat feel happier. I thought this is just like a yoga *asana*; small adjustments can make big changes which can bring quiet strength and calmness.

Other comparisons occurred to me throughout our trip:

- Polishing the brass plate on the stove one day it seemed comparable to yoga *sadhana* removing obstacles similar to the dark spots on the brass plate allowing us to see our inner light.
- Both require hard work and with both a little done everyday make the job so much easier.
- Sailing and yoga both can be a major commitment of time and money when taken seriously.
- Yoga and sailing are both thought of as peaceful to those not involved; the reality can be turmoil.



Sue Riddell in Paripurna Navasana – boat pose

- Both involve journeys either in distance or on the yogic path.
- Some points of sail are similar:
 - *Running* (when the wind coming from behind) and Forward Bending = Calming
 - *Broad or Beam Reach* & Sun Salutations = Invigorating
 - *Tacking* (wind on the nose) and difficult *asanas* = Forward progress is not always apparent
- Both sailing and yoga can be a hobby or the main focus of your life.
- Gear breakdown on the boat is comparable to sickness. Lack of maintenance on the boat leads to trouble on the water. Lack of maintenance on your Self can lead to sickness and despair.
- Charts (maps) guide your way when plotting your sailing course – good teachers and books light the way for yoga students. When sailing at night lighted buoys and stars guide your way; in yoga our guru lights the path.
- We suffer setbacks both in sailing and yoga, teaching us to persevere.
- A supportive spouse is a big help for both occupations!
- Some small adjustment in sail trim (or *asana*) unlocks power; you move ahead where before you were stuck.
- Bailing when disaster strikes (a leak from an unknown source occurred our second day out) – this is comparable to getting your life back on track after the calamity of losing a family member.

Jim and I are grateful for the opportunity to practise Iyengar Yoga at the Victoria Yoga Center with a wealth of highly trained, helpful and compassionate yoga teachers. Thank you, we are truly grateful. ॐ

SUE AND JIM RIDDELL ARE LONG TIME STUDENTS OF THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY. SUE ALSO KEEPS OUR PROPS IN ORDER AND JIM IS A MEMBER OF OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS WHERE HE OVERSEES STUDIO MAINTENANCE.



Leslie purchasing vegetables near her flat in Pune

Canadian Yogini in Pune

Dr. Vasudha Joshi

During her recent visit to the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute in Pune, Leslie Hogya was interviewed by her friend Dr. Vasudha Joshi – many thanks to Dr. Joshi for sharing their conversation with us.

VASUDHA JOSHI, AND LESLIE HOGYA MET IN 1992. VASUDHA TEACHES ECONOMICS AT WADIA COLLEGE IN PUNE. SHE INTERVIEWED LESLIE IN AUGUST 2004 ON HER MOST RECENT VISIT TO RAMAMANI IYENGAR MEMORIAL YOGA INSTITUTE.

“What is most appealing to me is the richer spiritual life that Indian men seem to have.” My uncomprehending gaze made her hasten to clarify: “In North America I haven’t often met men who are willing to talk about their deeper, finer feelings. Often it is all to do with his work, sports and maybe stock prices. In contrast, people here talk about values, standards, cultural traditions. They have a larger context in which to fit their lives. This is Indian culture to me.”

That was Leslie Hogya talking. She is currently in Pune, on her sixth visit. She first came here in 1985 and the interval between her successive visits is getting shorter and shorter. I was quizzing her about her impressions of India, Pune, local people and I wanted to know her reaction to the changes that have taken place here in the last nineteen years. She took her time to answer and then emphasized the disclaimers: “I have not seen much of India or Pune. I have met very few people

here. I have close contact with just a handful” etc. etc. I waved them aside and then she made the above startling observation.

Leslie hails from Victoria, British Columbia, a city situated on southern Vancouver Island on the west coast of Canada. Fishing and timber making are the main economic activities there but the island offers breath-taking views of snow-clad mountain peaks and has tall, dense, forests and also sandy beaches. So it attracts tourists from all over Canada. After her graduation with a Bachelor in Education, Leslie has been teaching in different schools. Today she is an accredited yoga teacher. Leslie is the past president of the Victoria Yoga Center and she devotes her time to yoga workshops and teacher training in yoga. Leslie visited Mexico while in college. After marriage, she spent two years in Nigeria. Apart from her visits to India, she has recently held yoga workshops in Thailand. In contrast, she has visited only three European countries. Her exposure to Mexico made her strongly

aware of the 'other' and the orient cast an early spell on Leslie. To her, Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar epitomizes the spirituality of the east. She began studying yoga in 1972. Yoga gave her relief from back pain and injuries sustained in a car accident. The turning point was meeting Iyengar in California in 1984. He had gone there for the first international yoga conference. Leslie attended the conference along with her friends in Victoria. The wisdom and compassion of Iyengar mesmerized her. The next year she came to Pune for the Canadian yoga teachers' intensive training programme and has kept coming back.

Leslie spends her mornings and afternoons at Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute. At home, she practices yoga for at least two hours everyday but nearness to the Guru and the opportunity to watch him are very inspiring. She is impressed with Guruji's children – Prashant and Geeta – and feels that the latter has given a much-needed feminine touch to yoga which otherwise is "for men, taught by men." B.K.S. Iyengar's writings on yoga are her constant companion. She finds something new in them every time she starts reading. Leslie is fond of quoting Iyengar's quip: on a Canadian airlines flight, he declared that he was the only passenger knowing Kanada¹ language there.

Evenings in her hired apartment get rather lonely and she starts missing her family – her husband of thirty-eight years who is Dean of Fine Art at the University of Victoria and who has produced off-Broadway plays, two grown up sons and their wives. Leslie is sensitive, well-informed and has a strong memory. She finds our college students very disciplined and eager to learn.

As we look out of the coffee bar, she asks: "Who are all these persons just standing outside on the pavement, doing nothing? How are they able to fend for themselves? Do they get enough to eat?" She nods her head when I talk of disguised unemployment, parallel economy and migration from poor states. I also quote J.K. Galbraith who had described India as a functioning anarchy. She guffaws but then adds with a twinkle in her eyes, "The chaos, this muddling through somehow is what gives a special charm to India. Let changes come but this part of your life must not be lost." A good, discerning friend of India, Leslie personifies the *Guru-Shishya parampara* at its best when we Indians have abandoned it. ॐ

1. Kanada, one of India's many languages. Sri B.K.S. Iyengar speaks Kanada, the language of his home village in Bellur.

Short WORKSHOPS

Openings Part II

With Ty Chandler

Saturday, Feb 12, 12 noon - 3pm

Ty has recently returned from studying in France with Faeq Biria. Join her as she shares with us some of the teachings from Blacon. Focus will be on opening the shoulders & hips.

Pre-requisite: level 2

Fees: Members:\$45. + GST, Non-members:\$50.+ GST

50+ Workshop: Backs and Hips

Teachers: Leslie Hogya & Wendy Boyer

Saturday, March 5, 1:00 - 3:30pm

Fees: Members: \$30 +GST, Non-members, \$35 +GST

To register, drop in or phone **Victoria Yoga Centre,
202 - 919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)**

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.



In prayer you make an offering to God, an offering of fruits, flowers, water, milk, honey, curds. Your exhalation should be all that an more as you chant 'OM' – Prashant Iyengar

VICTORIA *yoga centre* Calendar 2005

JANUARY

- 22 Teachers' Meeting
- 28-30 Heart of Yoga with Shirley Daventry French

FEBRUARY

- 5 AGM
- 12 Saturday workshop: Openings Part 2 with Ty Chandler
- 20 Teachers' Meeting

MARCH

- 4 Friday Night Gathering 6:30pm
- 5 Saturday Workshop: 50+ Workshop
- 27 Sunday Workshop: 50+ Workshop: Backs & Hips with Leslie Hogya and Wendy Boyer
- 19 Teachers' Meeting

APRIL

- 15-17 Basics to Refinement with Ingelise Nherlan
- 23 Teachers' Meeting

MAY

- 7 Seeing & Correcting with Shirley Daventry French
- 13-14 Inspirations from India with Leslie Hogya

JUNE

- 3-5 Saltspring Retreat with Shirley Daventry French
- 11 Teachers' Meeting
- 17-19 Introductory I/II Assessment in Courtney-Comox

JULY

- 4-31 Term 6
- 4-24 Early Morning Sadhana
- 11-16 Teacher Training Intensive – Introductory Levels with Linda Benn, Leslie Hogya, Ann Kilbertus

AUGUST

- 1 – 31 Term 7
- 15-19 Teacher Training Intensive – Junior Intermediate Levels with Shirley Daventry French
- 22-27 Student Intensive

SEPTEMBER

- 6-11 Registration Week
- 12 Term 1 begins
- 17 Teachers' Meeting
- 23-25 Weekend Workshop with Felicity Green

OCTOBER

- 14-15 Inspirations from India with Ann Kilbertus, Melissa Worth
- 22 Teachers' Meeting
- 21-23 Introductory I/II Assessment in London, Ontario

NOVEMBER

- TBA Term 2 begins
- 3-6 Weekend Workshop with Chris Saudek
Junior Intermediate Workshop for levels 3 & 4
- 26 Teachers' Meeting

DECEMBER

- 2 Sutra Workshop with Shirley Daventry French
- 3-4 Going Deeper with Shirley Daventry French
- 9 Junior Intermediate I Assessment in Montreal



Request for Volunteers

**Promote Iyengar Yoga in your
neighbourhood!**

The Victoria Yoga Centre seeks Karma Yogis
to distribute class schedules and flyers in
Greater Victoria, on a regular basis.

For more information, please contact
the front desk at the Yoga Centre
or phone 386-9642.

Congratulations

The following candidates achieved
certification during the Junior Intermediate I
Assessment in Toronto, 2004:

Gaye Barter, Toronto
Suzanne Fitzpatrick, Toronto
Linda Kaytor, Waterloo
Mieko Nakamura, Toronto
Temmi Ungerman Sears, Toronto

As well as the following candidates from
the Junior Intermediate I Assessment in
Vancouver, 2004:

Robin Cantor, Victoria
Ty Chandler, Victoria
James Currie-Johnson, Victoria
Louie Ettling, Vancouver
Sarah Godfrey, Vancouver
Deborah Lomond, Kelowna
Rob Walker, Calgary



Radha Yoga Centre

Sing for the joy of it!

A new addition to classes at the
Radha Yoga Centre is an
opportunity for people to raise
their voices in song and harmony.
Everyone is welcome to join in
singing simple chants and songs
in the style of Taize as well as
songs from around the world that
are inspiring and uplifting.

Sundays from 2-4pm

Please check our website
www.radha.org/victoria
or call 595-0177 for dates.
By donation.

Reflections on New Beginnings Saturday January 22, 1pm \$35

In this dark time of the year,
take time in stillness to reflect,
going within and listening. Set
your goals and ideals for the
coming year, using the Kundalini
system of yoga. Please call for
more information.

Open House Saturday January 8, 2005

Come visit our centre and join
in a free class.

Hatha Yoga Basics 9:00am - 10:30am

**Hidden Language
Hatha Yoga** 11:00am - 12:30pm

Kundalini Yoga 1:30pm - 3pm

Dreams 3:30pm - 5pm

Please call ahead to reserve your
place in classes.

time to renew

This is a reminder that the
Victoria Yoga Centre membership
expires on December 31, 2004.

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 (at right), and send to the Victoria Yoga Centre.



VICTORIA
yoga centre
SOCIETY

Membership and Newsletter Subscription

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

**Victoria Yoga Centre Society, c/o Karin Holtkamp,
202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3**

Membership/subscription fee is \$32 (incl. GST),
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

Membership benefits include 5% discount on classes, free practice times at the VYC, timed practices, early registration and discount on workshops, borrowing privileges in our library, eligibility to become a board member and eligibility for scholarships for workshops.

March / April 2005



VICTORIA

yoga centre

NEWSLETTER



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

IYENGAR YOGA

Teacher Training Intensives



July 11-16, 2005
**With Leslie Hoggia,
Ann Kilbertus
and Linda Benn**

This six -day course will build your understanding of teaching Iyengar Yoga based on the foundation of good practice. Leslie, Ann and Linda are experienced teachers certified at the Junior Intermediate Level III through the Iyengar Association of Canada (I.Y.A.C) and are qualified I.Y.A.C. assessors. They are involved in teacher training in Victoria as well as assisting teachers in outlying British Columbia and Yukon communities.

Preference will be given to I.Y.A.C members and those preparing for assessment in the near future.

August 15-19
With Shirley Daventry French

This program is for teachers certified at the Introductory Level II or higher.

Shirley is a long-time student of B.K.S. Iyengar who 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.

Both Intensives will include daily classes in asana and pranayama, the art and science of teaching and peer teaching. Philosophy and anatomy will be included.

As in previous years, Iyengar Yoga teachers from other countries are also invited to apply. I.Y.A.C. members will get priority.

Fees: **\$560 + GST for VYC members**
 \$600 + GST for non members

Registration opens February 23

To register contact the Victoria Yoga Centre, 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 3K3 3250 386-YOGA(9642)

A deposit of \$150 will reserve a place. Full payment is due June 2, 2005. If you cancel before June 2 your deposit less 10% will be refunded. After June 2, refunds will only be given if your space can be filled.

Short WORKSHOP

50+ Workshop: Backs and Hips

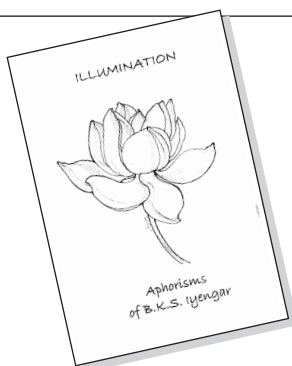
Teachers: Leslie Hoggia & Wendy Boyer

Saturday, March 5, 1:00 - 3:30pm

Fees: Members: \$30 +GST,
Non-members, \$35 +GST

To register contact
the **Victoria Yoga Centre,**
202 - 919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC V8V 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.



Illumination
- Aphorisms of B.K.S. Iyengar
(Victoria Yoga Centre, 2003)

This beautiful book was produced by the VYC for Mr. Iyengar's 85th birthday celebration. Get yours today.

Available from the Victoria Yoga Centre

Upcoming **IYAC** Assessment Dates

2005 June 17-19, 2005
 Introductory I/II
 Courtney-Comox BC

 Oct 21-23, 2005
 Introductory I/II
 London ON

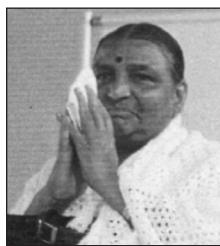
 Dec 9-11, 2005
 Junior Intermediate I
 Montreal QC

contents



2 Reflections

by Shirley Daventry French



6 Canadian Iyengar Yoga Conference

Opening Address by Dr Geeta S. Iyengar

10 Geeta Iyengar's 60th Birthday Celebration

by Linda Shevloff

12 Yoganga – Shikshaka – Chakravarti

by Chris Beach



14 Setting up in Sana'a

by Leslie Corcos

16 Uttistha Sthiti – Standing Asanas

Teacher Training Paper by Krisna Zawaduk

17 Reflection Practice

by Corrine Lowen



19 Forward Extension Asanas

< COVER PHOTO LAST ISSUE: Figure of Guruji adorning the gates to the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute.

Newsletter Advertising Policy (Adopted February 20, 2004)

In keeping with the mandate of the Victoria Yoga Centre Society Directors, 2004, to update, review and document policies and procedures, the newsletter committee submitted a policy which is a revision of the 1996 policy and has been adopted by the Board of Directors as follows:

1. Advertisements must not conflict with the aims of the newsletter of the VYCS.
2. Advertisements must be only for Iyengar Yoga
3. Priority given to advertisements regarding:
 - VYC events
 - VYC sponsored events
 - CIYTA events
 - Radha House/ Yasodhara Ashram

COURSE REGISTRATION:

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

Phone:
250 386-YOGA(9642)

Refund policy:
Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.



VICTORIA yoga centre NEWSLETTER

EDITOR Melissa Worth

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Shirley Daventry French, Lauren Cox,
Gwynneth Powell, Greg Sly, Jane Munro,
Taimi Mulder, Susan Robinson,
Nancy Searing

DESIGN / PRODUCTION Cady Graphics

PHOTOGRAPHY Melissa Worth, Corrine Lowen, Leslie Corcos, RIMYI; Photos of Geeta Iyengar by Nancy Bleck and Susan Stewart; Photos from Yog-Sadhana by Gaye Barter; Cover Photo: Statue of Patanjali gracing the entrance to the Iyengar home.

ADS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lauren Cox, Leslie Hogya

ILLUSTRATIONS Lauren Cox

SCANNING Byron Smith, Taimi Mulder

DISTRIBUTION Keiko Alkire,
Rosemary Barritt, Krysia Strawczynski

MEMBERSHIP / MAILING LIST

Karin Holtkamp

PRINTING Hillside Printing

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

March 15, 2005

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY

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

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

Send contributions, articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions to the Victoria Yoga Centre Newsletter: 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3. For information on activities and events, call 386-YOGA(9642) or visit our website: www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca.

Permission is hereby granted to reprint any of our material, except that copyrighted by the author or artists. When reprinting, please credit this Newsletter and send us two copies of the publication containing our material. Copyright material is only available with written permission.

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



SHIRLEY DAVENTRY FRENCH WAS AWARDED SENIOR CERTIFICATION FROM B.K.S. IYENGAR. SHE HAS BEEN TEACHING SINCE 1972 AND FOUNDED THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE IN 1976. SHIRLEY LIVES IN VICTORIA AND TEACHES WORLDWIDE.

In November 2003, two days before I was due to leave Hong Kong for India, I discovered that my entire itinerary for the ongoing journey had been erased mysteriously from Thai Air's computer. Things were complicated because my ticket had been issued by Air Canada. I never did learn how this happened, finding myself caught between Air Canada who said they did not know why Thai had erased my itinerary and Thai, who blamed Air Canada. It was not until the morning of my scheduled afternoon departure from Hong Kong that I received confirmation of my flights to and from Mumbai.

This year, the outgoing journey proceeded smoothly. Again I was staying first in Hong Kong, and must say I was relieved when I phoned Thai to confirm my flights to India and all proceeded smoothly. The airlines tell you there is no need to reconfirm, but if you are flying in Asia, don't believe them. I have spoken to many travellers who have had similar experiences to mine.

If you don't like disturbance in your life, stay away from yoga and particularly great Masters.

It was on the way back that I faced a challenge this time. Having cleared the security you go through to get into the Indira Gandhi international terminal at New Delhi, and put my baggage through the x-ray machines you must use before any airline will accept it, I approached the Lufthansa desk to get a boarding pass for my 3:30 am flight to Frankfurt. When I reached the desk and handed over my ticket and passport, I was told that my passage on Lufthansa had been cancelled because Air Canada had not sent them some vital information for reconfirmation. I protested vehemently that this could

not be. I had reconfirmed my flight in Pune and again in Delhi. Unmoved, the agent told me that I no longer had a seat and, despite the business class ticket which he was holding in his hand, that business class was full. They would see if they could find me a seat in coach. I protested louder that I wanted the business class seat which had been assigned to me and supposedly confirmed. The Lufthansa agent ignored me.

It was the middle of the night. The car which had driven me to the airport had left. I had changed all my Indian currency into Euros for my stopover in Germany. With no local money, no telephone, no hotel reservation, tired and wanting to sleep, I decided to stay put and if nothing happened soon, escalate my protestation. How, I was not clear, but I was not going to go away. I did ask the agent to write down what it was that Air Canada had not done so that I could take it up with them on my return. A little later, he told me he had done this on the back of my ticket.

I stood there. Time passed. About twenty minutes! Once or twice I asked what was happening but received no response. Then, just as I was thinking of asking to see a supervisor, the man suddenly turned and without a word gave me a boarding pass for exactly the seat I had originally been assigned when I bought my ticket. Wordlessly but thankfully, I left.

It was not until I had boarded the plane and we had taken off, that I looked at my ticket to see what the man had written about this problem. He had written nothing, and it suddenly occurred to me that my flight had probably been confirmed all along and he might have been hoping for a bribe. All the interaction had taken place between the two of us with no third party being consulted at any time.

The rest of my journey was straightforward, and I arrived safely home to spend the

Christmas season with my family.

The journey to and from Pune is never easy. Distance and time zones make sure of that. These difficulties are often a portent of challenges to come while in India and after returning home. On the level of learning, if the teaching has got through to you, there will follow the challenge of absorbing and assimilating new ideas and concepts which will require you to let go of old ones. While stimulating, this is always uncomfortable. I have learned from experience to give myself some space to allow not only for jetlag but for the evolution of those changes set in motion. It is especially difficult to teach. Teachers are supposed to know the subject and after being with Guruji, Geeta and Prashant I am well aware how little I know. As a teacher, I want to embrace what I was taught in Pune, but it is not yet fully digested.

Except for a couple of occasions when I have returned home sick, my energy is generally high after a trip to Pune, and I find myself having to rein in this energy so it doesn't get dissipated.

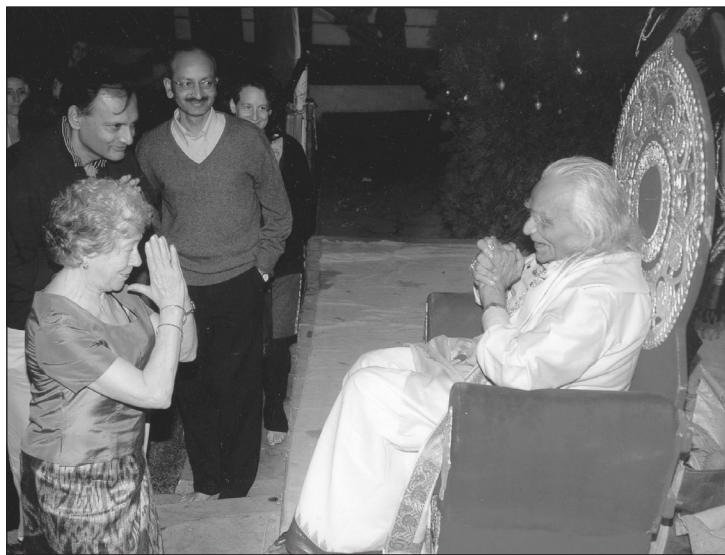
If you don't like disturbance in your life, stay away from yoga and particularly great Masters. If they accept you as their pupil and you accept them as your teacher, they will consider it their duty to accelerate your progress on the spiritual path by revealing the impediments which obscure the Light, and showing you how to remove or circumvent them. You will be very attached to many of these obstacles, even those which cause aggravation and disease, and coming face to face with this fact is going to disturb you. You can run away, bury your head in the sand, keep busy, do whatever you can to amuse or distract yourself; but inevitably, sooner or later, you are going to be faced with major challenges: ill health, accidents, family or financial troubles, losing your job, war, earthquakes, growing old or dying young.

We have had the recent catastrophic tsunami in Asia to remind us about our tenuous hold on stability; and in Vancouver a landslide in a residential area which, during the night, destroyed homes and life. How many of those who died were prepared for

this? What possible purpose could these tragedies have served? The survivors, once the first devastating torrent of grief has subsided, at least have the possibility of searching for answers which can only be found in a spiritual context.

Those are the sort of questions which a student of yoga wrestles with. These are the questions which lie behind the effort to pull up your kneecaps or stand on your head for ten minutes undisturbed.

Before I went to India for the first time, I attended a workshop with Ramanand Patel.



Someone had recommended him because he was not only a good teacher but he was Indian. One morning, at the end of three hours of work with *yogasana* he asked if anyone had any questions. Someone posed some obscure philosophical question about *samyama* (integration) or *samyoga* (union) or some such thing. Looking this woman straight in the eyes he said: I'll answer that question when you can hold your kneecaps up!

At that time I thought, what a rude man, but now I understand perfectly. It is a lot easier to contemplate some abstruse concept than to look at the lack of concentration which is interfering with progress right now. In Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras* it is no accident that *dharana* (concentration) comes before *dhyana* (meditation) which leads to *samadhi*, or the culmination of the eightfold path of *astanga*

Guruji is always chastising us for wanting to move on to more advanced asanas before we have learned to sustain basic actions in elementary ones.

yoga. Patanjali begins to delineate *astanga yoga* in the twenty ninth *sutra* of the second chapter. Along with *kriya yoga* (the yoga of action), it forms an integral part of the yoga of B.K.S. Iyengar.

Guruji is always chastising us for wanting to move on to more advanced *asanas* before we have learned to sustain basic actions in elementary ones. It isn't that he does not want anyone to practise advanced *asanas*, but that the path can only be trod successfully in a systematic and progressive way. *You want to do Kapotasana and you can't even keep your legs straight in Trikonasana or Paschimottanasana - or stand straight in Tadasana!* When Guruji is teaching such comments abound as he sees our gross presentations which may come in stiff or flexible bodies. In fact, he often demonstrates how a stiff bodied person is doing a certain posture better than someone who is very flexible.

Whatever age we are, whatever state our body is in, whatever stage of life we are immersed in, there is no obstacle to practising yoga and including *asana* as one of your spiritual tools. Yoga really is for everyone, despite the focus in *Yoga Journal* and so many yoga advertisements on youth, fitness, body building and a narrow concept of beauty.

One of the first yoga books I read in the nineteen sixties was called *Yoga, Youth and Reincarnation* by Marcia Moore. As yoga burst on the North American scene, this book became a bestseller. Thirty years later yoga is still touted as a means to look young and attractive in our youth and beauty

obsessed society. To quote Ramanand again: you can do the most perfect *Trikonasana* in the world and you're still going to die. Clinging to life or *abhinivesa* is one of the *klesas*, or five afflictions which disturb the equilibrium of consciousness (*Yoga Sutras* II.3).

There is so much misleading promotion of yoga. A student who dropped in recently at a new yoga studio opened by teachers of another style told me that the owner, a medical doctor, was touting yoga as a cure-all. This student has been in yoga for long enough to have seen, as have I, that even the most dedicated student, even the most spiritually evolved individual, is sometimes the recipient of ill health and other misfortune. There are many factors at work here. Yoga is not a guarantee of a happy and healthy life, but rather a fulfilling life with a defined purpose where the ego-self plays a supporting role to the divine self.

Each one of us has our own *karma* to face and mitigate, in this life or another. The law of *karma* is often translated as cause and effect. According to yoga, some of this *karma* came into this world with us at our birth as a result of past lives and the *karma* we create in this life will influence future births. My mind opened to the possibility of more than one life when, in a book about the work of the clairvoyant, Edgar Cayce, I read a quote by Voltaire: *After all it is no more surprising to be born twice than it is to have been born once.* Life, whether one or many, is a mystery.

Even if you don't subscribe to the idea of many lives, all our past actions will have an effect on our bodies, our

minds, in the present and the future. The *karma* that has been laid down has to be dealt with; there is no choice about that. The choice comes in how and when. I recall the following statement of the philosopher Cleanthes very often, because it really describes this dilemma in a nutshell: *Some follow the Gods willingly; the rest are dragged.*

In one sense I can see that I have been directed all of my life along a path which has brought me to where I am right now. Many of the steps were taken unwillingly as my recalcitrance necessitated a prod or push from the Divine, and sometimes I had to be dragged. Whatever the lessons were that I needed to learn, they came anyway however much I tried to avoid them. Wouldn't it be better to seek them consciously? I do not enjoy being dragged! Eventually I began to cooperate with what I perceived as my destiny, in the process learning a lot about letting go, surrender and non-attachment.

It is with this adage in mind that I keep making the effort to go to Pune despite the obstacles always arising along the way. I do my best to identify and face the *karma* I have put in place and to do something about it, but on my own I can only do so much. My practice reveals much, my reflection on my life in general reveals still more, but my ignorance prevents me from seeing clearly into many areas of my body-mind and many aspects of my life. Great teachers can penetrate that barrier of ignorance and shed light on reality. Great teachers give you pearls of wisdom for guidance in the future. But you have to be there and you have to listen not only with your ears but with your intuition, heart and soul.

On my recent visit to Pune in December 2004, on the second day in the library at the Institute Guruji spoke at length about his work, and how the search for alignment had led him to experience the inner mind. Guruji's

speech is peppered with aphorisms which you have to take in, reflect on and discover their meaning through your practice and study. If I had had to return home the following day, this one discourse would have been more than worth all the time, trouble and cost of my journey to Pune. But I was fortunate; it was not all. I attended some classes at the Institute as well as a special course taught by Geeta in honour of her sixtieth birthday. Geeta taught brilliantly in morning *asana* and late afternoon *pranayama* classes. In mid-afternoon she glowed as she led us through a full chanting of Patanjali's one hundred and ninety six sutras as well as some new sutras dedicated to Lord Patanjali.

And, as if that were not enough, we were graced by Guruji's presence and teaching each day of the course as well.

For such riches, I am truly grateful. ॐ



Student Intensive

August 29 - September 2
9 am-12 pm

Learn how to establish and
deepen your practice.

Level 2 experience required.

See next issue for more details.

SUMMER SADHANAS

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

This Summer we will be offering a 21-day and a 5-day Sadhana.

July 4-24, 6:30-8:00 am

**With Robin Cantor,
Wies Pukesh
and Linda Benn**

September 5-9, 6:30-8:00am

With Robin Cantor

See next issue for more details.

April 15-17, 2005

Basics to Refinement with Ingelise Nherlan

FRIDAY, APRIL 15, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 11:00 am – 1:30 pm, 3:00 – 5:00 pm

SUNDAY, APRIL 17, Noon – 3:00 pm

Fees: \$190 +GST for members | \$210 +GST for non-members

Registration open now

Ingelise Nherlan is a dynamic and inspiring teacher. She has studied yoga for 30 years and was awarded a Senior Intermediate Teaching Certificate by her teacher B.K.S. Iyengar. She has studied directly with the Iyengars at the Institute in Pune, India several times.

Ingelise teaches and practices from the point of view that all learning is

1. present knowledge
2. exploration of that which still remains to be discovered

“Combine the two and we can move from basics to the refined.”

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

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

Canadian Iyengar Yoga Conference

May 2-6, 2001 Vancouver, BC

with Honoured Guest and Teacher, Dr. Geeta S. Iyengar

OPENING ADDRESS – PART I

This *sadhana* proceeds towards *antaranga*, then you touch somewhere the inner mind which was tempting this body, remaining itself, hiding itself behind. Now you know your real mind, what it is. And that is how your practice begins. You have to break the barriers of your mind which want to put stoppage somewhere. It says, “Oh enough; oh a little more; all that,” even in your practice. You have to catch that mind. This is how you have great access to all these in *sadhana*. Whereas *abhyasa* is further subtle, subtle in a sense, if you have a proper idea about why you do your *asanas*, then it could be *tadasana*, *trikonasana*, *hanumanasana*, *vrksasana*, whatever. Once you are clear about it, that you are catching the thief - your mind, catching the thief - the ego, the *ahamkara*, catching the thief which is intelligence, which sometimes misbehaves, very rarely behaves. And to culture this when you know that you are doing *asana* or *pranayama* or meditation, whatever, but in that, now the *abhyasa* is such which is more subtle. In which it is subtle - you know that why you do *tadasana* - it is the first *asana* you start with standing *asanas*. If you are sure about why you are doing *tadasana* there, because you want to definitely do the practice of *asanas*, to see that you are doing yoga *sadhana*.

Try to understand what I am saying -



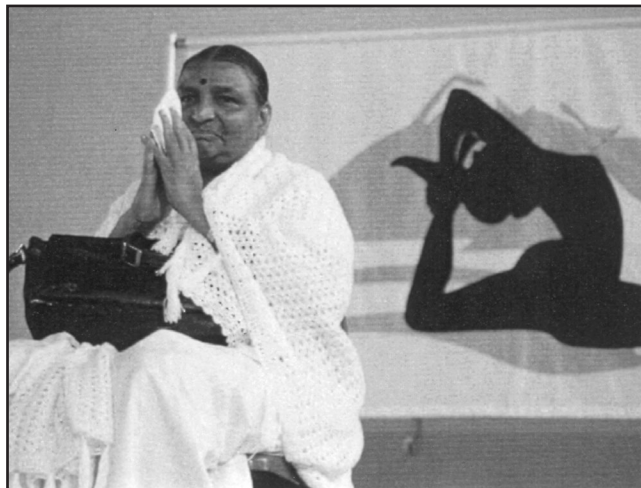
it is yoga *sadhana*. Don't use the word if you are doing *tadasana* and *trikonasana* that you did just physical yoga. It is a yoga *sadhana* because it has got to give a broad view and you have to set up the whole practice in that. So when you do *tadasana* then in that practice of *tadasana*, you are sharpening your mind. You come to your feet; you come to your toes; you come to your heels; you come to your ankles. In order to see each part of your body which is physical you require that subtle mind. If the mind is not subtle, it

won't look at your heels, it won't look at your toes. My mind can be somewhere else, outside, and I can't do my *tadasana* here. I will be just standing on my feet like a statue, but my mind can be wandering anywhere, and if the mind is wandering, the body, though it seems to be in that pose, it is wandering. And that is why no *asana* could be just physical - somewhere it pulls your mind, it makes your mind to gravitate towards the *asana*.

This is the thing which has been given to us by Guruji all through his techniques. You may find for *tadasana* so many techniques there in everybody's notebook if you gather. A book will be there on *tadasana*. But it is not the technique that he wants you to do; he has given our mind to see how much depth there could be for the mind to penetrate. That is a great treasure we have. You have to go to the goldmines you have to go on digging to find the gold. When it comes, if you say that it is a physical *asana*, then you are missing the gold because you are watching only the side of the mud on the rocks. I hope you understand this part. This is called *abhyasa*. In that *abhyasa*, you are all the time effortfully putting your efforts in order to see this goldmine, then in which you may find more and more gold. This is how the whole practice has to be built up. If the practice

has to be built up, the whole life has to be built up in that way. Your mind cannot then go anywhere out for any reason. There is no reason because you are disciplined - *anusasanam* - the beginning. If you compare yourself to the others, if you watch very carefully, you will know that, yes, we as practitioners, sometimes, we are better. Our body problems, if you compare, that is a different matter than if you say, "Oh, somebody hasn't got pain in the back, but I have, in spite of doing *asanas*, I have got the back pain." Then you are just comparing the sorrows, but who knows, perhaps your sorrows are stopped only at the back pain, but the one who is not practicing, their sorrows might be deeper than that, only they haven't opened their books, so they don't know. And we are not going to open their books for our purpose. We have to open only our book. So try to understand that in spite of having these kinds of problems, you may find that there is something greater than this that we are having. That is how the yogic mind is prepared gradually. If the food takes a long time to cook – yes, you need to go to market, you need to bring the vegetables, you need to see that the vegetables you bring are liked by the whole family, you have to see that it will be enough for the whole family, you should know that, yes, it requires this much time, and that much time you have to give. If just the preparation of food takes so long time, the yogic mind, if it has to be cooked, how long might it be taking? It is how, from the market as we go to bring the vegetables and every other thing, we have that this mind collects in that manner all the yogic tendencies, all the yogic *samskaras*. Then it is how the practice has to be.

It is not necessary to say that you do practice *yamas*: *ahimsa*, *satya*, *asteya*,



If just the preparation of food takes so long time, the yogic mind, if it has to be cooked, how long might it be taking?

brahmacarya, and *aparigraha*, it is the way of looking within ourselves. If once you know the principles, the principles are there. It has been informed. It has been returned. But it is you who has to see, are we non-violent when it is required? Are we violent with someone? Are we disturbing someone? That also comes, it is not a big violence there, but it makes us to think about it – we are disturbing someone by our way of behaviour, by our way of talking? *Satya*, it's not that you have to just speak untruth, if there is no fear, no untruth in your mind, of in your heart there is nothing to speak untruth, the question of speaking truth doesn't arise at all because it is truth. It is those who want to say or speak untruth, they have to calculate a lot. To cover each untruth, you require another untruth. To cover that untruth, you require another untruth. And sometimes you find a good wrap, a distinct wrapping is done and when you open, it's the same old matter

– material they will be selling under the name of a good wrapper. In the similar manner, untruth is like that which has no end, but for truth there is only one end. Whatever is, is, and if that remains in your mind, you are on the path of *satya*. Similarly, *asteya* – non-stealing – yes, we are not going somewhere to steal someone's property, but if the time comes, yes, be honest and be truthful, see that we don't do that. In classes sometimes, when the class is going and I say

that somebody picks up someone's blanket; they pick up this blanket and they don't notice. The other one comes over, "It is my blanket." This happens because if we don't take care, somebody has took the blanket, might be belonging to someone, but we don't pay attention with that. So, *asteya* is of that kind.

Brahmacarya – similarly *brahmacarya* has a vast meaning – having control over our senses, our organs, we have to see that we lead towards the Brahma. We cannot give in anyway to your mind just to get entangled in the worldly pleasures. That is what it means. Because we just take the verbal meaning, and the verbal meaning will just say – having control over the sex, sexual desires. Then you find that control over sexual desires means that you open the book of psychology in different ways, but that really doesn't mean that. It is telling the human being to have the control where the control is required because your path is different. You have to reach the final, ultimate goal. It is a spiritual path. So, to have the control over the mind, this is required. It shows the balance over there, the balance of the mind; and you find the person, who has lost the balance of the mind, will be going on the wrong path. That is why *brahmacarya* has got a great meaning over there. It is not just meaning to have control over the sexual desires because all the sexual desires

depend upon the sensual desires. Sensual desires depend upon the worldly pleasures, and the worldly pleasures we like more when the mind is indulged in it. All are linked. *Aparigraha*, last one, last of the *yamas*. Patanjali says, “Don’t show your ownership on anything, don’t hold on, don’t hold.” The self is giving, the *aparigraha* is a base. If one follows *aparigraha*, the base is such that it is leading you to go on this path of *brahmacarya*, to go on the path of *asteya*, to go on the path of *satya*, to go on the path of *ahimsa*. It’s no that you have to walk on *ahimsa* and *satya* and *asteya*, there is no path. The path is called completely different. The path is that which pulls the human being in opposite directions. It goes on hill. We are tempted to go on *ahimsa* path; we are tempted to go on *satya* path; we are tempted to go on *satya* path; we are tempted to go on *asteya* path; we’ll be tempted to go on *brahmacarya* path, and we’ll be tempted to go on *aparigraha* path – this is our tendency. It is absolute human tendency. All of us will be having this human tendency; we can’t run away, only it might be in different degrees. These human tendencies, we have to know, because they are our tendencies and we have to see how we cross these tendencies which are hidden inside, and we will be a better person, a better human being. That is what yogic path is.

Now to be on the yogic path, as I said, some capital is required. The mind needs some capital there, some wealth over there – and it is *sama*, *dharma*, that’s called, that we have to have tranquility of our sense perception. When you do *savasana*, when you close your eyes for *savasana*, you know there is some sort of quietness in the eyes. For five minutes even, if you do *savasana*, you know that yes, there is a feeling of silence, feeling of quietness, and you come out of *savasana* as a different human being. Now that small *savasana*



That feeling of elation from inside is a wealth to be stored, to experience and utilize at the right moment. That is the yogic path, yogic mind.

has taught you something about *sama*, the tranquility of the senses of perception, but we don’t hold on to it. If we think about that, yes, in *savasana* when I close my eyes and I’m there for five or ten minutes, whatever you do, your mind becomes quiet, your eyes have shown you the path of quietness. If that experience is stored by us, understood by us, and opened at the right moment, we know how the tranquility is to be brought. That means *savasana* leaves its imprints somewhere deep on the mind, and that’s why you enjoy. And each *asana* will be giving this kind of feeling. Even if it’s the perfect *sirsasana* – a day when you do your head balance correctly, when you feel that yes, there was no neck pain, there was no shoulder pain; when you know that yes, you could stay there for five, six minutes comfortably with full balance of mind. It was not just a physically or physiologically better pose,

but it gave you a mental poise. And this mental poise has to be used as a wealth to further the practice. That means each *asana* will be giving something, like when there is a mental depression, the mind went depressed. You ask us what to be taught, and then we write you, “Make the person to do *viparita dandasana*, *dandasana*, etc.” Then you know the therapy for mental depression – if you do back bendings, do full arm balance, do elbow balance, and as a therapy it works wonderfully well. “The

person comes out from depression,” you say, but is it only that thing that happens? The patient is having the depression and you have taught the back bending and you have taught him to do *sirsasana*, full arm balance, elbow balance. By doing that, do you mean to say it is only that much relationship that the fellow is suffering, and as a therapy you have introduced these poses? It cannot happen. He might come out from his depression, but again, it has got a great wealth for us to give. Because all of us know that in spite of not having any depression that when you will do the back bendings, when we will open up our chest, when we lift ourself properly with the spinal movement, there is a feeling of elation from inside. That feeling of elation from inside is a wealth to be stored, to experience and utilize at the right moment. That is the yogic path, yogic mind. If I have done my back bendings in a proper way, if I have found myself elated, tomorrow if I have to face something which will be very difficult for me to face, but those back bendings may help. And you have experienced that. Many of them have written me letters when there is some family problem, somebody is not well, somebody hospitalized, you said, “thank god, because I was doing yoga I could sustain this.” It could be a mental shock, whatever. So what is it that made you sustain that? That is a yogic mind. You

practiced yoga, and that yogic mind gave you this – that you could be courageous at that moment.

This is how from the discipline, the *anusthana*, because you want to practice everyday, the *anusanam*, and then again *Sadhana*, because there are different ways of doing it – today you do standing poses, tomorrow you do back bendings, day after tomorrow forward bends, or whatever you do, it is building up. Your mind is more than your body. It is the

mind which is getting cultured to a great extent if you watch. As a science, we may explain that forward bends are good for this, back bendings are good for that, and we have to say that otherwise you are not going to understand anything. So if you read the effects of the *asanas*, the effects of the *asanas* are not just $2+2=4$, giving the effect. It is also the reverse – that if this is the effect, from this effect you have to draw that energy to see that how you enhance your yogic practices,

how you uplift your yogic practices, how you go further progressively moving yourself in yogic practices. And that is how the yogic practice is built up. That is how the life is built up. So it begins from the discipline; it begins from the understanding. ॐ

Many thanks to Cathy Valentine from Saltspring Island for transcribing this address.

Scholarships & 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.

Victoria Yoga Centre
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria, BC V8V 3K3

Shirley Daventry French

seeing & correcting

Join Shirley Daventry French, senior teacher in Canada, for an inspiring teacher training workshop. Shirley has traveled to Pune many times and has observed firsthand this most challenging aspect of teaching. This one day interactive workshop will help hone your skills of observation and correction.

Saturday May 7, 2005 11am-5pm

Bring your own snack.

Fees: \$ 95 + GST for members
\$105 + GST for non-members

Registration opens:
March 7 for members
March 14 for non-members

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

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.



Friday Night Gatherings

Everybody is welcome to join us.
Bring a friend, your partner
or a family member.

MARCH 4, 2005

**Asana practice 6:30pm
Potluck dinner 7:30pm**

**By donation
Free to members**

Bring food to share

Geeta Iyengars 60th Birthday Celebration

Yog-Sadhana

Linda Shevloff

LINDA IS A CERTIFIED JUNIOR INTERMEDIATE III TEACHER WHO FORMERLY TAUGHT AT THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE. SHE NOW LIVES IN HONG KONG AND IS THE DIRECTOR OF THE IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF HONG KONG.

The following article was initially published in the Hong Kong newsletter, Svadhyaya Volume 3, Issue 1, 2005. It is with Linda's kind permission that we are able to re-print it here.

In December, fourteen Iyengar yoga students and teachers from this studio traveled to Pune, India to celebrate the 60th birthday of Geeta Iyengar. We were part of a large group of well-wishers from 25 countries who attended a five day *yoga sadhana* given by Geeta. About 550 of us crowded into large hall and spread out our yoga mats to practice together.



On the first day, Geeta began by talking about her own yoga practice. She said that throughout her life she has practised yoga and yoga practice has always been part of all celebrations. For her sixtieth birthday, as so many people insisted on having a special celebration, she agreed to lead a special practice or *sadhana* to mark this event in her life.

She talked about her own yoga standard, humbly explaining that in her view her standard of yoga is not very high. Those of us listening all know Geeta as a dedicated and brilliant teacher, so her comments were touching. She said that her yoga is simply practice, and that her practice is also regulated by the other demands and duties of her life. She has health limitations now and she is currently working with an arm injury and so she does her yoga practice within that restricted framework. Nevertheless, all of her life she has tried to bring her practice of yoga to a certain level.

Geeta discussed the theme of the *Yog-Sadhana* workshop. *Sadhana* roughly translated means "practice", but for a yogi it means more than merely just a practice. She said, "It tells how we need to have a complete gravitation toward our inner evolution, our inner improvement. The inner inclination needs to lead us to go inside to reach the soul."

Yoga sadhana is roughly divided into three steps. The first one, *bahiranga* is the more external, physical quest. In his edition of *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, Gurujii B.K.S. Iyengar explains that this external quest includes the first four limbs of *Astanga Yoga*,

Sadhana roughly translated means "practice", but for a yogi it means more than merely just a practice. She said, "It tells how we need to have a complete gravitation toward our inner evolution, our inner improvement. The inner inclination needs to lead us to go inside to reach the soul."

namely the *Yamas, Niyamas* (ethical principles and observances), *Asana* and *Pranayama* (yoga poses and breathing). The second step is *antaranga*, a practice concerning the internal quest. When considering the eight limbs of *Astanga Yoga*, this phase includes *Pratyahara* and *Dharana* (sense withdrawal and concentration). The third step is *antaratma sadhana*, a practice concerning the innermost quest for the soul. This corresponds to the last two limbs of *Astanga Yoga*, *Dhyana* and *Samadhi* (meditation and a profound deep state of meditation and awareness).

Geeta explained that no yoga *sadhana* is possible unless you are totally involved in the practice. Body, mind and soul need to do the *sadhana*. She also explained that the first stage, *bahirangas sadhana*, is quite big. *Bahiranga sadhana* includes training the outer body including the muscles, bones and skin. It also includes the inner organic body and the senses. She said that a lot of time is needed to culture the cells of the body so that they fully participate in the *sadhana*.

Antaranga sadhana only begins when the outer body is prepared to help you and can be available for you. On this level one begins to penetrate the mind. In *antaratma sadhana* one goes deeper inside using the instruments of body and mind.

Geeta explained that all three steps of the *sadhana* go together. Even though we verbally divide them, all three parts must be there. At first the practice is very much *bahiranga*, while the *antaranga* is proportionally much less, and the *antaratma* much much less. However, over time, with sincere effort and training, the penetration within comes more quickly.

When we start a yoga practice, she said we must come to the beginning and watch ourselves with fresh eyes. Being pupils of yoga our penetration has to begin from the outside. The outer skin of a fruit protects the inner fruit until it is ripe. This is how we need *bahiranga sadhana* to protect our inner interest and



to protect our inner gravitation towards the soul. Inner absorption does not come at once, but it has to be assimilated. The inner system has to be healthy and clear in order to assimilate so that yoga penetrates deeper and deeper within.

Geeta said that we can't expect all of this to happen within one life. As practitioners we can see time limits, but in a sense there is no limit. You can't fix the development of these stages into a yoga course. It is not a question of one life. We have to have hopes that may extend over several lives. Like the fruit, we need to protect ourselves now so *bahiranga* needs to be done by all of us every day.

After that introduction to the true meaning of *yoga sadhana*, we started the *yoga asana* practice with heightened attention and alertness.

The first pose was *Tadasana* and once we were standing in it she began to call out instructions: *"Everything has to be built up. The foundation has to be firm. The mind and intelligence has to stand ready. Bring yourself to attention. Be attentive to yourself. Be attentive everywhere within your cellular body. Attention without tension. Be quiet within to catch. Distribute your energy evenly, equally. A great chance to look at yourself. Are you in the right position?"* She proceeded to address the placement of bones, the direction of particular muscles, the feel of the skin, the state of the eyes and ears...so that we shaped our bodies into *Tadasana*, the mountain position, standing still.

We repeated *Tadasana* several times and each time she went deeper in her

instruction. She said that repetition is needed to penetrate the *bahiranga* further. *"You have adjusted the outer body but you haven't adjusted the inner body. If you just do once you can't pay attention. After many repetitions your mind begins to penetrate. For the fruit to become ripe it takes a longer time. Need the mind to reach everywhere. Then you begin to enter antaranga sadhana. You can't do this in a five day course. Penetration takes time. Keep your knee caps firm..."*

What a wonderful birthday celebration this was, and she was the one offering the gift. After five days I felt awakened, charged with energy and completely alive. Thank you Geetaji. Happy Birthday. ॐ

inspirations from India

WITH LESLIE HOGYA

May 13 & 14, 2005

Friday, 6:30-8:30pm

Saturday 11:00am - 1:30,
2:30--5:00pm

This all-levels workshop will be inspired by classes taken at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute. Saturday afternoon will be devoted to questions about establishing your home practice.

Leslie Hogya has a Junior Intermediate III level certificate, trains teachers and is an assessor for the Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada. She has studied in Pune six times, most recently in August 2004.

(Bring a snack for Saturday afternoon)

Members \$105+GST

Non-members \$115+GST

Registration open March 14 for members
March 21 for non-members

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

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

Sri B.K.S. Iyengar

Yoganga – Shikshaka – Chakravarti –

“Emperor of Teachers of Yoga”

PART II

Chris Beach

The Victoria Yoga Centre would like to express its gratitude to Chris Beach and Jean Smith for giving us permission to reprint this two-part article which was first published in the Orange County Iyengar Yoga Newsletter Vol. 1, No.7, August 2004.

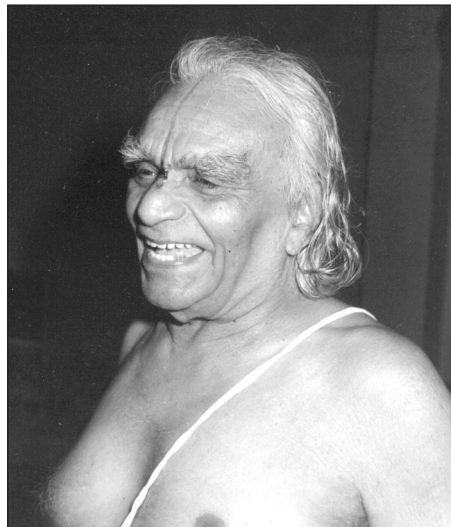
At the most recent IYOC (Iyengar Yoga Orange County) party, many of us had the opportunity to watch a new movie about the life and career of B. K. S. Iyengar. The movie, entitled *Atma Darsana*, reminded me once again of Mr. Iyengar's intense dedication to yoga, a dedication which is equally apparent both in his practice and in his teaching.

One part in the movie, however, caused me to think more deeply about what it means to be a yogi. In one of the interviews used for the film, Mr. Iyengar explained that he is not a “fanatic,” because although he may practise eight hours a day, when he is finished with his practice he returns to daily life as an ordinary person.

Yet while he may not be a yoga fanatic, Guruji is a person who has clearly dedicated his life to yoga. Anyone who has ever met Mr. Iyengar knows that he is nearly always teaching, working to pass on his knowledge and his example to others, trying to help those around him.

A story told by Los Angeles-based Iyengar Yoga teacher Chris Stein beautifully illustrates this point:

When Guruji was invited in 2000 to Kolkata to be given the title of “Yogacharya” from the World Yoga Society, he spent part of one day being interviewed by the press. At one point during the interviews, he told one of the reporters interviewing him that he was going to put him in headstand. The reporter was amazed and



Anyone who has ever met Mr. Iyengar knows that he is nearly always teaching,

terrified at the same time, but he totally surrendered to Guruji. He took off his shoes, and Guruji put him onto his head. As Guruji made sure that the reporter's shoulders were lifted, Jawahar (a senior teacher from Mumbai) held the man's feet. And there he was in headstand, being taught by the greatest yogi on the planet! When he came down, the reporter was so joyful, and felt the amazing recuperative result of Sirsasana. Guruji then explained that he saw that this man had a very “hot” mind, so busy with intense energy. Guruji asked him, “How do you feel now? How does your mind feel?” And the reporter answered, “Guruji, my mind feels very cool, very relaxed.” With this example in action, Guruji taught everyone there how the headstand cools the brain, how it makes the brain balanced, and he spoke about how it is the king of asanas. All of the reporters listened with rapt attention, and one could see how Guruji teaches by example, allowing people to experience the yoga rather than simply talking about it.

Even when Mr. Iyengar is not teaching, he is thinking about how to make the subject of yoga more accessible and more beneficial to his students. The senior teacher Patricia Walden, in an interview published in *Yoga Journal*, speaks about the remarkable way in which Mr. Iyengar uses his own body as a laboratory for experimenting with the poses:

I remember once watching him practice before teaching a class. I was startled to see his body twisted in uncharacteristically poor alignment, but later in class I realized that he had been working out the problems of his students within his own body. He once told me that he learned his method by exploring not only what was right, but what was wrong; and that he hoped his students could learn from his experience.

Mr. Iyengar is sparing with praise, stingy by our standards: even the senior-most teachers receive critical corrections from him. The highest compliment I ever heard him grant anyone was 'Not at all bad.'

Most of us can only imagine the dedication it would take to practice our *asanas* not only as a means of improving our own faulty postures, but also in order to understand our students' physical problems and limitations! This is what Mr. Iyengar means by discovering a "divine, dedicated practice" rather than an "egoistic practice."

As yoga teachers, Mr. Iyengar has said, "We have to be cruel to be compassionate." To be cruel, in this case, means to be honest about our students' mistakes. It is not part of the Iyengar method to praise our students, to tell them how beautiful their poses look. I can count on the fingers of one hand the times I have received a compliment on one of my poses from an Iyengar teacher.

Valerie Read, who has been several times to Pune, told the following anecdote about her experience studying with Mr. Iyengar:

Mr. Iyengar is sparing with praise, stingy by our standards: even the senior-most teachers receive critical corrections from him. The highest compliment I ever heard him grant anyone was 'Not at all bad.'

I will end this article on Mr. Iyengar's teaching with another quote from Valerie, which I believe illustrates Gururji's wry sense

of humor as well as his absolute integrity as a teacher:

Mr. Iyengar will adjust a student who is uncomfortable in a pose. He'll ask the student 'Is that better?' Often the student will begin to answer, 'Yes, but...' Mr. Iyengar will stop him, saying, 'Better is better, don't be greedy.'

Not being greedy, in our yoga practices and in our lives, is often a difficult task. Gururji's reminder is a good lesson for all of us. ॐ

PRACTICE

Any person who is not lethargic can obtain yoga, be he young, old, very old, sick or weak.

One who is intent on practice will obtain yoga, not one who is idle.

Yoga is not obtained by reading scriptures, nor by wearing the dress of a yogi, nor by talking about it. Practice alone is the course of success.

Hathayoga Pradipika (I: 64, 65, 66)

By dedicated practice of the various aspects of yoga, impurities are destroyed: the crown of wisdom radiates in glory.

The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali (II: 28)

A battle ensues when the mind says, "I want to", but the body says, "I cannot." It lies in your hands to see who wins.

Sri B.K.S. Iyengar

CHRIS HAS BEEN STUDYING IYENGAR YOGA SINCE 1985, AND IS A CERTIFIED INTRODUCTORY LEVEL II TEACHER. CHRIS HAS BEEN TO INDIA TWICE TO STUDY WITH THE IYENGARS AND WAS RECENTLY ELECTED TO THE BOARD OF THE IYASC.

*What you learn will stay with you
as a ready reckoner,
a store of information
for you to fall back on.*

— Prashant Iyengar



Setting up in Sana'a

Leslie Corcos

Sana'a is the mountain capital of Yemen, which is the home of Osama Bin Ladin's family, radical Islam, and the Queen of Sheba.

We moved to Sana'a shortly after I certified as an Iyengar Yoga teacher. I decided to set up my first yoga studio in my house, in spite of the challenge of most people saying, "This will never work." I knew there were obvious steps involved to make sure my studio succeeded. First I needed to learn Arabic, even at a beginner level, as few people speak English. Then I had to find yoga props, and finally I had to find my students!

My first two weeks were spent taking intensive Arabic, finding my way around the city, and learning how to dress appropriately. Having no car, I took public transport to my lessons. This meant taking *dababs* which are minivans filled with Yemeni men and women that hurtle up and down the chaotic, crowded streets with their doors propped open.

No foreign women ride *dababs*, instead most swish through the streets in air conditioned Land Cruisers with drivers. It seems that only Yemeni women ride *dababs*. They dress in ankle length, long-sleeved robes called *balto*s. Their heads are shrouded with black chiffon and burkhas cover their faces. Some even wear black gloves. I bought a *balto* and black chiffon for my hair but dared to leave my face exposed. After two weeks my Arabic was sufficient to do the basics. I could get around Sana'a on

I bought a balto and black chiffon for my hair but dared to leave my face exposed.



Leslie with Sa'ad, her bolster maker, and his nephew in Sa'ad's shop.

dababs and in my new clothes felt I blended in a bit in spite of continually tripping over my robe. The next challenge was finding yoga props as all I had were mats.

Suqs are markets, and I combed their alleyways for suitable blankets but was told firmly and repeatedly, no wool blankets! The only ones available were of very thick fluffy acrylic which I tumbled off in *Salamba Sarvangasana*. So I considered foam blocks, but the only foam around was too soft. One night, while walking with my husband, he spotted a tiny repair shop with a laborer working on car seats. I was ecstatic to find a small piece of very hard foam on his floor. The man, Yahya, offered to take me to the factory where it was made if I came back the next morning. So the next day I was there. He wasn't and his shop was firmly closed. In my faltering Arabic I asked some men next door if they knew Yahya and explained why I needed him. With great kindness they immediately hailed a taxi and told the driver to take me to the foam factory.

The factory was a beehive of activity and I was directed up steps where I found an office and two men sitting behind desks. In my childlike Arabic, I gave measurements, drew pictures and

determined the type of foam I needed. Immediately, 2 sample blocks were cut. I took them home to try and found they were too thick so returned the next day and had them cut them in half. They were just right so I ordered 36 more. I then showed them my wooden block and asked where I could get it copied.

With what I was beginning to realize was typical Yemeni generosity, they were anxious to help. A small, fierce man, named Mohamed, wearing a large dagger in a wide belt, was summoned to drive me to the wood, *heshab*, shop. First he needed his morning tea break. I was brought a chair where I sat in the shade. The foam workmen all brought their cut off plastic bottles or cans to be filled with sweet, milky tea. They all then squatted companionably in a circle on the hot, concrete parking area with the dust blowing round them and ate flat bread with cheese.

Again, with the usual Yemeni graciousness, Mohamed cut his break short and bundled me into his small truck with a shattered windshield and no seatbelts. We careened through the streets, sometimes on the left, the right, or in the middle, missing other vehicles by inches, until we arrived at the wood shop where I gave them my sample block. Mohamed kindly delivered the finished blocks to my house the next day. I then found a place to have bolsters made and my daughter sent me straps from the U.K. so I felt quite well equipped

Having the rudiments of props, I now needed students, so ran an ad in *The Yemen Times* and also put up small posters in the German House, my Arabic School and a beauty shop. Slowly the calls started coming and I asked them all to bring towels to pad the foam. Three

weeks after arriving in Sana'a, I gave my first yoga class to seven women. Word then spread and I soon had a steady stream of takers.

I have now been here nearly 6 weeks and have over 20 students. Happily four of my students are Yemeni, others are from Lebanon, Pakistan, Italy, New Zealand, Ireland, England, Canada, Holland, Slovenia, and the U.S. They all seem to appreciate taking a break from the swirling dust and incessant honking of the Sana'a streets to spend time in the quiet of my yoga room. A certain peace is added to doing yoga in Yemen, with the call to prayer drifting through the window, singing *Allahu Akbar* (God is great) as my students release into *Savasana*. ॐ

LESLIE STARTED PRACTISING YOGA IN 1972 WHILE STUDYING PSYCHOLOGY AT UC BERKELEY. SINCE THEN SHE HAS LIVED OVERSEAS AS A COUNSELOR AND TEACHER. SHE IS THE MOTHER OF 2 ADULT CHILDREN ONE OF WHOM WAS BORN IN ARABIA AND THE OTHER IN JAPAN.

Update!!!

Fund Raising Appeal

OUR GOAL THIS YEAR IS TO RAISE \$10,000
WE HAVE RAISED CLOSE TO \$7,000

Thank you to all who have so generously donated to our appeal.

It is not too late make a donation and help us meet our goal and support the ongoing work of the Victoria Yoga Centre in promoting Iyengar yoga in our community and across the country. Your donations help support our instructors, scholarships, bursaries and special needs classes. There are nine instructors certified at the Junior Intermediate and Senior Intermediate levels, plus seven

certified at the Introductory 2 level. Our special needs classes which help many people deal with illness and injury are very heavily subsidized by the Victoria Yoga Centre because of the low student/instructor ratio. We also rely on many dedicated volunteers.

We need your support so we can continue our work!

Namaste,
the Instructors and Board of Directors
of the Victoria Yoga Centre

The 21st Annual Retreat at the Saltspring Centre

June 3-5, 2004
With Shirley Daventry French

Shirley is a senior student of B.K.S. Iyengar and has studied at the Ramamani Memorial Institute in Pune many times, most recently in December 2003.



Registration will open for paid VYC members on March 14, 2005. If there are any spaces left, non-members may register after March 21, 2005.

Members Price

\$340 shared accommodation in the house
\$300 to camp,
\$265 for commuters

Non-members:

Add \$35 to the price above

All prices include GST.

To register, drop in or phone:

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

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.



Teacher Training Paper

Uttistha Sthiti – Standing Asanas

Krisna Zawaduk

Why are standing poses the foundation of Iyengar Yoga? List 5 or more basic principles that are taught in the standing poses. What do you think are the psychological effects of standing poses?

To become a teacher in the Iyengar tradition, one must undergo rigorous training. Teacher training through the Victoria Yoga Centre is a minimum three year program comprised of studies including anatomy, philosophy, practical teaching and, of course, personal exploration through yoga. Students are required to write papers exploring these aspects of study. Here we have published one such paper on standing postures.

Standing poses are the foundation poses of Iyengar yoga because they get the student to explore movement in the body. Through the standing poses the student can get in touch with the body and all its various parts. When we practice the standing poses we will also discover how our posture can be improved. Proper alignment will start to come. We play with balance and our centre of gravity and find proper weight distribution. These asanas, Uttistha Sthiti, demonstrate all the possible movements of the spine: forward and backward extension, sideways extension, lateral and twisting movements. In the standing postures we also discover how the joints move and function. In the beginning it is all about discovery. The student will discover how the body moves, and also the qualities of their bodies. We begin to see which parts of the body are overworking and which are underworking. We also come face to face with our body and mind's inherent strengths and weaknesses.

When we begin, many of us come as *tamasic* creatures, set in our patterns of posture and movement. Standing poses break us out of this inert, *tamasic* state and fire us up with *rajas* – action! – swinging us from one extreme to the other, in the hopes that

someday we might reach a light-filled *sattvic* state. Psychologically, this fire brings forward our self-confidence. Improved posture reflects inwardly and outwardly. We may feel encouraged to step out of our comfort zones. We may break old habits. We may feel more adaptable and capable as we see that our bodies can be strong, flexible and capable. Or, we may feel that even with our limitations, there are possibilities for improvement – there is hope. I love BKS Iyengar's quote, "STAND ERECT OR YOU CAVE IN THE VERY SELF". That really says it all.

The standing poses are a good place to start to make the mind-body connection. How can you stand on your head when you can't even stand on your own two feet? You must start at the beginning and build from there. It is a safe place to start. Start from the outermost layers, start from the arms and legs and head, feet, knees, elbows etc. We begin to realize how individual parts work with the whole. We are able to isolate different parts and delight in their functioning. I never knew I could ache there! We begin to make new connections – how can this action be translated into other poses? How can this standing pose teach that standing pose – and then how can this standing pose teach that backbend? How can I bring *Tadasana* into *Sirsasana*? As students, we can experience the links; we can experience the sequencing principles in our practice. When some alignment and understanding comes in the standing poses, we find that healthy patterns replace our old unhealthy patterns. The body increases in intelligence. We have laid the foundation for self-realization and we may not even know it. ॐ

KRISNA ZAWADUCK IS A STUDENT AND TEACHER AT THE KELOWNA YOGA HOUSE.



Uttistha Hasta
Padangusthasana II



Ardha Chandrasana

Reflection on Practice: Learning in the third year of teacher training

Corrine Lowen

Learning how to practise is a never ending process. Initially we learn the basic rules of sequences: shoulder stand follows head stand; twists follow backbends, but can also come before; cooling poses follow warming poses; standing poses teach the actions for all the poses. In the theory of sequence, all poses are important. Each group teaches actions that help the others.

It is not possible to practise all the poses every day, but as I began to prepare for the Introductory Level I/II Assessment for Certification it became very important to include all of the poses in my practice regularly.

A common strategy is to take each syllabus and divide the poses into five days so each will be practised at least once each week or two. I tried these practises, and attempted to devise a few of my own, but when I worked this way I found my practice seemed somehow alien, disjointed and out of whack. On Wednesdays I needed to add a pose from Monday, or Friday; the Thursday practice was unbalanced but if I shifted things around other practices became too long or too short. I needed a new approach that gave due attention to all of the poses in a coherent sequence each day.

I decided to make a deck of cards. Each is



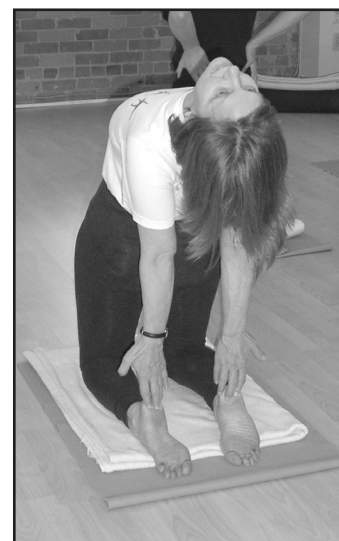
Urdhva Danurasana

The new style of practice developed a momentum and flow. I discovered new ways of practising, of linking and learning for myself. I found fresh insight into the ways students learn and I found ways to teach poses that I had not thought of before.

labeled with a pose, the syllabus level, the category (standing, sitting, forward extension, lateral extension, backward extension, restorative). On the card, I also record ways of teaching the pose, things I need to remember and feedback I have received. Each card becomes a living notepad for its designated pose.

I found many ways to use this deck of cards. First I shuffled the entire deck and dealt the cards out into eight days (nine poses per day). I added *Sirsasana*, *Sarvangasana* and *Savasana* to make twelve poses in each practice. Practising this way challenged me to think in new ways about how to sequence and how poses go together. I discovered links I had not considered before. This method requires a fair amount of extra time each day to think about sequencing but it has the advantage of covering every pose on the Level I/II Syllabus at the end of an 8 day cycle.

After a while I wanted to spend less time thinking about sequencing and more time doing *asana*. In stage two, I draw three new



Ustrasana



Adapted Padmasana in Sirsasana

cards each day and focus on these “poses of the day” with extra attention, different props and ways of working. I go straight to the mat and give myself only a few minutes to choose *asanas* to prepare, balance and focus body and mind in the direction of the focus poses. Very quickly I know where I needed to start to work. The new style of practice developed a momentum and flow. I discovered new ways of practising, of linking and learning for myself. I found fresh insight into the ways students learn and I found ways to teach poses that I had not thought of before.

The method of using cards continues to evolve and develop. If I feel that a pose

needs more work I will keep it in the practice for several days until the understanding starts to come. For example, the last time *Malasana* came up I realized I had more to learn about this pose in my body and about teaching it. For the remainder of the week, I only chose two new cards each day and kept *Malasana* in every practice. By the end of the week I noticed an improvement in my ability to do the pose and I felt more confident about the teaching ideas I developed. I tested these ideas when I taught the pose in all of my classes that week.

I record the practice on a chart each day to ensure that all the poses receive due attention over time. As my learning

needs change and grow I continue to adjust the practice. The cards keep it fresh; they are a place to record my learning and help me organize my practice to include all the poses in a balanced way.

Developing a more effective practice has been my most important learning experience in my third year of teacher training. ॐ

CORRINE LOWEN TEACHES AND STUDIES AT THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE. HER TRAINING TEACHER, LESLIE HOGYA, CERTIFIED AT THE JUNIOR INTERMEDIATE III LEVEL, IS SHOWN IN THE PHOTOGRAPHS.

Thank You All!

Victoria Yoga Centre volunteers are everywhere!

Some recent sightings:

At the front desk - afternoons...

Elaina Zackariuk
Val Aloian
Drew Yallop
Denise Meyers

In between classes...

Wies Pukesh helped get the program committee organized and organized our free classes.

Karin Holtkamp coordinated the distribution of the newsletter.

Kevin Aldous and Weis Pukesh organized the Light on Yoga workshop, decorating the centre with beautiful lights and making chai and providing an overall festive atmosphere.

Doug Hart and Wendy Boyer who are our main members practice space supervisors.

In the Special Needs classes

two new volunteers
Gary Wong
Maureen Doyle

On TV...

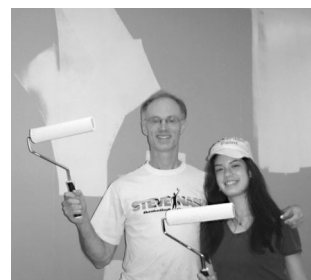
Charles Campbell
Sue Riddell
Jim Riddell
Ted Mather
Lauren Cox
Anna Cox
Corrine Lowen
Leslie Hogya...went live on the New VI at 7 AM to promote the Victoria Yoga Centre.

On the road...

Kevin Raymond picked up a supply of foam blocks in a pinch.

In your neighborhood...

Janine Beckner
Doug Hart
Hilary McPhail
Nina Coverdale
Jeannette Merryfield
Mary Lou Wakefield
Aleta Crawley
Karin Dayton
Charles Campbell
Tara Dutcawich
Nancy Peterson
Kevin Aldous
Ewa Czaykowska-Higgins
Maureen Doyle
Laura Anderson
Janet Milligan
Karin Holtkamp
Elaine Davies
Rosalyn Grey
Katrina Chappelle
Laurie Newnham ...delivered schedules to cafes, libraries and local businesses.



In Arbutus and Birch Studios...

Bruce Cox made Arbutus glow with a new coat of yellow paint and added a fresh coat of ceiling paint to Birch. Daughter Anna, Jim Riddell and Charles Campbell extended helping hands.

Paschima Pratana Sthiti – Forward Extension Asanas

by Linda Benn

Melissa Perehudoff is a teacher-in-training at the Kelowna Yoga House. The following question came up during her studies with Linda Benn.

Why is the concave back position so important in standing and seated forward extensions? I understand that forward extensions prepare the body for backbends and pranayama by extending the spine, but can you shed more light on this question?

Many people, myself included, tend to be lazy and slump into too much convexity in the dorsal spine. When this becomes a habitual posture, the muscles and ligaments of the back lengthen but they are weak and can no longer sustain an erect spine with normal curves. These muscles must be strengthened to maintain good posture and to move into good forward and backward extensions. The supporting back muscles must contract to lift and lengthen the front body.

Tadasana and the standing *asanas* are essential to build awareness of good upright posture as well as creating stability in the legs and lower body. *Salabhasana* and *Urdhva Mukha Svanasana* are also important *asanas* to develop awareness and strength in the dorsal region. Since it is often easy to contract the muscles of the low back, students tend to overarch the lumbar curve and harden the abdomen. One must learn to coordinate the correct action of the shoulder blades – learn to move them into the back ribs in order to lift and open the chest to concave the upper back – with the pressing in of the coccyx (tailbone). Teachers must introduce these actions so students lengthen the spine as much as possible in these *asanas*.

My understanding is that people that have a normally convex upper back will never completely reverse that curve into concavity (hyperextension). However, the effort should be in the direction of concavity. Once in a while I have had a student whose normal upper back appears to be flat or even concave but that is not common and there are challenges associated with this shape of spine.

When we slump in daily posture or over-round the back in forward extensions, the front of the vertebrae and discs are compressed. The discs are thinner in the thoracic spine. This could lead to problems of nerve compression or over time push the disc posteriorly out of position.

When the back is over-rounded, there will be restriction of the breathing muscles. Many of the internal organs will be compromised in function. The abdomen should not puff forward and this tends to occur when the upper back is hunched and the chest collapsed. During forward extensions, lengthen the sides of the body, elongate the spine and lift the chest so as not to compress the organs.

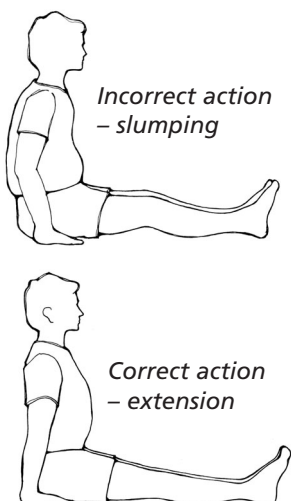
When you look at the back of someone who is overly rounding the upper back, you will see a great deal of hardness in the back and the skin. The spinous processes will be poking out into the skin. The spinous processes of the thoracic vertebrae get smaller going down from the base of the neck to the top of the lumbar curve. This may mean there is more potential for movement in that mid back band at the lower shoulder blade area than in the upper thoracic. In Vancouver, at the 2001 CIYTA (now IYAC) conference, Geeta Iyengar said that the back muscles and skin in forward extensions should be like butter.

The first stage of forward extensions, when seated, is *Dandasana*. The action of the legs grounding to the floor is of key importance. Then we go into the stage that is often called the concave stage – lifting the chest and lengthening the trunk. In the final stages of the pose, the thoracic spine will be rounded, but not hard. By using the action of the legs and arms to lengthen the side ribs, any strain is taken off the spine.

The goal of our *asana* practice is to penetrate deeper than the muscular-skeletal level. Any time that hardness is occurring, the breath, the nervous system and the mind will be affected in a negative manner. Tension will be created. Irritation rather than stimulation will be the result. Forward extensions should have an inward focus and result in a cool, quiet state of mind, body and breath.

Understanding and applying these principles and actions will help a great deal with the practice of *pranayama* and in the healthy movement of vital energy. ॐ

LINDA BENN IS A TEACHER CERTIFIED AT THE JUNIOR INTERMEDIATE LEVEL III. IN ADDITION TO TEACHING, LINDA TRAINS STUDENT TEACHERS.



VICTORIA *yoga centre* Calendar

MARCH

- 4 Friday Night Gathering 6:30pm
- 5 Saturday Workshop: 50+ Workshop:
Backs & Hops with Leslie Hogya
- 19 Teachers' Meeting

APRIL

- 15-17 Basics to Refinement with Ingelise Nherlan
- 23 Teachers' Meeting
- 25 Term 5 begins

MAY

- 7 Seeing & Correcting with Shirley Daventry French
- 13-14 Inspirations from India with Leslie Hogya

JUNE

- 3-5 Saltspring Retreat with Shirley Daventry French
- 11 Teachers' Meeting
- 17-19 Introductory I/II Assessment in Courtney-Comox

JULY

- 4-31 Term 6
- 4-24 21 Day Sadhana
- 11-16 Teacher Training Intensive – Introductory
Levels with Linda Benn, Leslie Hogya,
Ann Kilbertus

AUGUST

- 2-31 Term 7
- 15-19 Teacher Training Intensive – Junior
Intermediate Levels with Shirley Daventry
French
- 29-Sept 2 Student Intensive

SEPTEMBER

- 5-9 5 Day Sadhana
- 6-11 Registration Week
- 12 Term 1 begins
- 17 Teachers' Meeting
- 23-25 Weekend Workshop with Felicity Green

OCTOBER

- 14-15 Inspirations from India with Ann Kilbertus,
Melissa Worth
- 22 Teachers' Meeting
- 21-23 Introductory I/II Assessment in London, ON
- 31 Term 2 Begins

NOVEMBER

- 3-6 Weekend Workshop with Chris Saudek
Junior Intermediate Workshop for levels 3 & 4
- 26 Teachers' Meeting

DECEMBER

- 2 Sutra Workshop with Shirley Daventry French
- 3-4 Going Deeper with Shirley Daventry French
- 9-11 Junior Intermediate I Assessment in Montreal

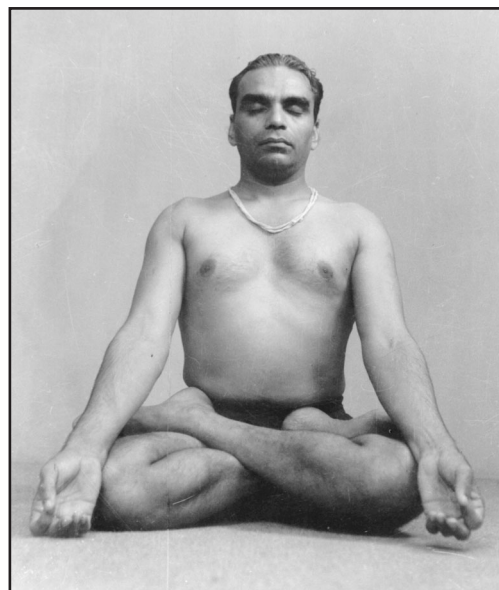
JANUARY 2006

- 27-30 Heart of Yoga with Shirley Daventry French

Check our website www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca
to find out about the current class schedule.

*When you study you are humble,
you are neither a teacher
nor a doer. Work for yourself
and on yourself, like an Iyengar teacher
who is sharp and demanding.*

– Prashant Iyengar



Radha Yoga Centre

THE TREE OF LIFE Hidden Language of Hatha Yoga Workshop

**Saturday April 29,
1:30 - 4:30 pm**

Come for three hours of relaxing and rejuvenating hatha yoga combined with reflections on the tree as a symbol.

Bring a new depth of experience to this pose. The tree is sometimes seen as a bridge between heaven and earth. How am I like that tree? "Where have my roots spread? Where do they get their nourishment?" Can I hold my ground in the midst of the many influences in my life? Can you? Find out for yourself.

Open House

**Saturday April 9,
10:00 am to 5:00 pm**

Drop by for a free class, for tea or for quiet reflection in our garden and lawn labyrinth

FREE CLASSES:

- 10:00 - 1:15 Hidden Language of Hatha Yoga
- 11:30 - 12:45 Kundalini Yoga
- 1:30 - 2:15 Dream Yoga
- 3:30 - 4:45 Hatha Yoga Basics

*Please call to reserve
a place in classes*



NOW OPEN!

Radha Yoga and Eatery

728 Main Street
Vancouver
(604) 605-0011
radha@telus.net

Drop by for A Relaxing Yoga Class
&/or Delicious Vegetarian Food

time to renew

This is a reminder that the
Victoria Yoga Centre membership
expired on December 31, 2004.

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 (at right), and send to the Victoria Yoga Centre.



VICTORIA
yoga centre
SOCIETY

Membership and Newsletter Subscription

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

**Victoria Yoga Centre Society, c/o Karin Holtkamp,
202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3**

Membership/subscription fee is \$32 (incl. GST),
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

Membership benefits include 5% discount on classes, free practice times at the VYC, timed practices, early registration and discount on workshops, borrowing privileges in our library, eligibility to become a board member and eligibility for scholarships for workshops.

May / June 2005



VICTORIA

yoga centre

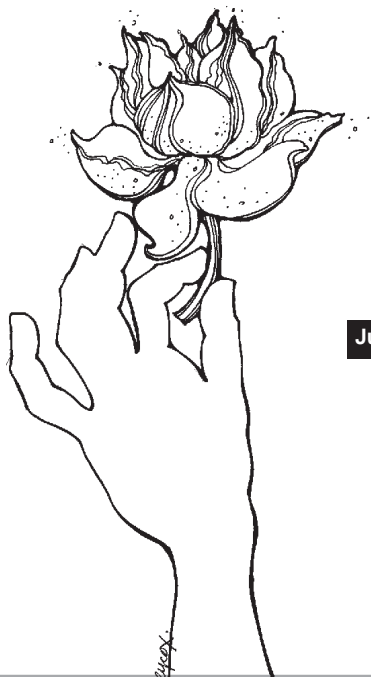
NEWSLETTER



The work of B.K.S. Iyengar takes us to Bellur, India to celebrate the world's first temple dedicated to Patanjali.

IYENGAR YOGA

Teacher Training Intensives



July 11-16, 2005
**With Leslie Hoggia,
Ann Kilbertus
and Linda Benn**

This six -day course will build your understanding of teaching Iyengar Yoga based on the foundation of good practice. Leslie, Ann and Linda are experienced teachers certified at the Junior Intermediate Level III through the Iyengar Association of Canada (I.Y.A.C) and are qualified I.Y.A.C. assessors. They are involved in teacher training in Victoria as well as assisting teachers in outlying British Columbia and Yukon communities.

Preference will be given to I.Y.A.C members and those preparing for assessment in the near future.

July Intensive FULL. A waitlist is being taken.

Fees: \$560 + GST for VYC members, \$600 + GST for non members

Scholarship applications due May 7 for the July Intensive and June 7 for the August Intensive.

To register contact the Victoria Yoga Centre, 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 3K3 3250 386-YOGA(9642)

A deposit of \$150 will reserve a place. Full payment is due June 2, 2005. If you cancel before June 2 your deposit less 10% will be refunded. After June 2, refunds will only be given if your space can be filled.

August 15-19
With Shirley Daventry French

This program is for teachers certified at the Introductory Level II or higher.

Shirley is a long-time student of B.K.S. Iyengar who 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.

Both Intensives will include daily classes in asana and pranayama, the art and science of teaching and peer teaching. Philosophy and anatomy will be included.

As in previous years, Iyengar Yoga teachers from other countries are also invited to apply. I.Y.A.C. members will get priority.

Upcoming **IYAC** Assessment Dates

June 17-19, 2005
Introductory I/II
Courtney-Comox BC

Oct 21-23, 2005
Introductory I/II
London ON
Winnipeg MB

Dec 9-11, 2005
Junior Intermediate I
Montreal QC

Plan to attend!!! The 2005 Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada Annual Conference

University of New Brunswick, Fredericton

Thursday, May 26 to Sunday, May 30
Assessors Meeting: Sunday, May 30 to Monday, May 31

Many local teachers will be attending as they serve as regional representatives on the national board of directors or are assessors for teacher certification.

Cost: \$350.00 (taxes included). Prices cover all accommodation, meals and programs.

Programs include association work, an annual general meeting, assessors meetings as well as asana and restorative/pranayama classes and many other wonderful events.

Deadline for registration and payment April 30th, 2005

For brochure and registration information visit the Iyengar Yoga of Canada Website at: www.iyengaryogacanada.com/agm

contents



2 Reflections

by Shirley Daventry French



6 Canadian Iyengar Yoga Conference

Opening Address by Dr Geeta S. Iyengar, Part II

by Louie Ettling

10 Yoga in Action in Bellur

13 Annual General Meeting

14 Financial Report



15 Words from Your New President

by Sylvia Vilches

16 Workshop Review

By Gary Wong



18 Working with Guruji

20 Calendar

APOLOGY regarding our Nov/ Dec 2004 issue.

The Newsletter Committee presented a tribute to Geetaji's 60th birthday. In the layout there were many photographs that did not receive credit. All seven photos of Geeta Iyengar were taken by Susan Stewart and Nancy Bleck.

Newsletter Advertising Policy (Adopted February 20, 2004)

In keeping with the mandate of the Victoria Yoga Centre Society Directors, 2004, to update, review and document policies and procedures, the newsletter committee submitted a policy which is a revision of the 1996 policy and has been adopted by the Board of Directors as follows:

1. Advertisements must not conflict with the aims of the newsletter of the VYCS.
2. Advertisements must be only for Iyengar Yoga
3. Priority given to advertisements regarding:
 - VYC events
 - VYC sponsored events
 - CIYTA events
 - Radha House/ Yasodhara Ashram

COURSE REGISTRATION:

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

Phone:
250 386-YOGA(9642)

Refund policy:
Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.



VICTORIA yoga centre NEWSLETTER

EDITOR Melissa Worth

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Shirley Daventry French, Lauren Cox,
Gwynneth Powell, Greg Sly, Jane Munro,
Taimi Mulder, Susan Robinson,
Nancy Searing

DESIGN / PRODUCTION Cady Graphics

PHOTOGRAPHY Melissa Worth, Corrine Lowen, Leslie Corcos, RIMYI; Photos of Geeta Iyengar by Nancy Bleck and Susan Stewart; Photos from Yog-Sadhana by Gaye Barter; Cover Photo: Statue of Patanjali gracing the entrance to the Iyengar home.

ADS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lauren Cox, Leslie Hogya

ILLUSTRATIONS Lauren Cox

SCANNING Byron Smith, Taimi Mulder

DISTRIBUTION Keiko Alkire,
Rosemary Barritt, Krysia Strawczynski

MEMBERSHIP / MAILING LIST

Karin Holtkamp

PRINTING Hillside Printing

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

? 15, 2005

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY

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

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

Send contributions, articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions to the Victoria Yoga Centre Newsletter: 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3. For information on activities and events, call 386-YOGA(9642) or visit our website: www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca.

Permission is hereby granted to reprint any of our material, except that copyrighted by the author or artists. When reprinting, please credit this Newsletter and send us two copies of the publication containing our material. Copyright material is only available with written permission.

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



SHIRLEY DAVENTRY FRENCH WAS AWARDED SENIOR CERTIFICATION FROM B.K.S. IYENGAR. SHE HAS BEEN TEACHING SINCE 1972 AND FOUNDED THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE IN 1976. SHIRLEY LIVES IN VICTORIA AND TEACHES WORLDWIDE.

Towards the end of my vacation in Mexico, I had a dream. Thoughts of home and the many duties and commitments awaiting me had begun to intrude on a relaxed routine I was reluctant to end.

I had woken up early, too early to get up, and fallen asleep again. When this happens I often have tortuous dreams where I face one frustration after another. In this dream I was preparing a meal for three children but had forgotten one essential ingredient so went in search of it. After many obstacles I found it only to leave unintentionally without paying. When I realised this I decided to return and take care of this oversight, but in the nature of such dreams more obstacles stood in my way. Eventually, I made some headway and arrived at a fork in the road not knowing which road led to my destination. There is a bus stop but I don't know which bus to take.

There are three youths standing there talking and I ask them where these roads lead, but they do not know. Then I spot a man I know; moreover I know that he knows the way to where I want to go. He has a motorcycle and I wonder if he will take me because I am running very late and am concerned for these three children whom I have left alone and hungry. I am not sure he will take me, but set about trying to persuade him. Just as I begin to think I am getting somewhere, I wake

up - frustrated. I would have liked to complete that quest, but dreams rarely work that way. They merely, if you can unravel the symbolism, give you clues about making the journey. You still have to wake up and take the necessary steps!

The late Yogi Berra was an accomplished baseball player who coined many simplistic observations. One of them is: *When you come to a fork in the road, take it!* Swami Radha was fond of pointing out that if you have no particular destination in mind then it doesn't matter which fork you take. In my dream I did have a destination but was constantly thwarted in my attempts to get there.

The day before this dream I had finished reading a novel in which the main character, a Scotland Yard detective inspector, had almost lost the woman he loved because of a series of hurdles in his way. By the skin of his teeth he prevailed, but I thought the situation was contrived and the novelist's concept irritated me. I did not believe that so intelligent a character would have been so foolish as to leave himself so vulnerable so unnecessarily. There was much he could have done to avoid the cliffhanger with which the writer chose to end her novel. He encountered hindrance after hindrance as he hastened to meet and propose to the woman he loved before she boarded a train which would take her away from him forever. It was not the fact that obstacles arose which bothered me, this is the nature of life; but for such a pivotal event in his personal life he had left so much to chance. The book deserved a more polished finale.

Of course, this is the stuff of many myths as heroes and heroines, gods and goddesses tempt and wrestle with the fates.

In my dream sequence, finding myself at this fork in the road and at an impasse, I acted reasonably. First of all, I looked for someone who could point me in the right direction. When the first people I approached turned out

*I would have liked to complete that quest,
but dreams rarely work that way.
They merely, if you can unravel the symbolism,
give you clues about making the journey.
You still have to wake up and take
the necessary steps!*

to be ignorant, I looked elsewhere. Spotting someone who could guide me in the direction I wanted to go, I attempted to enlist his help. Even better, this man had a vehicle which could be used for the journey.

I was in India in December 2004 for Geeta Iyengar's sixtieth birthday course which she entitled *Yog-sadhana*. At the start of the course she spoke about her choice of subject, and how the whole of her life has been yoga sadhana.

As she told us: "When the time allows I practise. If life demands something else as a responsibility, I give myself for that." Geeta had suffered a severe injury during the preceding year which handicapped her enormously but "still the sadhana has to continue." And to emphasise the importance of perseverance in the face of obstacles she repeated these words: "*Still the sadhana has to continue.*"

For all of us, whatever difficulties, whatever unfortunate or unforeseen situations arise, if we are committed to yoga, the sadhana has to continue. At each fork in the road we have to ask ourselves: which one will bring me closer to the light?

The beauty is that if we choose the wrong fork and it takes us away from the light, we can still profit from this experience. The opportunity to learn, the opportunity to grow, the opportunity to evolve is ever-present. Certainly some choices slow us down; but, if we learn from them, the journey will not have been wasted. This winter, in the library at the Institute in Pune, I read a comment of Gururji that the term 'spiritual path' is a misnomer, because the spiritual path is everywhere.

In today's yoga world with its trivialisation of the ancient teachings, the ability to physically perform complex *asanas* has become confused with advancement in yoga. An adept may or may not be advanced, depending on their general spiritual development: their state of mind, the sensitivity of their skin, the flow of their breath, the purpose and nature of their asana practice, and above all, how it affects their sadhana. Beyond the exquisite form of an advanced *asana* performed by B.K.S. Iyengar, he is in communion with his self, his soul. *Antaratma sadhana* or the innermost spiritual quest is at the heart of each asana Gururji

"And to emphasise the importance of perseverance in the face of obstacles she repeated these words:

"Still the sadhana has to continue."

performs. Similarly Geeta, despite her current physical limitations, has maintained a level of sadhana far beyond the grasp of most yoga practitioners.

In her opening remarks at her birthday course Geeta stated: "*Sadhana* is not merely just the practice, though in English we translate it as practice. If some injury takes place you cannot help that, but still one can build up the very sadhana in this manner, knowing one's limitations. In that limitation I have tried all of my life to come to a certain level." In her youth, Geeta was blessed with a level of expertise in asana which few have attained. With this stripped away from her, humbly she continued her practice and deepened her sadhana. For the discerning and determined student of yoga, nothing will interfere with this pursuit.

We need to gravitate towards inner improvement, inner evolution, and heed Geeta's warning that practice can remain on the surface level. She urged us to follow our inner inclination to go deeper inside "to reach the very soul".

Since my return from this visit to Pune, I have been doing a great deal of reflection on my own sadhana which no doubt led to this dream. Try as I do, I have difficulty sustaining the right balance between practising, teaching, writing, travelling. In addition there are a myriad number of details to attend to in order to maintain an environment conducive to yoga sadhana. I look for somewhere that is well organised and pleasant to live in, quiet and spacious enough to practise asana and pranayama, but at the same time able to welcome my children and absorb the energy of my grandchildren whenever they are able to visit.

The *sadhana* I follow is the path of a householder. When I began my yogic journey I was a householder with three very young children. My husband was in single handed

...I read a comment of Guruji that the term 'spiritual path' is a misnomer, because the spiritual path is everywhere.

medical practice as a general practitioner and when his office was closed, I was the one who answered the telephone, took messages, searched for him in emergencies. There were no cell phones or telephone answering machines in those days, so I had to do a lot of phoning around. Because he was so busy, I did not get much physical help from him on the home front, and the rest of my family were in England. It was a difficult time. I needed yoga and yoga came looking for me in the form of Carole Miller, now a longtime colleague and friend. At that time I was teaching fitness and swimming at the Y and each week found myself in the shower room at the same time as Carole who was attending a yoga class. Liking her and finding her description of her yoga class intriguing, I decided to join.

As soon as I started attending these yoga classes and particularly when I heard Swami Radha speaking about the philosophy of yoga and its purpose, I knew this path was relevant for me. It was like a thirsty person lost in a desert coming upon an oasis with an abundant well of clean water. The trouble was that I could quench my thirst easily in class or while away on a course, but back home in the midst of everything I was

having trouble remembering the location of this well.

My struggles today are very different although, as my dream testified, I still lose my way. My children grew up, had children themselves, established their own households and entered another phase of their struggle. Yet I am still a mother who enjoys time with her children, as well as a grandmother who adores her grandchildren. I am also a wife in a long term relationship. My struggle is to embrace all of this as part of my yoga sadhana accepting that I have made a choice to make my spiritual journey in a family. My husband and children count among my greatest teachers!

Patanjali defines yoga as the cessation of the fluctuations of the mind, and explains that this is achieved by practice and renunciation. At every stage of life, to progress in a chosen discipline one has to renounce something. Some people, such as Swami Radha and Geeta, chose a path of celibacy and are known as renunciates. They renounced marriage and children to concentrate on their *sadhana*.

Swami Radha was married twice in her early life as Sylvia Hellman, marriages which did not produce children;

but once she became a committed disciple of Swami Sivananda, she renounced the status of householder and took a different path under the name of Radha. Despite this, her family problems continued, albeit in a different form. As Swami Radha, she went on to establish an ashram and many outreach centres all of which laid their problems at her feet.

Geeta Iyengar has never married having decided at a young age that this was not the path for her in this lifetime. Daughter of one of the world's most distinguished Yoga Masters, she was clear that she wanted to devote herself to yoga, yet here again, living as she does in the compound of a Yoga Institute which attracts thousands of people from all over the world, she cannot help but be involved in the Iyengar Yoga family. Moreover, by virtue of being the oldest of six children in an orthodox Brahmin family, and a female whose mother died when she was quite young, Geeta has had to assume many responsibilities in her large biological family which would otherwise have fallen to her mother.

Guruji, on the other hand, chose to pursue his sadhana as a householder. In the tradition of his guru, Krishnamacharya, he took a wife and had children. He lived, as he still does, at the centre of his family. Yet he managed to sustain a single-minded focus and purpose on the path of yoga. As the saying goes: *talent does what it can, genius does what it must*. Guruji followed his destiny to become a paramount yoga

Scholarships & 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.

Scholarship applications for Weekend Workshops are due one month prior to the workshop. Scholarships for Special Events and Intensives are due two months before the event.

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.

Victoria Yoga Centre
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria, BC V8V 3K3

teacher as a family man, fulfilling his duty to them as well as his duty to his Higher Self. To this day, nothing deters Gururji from his sadhana.

In Pune in December, when teaching sirsasana, Gururji said the big toes have to challenge each other like two wrestlers. In my life, my aspirations in yoga and my duties as householder often wrestle with each other. It was a wrestling match in the beginning with three young children, continued with three adolescents, and continues still to this day. I am pulled this way and that way, get frustrated, get overworked, get irritable, forget sometimes what purpose lies behind it all - but I never cease my efforts to integrate yoga into all of my life and deepen my *sadhana*.

In my early days in yoga I used to dream of a plateau which I would reach (sometime soon I hoped) where I would live a vibrant life in perfect harmony and equilibrium. I would think to myself: I'll just get this next trip to India over and things will settle down. Or I'll just get through this particular challenge and things will smooth out. I continued to hold on to this illusion, all evidence to the contrary, for a long time. Now I accept that once I overcome one challenge, another presents itself. This is the way of the Divine who, sensing that I am obviously ready to tackle another problem, puts one in my way. Be assured that life's vicissitudes will come anyway, whether you seek them or not. The difference is that if you go out to meet your challenges you will be in a better position than if you try to hide; then they will come upon you unexpectedly and in less advantageous circumstances.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Prince Arjuna is faced with the frightening prospect of going to battle against an army, led by his kinsman King Duryodhana, which includes many relatives and friends. Prior to this confrontation he had found himself, along with Duryodhana, in the presence of Lord Krishna who was sleeping. Krishna awoke and knowing

I have made a choice to make my spiritual journey in a family. My husband and children count among my greatest teachers!

that this war was about to take place offered both Arjuna and Duryodhana a choice between himself unarmed and an army of ten thousand warriors. He gave Arjuna the first choice, and Duryodhana was incensed because he had arrived first; but Krishna said that when he awoke his eyes had alighted first on Arjuna which is why he was going to be given first choice. Arjuna chose the unarmed Krishna, much to the relief of Duryodhana who promptly chose the ten thousand warriors which he had wanted all along.

The ensuing dialogue which takes place between Krishna and Arjuna on the battlefield, forms the timeless wisdom of the *Bhagavad Gita*. With Krishna's guidance, despite his reservations and after a prolonged period of struggle and doubt, Arjuna understands what he has to do to overcome the forces of darkness and ignorance which are threatening him. At one point Arjuna asks Krishna to show himself in his true form and Krishna appears in a burst of light equivalent to a thousand suns. At first this is too much for Arjuna, but gradually he becomes stronger and able to look more directly into this light.

It is for this reason that we maintain disciplined practices, so that we are able to come closer to the Divine or the Light or God, whatever you like to call the source to which you turn for intuitive wisdom and truth.

Dreams can be a reliable source of direction and guidance, a means of tapping into the unconscious. Like all aspects of yoga, the benefit is only available to us when we work with them regularly. At one time I consistently attempted to interpret and make sense of my dreams and received some valuable counsel, but I have neglected this

practice lately. The power of my recent dream and the strong feelings it evoked in me suggest that it's time to pay more attention. Perhaps then, the next time I am at a crossroads, I will receive clear guidance on which direction to take! ॐ

inspirations
from India



WITH ANNE KILBERTUS
& MELISSA WORTH

October 14 & 15, 2005
Friday, 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Saturday 11:00 am - 2:00 pm,
3:00-5:00 pm

(Bring a snack for Saturday
afternoon)

Members \$95+GST

Non-members \$105+GST

To register, drop in or phone:

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

Refunds will only be offered if your
space can be filled and are subject
to a \$10 cancellation fee.

Canadian Iyengar Yoga Conference

May 2-6, 2001 Vancouver, BC

with Honoured Guest and Teacher, Dr. Geeta S. Iyengar

OPENING ADDRESS – PART II

Now often it is said, “We do *asanas*, and somebody else does the *mantras*, somebody does the prayers; and they do more of the mantras and more of the prayers, and we do just *asanas*.” There again you are committing that mistake. Guruji has often said, “*Asanas* are my prayers.” It makes the meaning there. You may do chanting, you may not do chanting – that is up to you. And mind yourself, the chanting etc. cannot be forced on every individual. If you do the chanting, you may want to know the meaning. Suppose if I just said, “We’re going to do the prayers,” you would have chanted the prayers with me. But again, you want to know why those prayers are said. You want to know what is the meaning of those prayers because why should you otherwise chant? The question comes, “Why should you do the *puja*?” Next question you may ask is, “What is the effect of the *puja*?” This is the human mind which asks so many questions, and for that the answers have been given. For the prayers also they say, “Why do you do?” That is why I said for any auspicious work, if it has to go in a proper way, we offer the prayers. We are asking that Lord make our path absolutely obstacleless, problemless, because we are doing auspicious work. And he’s the one who makes the path clear. So this is what whole psychology is there. We know that we may be having an auspicious beginning, and something breaks and just we cannot do it. We pray for that reason;



that, no, let it go on that path, on auspicious path. This silences our mind to go further on the path. And that is how, in spite of having problems, you see that you don’t miss your practice. So what is that mind that tells you that you should not miss your practice? Again it is a yogic mind. The prayers that you offered – it’s a yogic mind. The question that you asked – “What does it mean?” – he is also a yogic mind. So in this manner we should know the practice of *asana* and *pranayama* basically.

Coming to the last point, I tell you now that how in a daily life when you are doing this, as I already have explained how the discipline begins, but you should know also the second part of way that how this mind is built up because path of *bhoga* is something which is clear, you can see, and path of yoga cannot be seen very clearly. If the plane is moving on the sky, it hasn’t got the direction to show you the path as you find the road path, but it has got its subtle instrument

to show its path. That’s why every time the pilot has the guidance there to know in which direction he’s moving. He is not directionless in that big sky; you don’t find the plane going and just lost somewhere. But the path of yoga is of that kind – it is quite a big path, but there is a piloting done properly. That is why when Guruji says your *asana* and *pranayama* have to be done in such a manner, it’s like a river having two banks. So *yama* and *niyama* are two banks and your *asana* and *pranayama* have to be going in such a way that these two banks will be protecting your *asana* and *pranayama* – *yama* and *niyama* – because all that you practice. It has a compound wall to protect it. The compound wall: *ahimsa, satya, asteya, brahmacharya, aparigraha*, and the compound wall: *sauca, santosa, tapas, svadhyaya, Isvara pranidhana*, because in that path it knows. That’s why even with a small issue (*pramana*), if you come to the class and you offer your prayers to Lord Patanjali, in the beginning you feel the starting itself of something good. There is something inside telling you that yes, the mind shows it’s sparkling light inside. If it is not there, you don’t; you just say “*om*.” Moment you say that you know that you have made a starting over there. And that is how you are building a compound wall of *yama* and *niyama* there. As a *sauca*, food, you are finding the compound wall of *sauca*. They are food to the digestion, up to the constipation. So that you don’t get constipated, everything has to be

clear for your better practice. It's not just for the health's sake. Remember that, it's not just for the health's sake that you see that your bowel movement is clear. You see that your practice will be better if there is a proper bowel movement, and if you are constipated it bothers your practice. You know that it is now coming as it should come. If you have to see that it should come the way you want it, you need a sensitivity with you over there. If you know proper *trikonasana*, proper *ardha chandrasana*, proper *adhomukha svanasana*, and if you have the feeling that it should come in this manner, then only you can relate to it that when you have now digested your food, well it is bothering you. That is sensitivity, and that comes through your *abhyasa*. If you have no sensitivity, then you won't feel anything. That's why quite a few people, in the beginning, they have taken full meals. Say in the morning they have taken full meals, and then they want to come at 3:00 or 4:00pm to your classes – the food comes up; they are not bothered at that time; they will say, "Something came up, I am feeling sick." That will be the reaction of the beginner, but you cannot say as a practitioner, "I am feeling sick" because you have the experience when you are not sick, how you do, and when you are sick, how you do. And you have differentiated those two things – that yes, when you are not feeling sick, that means when your digestion is absolutely okay, your doing process, you're remaining in the pose, you're staying in the pose, it's much better. That has given you sensitivity, and that sensitivity gives you *viveka* – conscience is ignited. He says, "Yes, if I eat this wrong food, my practice suffers; if I take the right food, my practice does not suffer." So for me, yogic path in daily



routine is that (apart from doing the *asana* and *pranayama* in a proper way, that is next part of it which comes under *anhyasa*).

We have to have in our minds all these things, the whole background and everything because we have to proceed from our body which I said is the one which is gross – our big soul available for us to see. The body is a big soul of the inner subtle soul which expresses. You can never say that when the body is suffering that my soul is perfect – nobody says that. It is only verbally people talk about that. If your body is suffering, you know that something inside is also suffering. This is what Patanjali says: that your practice begins from the physical aspect, from the body, and from there you proceed further towards your mind. From mind you control your senses of perception. When you are dealing with your physical body, you are dealing with your physiological body. You are dealing with all the five elements because your very organs of

action are formed with the five elements: *prthvi*, *ap*, *tej*, *vayu*, and *akasa*. In each *asana*, when you are having your mind over there, the breath reaches somewhere. "Your dorsal opens in *trikonasana*" means your respiratory system has responded to the breath. If your spine is not open and your chest is not open, it hasn't responded to the breath properly. The chemistry goes wrong there, and something inside tells you, "I did not open my chest properly." You say that, "Yes, something is caught over there, still freedom is not coming." And this is how the physical body works there because mind is telling from inside – you did not open here and you opened there, you did not expand here and you expanded there, you lengthened here and you did not lengthen there... Mind is all the time speaking there to your body.

Similarly, the senses of perception – if you have to open your chest, unless your eyes, ears, everything is controlled, your mind's attention will not go. Mind is tricky, mind is so tricky, senses of perception take the mind somewhere out to go, it is quick to follow that. That is how sometimes you are in *trikonasana*, you are thinking of something else because mind has been pulled, gravitated out towards the external world, but here mind is gravitated towards the internal world through your practice. This gravitation of the mind which has occurred to see what *trikonasana*, to see what *parsva konasana*, is the mind which is a yogic mind required by each and every aspirant... And that is the mind which you have to form. It is not just that *trikonasana* should be perfect for the sake of your knee, perfect for the sake of your spine, perfect for your thigh muscles, no, that has not been said. I don't think Gururji has ever explained in

that manner – that you stretch your root of the thighs, the thigh will be perfect. The moment you stretch that thigh in a particular manner, he has already shown the mind that path, to go inside, and that is the way of understanding it. From the mind, then it comes to the “I” awareness, “I” consciousness. Your mind will not reach your foot unless your “I” consciousness reaches over there. If I say, “Yes, your foot is still dead,” the second question: “Is my foot still dead?” You want to put that responsibility on the others because somebody will be doing next to you or behind you. Then you think, “Oh, that is so dull – the next one who is next to me or the other one who is behind me, but that’s not me”. If you want to check clearly whether it is your foot which is still dead, then your “I” consciousness will go to that foot to see your foot. Then you may not question me: “Is it my foot or her foot or his foot?” because it is not your business whether it is her foot or his foot. It is your business to see your foot. And that is how the consciousness reaches first over there to see whether you have done it or not. It will reach first to see whether you are doing it or not. This is the way the instrument that is given to us to use, we have to utilize it to have our yogic mind get cooked and prepared properly.

So have no doubt in your mind when you practice *asana* and *pranayama* that because your mind, by thinking that is a short time, two hours of practice you may do, or three hours of practice, then the rest of the time, what have you to do? If you think in that manner, then your practice is somewhere wrong because you want to practice for two or three hours, then go and sit in a cinema theatre everyday. The mind doesn’t allow you to do that. That is the yogic mind, and that is the pure mind which doesn’t allow you to do something which should not be done. This was the question: again I repeat here to say because from Las Vegas I went to San Diego – all were in the airport to receive me and then

they asked me, “Oh you went to Las Vegas, what did you see there? Oh you went to Las Vegas?” That was the question, so I said, “Yes, whatever I have to see, I saw that, and what I should not see, I shouldn’t see that.” There are some things beautiful to see. So is it not something to see what happens? So this is what one has to understand: that the yogic mind will be of that type which doesn’t get distracted as often as we feel, but it should be prepared in that manner. That is why regular practice is required to prepare this mind. Don’t think that by saying bhajans and prayers also the mind is prepared. Many a time it happens that people just come together to have *satsanga*; they think that they are having *satsanga*, but the mind will be somewhere else. But here in the very practice, you are being sharpened to see that you are reaching there inside. So it depends upon your mind. You may go to *satsanga*, you may go to sing the *bhajans*, or you may come to practice yoga, whatever; it is your mind you have to deal with and see that it takes you on the disciplined path, on a proper path. If you have got the total idea in your mind, you will be doing that. It is not something that in daily life you have to do something different. Routine – the very routine that you have got to do, whatever, whether it is your office or whether it is your job or whether it is your housekeeping work, it’s the children that you have to look after, whatever it may be, if your mind is there, you find that there is more purity and more sanctity in that work. That is what the yogic path says.

Patanjali says this, that karma should be there and then from *karma-suddhi* comes *sasmita-suddhi*. So there is not something different to do for *karma-suddhi*. It is not that in your house the purification of the water takes place in a different way and in my house the purification of the water takes place in a different way. When we have to purify the water it is the same method; it is the same procedure, and all of us purify the

water in the same manner. This is the way we have to understand the *karma-suddhi* – it has to be done whether you are in this country or some other country, it doesn’t make any difference. It is our mind which has to be pure, which should be free from all these *klesas*, as I said – *avidya*, *asmita*, *raga*, *dvesa*, *abhinivesah*. We have to search that mind which is interfering and bothering us. We should be able to analyze. And that is why Patanjali says, “*Ahimsapratisthayam*” – have that mind which analyzes immediately whether I am proceeding towards the non-violence or violence. Even if it is a small work. Am I hurting someone for no reason? And that is what yoga is teaching you and the more you begin to practice your *asana* and *pranayama*, these things do occur because your nerves are getting purified. Again you may question that how does it happen? It happens because the food that we eat, through that, the nerves, the cells, everything is formed. Through the nerves and the cells which are formed through this food, the mind is formed. If the mind is pure there, the mind has to give its *sattva* to its nerves to have the feedback so that they go in the proper way; they think in the proper way; they work in the proper way; they maintain the balance. That is how whole, total human being is thought of in a yogic process in order to bring the change in oneself.

That much, if you understand there, will bring clarity in your practice and that is how the yogic mind we have to have. We have to cook our mind with the *asana* and *pranayama* to have the yogic mind. All the ingredients in that, all these aspects of *yama* and *niyama* are the ingredients. We have to put them into that mind to see that with the *asana* and *pranayama*, when we cook it, this mind will be a delicious mind. If that much you understand, I will say that yes, you have learned the very depth of the practice, the very *sadhana* it has got. And that is why regular practice is required at the stage of *abhyasa*. Patanjali said, you

have to just trust, just keep on practicing repeatedly. The more you just keep on practicing repeatedly, that means everyday, on the base of *anusthana*, not just at midnight getting up and starting your *trikonasana* because in midnight your mind is not prepared, your mind has got something else to do at that time. There comes the picture of *anusthana* very clear. There should be a spiritual platform for it. You should know why you are doing your *asana* and *pranayama*. Not just at midnight getting up and thinking, "Oh Geeta said that the more you practice, your mind will be getting cooked to become a yogic mind." The next day you may fall asleep, you may be tired, you may get dizzy, dehydrated, anything can happen. Because it is structured in the discipline, *anusasanam*, your *anusthana* has to be structured in the frame of discipline, *anusasanam*. If you have to follow that discipline, the whole daily life, the whole life has to be

programmed. Your computer also doesn't answer you if it is not properly programmed. You can't imagine how much program inside is required for you, if this has to give you, or monitor your whole life, this is more sharp, sharper than your computer. If you haven't already properly fed that, it says, "No, I don't know anything." If you haven't properly programmed it, it won't come in front of you to say, "No, I don't know anything." It is blank. And that is how the whole practice has to be. So try to understand that, and see that these kinds of doubts will not remain in your mind when you have practice in yourself. And I hope this much introduction will allow us to proceed further in our practice. Thank you very much. Thank you. ॐ

Many thanks to Cathy Valentine from Saltspring Island for transcribing this address.

Coming
November 4-6, 2005

Chris Saudek

A Junior Intermediate
Workshop
for Level 3 and 4

Chris is a devoted student of the Iyengars, certified at the Senior Intermediate level and has a background in physical therapy. She is a precise and disciplined, caring and innovative teacher.

Look for more information in the July August 2005 issue.

The 21st Annual Retreat at the Saltspring Centre

June 3-5, 2005
With Shirley Daventry French

Shirley is a senior student of B.K.S. Iyengar and has studied at the Ramamani Memorial Institute in Pune many times, most recently in December 2004.



Members Price
\$340 shared accommodation in the house
\$300 to camp,
\$265 for commuters

Non-members:
add \$35 to price above.

All prices include GST.

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

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

Yoga In Action In Bellur

by Louie Ettling

LOUIE IS A CERTIFIED IYENGAR TEACHER. SHE DIRECTS THE YOGA SPACE IN VANCOUVER (WWW.THEYOGASPACE.CA). SHE RECENTLY RETURNED FROM A MONTH IN INDIA.

Bellur Krishnamachar Sundararaja was born on December 14, 1918. Bellur indicates the village where Mr. Iyengar was born, in the Indian state of Karnataka. This past December Mr. Iyengar invited local and international students to join him in travelling to Bellur to attend the inauguration of the world's first temple dedicated to Patanjali. My decision to accept this invitation was a blessed one.

December turned out to be a very exciting month to be in India. My journey started in Pune at the Iyengar Institute. Public classes six days a week paved the way for the international intensive that was held in honor of Geeta's 60th birthday. Shortly afterward began B.K.S. Iyengar's own 86th birthday celebration which was then followed by the pilgrimage to Bellur for the inauguration.

Those of us who were going to the inauguration were first introduced to Bellur at Guruji's birthday party. Rajvi Mehta, a dedicated student from Mumbai gave an informative slide presentation on Bellur, Guruji's birthplace. The slideshow described Bellur as a small village forty kilometres from Bangalore, Karnataka. This community has suffered from a lack of health and educational facilities; alcohol and other substance abuse has also been a serious problem. Rajvi explained that the Bellur Krishnamachar Seshamma Smaraka



Children of Bellur and their families now have clean water and education.

Nidhi Trust had been created by Guruji, the Iyengar family and students. The Trust has been overseeing and coordinating development projects in Bellur. The slide presentation introduced us to leaders of the Bellur community. The female principal of the school particularly stood out for me because of the strength of character in her face and because she had played a key role in implementing projects in Bellur. We learned that up until late 2003 kids and even educated adults from Bellur had not even known about Guruji, even though he had built one primary and middle school in 1967. The next slide was an image of kids jumping into *Trikonasana* in the dirt as soon as Guruji's students approached the village. With their yoga enthusiasm they were not only telling visitors we know who you are, but they were also saying we know what yoga is. Rajvi's impressive slide show left me

even more enthusiastic about the upcoming trip.

More than fifty of us arrived for the Bellur Inauguration. I flew from Pune, which took a bit over an hour. Others spent a day traveling by train. Rajvi Mehta and helpers picked us up and took us by bus to Bellur. We drove past villages, farms and many small industries such as nurseries and cement factories. Those of us who were not staring out of windows in contemplation, talked about what brought us together from Italy, France, USA, Denmark, Canada, India and elsewhere.

In Bellur there was an informal tea with Guruji and people from the local welcoming committee. Then we were taken to an outdoor event where Guruji was honored. We were put on a large stage behind Guruji. Garlands were presented to Guruji and the dignitaries who sat with him. Many speeches were

made, almost all in Kannada, the local language (that's why Guruji sometimes jokes with Canadians, saying "I speak Canada"). Right in front of the stage was a group of lively buzzing kids who were often asked to settle down. It was obvious to us that Guruji was extremely revered by the local people. What a privilege to get a glimpse of Guruji's own world, the world of his childhood, of his language.

Guruji spoke no English on this occasion. This pleased me, as it put the focus where it was meant to be, the village of Bellur and its people. For those of us who see all human development as part of a global whole, the reality of Bellur is not belonging to another world. Our common language is the language of yoga in the larger sense of the word which means, after all, "to unite/to bind together". We have become connected to the village of Bellur through the development work that our teacher, B.K.S. Iyengar, has committed himself to.

That evening we were kindly put up in a hotel about half an hour's drive away from Bellur. The village itself does not

even have a shop, let alone its own hotel. It was wonderful that the local community looked after us during a time when they obviously had so much on their plate.

On the plate indeed - the next day, the actual day of the inauguration- we were served a delicious traditional breakfast under the tent at the temple. After the Pooja, which lasted almost seven hours, we were served vast helpings of wonderful food again and the famous Indian chai became even more famous as we drank. The Iyengar family had fed the entire village on other such special occasions and on this day locals were once again invited to eat. The Iyengar's generosity has become legendary around Bellur.

During the long Pooja there was much visual stimulation for those of us not familiar with such auspicious events. Right in front, near the Patanjali sculpture, was a white marble bust of Guruji's late wife, Ramamani Iyengar. This bust was decorated carefully. Appointed Hindu men were holding a thin cloth-like screen in front while they draped a beautiful sari around her. The sari fell

realistically and gracefully a few feet toward the floor.

We were honored to be part of ancient traditions. There was much chanting and incense as we witnessed an enactment of the marriage of Rama and Sita. Again, the holy men were decorating the statues. With many nimble fingers they were beautifying each and every inch of the symbolic scene with care. They spent what seemed to be an hour doing just that. We were in awe of Guruji, who remained right at the front with those leading the Pooja, focused, calm and fully present, hour after hour.

A couple of times I left to walk outside the temple. I visited the school and the yoga hall which Guruji had added as a top floor to the school in 2003. This Yogacharini Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Hall measures 1700 square feet and is used as would be a community centre in Canada for yoga, social gatherings and other events. The yoga hall is fully equipped with belts, ropes and blankets. Classes which started with only a few students are now full with two hundred students studying with

SUMMER SADHANAS

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

This summer we offer a 21 day and a 5 day Sadhana.

Come to a 20 day Sadhana. Practicing every morning for 20 days will help you to develop, and deepen your home practice. Linda Benn, Wies Pukesh and Robin Cantor will lead the sadhana, and each week will build on the week before.

Time: 6:30-7:45 am

July 4-8 with Linda Benn

July 9-15 with Wies Pukesh

July 16-23 with Robin Cantor

Fees: \$260.00 + GST for VYC members
\$290.00 + GST for non-members

The 5 day Sadhana is the perfect opportunity to further develop and deepen your practice.

Time: 6:30-8 am

September 5-9 with Robin Cantor

Fees: \$80.00 + GST for VYC members
\$90.00 + GST for non-members

To register, drop in or phone:

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

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.



the yoga teachers who travel from Bangalore.

A group of small kids stroll with me during my walk, asking me "You, where from? Your name? My name Sindhu, Pandu, Ram....." they say, almost in unison. They want to show me the new water tank. I had heard about it. Availability of clean water has been a problem in Bellur. On October 31, 2004 the Trust officially handed the water tank to the villagers. The kids seemed particularly proud of their water tank. "Guruji, water" they repeat. This tank with a capacity of 50,000 gallons now serves the village needs.

I was touched by the enthusiasm and open-heartedness of the children who are all attending "Guruji's school". Soon a second school will be built - a high school for girls. Parents were fearful of sending their daughters to other villages once they finish the highest grade they can currently complete in Bellur. Since returning from Pune I read that the foundation for the girls' school was laid on January 27, 2005.

On our way back to Bangalore late

that afternoon we had time to make one quick stop just outside Bellur. We were told that the field we were standing in was part of the sixteen acres of land that Guruji's Trust had bought for further developments. A medical clinic and technical college are in the plans.

On the return trip to Bangalore, the Bellur visit simmered in me. Some of us know that our lives in the west are connected with, affected by and affecting lives elsewhere. Often we don't know how to express this sense of inter-connectedness in a practical way.

B.K.S. Iyengar shows us what is possible. He is a man of his deed, as we know from his asana practice, but he is also a man of his word. In 1998, during his eightieth birthday celebrations, he stated the purpose of his future, "My only desire now is to take yoga to the Indian villages" - he did just that.

I am filled with a positive sense of what is not only possible through yoga but part of an integrated life practice. There is work for many of us to do in our villages of birth. And we also have the option of contributing to developments in

India through the projects in Bellur.

For contributions or updates on Bellur projects please visit the website: www.bksiyengar.com. ॐ

Can you help?

Are you able to provide a private bedroom and a breakfast for a yogi during either one or both of the Teacher Training Intensives? If so, please fill out a form at the front desk or contact Robin Cantor at robincantor@telus.net (382-4111)

Or, if you are out of town during this period, yoga students housesit for you. The billet and breakfast rate is \$30 per day.



Student Intensive

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

With Lauren Cox and Ty Chandler
August 29- September 2, 9 am-12 pm

Learn how to establish and deepen your practice

Prerequisite: Level 2 Iyengar Yoga experience

Lauren and Ty are certified Iyengar yoga teachers who bring enthusiasm, dedication and humor to this five-day intensive. There will be two hours of asana including yoga kurunta, a timed practice, an introduction to pranayama and philosophical and spiritual discussions.

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

To register, drop in or phone:
202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 3K3
250 386-YOGA (9642)

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

Annual General Meeting

The Victoria Yoga Centre Society's Annual General Meeting was held on February 5th, 2005. A complete set of committee reports can be viewed in the library at the centre. Here are just a few highlights.



2005 VYC Board of Directors

From back row left to right: Jim Riddell, Amanda Mills, Bruce Cox, Rosemary Barritt, Lori Wanamaker, Byron Smith, Laure Newnham, Finka Toeves, Melissa Worth, Leslie Hogya, Silvia Vilches. Absent: Wendy Boyer

President's Report

by **Rosemary Barritt**

February 2004 was the start of my second term* as President of the Victoria Yoga Centre. I was fortunate to have a great group of people on the Board of Directors along with me, and together we have worked through various issues and have ended the year accomplishing what we set out to do.

One of the first things on our list was to set up a new bookkeeping system. Lori Wanamaker joined the board a year ago and as our treasurer she has spent many hours going over the accounts and by year's end with her expertise and guidance we are all better aligned with the accounting process. Thank you Lori, we are very fortunate to have you as one of our board members and thanks also to Drew Yallop and Byron Smith, who volunteered their time to help Lori.

The Victoria Yoga Centre is known world wide for its newsletter and we have a very dedicated group of people who volunteer throughout the year to produce it. Our members will now be familiar with the larger format of the

newsletter and everyone I have spoken to feels it is a change for the better, many thanks to all involved. One of our editors and yoga teachers, Gwynneth Powell, moved to North Vancouver in December. She is commuting back and forth for the next few months to teach at the centre but, by June, the mainland will be home for her and her partner Paul. For the last few years she has been a vital link between the newsletter committee and the board of directors and in the position of board liaison has kept us all up to date with newsletter concerns. We will miss you Gwynneth and wish you all the best for the future.

In 2004 all businesses in B.C. were required to adopt a privacy policy and appoint a privacy officer. Lynn Langford, who joined the board last year took this job on and with her knowledge of the law I feel we have an appropriate policy for our organization and we have attached the position of privacy officer to that of President. Lynn will not be standing for re-election but has offered to point us in the right direction where legal matters are concerned, thank you Lynn for your help over the past year.

When you phone the centre, or come to the front desk in person, you are greeted by one of our office staff. They

are: Leslie, Britta, Monica, Karen and Hillary, they are the best staff any business could hope to have. They are helpful, kind, courteous and friendly and we are very lucky that they choose to make the Yoga Centre their workplace. Leslie, our manager, is a wonderful role model for the staff and she volunteers many hours to make sure that the centre runs well. Leslie is off to Mexico soon to join Shirley Daventry French. Shirley is our senior teacher at the centre and she will be teaching an Iyengar Yoga workshop in Puerto Vallarta for two weeks. Thank you Leslie, for all that you have accomplished over the past year and enjoy the sunshine in Mexico.

A long time member of our board, Linda Benn, is stepping down this year. I feel that "Thank you" does not adequately express our appreciation for all that you have done while on the board of the Victoria Yoga Centre and all that I know you will continue to do in your various roles. Your dedication to yoga and our centre is an inspiration to all of us.

I would like to thank Corrine Lowen for her work over the past two years on the roles and responsibilities document for board members, and more recently on board development; to Ted Mather,

another long standing board member and to Joan Douglas who has been secretary for the past year, they will be stepping down from the board this year but I know they will be involved in the life of the yoga centre in one way or another.

The names mentioned so far in this report are only a few of the people who volunteer their time to make the centre function; there are so many others who do jobs both big and small. Thanks to every one of you, your help and support has made the Victoria Yoga Centre what it is today.. ॐ

**editor's note: this was Rosemary's final term as president. The VYC thanks Rosemary for her dedicated commitment over the past 2 years she served as President.*

Finance Report

It has been my pleasure to serve as the Treasurer for the Victoria Yoga Centre for this past year.

From a financial perspective, the fiscal year ending October 31, 2004 has been both difficult and rewarding. It has been a year in which the Board faced significant financial challenges and made solid progress towards building a strong system of financial accountability that will address these challenges in the future.

For the year ending October 31, 2004, our revenue was 7% less than our budget expectation. This variance results from a decline in the number of students attending classes as well as the implementation of a 5% discount for members. For the same period, our expenditures exceeded our budget by \$17,013 or 4.0%. The primary drivers of the variance were:

- 3% increase in teachers' fees; and,
- Recognition of depreciation on capital assets of \$12,000.

Despite significant adjustments made during the years, these variances resulted in a net loss of \$36,404.

While the Victoria Yoga Centre has modest cash reserves, this is not a trend that we can afford to continue. The Board has adopted several processes and policies to maintain a balanced budget and to improve our overall financial accountability:

1. The Board adopted a provisional budget at the October 2004 Board meeting. As a result, the Centre is operating with a financial plan in place for the entire fiscal year. This budget is directly linked to class schedules and historical participation rates.
2. Reports on class profitability are scrutinized during the class scheduling process. Each term decisions are made to maximize class profitability and studio usage.
3. The Board has established a finance committee that meets during the budget building process to rigorously review budgeted expenditures and revenues.

On a go forward basis, I believe that the Victoria Yoga Center has a solid financial plan for ensuring its continuing fiscal health of the Victoria Yoga Centre. The provisional budget is balanced and we are on target with our projections of revenues and expenditures.

In closing, I want to thank all of the members of the Board for their support and commitment in making difficult financial decisions over the course of the past year. As well, I want to thank Drew Yallop for his dedication and flexibility in accommodating our many requests as we revamped our financial management system and Byron Smith for assisting in our yearend financial review. ॐ

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY Statement of Revenue and Expenditures

November 2003 through October 2004

Accrual Basis

Ordinary Income/Expense	
Total Income	\$ 381,470
Total Cost of Goods Sold	21,008
Gross Profit	360,462
Total Expense	404,429
Net Ordinary Income	(43,967)
Other Income/Expense	
Total Other Income	7,644
Total Other Expense	(20)
Net Other Income	7,664
Net Income	\$ (36,303)

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY Balance Sheet

As of October 31, 2004

Accrual Basis

ASSETS

Current Assets	
Chequing/Savings	\$ 40,485
Accounts Receivable	831
Other Current Assets	28,519
Total Current Assets	69,835
Fixed Assets	59,932
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 129,767

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	\$ (3,695)
Credit Cards	1,164
Other Current Liabilities	40,075
Total Current Liabilities	37,544
Total Liabilities	37,544
Equity	92,224
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$ 129,768

"I'm Not Ready..."

words from your new President

by Silvia Vilches

When I was first asked, by the now Past President Rosemary Barritt, if I would like to consider standing as nominee for President this year, my first thoughts were "I'm not ready, I'm not a true yogi, I don't even practice regularly enough and I can't bend!" Very fortunately, as these things happen, I picked up a 1986 Ascent magazine from the "re-use, recycle pile" by the front door of the Yoga Centre, and found that the lead article by Swami Rhada was called "I'm not ready!" She described her journey, as a young white woman pursuing a yoga path in the 1950's, her insecurity as she was selected by her Swami to continue in studies, and her fear that she was not ready when she was inducted as a Swami herself.

However, she recounted a dream that helped. In her dream she was the driver of a bus. Although she didn't know exactly where she was going or what she was doing, people seemed quite comfortable to be on the bus. So, she drove on. She had to stop many times for more people to get on the bus, and at one point, when she looked back, the bus had become a train, to accommodate all the people! She continued to drive, though, focusing on the road ahead. After all, she thought, it was not really her problem if people wanted to get on the bus/train! There is more to her story, but this, she explained, was the meaning; that even if she felt she was not ready, she should not concern herself, because the road was ahead, and her task was to dedicate herself to the journey. People would get on the train if they wanted to!

I have done a lot of community service work over many years, but I have

always avoided the position of "Chair" or "President". After asking some careful questions about the workload, I had to honestly admit that I had the experience from previous non-profit board work, and since I was committed, and others were supportive, there was no reason I could not take this task on. And, as my teachers have said, extending advice given by Mr. Iyengar, "Stretch any amount!" There is no time like the present to try that new pose!

I believe that an organization is like a body, it is complex, and one has to attend with intelligence to the signals it sends. Each part must communicate with the other. There must be sensitivity, but also discipline, in order for the whole to function. The subtle body is as important as the physical body. And practice, practice, practice, leads to astonishing results. The Victoria Yoga Centre has a long history of extremely dedicated supporters and founders, and we now have 613 members! We have a strong body, and I believe it will be a pleasure to serve as President.

On to more serious business. I believe the year ahead will be marked by energy and enthusiasm. In the Chinese calendar, it is the Year of the Rooster, a year marked by energy and change. There is a desire to identify ourselves publicly as a Centre dedicated to the teachings of yoga as developed by Mr. Iyengar, and carried on by his daughter, Geeta, and son, Prashant. This discussion also seems to be stimulating thought and energy toward clarifying our purpose. We are one of a very few non-profit Yoga centres. This means that we are able to provide community services like our special needs classes, bursaries for low-

income students, support to teachers in training (as teachers are all the time!) and many other good works. However, we have been quiet about this in the public realm. Perhaps it is time, in this era of "yoga for sale", to talk about the entire path of yoga, of dedication, service, and ethical action.

I look forward to supporting the centre: thank you for your vote of confidence, and many kind words. ॐ

Announcement!

Members of the Victoria
Yoga Centre recently voted
unanimously to change our name
to

**the Iyengar Yoga Centre
of Victoria.**

The name change will officially
take place as soon as all legal
requirements are met. We are
grateful to B.K.S. Iyengar for
allowing us to use his name
for our centre.

*"If you want to learn
you must learn
to teach yourself."*

— Prashant Iyengar

Workshop review

“Heart of Yoga” with Shirley Daventry French

By Gary Wong

It's been several weeks since I attended Shirley's “Heart of Yoga” weekend seminar. The seminar was a combination of theory and practical, and I learned much of both. The poses, and their sequences were challenging but the seminar was focused on more than just the physicality of yoga. There is the great misconception these days that yoga is all about physically challenging poses, but Shirley made it clear that *Astanga Yoga*, and specifically our Iyengar school of *Astanga Yoga*, is not just about the *asanas*, their physical alignment and the use of props, although all three can be important in our “quest”.

By “quest”, Shirley was talking about quest in the context of our own practice. During her last visit to Pune, the Iyengar Family reviewed the *sadhana* (i.e. dedicated practice of yoga) and how it can be viewed in three ways:

<i>Bahiranga Sadhana</i>	“External” Quest, which I took to be a predominantly physical practice.
<i>Antaranga Sadhana</i>	“Moving Inward” Quest, which I understood to be a practice focusing on body and mind
<i>Antaratma Sadhana</i>	“Innermost” Quest, which I grasped to be a practice concentrating on self, or soul

These three aspects can be viewed as stages in our study of yoga, but Shirley explained that it is not a strictly linear or sequential 1-2-3 progression. As she discussed this further, I made the mental note that I myself was firmly in the *Bahiranga Sadhana* stage; I have an affinity for the standing poses and a tendency to view *asanas* in a biomechanical fashion. However, I did become aware of the other two stages, both at the seminar and in the subsequent weeks. I'll get to this later on, but I'd like to return to the three stages and make one last remark; that the three stages can be linked to the Eight Limbs of yoga.

<i>Bahiranga Sadhana</i>	<i>Yama</i>	(universal moral commandments)
	<i>Niyama</i>	(self purification by discipline)
	<i>Asana</i>	(posture)
<i>Antaranga Sadhana</i>	<i>Pranayama</i>	(rhythmic control of the breath)
	<i>Pratyahara</i>	(sense withdrawal)
<i>Antaratma Sadhana</i>	<i>Dharana</i>	(concentration)
	<i>Dhyana</i>	(meditation)
	<i>Samadhi</i>	(profound deep state of meditation & awareness)



There is more to this concept of *Astanga Yoga* stages and limbs. You will find a clearer, deeper, and better explanation in authoritative sources (i.e. *Light on Yoga*), and so I'll turn my attention back to Shirley's seminar.

Now, I had started off this article by saying that ‘... the seminar was focused on more than just the physicality...’, and how our study is ‘... not just about physical alignment’. If you took this to mean that Shirley neglected the physical aspects of the *asanas* during the seminar, then you would be very much mistaken.

Friday night's *asanas* began with *Tadasana*, and moved into *Supta Tadasana* and *Adho Mukha Vrksasana*. Shirley stressed a ‘...soft abdomen...’, and in fact, demonstrated this on one student. While lying on her back, this student was talked through to a softer abdomen than she had before. Shirley pointed out ‘... see, even her eyes have changed...’ and this was obvious even to my untrained eye. Throughout the rest of the evening's *asanas*, Shirley reminded us to keep a ‘soft abdomen’. Whether it was *Sirsasana*, *Sarvangasana*, or *Setu Bandha Sarvangasana*, we were conscious of our ‘soft’ or perhaps ‘less-than-soft’ abdomen.

Saturday morning's seminar began with a short review of Friday's material, and then we were off through a variety of sitting and lying poses. One person asked about the correct shoulder-blade action, and Shirley used touch to help her adjust the shoulder blades; I could see the difference in breadth of the shoulder-blades and how they moved away from the skin's surface and into the body. Throughout the day, *asanas* were taught in-depth, with pauses to answer questions and to demonstrate how that answer revealed itself in our bodies.

One concept that I picked up on that day was the '-ing' aspect of the instructions. Shirley repeatedly used active verbs in the progressive tense, such as '... arms lengthening...', '... shoulder-blades cutting in...', '...front groins softening...', '...tailbone plugging in...' I learned that these actions are not ones you can do once and then just hold, that there's an unbroken intent. This made the *asanas* even more challenging for me.

This challenge was heightened by the repetition... of each pose... several times... on each side. The length of time also seemed to be longer than how I hold them in my own practice. Of course, it may have just been that Shirley's verbal instructions coerced me into a better asana, and there were indeed many verbal instructions. But, Shirley was sure to include after each final repetition, the directive to '... and now, do not dwell on what you've accomplished or have yet to accomplish in this pose, just be in this pose....'.

Near the end of Saturday's session, Shirley repeated that '... after a few minutes in this pose, we STOP adjusting and just wait, and enjoy...' At the time, we were in *Supta Virasana* (a pose I do not associate with 'enjoyment'), but I was surprised to find that part of me initially unwilling to yield, can release and settle, if I just... wait.

The final morning's seminar started as the day before, with a review and short discussion on

Bahiranga, *Antaratma*, and *Antaranga Sadhana*. We moved into some preparatory poses before *Urdva Dhanurasana*, then some twists, and then *Sirsasana*. During *Sirsasana*, I came down before the rest of the class, and while looking around the room, I noticed something interesting.

Those still in headstand were rock-solid on their forearms, and some were rock-solid from their forearms right on up the torso, the legs, and even their feet (and toes) were completely unwavering. A few had that solid foundation, an unwavering body, and a peaceful facial expression with eyes that were crystal clear; some lips even had a slight smile on them.

After this, we continued on to *Sarvangasana*, *Pashimottanasana*, and finished with *Savasana*. It was a relatively quiet *Savasana*, with a minimum of instructions from Shirley. When *Savasana* ended, I found that for the first time ever, I did not spring up to be one of the first out of the pose. In fact, I had to make a conscious 'adjustment' to even be able to come out of the pose.



That was the end of the seminar, but not the end of my learning.

By going through my notes, and working them into my practice, I have a different awareness in the *asanas*. After a few minutes in a pose, I now STOP adjusting and wait. Before coming out of the pose, I'll check to see if I'm coming out because it's time to come out, or because my limbs are saying '... I'm tired...'. If the latter, I'll wait a bit more.

Then, before coming out of this one pose, I'll check to see if I'm coming out because it's time to come out, or because my breath is becoming shallow or hard. If the latter, I'll quieten my breath and wait a little more.

Then, before coming out of this same pose, I'll check to see if I'm coming out because it's time to come out, or because my mind is saying '... I'm bored...'. If the latter, I'll refocus my attention and wait a few more breaths.

Then, when I do acknowledge that it's time to come out, I'm ready to come out. But by now there is a certain familiarity in the pose that invites me to stay, and so I stay just a little bit longer. ॐ

GARY IS A KEEN STUDENT AND PRACTITIONER. HE IS IN LEVEL 3.

Working with Guruji

by John Evans

John Evans was asked by the Astadala Yogamala Fund group to write an article for IYN to give a flavour of his experience of working with Guruji. The following article was first published in Iyengar Yoga News, Spring 2004, No. 5, a publication of the Iyengar Yoga Association of the United Kingdom. It is with their kind permission that we reprint this article here.

I have just come back from two weeks in Pune after an absence of three years. What took me was the usual, a book to be worked on with Guruji, with Geeta and Prashant helping and advising. I had worried the city would have changed beyond recognition and it is true that bits of it were unrecognisable. Sadly there are fewer birds, though the mewling kites still soar over Shivajinagar, and the chances of waking to the rumble of a bullock cart's wheels are nil, but once one turns off the Ganeshkind road into the tree lined model colony and enters the old familiar institute, nothing essential seems to have changed.

Yet you have only to walk downstairs to the narrow semi-basement library to find that, except as according to Prashant, in Savasana, time does not stand still. In days past at three o'clock the library would be empty, save for Guruji dealing with his correspondence, a mouse-quiet librarian and a typewriter on loan from a museum. Now it is difficult to find a free chair. Sprightly students using yogic powers (or just youth) to appear awake even during the siesta hours sit in front of flashing screens, palm tops, lap tops, heavy PCs, printers, all jungled together with electronic entrails. The muffled talk is largely of failure to download, loss of compatibility and other arcane maladies of the information society.

The only constant is Guruji, still, pen in hand, immersed in his papers, but alert as a dragon guarding its treasure, and I remember the old ways of manuscript correction. First Guruji



would hand me a sheaf of blue typescript with edges curling up. I would correct it for spelling and grammar, strike out repetitions and overworked images, and mark the passages which, being incomprehensible to me, might be so also to others.

Then back to Guruji: "This is not clear," I might say, or "This is contradictory." He never, ever, replied, "Well, it is clear to me," or defended his text. His attitude was simply to accept that it was not right and to set about changing it. To that end he would re-explain, re-express as often and as long as necessary and expect me to get on with it. He never looked back, never argued. All his attachment was to the subject, yoga, and none to his text. He describes himself as a practical man. That means dealing with things as they are. So he takes a raw paragraph from where it is, just as he brings along our Trikonasana from where it is. Patanjali says that mastery of asana will leave us unshaken by dualities. To any author a big red line through paragraph after paragraph is a shaking experience. Not to Guruji - he is unmoved.

Do perseverance, absence of pride and authorial egotism make him easy to work with? Of course, for the only problem that remains is the original one of how to express the subject and all energy is directed to that end. How much easier Guruji's life as a teacher would be if only his students brought that same clean, optimistic humility to learning yoga.

People have some funny ideas about the "Spiritual Path", partly because of the language we use. What we call the spiritual path takes place in the realm of Nature. After all, how can you move towards something which, like Divinity, is already by definition, everywhere? A better image might be that if we tidy and clean our house thoroughly enough, we might one day notice that Divinity has been sitting in it all along.

Even if a man were to see God, it would still be impossible for him to describe God to others and remain an honest man. All he

can do is teach others to see, and that, I think, is what the Iyengars try to do, to impart through yoga the technology of seeing, of hearing, of scent, of taste and of sensitive feeling. They show others how to discover. They never say what the discovery will be.

A scientist sets out to conquer nature through knowledge – external nature, external knowledge. By these means he may split the atom and achieve external power. A yogi sets out to explore the nature of his own nature, to penetrate the atom of being. He does not gain dominion over wide lands and restless seas, but over his own recalcitrant flesh and febrile mind. This is not the power to destroy, but power to heal, the power of compassionate truth. This, to my mind, is what Gururji has. He radiates benevolent intelligence. The presence of truth can make us feel naked, but the compassion takes all our shame away.

There are those who like to evaluate, compare, even judge their gurus, as if they were top cricketers or great artists. This is

obviously nonsense. When I first met Gururji twenty five years ago, I was aware that I was standing at the foot of a rather large mountain. How high, who could tell? The summit was out of sight. Has he changed in the last quarter century? Of course; beyond doubt the mountain is even more immense, and no, I still cannot see the top. The only observation I would make is that, strangely enough, the larger this mountain grows, the more sunny and clement the weather around it becomes.

Dr. D.T. Suzuki, the Japanese savant, was once asked what the difference was, in daily life, between an ordinary man and one who has reached the ultimate freedom. He replied that whereas the ordinary man walks with his feet two metres above the ground, the enlightened man walks with his feet touching the earth. Perhaps we should bear this in mind when we hear Gururji say, "I am a practical man". We may not be able to see the summit of Mount Iyengar but at least we can appreciate the base planted so firmly on the ground. ॐ

B.K.S. Iyengar is coming to North America!

B.K.S. Iyengar will deliver the opening keynote address at the Yoga Journal Conference in Estes Park, Colorado September 26 - October 2, 2005.

Gururji will be present in the morning classes taught by senior Iyengar Yoga teachers during the Iyengar Yoga Intensive September 26 - 29. He will also lead a closing Q&A on Thursday morning, September 29.

Certified Iyengar Yoga teachers may register for the Iyengar Intensive, September 26 - 29 or for the

entire conference, September 26 - October 2 during the first two weeks of registration beginning on March 28, 2005.

All Iyengar Yoga students with at least two years experience may register for the Iyengar Intensive or for the entire conference on April 11.

The conference brochure and registration information is available at:

www.yogajournal.com/yjevents/estespark.cfm

Thank you!

• Jean Ives for helping at the front desk. • Katrina Chappel for helping to keep the kitchen clean. • Everyone who participated in our special day of chanting in January to raise money for the victims of the tsunami. Approximately \$350 was donated to the Red Cross.

• Hilary McPhail, Bob Maher, Greg Sly & Jasmine, Patti Kallio, Betty MacNaughton, Joan Douglas, Ty Chandler, Silvia Vilches, Finka Toevs, Laure Newnham, Karin Holtkamp, Vicki Robichaud, Lynn Langford, Charles Campbell and Jim & Sue Riddell for representing our centre at The Victoria Health Fair earlier this year. Everyone took turns sitting at our table over the weekend and answered questions that the public had about yoga and our centre.

VICTORIA *yoga centre* Calendar

MAY

- 7 Seeing & Correcting with Shirley Daventry French
- 13-14 Inspirations from India with Leslie Hogya
- 26-30 Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada AGM – Fredericton

JUNE

- 3-5 Saltspring Retreat with Shirley Daventry French
- 11 Teachers' Meeting
- 17-19 Introductory I/II Assessment in Courtney-Comox

JULY

- 4-31 Term 6
- 4-24 21 Day Sadhana: with Linda Benn, Wies Pukesh, Robin Cantor
- 11-16 Teacher Training Intensive – Introductory Levels with Linda Benn, Leslie Hogya, Ann Kilbertus

AUGUST

- 2-31 Term 7
- 15-19 Teacher Training Intensive – Junior Intermediate Levels with Shirley Daventry French
- 29- Sept 2 Student Intensive: with Lauren Cox, Ty Chandler

SEPTEMBER

- 5-9 5 Day Sadhana: with Robin Cantor
- 6-11 Registration Week
- 12 Term 1 begins
- 17 Teachers' Meeting
- 23-25 Weekend Workshop with Felicity Green
CANCELLED due to B.K.S. Iyengar tour
- 26 B.K.S. Iyengar – Estes Park, Colorado

OCTOBER

- 14-15 Inspirations from India with Ann Kilbertus, Melissa Worth
- 22 Teachers' Meeting
- 21-23 Introductory I/II Assessment in London, ON
- 21-23 Introductory I/II Assessment in Winnipeg, MB
- 31 Term 2 Begins

NOVEMBER

- 4-6 Weekend Workshop with Chris Saudek
Junior Intermediate Workshop for levels 3 & 4
- 26 Teachers' Meeting

DECEMBER

- 2 Sutra Workshop with Shirley Daventry French
- 3-4 Going Deeper with Shirley Daventry French
- 9-11 Junior Intermediate I Assessment in Montreal
- 19-23 5 Day Sadhana with Corrine Lowen
- 21-22 Winter Solstice Workshop with Ty Chandler

JANUARY 2006

- 21 Teachers' Meeting
- 27-30 Heart of Yoga with Shirley Daventry French

FEBRUARY 2006

- 4 VYC AGM
- 12 Inspirations from India with Linda Benn
- 25 Teachers' Meeting

Check our website www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca to find out about the current class schedule.

Summer Sizzler

For maximum flexibility and versatility this summer, purchase one of the Victoria Yoga Centre's Summer Sizzler Passes. GET details at the reception desk.

Use four passes in a week or stretch it over the months of July and August! These passes are for experienced students ONLY.

New to yoga? Please sign up for a level one class.



VYC Summer Sizzler Pass

12 half hour segments
for **\$48** (+GST)

Save up to \$12

Come to:
Six 1 hour classes
or
Four 1.5 hour classes
or
Three 2 hour classes
or
mix it up!

VYC Summer Sizzler DELUXE Pass

24 half hour segments
for **\$88** (+GST)

Save up to \$26

Come to:
Twelve 1 hour classes
or
Eight 1.5 hour classes
or
Six 2 hour classes
or
mix it up!



Radha Yoga Centre

CELEBRATING SARASWATI

Sunday May 15, 1:00 to 4:00 pm
Fee: \$20.00

Saraswati, Goddess of wisdom and learning, is a special symbol for us because our teachings come through the lineage of the Saraswati Order of Yoga. Saraswati's realm is entered through the inspiration and insight of the heart, enabling us to bring refinement to our daily lives.

Come find and celebrate Saraswati in all of us. The afternoon will be filled with Mantra, poetry, song and dance.

THE ROSE CEREMONY

Saturday June 11, 7:30 - 9:00 pm
& Sunday June 12, 10 - 11 am

This beautiful ritual is a means to remember our personal commitment to an ideal. Move beyond the opposites in your life, beyond good/bad, accept/reject, let go of your grudges and resentments. Enter the love and joy of Divine Mother's grace.

All are welcome Call for details.
Bring 2 roses. Fee: by donation



NOW OPEN!

Radha Yoga and Eatery

728 Main Street
Vancouver
(604) 605-0011
radha@telus.net

Drop by for A Relaxing Yoga Class
&/or Delicious Vegetarian Food

time to renew

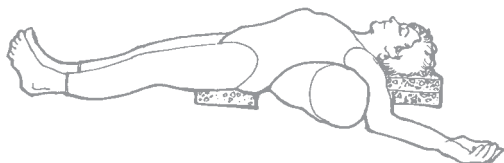
This is a reminder that the
Victoria Yoga Centre membership
expired on December 31, 2004.

The membership subscription fee is
\$40 + GST, effective June 1, 2005,
(Canadian residents add 7% GST)
and is 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 (at right), and send to the Victoria Yoga Centre.



VICTORIA
yoga centre
SOCIETY

Membership and Newsletter Subscription

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

**Victoria Yoga Centre Society, c/o Karin Holtkamp,
202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3**

Membership/subscription fee is \$40 plus GST,
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

Membership benefits include 5% discount on classes, free practice times at the VYC, timed practices, early registration and discount on workshops, borrowing privileges in our library, eligibility to become a board member and eligibility for scholarships for workshops.

July / August 2005



VICTORIA

yoga centre

NEWSLETTER



We are what we think,
All that arises from our thoughts.
With our thoughts we make the world.
Speak or act with a pure mind
And happiness will follow you
As your shadow, unshakable.

– *Dhammapada*

Weekend Workshop with **MAHYAR RAZ**



One of Canada's most senior teachers, Mahyar Raz, is Director of the Iyengar Yoga School of Toronto and founder of the Yoga Institute in Tehran, Iran. Her studies include time in Pune and work with 'Modern Techniques in Medical Yoga' at the Gupta Yoga Hospital in Lonavla, India. She interprets the work of B.K.S. Iyengar, Prashant and Geeta with artistic flair and promises all a charming and challenging weekend.

September 23-25, 2005

Friday 6:30 - 9 pm

Saturday 10:30 am - 1:30 pm and 3:30 - 6 pm

Sunday 9 am - 12 pm

Prerequisite: six months of Iyengar Yoga.

Fees: \$203.50 + GST for VYC members

\$233.50 + GST for non-members

Registration opens June 15, 2005 for members and June 29, 2005 for non-members.

To register, drop in or phone:

202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 3K3

250 386-YOGA (9642)

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

inspirations from *India*



WITH ANN KILBERTUS
& MELISSA WORTH

October 14 & 15, 2005

Friday, 6:30 - 8:30 pm, Saturday 11:00 am - 5:00 pm

Melissa and Ann are both certified Iyengar Yoga teachers. Both Melissa and Ann have recently returned from studying at the RIYMI Institute in India. It was Ann's fourth trip and Melissa's first. They are looking forward to sharing their combined experience and insights from this recent illuminative journey. All Levels workshop, with a minimum of two terms of level one.

Fees: \$95+GST for VYC members

\$105+GST for non-members

(Bring a snack for Saturday afternoon)

To register, drop in or phone:

Victoria Yoga Centre

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

250 386-YOGA(9642)

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

contents



2 Editorial

3 Reflections from the Archives

by Shirley Daventry French



6 Freedom and Contentment

by Corrine Lowen

8 Kleshas And Anti-kleshotics

by Prashant Iyengar

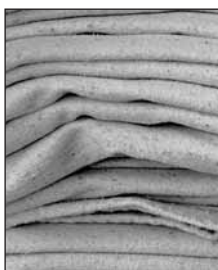


12 Why do Yoga?

by Eleanor Holwerda

13 Teacher Training Paper

by Karen Woodland



15 Understanding the Principles Behind "Iyengar Yoga"

20 Calendar

Newsletter Advertising Policy (Adopted February 20, 2004)

In keeping with the mandate of the Victoria Yoga Centre Society Directors, 2004, to update, review and document policies and procedures, the newsletter committee submitted a policy which is a revision of the 1996 policy and has been adopted by the Board of Directors as follows:

1. Advertisements must not conflict with the aims of the newsletter of the VYCS.
2. Advertisements must be only for Iyengar Yoga
3. Priority given to advertisements regarding:
 - VYC events
 - VYC sponsored events
 - CIYTA events
 - Radha House/ Yasodhara Ashram

COURSE REGISTRATION:

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

Phone:
250 386-YOGA(9642)

Refund policy:
Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.



VICTORIA yoga centre NEWSLETTER

EDITOR Taimi Mulder

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Shirley Daventry French, Lauren Cox,
Greg Sly, Jane Munro, Susan Robinson,
Nancy Searing, Melissa Worth

DESIGN / PRODUCTION Cady Graphics

PHOTOGRAPHY Corrine Lowen,
Gillian Davidson, Taimi Mulder

ADS / ANNOUNCEMENTS
Nancy Searing

ILLUSTRATIONS Lauren Cox

SCANNING Nancy Poole, Taimi Mulder

DISTRIBUTION Rosemary Barritt,
Krysia Strawczynski, Karin Holtkamp

MEMBERSHIP / MAILING LIST
Karin Holtkamp

PRINTING Hillside Printing

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
July 15, 2005

VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE SOCIETY

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

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

Send contributions, articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions to the Victoria Yoga Centre Newsletter: 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3. For information on activities and events, call 386-YOGA(9642) or visit our website: www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca.

Permission is hereby granted to reprint any of our material, except that copyrighted by the author or artists. When reprinting, please credit this Newsletter and send us two copies of the publication containing our material. Copyright material is only available with written permission.

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

Editorial

As many of you may, or may not, know the previous newsletter issue was Gwynneth Powell's last issue as editor. She has moved to North Vancouver, is happily teaching yoga, riding her mountain bike, and sharpening her pencil to create contributions to this newsletter. Gwynneth's abounding energy, attention to detail, and organizational talents have been a great boon to the newsletter and the Victoria Yoga Centre. She embodies the true spirit of karma yoga, selflessly giving of her time and energy with a beautiful openness of spirit. To commemorate her departure it is only fitting to reprint her swan song to the newsletter committee and give readers an inside look at an editor's job with the many late night meetings invariably accompanied by take-out sushi over the years:

Dear all...i'd LOVE to say yes to sushi and the upcoming newsletter meeting but as my last issue is about to hit the stands this week, i will officially be OFF of our esteemed victoria newsletter committee. and once i stop commuting to victoria, at the end of june, i'll be added to the masses of out of town subscribers and the newsletter will arrive on my doorstep. i'll know i've entered another realm when that moment comes (and perhaps i can now be a contributor from time to time). now, not to get all nostalgic and sentimental but i do say that in terms of many things, being on the newsletter committee has taught me so much. i came onto the committee with an interest in being there and not much more than that. once on the committee i learned not only how to write...but also 'how' to edit, for i knew nothing about editing or style sheets until neil mckinlay walked me through my very first issue. i swear i phoned him every day, 4 times a day sometimes for weeks...and then perhaps a little less frequently during my 2nd issue, until neil finally took away my water wings. i felt i had an inside scoop as i learned about how the timing of what we printed was sometimes as important as what we didn't print. i learned how to revise what people had written, and how revising one person's work might be a piece of cake due to their nature and non-covetness...while another

person's attachment to 'their' words required a completely different approach. i learned about digital cameras, and at one point i actually did learn how to scan (but i forget now). but mostly i learned how to work with a great bunch of people while at the same time doing some very important work for our community. i can't tell you how nice it felt walking into the library in pune and introducing myself to mr. lyengar as one of the editors of the VYC newsletter – and him smiling at me, knowing very well our publication. and how great it was when i passed out some issues of our newsletter in pune and then having someone from greece email me to ask me whom to contact to become a member so they could get the newsletter in their country. it's been good work. it has kept me in the inner loop of the yoga community and it's been a great place to be for the last five years...thank you to you all who have been there through all the meetings, the joinings, the leavings...and to those who will go on with this work.

*boo hoo and hats off to you all.
love, gwynneth*

NOTE: If you would like to join the newsletter committee as editor, or otherwise, please contact any member of the newsletter committee or leave a message with our front desk. ॐ





SHIRLEY DAVENTRY FRENCH WAS AWARDED SENIOR CERTIFICATION FROM B.K.S. IYENGAR. SHE HAS BEEN TEACHING SINCE 1972 AND FOUNDED THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE IN 1976. SHIRLEY LIVES IN VICTORIA AND TEACHES WORLDWIDE.

Burning zeal in practice, self-study and study of scriptures, and surrender to God are the acts of yoga.

Patanjali's Yoga Sutras: II-1
translation by B.K.S. Iyengar in
Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali

Why yoga? Why has it assumed such a central role in your life? What brought you to yoga? These questions were posed by someone who was interviewing me for a small regional newspaper published monthly in the area where I live. This man, who is one of the editors of this publication, had just completed a course of classes at my home studio so knew a little about my work.

I was not surprised to be asked the above questions. In the West, interest in yoga has grown over the past thirty years, but it is still a rarity to meet an otherwise normal and rational woman, who on the outside looks pretty much like everyone else, whose life has become so involved with an esoteric Eastern practice. What did surprise me, was that a very large part of this interview was devoted to questions about my life before I began yoga. I was also surprised at how little I wanted to talk about this part of my life preferring to get on to what interests me now. Of course, I understand that the philosophical precepts of yoga are, at best, of limited concern to most of the readers of this newspaper, while they may be interested in what led me to forsake one way of life for another - and I do hope the message will come across that Yoga is, above all, a way of life.

At other times, in other places, with less discerning interviewers, I have been asked: Is Yoga a religion? Is it a cult? Are you cured yet? And the perennial questions: can you do lotus posture and stand on your head?

It's not that I had a bad or a dull life, before yoga. It was full and interesting, challenging and diverse, with many adventures, some of which have become the stuff of family folklore. It was a good life, so what did bring me to yoga?

Once upon a time, there was a young Englishwoman who met a young Englishman. They fell in love, and after many trials and tribulations, they overcame the obstacles placed in their path, got married, travelled, immigrated to Canada where he opened a medical office, she had three lovely children (in four years), and they lived happily...for a while. Then questions began to surface like: What am I doing here? Why am I here? What is the purpose of my life? Who am I?

There was a tendency to answer (or avoid answering) many of these questions by blaming, i.e. if only I were still in England, why did I let him talk me into coming to Canada; or by trying to change the world out there, i.e. becoming involved in politics, trying to change the local education system, and the health care system in the province. From time to time another question arose: why don't you try to change yourself?

One day, I decided to explore that possibility. I started Tai Chi, was initiated into Transcendental Meditation, and also took leave of my family to attend a week long course which was grandly called "Sensitivity

*Then questions began to surface like:
What am I doing here? Why am I here?
What is the purpose of my life? Who am I?*

Training” and turned out to be an encounter I group - a popular form of self-discovery in the late sixties. What I began to encounter was myself, and I did not like much of what I saw.

I have always had an interest in sports and physical exercise, so after my children were born I joined the Y and became involved in fitness classes and swimming. I also fulfilled a lifelong desire to study ballet, and joined a beginners’ class for adults who had never danced before. Then the time of my dance class was changed to an inconvenient hour, and that same week, in the changing room at the Y, I met a woman who was taking yoga classes there. What she told me sounded intriguing, so I substituted yoga for ballet. At first I was there merely for the exercise, but then began to notice something more was happening - to my mind!

The teaching was not Iyengar Yoga, which had not yet arrived in Canada, but I was fortunate to find a good teacher who herself wanted to learn more about yoga. When she discovered that there was a noted yogini who had established an ashram not too far away in central British Columbia, she invited Swami Radha to Victoria. She also recommended Mr. Iyengar’s book *Light on Yoga* as the best book on yoga which was available, and often in class we worked with it as our guide. I bought the book and a few weeks’ later attended a lecture given by Swami Radha. The seeds were sown for my yogic journey.

I listened to Swami Radha speaking about yoga philosophy and psychology, and I was intrigued. She even asked the group some of the questions I had been asking myself: Who are you? What is the purpose of your life? What makes your life worth living? I was excited, so much of what she said made sense; but she left me with more questions than answers, and I continued my quest by studying at Yasodhara Ashram, attending more classes and workshops in and around Victoria, and eventually travelling to the

Yoga took over more and more of my thoughts, words and deeds to the point where once, in frustration because I was not meeting some of his expectations, my husband burst out that I was a yoga fanatic.

source of these teachings, India itself. It was at Yasodhara Ashram that I took my first class in Iyengar Yoga taught by a teacher who had just returned from studying with Mr. Iyengar in Pune, and it was she who paved the way for me to go there.

Yoga took over more and more of my thoughts, words and deeds to the point where once, in frustration because I was not meeting some of his expectations, my husband burst out that I was a yoga fanatic. The zeal of fanaticism is always misdirected, but zeal is a necessary ingredient on the yogic path which is steep and twisting, paved with temptations to give it all up, and other obstacles, such as seductive suggestions that you have done enough, you deserve a rest, and there must be an easier way to self-realisation.

In the West, Yoga is seen largely as a means of becoming more flexible or more relaxed, both of which are by-products of the practice. However, facing your limitations, physical or otherwise, is not relaxing; it can be intimidating, frustrating and exhausting-and is certainly hard work unless you are one of those rare souls who has evolved sufficiently to be able to surrender and practise non-attachment in all aspects of life.

Over two thousand years ago, the renowned sage Patanjali, an expert in yoga, compiled and systematised the available knowledge and teachings of yoga into one hundred and ninety six terse aphorisms or maxims which are known as Patanjali’s *yoga-sutras*. *Sutra* means thread, and in her book *Language of the Gods*, Judith Tyberg says: “*Sutras* are pearls of thoughts sewn together on one string.” Originally written in sanskrit, an ancient language in which many of the Eastern spiritual texts were written, the *sutras* have been translated by many people, numerous commentaries have been written on them, and they are the subject of a great number of books, large and small.

Patanjali divided his aphorisms into four sections. The first chapter *Samadhi Pada* is directed towards individuals who have already travelled far along the yogic path (in this life or past lives). According to Mr. Iyengar in his book *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, this chapter “is directed towards those who are already highly evolved to enable them to maintain their advanced state of cultured, matured intelligence and wisdom.”

For the rest of us, while it is important to study the first chapter which gives a good overview of yoga, the workings of the mind, and the obstacles we face, the work we have to do is more clearly laid out in the second chapter which is called *Sadhana Pada*. *Sadhana* is spiritual practice, the means by which one can attain spiritual realisation. Judith Tyberg says: “*Sadhana* is the act of mastering Yoga. It is one’s worship or method of spiritual fulfilment, spiritual self-training and exercise.”

Sadhana Pada begins with a definition of *Kriya Yoga*, the yoga of action, which has three tiers: *tapas*, (self-discipline); *svadhyaya* (self-study); *Isvara pranidhana* (surrender to God). *Kriya Yoga* includes the three great paths of yoga: *kurma marga* (the path of action), *jnana marga* (the path of knowledge), *bhakti marga*

(the path of devotion). Those of us who practise Iyengar Yoga are practising *Kriya Yoga*. In the third *sutra* of this chapter, Patanjali lists five afflictions (*klesas*), which impede progress: ignorance, egoism, attractions, repulsions, and clinging to life, and further states that ignorance is the source of all the rest. Does this sound familiar to anyone?

At the end of *Sadhana Pada* we are introduced to *Astanga Yoga* (the eightfold path or eight limbs of yoga). Here we find *tapas*, *svadhyaya* and *Ishvara pranidhana* appearing again under the heading *niyama* or individual ethical observances which are the underpinnings of the practice of *asana* and the second of the eight limbs - *asana* being the third. The practice of Iyengar Yoga also incorporates *Astanga Yoga* which is introduced towards the end of *Samadhi Pada*.

These divisions are merely a means of creating a structure within which to do our work, a structure which offers support and guidance. Study of the *sutras* helps us to develop a better understanding of this path on which we have embarked, like a map of the territory which gives a sense of direction. Study of the *sutras* can help us to move along a little more quickly, and prevent us from losing our way or wasting too much time by going down cul-de-sacs which lead nowhere. Mr. Iyengar always refers to his work simply as Yoga, and it was a long time before he accepted the

...teachers are being trained in this type of Yoga all over the world, and if you practise Iyengar Yoga you are part of an unbroken tradition which can be traced back to Patanjali.

use of the term Iyengar Yoga even though his students had begun to use it as a means of identifying themselves as pupils of this Master. Now it is widely used, teachers are being trained in this type of Yoga all over the world, and if you practise Iyengar Yoga you are part of an unbroken tradition which can be traced back to Patanjali. I am honoured to be part of this tradition.

What a blessing to have had the opportunity to study with two great contemporary masters of yoga, but with this comes a responsibility to do the work myself and pass on what I can to others! Swami Radha may have gone physically, but her teaching lives on. B.K.S. Iyengar is still alive with a worthy disciple in his daughter Geeta who under his tutelage has become a master of yoga in her own right. I hope I will never stop learning from them, so that I can develop a deeper understanding of the ancient teachings of yoga, remarkable teachings which have survived for thousands of years. This is what I would have like to have talked about in my newspaper interview, but this column is probably a better place for such ruminations.

Swami Radha used to talk about Lord Krishna's flute, on which he plays a variety of tunes to entice different people to approach the Divine. A newspaper article may encourage someone to try yoga for the first time, while hopefully an article like this one encourages those who have already embarked on the path of yoga to read and reflect on the *yoga-sutras* and what relevance they might have in their life. Beginner or advanced practitioner, for all of us there was a remark, an event, an illness, an injury, something or other which got us into yoga in the first place. For me it was because my dance class was cancelled.

Om Krishna Guru. ॐ

Can you help?

Are you able to provide a private bedroom and a breakfast for a yogi during either one or both of the Teacher Training Intensives? If so, please fill out a form at the front desk or contact Robin Cantor at robincantor@telus.net (382-4111)

Or, if you are out of town during this period, yoga students housesit for you. The billet and breakfast rate is \$30 per day.

Upcoming **IYAC**

Assessment Dates

Oct 21-23, 2005

Introductory I/II
London ON
Winnipeg MB

Dec 9-11, 2005

Introductory I/II &
Junior Intermediate I
Montreal QC





AUTHOR: CORRINE LOWEN
 CORRINE IS A STUDENT AND
 NEWLY CERTIFIED (INTRO I/II)
 TEACHER AT THE VICTORIA
 YOGA CENTRE.

Freedom and Contentment

By Corrine Lowen

Yama are universal moral codes that prescribe the social disciplines or abstinences that transcend all creeds and cultures. *Niyama* are individual disciplines. There are five yama and five niyama (see table), which together form the two foundation limbs of *astanga yoga*. All the *yama* and *niyama* are interrelated. Here I explore the special relationship between *aparigraha* (non-greed) and *santosa* (contentment).

Aparigraha means non-greed. It involves the renunciation of possessions beyond those

required for the necessities of life. When *Aparigraha* is practiced one feels a reduced dependency on external resources. With this freedom from acquisitiveness one does not hanker after objects and pleasures that have no relation to the necessities of life. The practice of *aparigraha* keeps life simple. When one lives simply, satisfaction comes easily, creating the conditions for *santosa*, or contentment. Desires diminish when one is content and in a state of *santosa*. When desire is conquered, practice of *aparigraha* comes

IYENGAR YOGA

Teacher Training Intensives



July 11-16, 2005
With Leslie Hogya,
Ann Kilbertus
and Linda Benn

This six -day course will build your understanding of teaching Iyengar Yoga based on the foundation of good practice. Leslie, Ann and Linda are experienced teachers certified at the Junior Intermediate Level III through the Iyengar Association of Canada (I.Y.A.C) and are qualified I.Y.A.C. assessors. They are involved in teacher training in Victoria as well as assisting teachers in outlying British Columbia and Yukon communities.

Preference will be given to I.Y.A.C members and those preparing for assessment in the near future.

July Intensive FULL. A wait list is being taken.

August 15-19
With Shirley Daventry French

This program is for teachers certified at the Introductory Level II or higher.

Shirley is a long-time student of B.K.S. Iyengar who 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.

Both Intensives will include daily classes in asana and pranayama, the art and science of teaching and peer teaching. Philosophy and anatomy will be included.

As in previous years, Iyengar Yoga teachers from other countries are also invited to apply. I.Y.A.C. members will relieve priority.

Fees: \$560 + GST for VYC members, \$600 + GST for non members

Scholarship applications due May 7 for the July Intensive and June 7 for the August Intensive.

To register contact the Victoria Yoga Centre, 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 3K3 3250 386-YOGA(9642)

A deposit of \$150 will reserve a place. Full payment is due June 2, 2005. If you cancel before June 2 your deposit less 10% will be refunded. After June 2, refunds will only be given if your space can be filled.

with ease. *The yogi feels the lack of nothing and so he is naturally content* (Iyengar, p. 17).

The principles of *aparigraha* and *santosa* teach us to remember that we live in a world of abundance, that our world contains all that we need to live a full and happy life. When we

learn to trust and have faith that we will find what we need in our world when we need it, we are released from the pressures of pursuing unnecessary need. And in those moments when we stop running after the unnecessary, we taste the nectar of, and are free to enjoy contentment.

YAMA: THE ABSTINENCES, SOCIAL DISCIPLINES, UNIVERSAL MORAL CODES	NIYAMA: INDIVIDUAL DISCIPLINE
<p>AHIMSA</p> <p>Harmlessness, non-violence to self and all others; being at peace with the world. A state of mind in which all others are treated with respect. <i>Violence is bound to decline when men learn to base their faith upon reality and investigation rather than upon ignorance and supposition. ...The yogi opposes evil in the wrong doer, but not the wrong-doer</i> (Iyengar, p. 13). <i>Ahimsa</i> brings freedom from fear and freedom from anger.</p>	<p>SAUCA</p> <p>Internal and external cleanliness, purity. Cleanliness of the senses, personal hygiene, cleanliness of the mind and the body. Internal cleansing gives radiance and joy. It brings benevolence...and banishes mental pain, dejection, sorrow and despair (Iyengar, p. 17).</p>
<p>SATYA</p> <p>Truth in thought, speech and action. Practice of satya reduces malice. <i>When the mind bears malice towards none, it is filled with charity towards all</i> (Iyengar, p. 13).</p>	<p>SANTOSA</p> <p>Cultivated contentment, reduced desire; santosa results in pure happiness. <i>A mind that is not content cannot concentrate. The yogi feels the lack of nothing and so he is naturally content.</i> (Iyengar, p. 17).</p>
<p>ASTEYA</p> <p>Non-stealing. Refraining from misappropriation, misuse, mismanagement and breach of trust. Brings freedom from craving. <i>He who obeys the commandment thou shalt not steal, becomes a trusted repository of all treasures</i> (Iyengar, p. 15).</p>	<p>TAPAS</p> <p>Austerity, religious fervor, burning desire, self-discipline, endurance. Purity in thought, speech and action. <i>Tapas</i> removes physical and mental impurities and leads to mastery over the senses. Practice of <i>tapas</i> builds character. <i>By tapas the yogi develops strength in body, mind and character. He gains courage and wisdom, integrity, straightforwardness and simplicity</i> (Iyengar, p. 18).</p>
<p>BRAMACARYA</p> <p>Continence, moderation in sexual relations, steadying of the vital energy of the body. Vitality, energy, a courageous mind and powerful intellect develop through <i>bramacharya</i>. <i>Bramacharya is the battery that sparks the torch of wisdom</i> (Iyengar, p.15).</p>	<p>SVADHYAYA</p> <p>Self study, education of self, leading to self-realization. Practice of <i>Svadhyaya</i> elevates one's thought processes and integrates them into life and living. <i>Ignorance has no beginning, but it has an end. There is a beginning but no end to knowledge</i> (Iyengar, p. 19).</p>
<p>APARIGRAHA</p> <p>Non greed, renunciation of possessions beyond those required for the necessities of life. Reduced dependency on external resources. Freedom from acquisitiveness: hankering after unnecessary objects and pleasures. <i>Aparigraha</i> keeps life simple and one remains satisfied with life. <i>Everything [the yogi] really needs will come by itself at the proper time</i> (Iyengar, p. 16).</p>	<p>ISVARA PRANIDHANA</p> <p>Surrender of all one's actions, in devotion to the lord, emptying the mind of desire. Practice of <i>Isvara pranidhana</i> brings illumination and mental power with knowledge that the source of these powers is the Lord. <i>Actions mirror a man's personality better than words. The yogi has learned the art of dedicating all his actions to the Lord and so they reflect the divinity within him</i> (Iyengar, p. 20).</p>

Sri Prashant Iyengar on Kleshas And Anti-kleshotics

By Prashant Iyengar

The terms such as 'perverse science' and 'anti-kleshotics' have been coined by Shri Prashant Iyengar and will not be found in any dictionary.

Kleshas are afflictions of the mind, which bring nothing but pain and distress.

This article was first published in Yoga Rahasya Vol.10, No.1, 2003. It is with their kind permission that we reprint it here.

Yoga is an art, science, religion, philosophy, and technology to serve human beings. A state of contentment is what every human being aims for and man is constantly striving and seeking ways to sustain an essentially happy state. This is provided to him when he realises certain goals and aspirations in his life. When these are attained, restlessness propels him to seek other forms of happiness and he continues to satisfy himself on the material plane. However, the wisdom of the *Upanisad* states that 'Ultimate happiness or the highest bliss, which is spiritual summumbonum, is the only happiness which will satisfy man from the core. All other forms of self gratification are inferior, transient and temporary and not happiness at all.' Yoga satisfies that inner need of every human being, which is that of attaining bliss.

For centuries gone by or centuries to come, man has had and will have a universal appeal for three fundamental desires. These are:

- Physical and mental well-being
- Intelligence and wisdom, perhaps to the extent of being omniscient, and
- Peace and tranquility

These three desires are prevalent in man, irrespective of his being an atheist or a theist. Yoga is an answer to all these needs in man.

Every human being, irrespective of any culture, civilization, economic or social status, encounters pain and suffering at some time or

the other and is always seeking ways to overcome these afflictions. This brings us to a poetic definition of yoga in the *Bhagavad Gita* Chapter VI Verse 23:

tam vidyad dukkha-samyogaviyogam yogasamjnitam

'The disjunction of the conjunction with pain is yoga.' *dukkha-samyogam* (union with pain) is prevalent in all beings, but *dukkha-samyogaviyogam* is what yoga bestows.

Yoga thoroughly investigates human suffering and provides antidotes for it. Yogic psychology has various classifications of sorrows. Let us first analyse the sorrows arising on account of the *kleshas* and how one can effectively counter them.

Kleshas are afflictions of the mind, which bring nothing but pain and distress. The five *kleshas* are:

<i>Avidya</i>	nescience or 'perverse science'
<i>Asmita</i>	ego, pride
<i>raga</i>	attachment syndrome
<i>dvesa</i>	aversion syndrome
<i>abhinivesa</i>	tendency to cling on due to fear

It is important to understand the 5 *kleshas* mentioned above, in order to counter them effectively through yogic principles.

Avidya

Vidya means knowledge and *a-vidya* means knowledge which is opposed to that knowledge. *Avidya* is not merely ignorance as is wrongly understood, but knowing something in a perverted way. Hence it is nescience, which is of the nature of 'perverse science'. Sometimes ignorance may be bliss, but *avidya* is never blissful. It is always agonizing. Not to know something is ignorance, but to know

Avidya is not merely ignorance as is wrongly understood, but knowing something in a perverted way. Hence it is nescience, which is of the nature of 'perverse science'.

something perversely, is always dangerous. An example of the above would explain this point. Believing a thief to be an ordinary man is ignorance, but believing a thief to be a saint is 'perverse science' and is dangerous. This is termed as *avidya*, which is 'perverse science' which is opposite in nature to knowledge. The principles of *jnana* yoga, annihilate *avidya*, thereby effectively countering sorrows arising due to nescience. *Jnana* yoga bestows wisdom and knowledge. What is that knowledge? Knowing what is essentially true and untrue. Knowing what is essentially real and unreal. Knowing what is essentially permanent and impermanent. Knowing what is essentially sentient and insentient. Inability to discriminate between these things, invites problems. If you do not know that something is impermanent and you lose it, you would have sorrows. E.g. If a child does not know that a toy is capable of breaking, and it breaks, it starts crying, because it thinks that the toy should remain permanently unbroken. Hence what is essentially permanent and impermanent should be known. If an impermanent thing ceases to exist, then you won't have sorrows. E.g. You won't have sorrows when the day ends today, because you know there is tomorrow, but a person who doesn't know that is going to be miserable at sunset. So *jnana* yoga is important to counter ignorance and that ignorance is removed by discrimination,

The karma yogic principle can help one overcome sorrows emanating on account of pride, 'I'ness, and 'I'consciousness. Negating pride, arrogance, self-conceit can alleviate most of our suffering.

which is called *viveka*. Such as *atma-anatma viveka* (what is sentient what is insentient); *nitya-anitya viveka* (what is permanent what is impermanent); *suci-asuci viveka* (what is pure what is impure); *sukha-duhkha viveka* (what is pleasure what is pain). So one must discriminate between pleasure and pain, as something seemingly pleasurable could eventually be painful. Hence *avidya* is countered by *jnana* yogic principles of yoga and the seeds of it are found in *svadhyaya* of *niyama*. *Svadhyaya* is the study of the self, and from this self study springs forth the fountain of wisdom.

Asmita

The second cause for human suffering is on account of *asmita*, which is pride and ego. Why are you sorrow-free when you are in a dreamless sleep? The main reason is that your 'I' is kept at bay and does not surface. The moment you wake up, the 'I' bloats up and problems surface. This is because the moment you wake up you are constantly doing things

B.K.S. Iyengar is coming to North America!



B.K.S. Iyengar will deliver the opening keynote address at the

Yoga Journal Conference

in Estes Park, Colorado

September 26 - October 2, 2005.

Gurujī will be present in the morning classes taught by senior Iyengar Yoga teachers during the Iyengar Yoga Intensive September 26 - 29. He will also lead a closing Q&A on Thursday morning, September 29.

The conference brochure and registration information is available at:
www.yogajournal.com/yjevents/estespark.cfm

A painkilling drug like an antibiotic would only remove physical body pain, but in yoga you have a 'sorrow killer' which is an 'anti-kleshotic' for the mind and emotions.

to satisfy that 'I' e.g. you want a cup of tea or coffee, you want to go out, you want this, you don't want that and the cycle goes on endlessly. All this builds up an anxiety syndrome or a worry syndrome, because the 'I'ness has been awakened. Most of human suffering is because of 'I'ness which is two fold.

Inferiority Complex based

Superiority Complex based

The 'I'ness may give one an inferiority complex, making one feel insignificant or inferior or paltry, and invite sorrows on account of that. Or the 'I'ness may give one a superiority complex where one has an inflated opinion about oneself and hence sorrows can also manifest on account of that. So the 'I'ness is channelised either towards the superiority complex or the inferiority complex and these can be effectively countered by the *karma* yogic principles which can be traced in the *Isvara pranidhna* of *niyama*. The *karma* yogic principle can help one overcome sorrows emanating on account of pride, 'I'ness, and 'I'consciousness. Negating pride, arrogance, self-conceit can alleviate most of our suffering.

Raga-Dvesa

Raga is attachment and *dvesa* is aversion. These are the likes and dislikes of a person. This is countered by *dhyana* yoga. When you practice anything meditative, you are neutralized, insulated and depolarized, hence attachment and aversion do

not affect you. E.g. You come out of *Halasana* and if you are offended by someone, you would not feel offended. But if you do 50 *Viparita chakrasana*, strive and perspire and you were offended, you would feel irritated or infuriated. But if you have done a long *Viparita karani* or *pranayama* class and somebody calls you stupid, you would ignore the person and just walk away. A painkilling drug like an antibiotic would only remove physical body pain, but in yoga you have a 'sorrow killer' which is an 'anti-kleshotic' for the mind and emotions. Since sorrows cannot be countered by pain-killing drugs, an insulation is required for the mind. Once you are insulated, you are depolarized, you are neutralized and *dhyana* yoga principles work for *raga-dvesa klesha*.

Abhinivesa

Abhinivesa is clinging due to fear. You cling on to something due to supportlessness which springs from fear, which is also called *niradharma vritti*. Imagine yourself totally isolated from all those who love you, like your parents, spouse, siblings, children and you have no one with whom you have any affinity, what would be your plight? The moment you feel supportless, sorrows come up. Mere imagination of a sense of supportlessness would also bring about sorrows. This supportlessness is also called *anatha vritti*. *Anatha* means an orphan and being orphaned would invite sorrows. A child is fearless when the mother is around. It feels a sense of comfort when it plays in her lap. Similarly, if you know that your 'eternal' mother is around you all the time, then that support bestows a sense of blessedness. *The Bhagavad Gita* gives a beautiful description of this in chapter IX verse 17, 18:

*pitham asya jagato mata dhata pitamahah
gatir bharta prabhuh saksi nivasah saranam suhrt
prabhavah pralayah sthanam nidhanam bijam avyayam*

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 wisely, and are as relevant in the 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, December 2, 2005

6 - 8 pm

Fee:

\$35 + GST for members

\$40 + GST for non-members

Registration opens

October 3 for members

and October 17 for non-members.

*Just as the child rests in the
comforting lap of the mother,
you entrust everything to divinity,
which is your eternal mother,
who is with you all the time.
This quells the tendency of
clinging due to fear.*

Lord Krishna says: “I am the *mata, dhata, pitamahab*” which means He is the mother, the father, the grandsire and everything. The literal meaning of *bharta* means a husband, and a husband is one who takes care of everything, hence He is a husband to everyone. “I am the Lord”. He says, “the witness, the Resort, and the *saranam*”, which means that you can totally depend on Him and He will take care of everything. Just as the

child rests in the comforting lap of the mother, you entrust everything to divinity, which is your eternal mother, who is with you all the time. This quells the tendency of clinging due to fear. Hence the principles of *bhakti* yoga are to be inculcated and that can be found in *Isvara pranidhana* of *niyama*.

It is to be understood here that yoga is a blend of the four yogas. You cannot be practicing *bhakti* yoga, or *jnana* or *karma* yoga or *dhyana* yoga in isolation. Hence an integration of the four yogas namely *karma* yoga, *jnana* yoga, *dhyana* yoga and *bhakti* yoga, can work as ‘*anti-kleshotics*’ for the five *kleshas*. These *anti-kleshotics* work to remove the cause of the suffering. This is one of the ways of classifying the sorrows according to the *kleshas* and providing antidotes for the same. ॐ

(As narrated to Diana Mahimwala)

Fear and fatigue block the mind,
Face both,
then courage and confidence grow into you.
– *Guruji B.K.S. Iyengar*

55+ Fall Retreat at Saltspring Centre



Shared accommodation.
Begin at 4 pm Friday
with a restorative class
before dinner,
end after a delicious
vegetarian lunch
on Sunday.

Are you over 55, and have some yoga experience? Come to Saltspring with Leslie Hogle and Wendy Boyer

November 18-20, 2005

Fees: \$310.00 + GST for VYC members
\$340.00 + GST for non-members

Registration opens Sept 1, for members
and Sept 15, for non-members.

To register, drop in or phone:
202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 3K3
250 386-YOGA (9642)

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled
and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

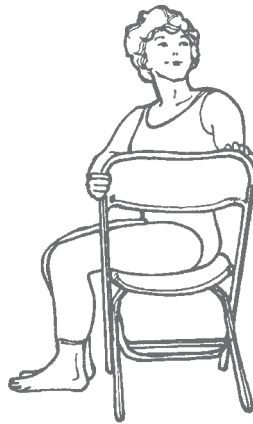
Why do Yoga?

By Eleanor Holwerda

Why do yoga? In fact, why do Iyengar Yoga? Having had a little exposure to yoga in the past I thought I would try something close to home so when the time, day, and place worked for me to join a class at the local community center I signed up. Little did I know about it other than the description in the brochure. The classes I had taken previously, which I think were *Hatha*, but with little instruction, were more about breathing and relaxing. Which was all very nice but I wanted more. So I tried belly dancing. Many times I came away from that with some part of my body aching or even in pain. Plus, I couldn't see myself pursuing that for a life-long journey.

Interestingly I don't have the pain with Iyengar Yoga. I would walk to the class and home again after a long day at work and put my body into positions that it had never been in before, or at least not since I was a limber child. I would try to replicate a pose or two when I got home to show my husband what I had learned. I was excited and empowered by the knowledge that my body wasn't just this overweight, older receptacle to hold my innards in their places. My body now moves with less suffering.

Now, don't get me started on pain. Sure my knees ache and my back tenses



up into knots, my right ankle doesn't bend as well as I'd like it to and my wrists cry out with the weight that I place on them in *Adho Mukha Svanasana* (downward facing dog). Being on my feet all day plays havoc with my spine so I often suffer from a misalignment of my lower back, which affects my hips. Now when I get home from work I lay flat on the floor with my legs up the wall, strongly, in *Urdhva Prasarita Padasana*. With several slow in-breathes the tension of the day releases, and with the out-breathes my vertebra soon begin straightening with little pops, without the assistance of a chiropractor.

After one semester of lessons I convinced my husband to join me. Amazingly he did with little hesitation having had some experience with yoga many years before and knowing the benefits I was deriving from the practice. Together we have had over a year of

instruction from two brilliant teachers. I have attended several other lessons so have had the privilege of working with other instructors who also bring such commitment and inspiration to their lessons. Every teacher and indeed, each class, brings something new and we often comment how much we learn from each lesson. When I doubt that I should be in this type of yoga our instructor reassures me and encourages me to move forward. Having the props for support also allows me to do movements that I would otherwise find difficult to do.

Recently I joined the Victoria Yoga Centre Society. I did not realize it was a society and was not really sure why I joined other than to support the great newsletter. It is more like a magazine, wonderfully written and illustrated. After having read several issues I realize how little I understand about yoga, let alone Iyengar Yoga, and the spiritual and mystical aspects of it. I am hopeful that being a member will shed more light on the way a yogi lives and to incorporate the wisdom of yoga practice into every aspect of my life.

And now I'm off to the '50 plus' class for two and a half hours. I shall return invigorated and inspired to do more. Thanks to all who have helped me on my journey. ॐ

Scholarships & 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.

Scholarship applications for Weekend Workshops are due one month prior to the workshop. Scholarships for Special Events and Intensives are due two months before the event.

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

Applications and details for both are available at the reception desk.

Victoria Yoga Centre
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria, BC V8V 3K3



BHAGAVAD GITA

by Karen Woodland

Assignment:
Summarize the central struggle of the Gita. Select one chapter that has relevance to you and your life and comment on this.

To become a teacher in the Iyengar tradition, one must undergo rigorous training. Teacher training through the Victoria Yoga Centre is a minimum three year program comprised of studies including anatomy, philosophy, practical teaching and, of course, personal exploration through yoga. Students are required to write papers exploring these aspects of study. Here we have published one such paper on the Bhagavad Gita.

The *Bhagavad Gita*, composed in the first century A.D., is an epic tale set on an ancient Indian battlefield.

Widely believed to be an excerpt from the *Mahabharata* (written by the sage Vyasa), the *Gita* has been called:

- one of the great religious classics of world literature;
- an intensely spiritual work that forms the cornerstone of the Hindu faith;
- one of the masterpieces of Sanskrit poetry;
- one of the greatest philosophical and religious dialogues known to man;
- a gospel of selfless action.

The Kauravas and the Pandavas

Dhrtarastra and Pandu were brothers descended from King Bharata. When Pandu died, his five children (Yudhishthira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva) went to live with their uncle Dhrtarastra, who had become regent (but because he was born blind, could not be King). The regents' own sons, especially the oldest, Duryodhana, envied the Pandavas and plotted against them. Eventually a battle between the two families ensues. The story begins as the Kauravas (sons of Dhrtarastras) and the Pandavas (sons of Pandu) prepare for war.

The *Gita* is primarily a dialogue between Arjuna, a mighty warrior and renowned

archer, and Krishna, his charioteer.

Arjuna is grief-stricken at the thought of killing his kin and his revered teachers. He begs Krishna to tell him where his duty lies.

While the story appears to be historical fact, it is an allegory. Arjuna represents the *Atman* (soul), and Krishna the incarnation of Brahman—the Supreme Godhead. Krishna (Brahman) is also the *atman* within, our charioteer. The *Bhagavad Gita* is understood as a struggle of the ego. The tale describes “the battle ever raging between the countless Kauravas and Pandavas dwelling within us” (Gandhi).

Other Interpretations of the Gita

While the focus of this paper is the spiritual teachings of the *Gita*, I think it is important to note that the text can be (and indeed has been) interpreted on various levels. It is obviously, as the essence of Vedic knowledge and one of the most important *Upanishads* in Vedic literature, a text of great religious import. As the cornerstone of the Hindu faith, the *Gita* clearly espouses the Hindu belief in the Wheel of Life and reincarnation.

It has been suggested that the *Gita* was also a socio-political tool designed to inspire Indians to revolt against British Imperialism, and to reinforce Vedic authority. Mascaro tells us: “the text repeatedly insists that Arjuna—and by implication people in general—follow the established ritual texts as a guide to behaviour, and comply with the duties set down by male Brahmins” (Mascaro, 1962). The *Gita* reinforced the Indian caste system, cautioning the masses against going beyond their caste ‘duties.’

Duty, thus, can have different connotations. Which ‘duty’ does one follow? The duty

of the social structures which frame our earthly lives? Or the 'duty' to abide by what one believes to be the Song of God within? In today's world, it seems there are many 'duties.' Which to fulfil? This is for me the constant razor's edge.

The War Metaphor

"If you refuse to fight this righteous war you will be turning away from your duty," Krishna tells Arjuna (Prabhavananda & Isherwood, 1972), accusing him of cowardice, saying his name will be slandered if he does not fight (Miller, 1986).

But isn't this an appeal to the ego? The first *yama*, *ahimsa*, seems to be contradicted by the images of war and killing, and especially by Krishna's prompting Arjuna into battle; I have always found this aspect of the *Bhagavad-Gita* troubling.

Reading Mahatma Gandhi's translation ameliorated my concerns somewhat. Gandhi, a great lover and practitioner of peace, writes that while he once found the metaphor disturbing, he has learned to see the beauty of it. (Perhaps one day I will, too!) "Let us put aside the question of violence and non-violence," says Gandhi. He believed that the *Gita* was "written to explain man's duty in this inner strife" and "that Duryodhana and his supporters stand for the Satanic impulses in us, and Arjuna and others stand for Godward impulses ... The battlefield," Gandhi contends, "is our body" (Gandhi).

CHAPTER 2: The Yoga of Knowledge; Philosophy and Spiritual Teaching

Chapter 2 is an all-encompassing chapter of particular interest to me because it contains many of the same ideas put forth by Patanjali. These teachings not only have relevance for me currently as a 'teacher-trainee;' they will always be paramount in my role as yoga 'teacher;' and as the foundation of my belief system in my journey throughout this life, in whatever 'role' I find myself (mother, wife, sister, daughter, friend, employee, householder ...).

Echoing Patanjali's definition of yoga as *citta vrtti nirodhah*, Krishna says:

Poise your mind in tranquility. Take care neither to acquire nor hoard. Be established in the consciousness of the Atman, always ... Perform every action with your heart fixed on the Supreme Lord. Renounce attachment to the fruits. Be even-tempered in success and failure; for it is this evenness of temper which is meant by yoga (Prabhavananda & Isherwood, 1972).

Equanimity and non-attachment are thus seen as the essence of yoga. Krishna refers to many of the concepts embodied by the *yamas* and *niyamas*, the first two limbs of *ashtanga yoga*. "Take care neither to acquire nor to hoard," describes *Aparigraha*. To "renounce attachment to the fruits" of action is to surrender to the Lord, *Isvara Pranidhana*.

Advocating *Pratyahara*, Krishna tells us the senses are fleeting and unreliable. "The tortoise can draw in his legs: The seer can draw in his senses." To be "established in the consciousness of the *Atman*," speaks of the 8th limb, *Samadhi*.

Other 'yogic' and time-honoured concepts expounded upon include:

- The body is temporary but the spirit is eternal.
- No efforts, however small, are wasted on the spiritual path.
- Be intent on action. Not on the fruits of action.
- Be fearless in your actions.
- Discipline the mind to discriminate.
- Seek right knowledge (rather than delusion).

Arjuna asks:

Is this real compassion that I feel, or only a delusion? My mind gropes about in darkness. I cannot see where my duty lies (Prabhavananda & Isherwood, 1972).

To which Krishna replies:

When your intellect has cleared itself of its delusions, you will become indifferent, to the results of all action present or future (Prabhavananda & Isherwood, 1972).

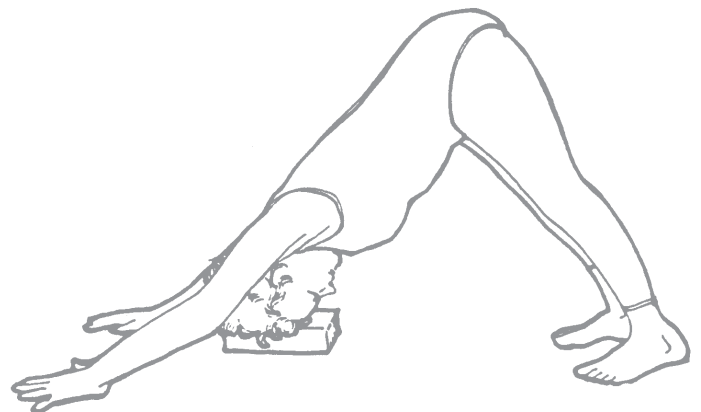
The practise of yoga, maintains Krishna, creates a "serene spirit [which] accepts pleasure and pain with an even mind, and is unmoved by either."

A real test of how ably I can apply these ageless precepts within my life is approaching — June Assessment. Can I take the actions, steadfastly put forward the required preparations and discipline, yet remain unattached to the results? ॐ

KARYN WOODLAND IS A STUDENT AT THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE.

References:

- M.K. Gandhi, 1993, *The Bhagavadgita*, Orient Paperbacks.
 Juan Mascaro, 1962, *The Bhagavad Gita*, Penguin Books.
 Barbara Stoler Miller, 1986, *The Bhagavad-Gita: Krishna's Counsel in Time of War*, Bantam Books.
 Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood, 1972, *The Song of God: Bhagavad-Gita*, The Penguin Group.
 A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, 1986, *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*, International Society for Krishna Consciousness.



Understanding the Principles Behind "Iyengar Yoga"

*This article was first published in Yoga Rahasya volume 11, No. 2, 2004
by its editor Ravji Mehta and staff.*

In the year 1998, Prashantji paid a tribute to Guruji on the occasion of Guru Purnima through a talk titled as Yoga: Our System. In this talk, he very clearly and precisely articulated as to "What is Iyengar Yoga?" and the unique features of our system being precision and alignment, sequencing, timing and use of props. Today, he observes that many of the practitioners are being so obsessed with these features that they are forgetting the principle behind them. In this article, we clarify the common misunderstanding of these features and an explanation behind the principles of Iyengar Yoga practice.

Yoga is symmetry.

— Yogacharya BKS Iyengar

Before Prashantji gave these talks on our system we, as Iyengar Yoga students, would often fumble when asked, "What is Iyengar Yoga?" It is yoga as practiced by Guruji Yogacharya BKS Iyengar. If we were asked to specify in what way it was different from "other" types of yoga then we would be unclear in our responses. Many of us had never done "other" forms and knew yoga as Iyengar Yoga. Many of us had never bothered to study the yoga texts to be able to articulate what was so unique about Iyengar Yoga and in what way it authenticated what was stated in the ancient texts. So, Prashantji felt it necessary that we clearly know what we are practicing or supposed to practice and so clearly articulated the unique features of "Iyengar Yoga".

Today, five years later, if any Iyengar Yoga teacher is asked to express what is so unique about Iyengar Yoga then he would have no difficulties in expressing that "Iyengar Yoga is characterised by precision and alignment, sequencing, timing and the use of props". Unfortunately, as Prashantji again clarifies, we have become so obsessed with these "4 unique features" that we

have forgotten the principles behind them. By doing this we are only looking at Iyengar Yoga superficially and not at the real teachings of Guruji.

The situation is analogous to many of the rituals, which are common in many civilizations. There was logic, a rationale, and a reason behind each of these rituals. The principle behind these ceremonies was lost over the years. For example, it was very common to have elaborate rituals signifying important milestones in human life such as birth, puberty, marriage and death in most civilizations. These "rituals" are now often ridiculed, considered unscientific or superstitious and often looked down upon by so-called intellectuals. These elaborate rituals were basically a preparation for a major change. It would give individuals time to absorb and prepare themselves with the new phase entering their life so that the transition would be smoother. Imagine a death in the family. The interactions with friends and family during the rituals that follow give the near and dear ones time to accept and absorb the loss. Otherwise, the psychological trauma of death in the absence of any support systems could lead to the

collapse of the surviving individual.

Today, Prashantji notices that much of the "uniqueness" of Iyengar Yoga is turning into rituals and we are forgetting the principles behind these. If we do not go to the roots of these unique features of Iyengar Yoga then what is today considered the "strength" of Iyengar Yoga would lead to our own downfall and also ridicule of our system. And, this would only happen because we are interpreting Iyengar Yoga from our superficial understanding and not the depth to which Iyengar Yoga really is!!



Precision and alignment:

Precision and alignment in the practice of the various *asanas* forms the hallmark of Iyengar Yoga. If legs are to be straight then they have to be absolutely straight. If the legs are to be bent at the knees

If the body is aligned with precision then the breath is aligned with that same precision, if the breath is balanced then the mind, emotions and senses get balanced.

then they should be right angle between the thigh and the calf. There has to be an alignment between the inner and outer wrist when the hands are lifted up in *Urdhva Hastasana*, between the left and right leg in *Tadasana* and *Sirsasana*, how the weight has to be equally distributed on the front and back of the foot in *Tadasana*.

Even the junior-most Iyengar Yoga teacher would start emphasising on precision and alignment in his/her very first Iyengar Yoga class. However, some of the teachers are getting obsessed by “precision and alignment” of the body to a point of ridicule and are forgetting the reason why Guruji insists on precision. The precision is not just for the geometrical presentation of the structure of the body!!!

The precision in an *asana* is not merely meant for the alignment of the part but for the proper functioning of the human being. If the body is aligned with precision then the breath is aligned with that same precision, if the breath is balanced then the mind, emotions and senses get balanced. We have to study the connections of how these precise adjustments work on the entire human being.

If we are asked to spread and create space between the metatarsals in *Tadasana* – it is not just to align the inner and outer foot for the sake of the foot. Even a first time practitioner would realise that extending the foot leads to a firm grip on the quadriceps (the thigh muscles) which move closer to the thigh bone. A firmness in the thighs leads to a sharpness and lift in the gastric and lower



abdominal region (which is the *samanic* and *apanic* region). This lift in turn elates the thoracic and *pranic* region; the breathing automatically becomes deeper and rhythmic with corresponding changes to the senses, mind and emotions. So the precision and alignment should be accompanied by a study on the effects on the breath and the mind. As a practitioner progresses, he/she needs to learn how the senses, the mind and the breath have to and should be utilised to align the body.

Timing:

Iyengar Yoga practitioners are known for their “ability” to stay for prolonged duration of time in different *asanas*. For a beginner, it does mean developing a will-

Kids' YOGA camp

(with TY CHANDLER



To register, drop in or phone: 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 3K 3 • 250 386-YOGA (9642)
Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

Do YOGA

listen to stories about yoga heroes
draw watch videos
Practice Karma Yoga
and learn about anatomy

Bring your own healthy snack.

1-4 pm Friday, August 23, 2005

Fees: \$35.00

power and is essential in early stages of practice. However one has to evolve beyond the realms of external force i.e. will. As Guruji has explained in his talk on *citishakti* (YR 10.4; 2003), one should evolve in one's practices whereby one performs an *asana* not merely by external force of power of the mind but the practice should be such that one intrinsically wants to stay in the *asana*. It is that *atma (citi)* which gets you to perform the *asana*. Then, naturally *sthirata* (stability) and *sukhata* (gladness) come in an *asana*. One should not be staying in the *asanas* just because one's neighbour is doing so or stay in the pose because the clock demands.

One should stay in the *asana* as long as one is contemplative, reflective in that *asana* so that one becomes meditative in whatever *asana* one is performing. We may extend our chronological duration of staying in the *asana* but at the cost of quality. Such a practice has no meaning but is in fact detrimental.

Sage Patanjali also mentions [Ed: sutra II.47] that *asanas* are mastered when *prayatna* [Ed: persevering effort]



becomes *saiithilya* [Ed: relaxation]. So we need to stay in an *asana* such that the effort required to perform it minimises. So, we may stay for the same amount of time but the effort required to maintain it should be diminishing. As Prashantji has often mentioned in class "Do not inspire till you expire." The performance of an *asana* includes going into, staying and coming out of the *asana*. We tend not to give enough emphasis to coming out of the *asana*. For us, the *asana* ends with the staying phase. We extend the chronological time of our stay to such an extent that we have no energies left to thoughtfully come out of the *asana*. It is like utilising all one's energies and resources while going up the mountain and having nothing left to come down.

Sequencing:

As Iyengar Yoga practitioners, we are aware that it is not just the *asanas* but how you perform them, how long you perform them and also the sequence in which they are performed which determine the effect of these *asanas*. The sequence in which the *asanas* are performed is determined by various factors. These include the purpose of practice, the weather, time of the day, the health status of the practitioner and the level of practice. With over 200 *asanas*, there can be any number of permutations and combinations. However, there are certain thumb rules. For example, *Sarvangasana* is never practiced before *Sirsasana*. Practice generally ends with *Savasana* or any other such relaxing *asanas*.

Unfortunately, some students and teachers are tending to go "overboard" with the concept of sequences. They think that sequences are like mantras. One sequence for one disease. One sequence for one individual. It was quite amusing when a foreign student at the Institute felt that she was not taught at

SUMMER SADHANAS

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

This summer we offer a 20 day and a 5 day *Sadhana*.

Come to a 20 day *Sadhana*. Practicing every morning for 20 days will help you to develop, and deepen your home practice. Linda Benn, Wies Pukesh and Robin Cantor will lead the *sadhana*, and each week will build on the week before.

Time: 6:30-7:45 am

July 9-15 with Wies Pukesh

July 16-23 with Robin Cantor

Fees: \$260.00 + GST for VYC members
\$290.00 + GST for non-members

The 5 day *Sadhana* is the perfect opportunity to further develop and deepen your practice.

Time: 6:30-8 am

September 5-9 with Robin Cantor

Fees: \$80.00 + GST for VYC members
\$90.00 + GST for non-members

To register, drop in or phone:

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

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.



RIMYI as she had not been given HER sequence. Although she was attending classes by Geetaji and Prashantji for over a month! It is important to reiterate here that one needs to understand the principles behind sequencing rather than memorising the sequences alone! Repeating a sequence taught at the Institute will not essentially lead to the same effect.

Props:

Props have been a fruit of Gururji's innovative genius. It is because of the prop that people of all ages and health status can perform *asanas* with ease and attain benefits of the practice of yoga. As Gururji explained during his presentations during the 85th birthday celebrations one should not be using a prop only as a crutch or a support but learn from the prop. This aspect is not

being dealt with here as it has already been covered in YR 11.1; 2004.

Hierarchy in practice:

One of the most important aspects of Iyengar Yoga is hierarchy in practice. A beginner may be taught *Trikonasana* in his very first class while Gururji also practices *Trikonasana* after 70 years. Both these *asanas* are *Trikonasana* but the quality of the *asana* is totally different. For a beginner, the *asana* is totally on the skeletal plane whilst Gururji's *Trikonasana* would be in a state of mediation in *Trikonasana*. A beginner's *Trikonasana* would be controlled and guided by his/her teacher whilst Gururji's *Trikonasana* would be guided by his *citi*.

Thus, as students of Iyengar Yoga, we have to practice *asana* and progress in the hierarchy of our practice. We should align our *sharira*. It is imperative to

mention here that *sharira*, which is loosely translated as body in English, in reality encompasses our breath, mind, senses, intellect and emotions. So although we start with physical alignment, we have to progress to include the complete meaning of the *sharira*.

We should evolve so as to time our practices not only by the clock but to perform them to attain *sthirata* and *sukhata* with the practice being progressively being governed by the will, mind, breath, intelligence and finally the *citi*.

If and only if we understand the principles behind the unique features of Iyengar Yoga will we be able to progress in the hierarchy in our practices, which is the fifth and most important aspect of Iyengar Yoga. ॐ

Teacher Training and Junior Intermediate Workshop for Levels 3 & 4 students

With Chris Saudek
November 4 - 6, 2005



Teacher Training

Friday 9 am - 12 pm, 3 - 6 pm

Open to all certified Iyengar yoga teachers, or those in Iyengar yoga teacher training programs.

Junior Intermediate Workshop

Sat. 10:30 am - 1:30 pm,
4:00 - 6:30 pm,

Sun. 10:30 am - 1:30 pm,
4:00 - 6:00

Open to Level 3 & 4 students (able to hold headstand and shoulderstand for 5 minutes or more)

Please be committed to staying to the end of the workshop both days.

Note: Chris will be teaching extended Level 4 class Monday, November 7. (Details TBA)

Chris 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. She is a precise and disciplined, caring and innovative teacher. Chris is the director of the Yoga Place in La Crosse, Wisconsin and is certified as a Senior Intermediate teacher of the Iyengar method.

Fees: \$340.00 + GST Teacher Training and Workshop for members
\$375.00 + GST Teacher Training and Workshop for non-members
\$220.00 + GST Workshop for members
\$240.00 + GST Workshop for non-members

Registration opens September 12, for members and September 26 for non-members

To register, drop in or phone: 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 3K3
250 386-YOGA (9642)

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.



- Bruce Cox for painting the baseboards in the lobby
- Jim Riddell for installing new dimmer switches
- Mark Davies for volunteering at the front desk and for producing a list of near-by accommodations and a map of eateries for visiting students: useful even for locals!

You wonder
as my words tumble out,
asking for your company
where the beauty
like water cascading over precambrian rocks
in the late afternoon sunshine
has gone,
as you sweep past
on your way home
lamenting the loss
disguised in the slowly gathering mist
of the swiftly approaching evening
and leaving my heart longing
for time
to show you what has always
been
here.

– Taimi

Student Intensive

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

With Lauren Cox and Ty Chandler
August 29- September 2, 9 am-12 pm

Learn how to establish and deepen your practice

Prerequisite: Level 2 Iyengar Yoga experience

Lauren and Ty are certified Iyengar yoga teachers who bring enthusiasm, dedication and humor to this five-day intensive. There will be two hours of *asana* including yoga *kurunta*, a timed practice, an introduction to *pranayama* and philosophical and spiritual discussions.

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

To register, drop in or phone:
202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 3K3
250 386-YOGA (9642)

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

VICTORIA *yoga centre* Calendar

JULY

- 4-31** Term 6
- 4-24** 20 Day Sadhana: with Linda Benn, Wies Pukesh, Robin Cantor
- 11-16** Teacher Training Intensive – Introductory Levels with Linda Benn, Leslie Hogya, Ann Kilbertus

AUGUST

- 2-28** Term 7
- 15-19** Teacher Training Intensive – Junior Intermediate Levels with Shirley Daventry French
- 23** Kids' Yoga Camp with Ty Chandler
- 29-Sept 2** Student Intensive: with Lauren Cox, Ty Chandler

SEPTEMBER

- 5-9** 5 Day Sadhana: with Robin Cantor
- 6-11** Registration Week
- 6** Term 1 begins
- 17** Teachers' Meeting
- 23-25** Weekend Workshop with Mahyar Raz
- 23-25** Weekend Workshop with Felicity Green
CANCELLED due to B.K.S. Iyengar tour
- 26-Oct 2** B.K.S. Iyengar – Estes Park, Colorado

OCTOBER

- 14-15** Inspirations from India with Ann Kilbertus, Melissa Worth
- 22** Teachers' Meeting
- 21-23** Introductory I/II Assessment in London, ON
- 21-23** Introductory I/II Assessment in Winnipeg, MB
- 31** Term 2 Begins

NOVEMBER

- 4** Teacher Training with Chris Saudek
- 5-6** Junior Intermediate Workshop for levels 3 & 4 with Chris Saudek
- 7** Extended level 4 class with Chris Saudek (details TBA)
- 18-20** 55+ Fall Retreat at Saltspring Centre with Leslie Hogya and Wendy Boyer
- 26** Teachers' Meeting

DECEMBER

- 2** Sutra Workshop with Shirley Daventry French
- 3-4** Going Deeper with Shirley Daventry French
- 9-11** Introductory I/II & Junior Intermediate I Assessment in Montreal
- 14** In the Light of Yoga workshop – Mr. Iyengar's Birthday celebration
- 19-23** 5 Day Sadhana with Corrine Lowen
- 21-22** Winter Solstice Workshop with Ty Chandler

JANUARY 2006

- 21** Teachers' Meeting
- 27-30** Heart of Yoga with Shirley Daventry French

FEBRUARY 2006

- 4** VYC AGM
- 12** Inspirations from India with Linda Benn
- 25** Teachers' Meeting

MARCH 2006

- 25** Teachers' Meeting

Summer Sizzler

For maximum flexibility and versatility this summer, purchase one of the Victoria Yoga Centre's Summer Sizzler Passes. Get details at the reception desk.

Use four passes in a week or stretch it over the months of July and August! These passes are for experienced students ONLY.

New to yoga? Please sign up for a level one class.

Please use your sizzler pass for evening classes during the intensive weeks.

VYC Summer Sizzler Pass

12 half hour
segments
for **\$50** (+GST)

Come to:
Six 1 hour classes
or
Four 1.5 hour classes
or
Three 2 hour classes
or
mix it up!

VYC Summer Sizzler DELUXE Pass

24 half hour
segments
for **\$90** (+GST)

Come to:
Twelve 1 hour classes
or
Eight 1.5 hour classes
or
Six 2 hour classes
or
mix it up!



Radha Yoga Centre



NEW from TIMELESS BOOKS

*when you first
called me radha:
poems*

Glimpse into the heart of a spiritual visionary in this collection of poetry and accompanying CD.

ISBN 1-932018-07-7

MY EYES ARE FIXED ON HER BEAUTY (excerpt)

...My ears are open to receive
The sparks of Her wisdom
And my mind is like the air
the flower fills with its fragrance.
All the corners of the earth receive
their share.
Beauty invokes magic
And the mind becomes spellbound
for a brief moment
all clatter stops, to be receptive.
Wafts of the indescribable fragrance
Of Divine wisdom fills all spaces.

FALL CLASSES

begin Monday, September 19

Hatha Yoga, Kundalini Yoga, Dream Yoga, Sacred Dance, The Hidden Language of Hatha Yoga. Please call for information and schedule

SPECIAL SATSANG

Sunday September 11, 7:30 pm

A celebration of Swami Sivananda's birthday. He was Swami Radha's Guru and 'spiritual mother', known for his support of women and honoring of their spiritual potential.

time to renew

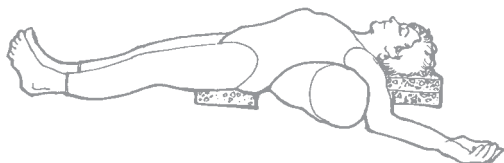
This is a reminder that the
Victoria Yoga Centre membership
expired on December 31, 2004.

The membership subscription fee is
\$40 + GST, effective June 1, 2005,
(Canadian residents add 7% GST)
and is 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 (at right),
and send to the Victoria Yoga Centre.*



VICTORIA
yoga centre
SOCIETY

Membership and Newsletter Subscription

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

**Victoria Yoga Centre Society, c/o Karin Holtkamp,
202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3**

Membership/subscription fee is \$40 plus GST,
renewable each January.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Postal Code: _____

Country: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

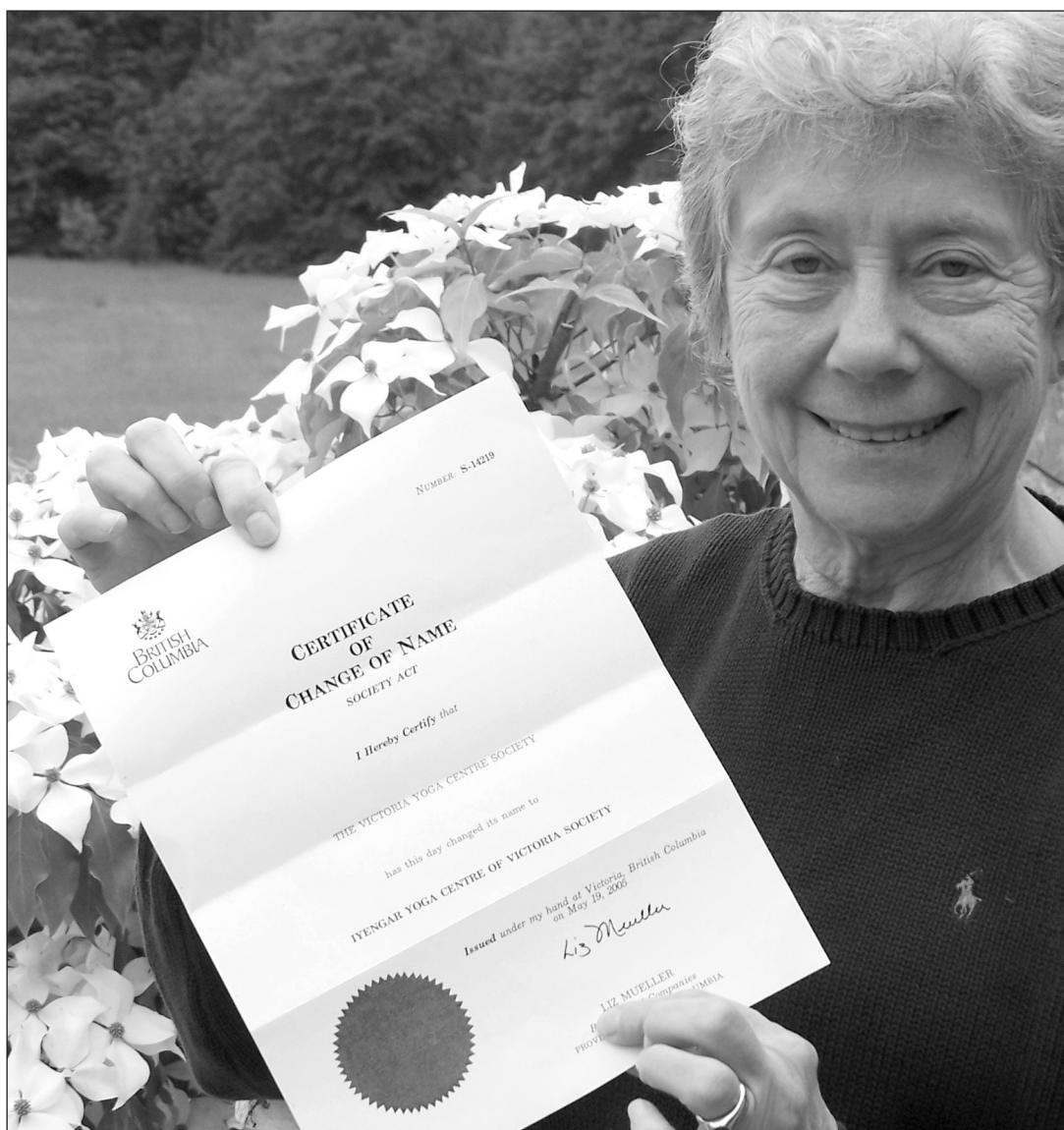
☐ Do not mail me my newsletter during sessions,
I'll pick one up at my class

☐ Receipt required

Membership benefits include 5% discount on
classes, free practice times at the VYC, timed
practices, early registration and discount on
workshops, borrowing privileges in our library,
eligibility to become a board member and
eligibility for scholarships for workshops.



IYENGAR yoga center OF VICTORIA



Shirley Daventry French celebrates the name change
of the Victoria Yoga Centre Society to the
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Society

inspirations from India

WITH ANN KILBERTUS
& MELISSA WORTH

October 14 & 15, 2005

Friday 6:30 - 8:30 pm

Saturday 11:00 am - 5:00 pm

Melissa and Ann are both certified Iyengar Yoga teachers. Both Melissa and Ann have recently returned from studying at the RIYMI Institute in India. It was Ann's fourth trip and Melissa's first. They are looking forward to sharing their combined experience and insights from this recent illuminative journey. All Levels workshop, with a minimum of two terms of level one.

Fees:

\$95+GST for IYCV members
\$105+GST for non-members

(Bring a snack for Saturday afternoon)

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

250 386-YOGA(9642)

Refunds only offered if your space can be filled
and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

55+ Fall Retreat

at Saltspring Centre

Are you over 55, and have some yoga experience?
Come to Saltspring with Leslie Hogya and Wendy Boyer

November 18-20, 2005

Shared accommodation. Begin at 4 pm Friday
with a restorative class before dinner, end after
a delicious vegetarian lunch on Sunday.

Fees:

\$310.00 + GST IYCV members

\$340.00 + GST non-members

Registration opens Sept 1, for members
and Sept 15, for non-members.

To register, drop in or phone:

202-919 Fort Street

Victoria, BC, V8V 3K3

250 386-YOGA (9642)

Refunds only offered if your space can be filled
and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

scholarships & 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 for dates.

Scholarship applications for
Weekend Workshops are due
one month prior to the
workshop. Scholarships for
Special Events and Intensives
are due two months before
the event.

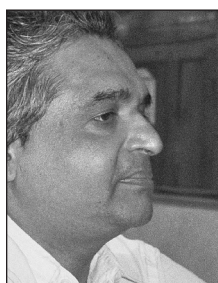
Student Bursaries are
available to all students

presently enrolled in classes.
To subsidize your term fees
please apply three weeks
prior to term.

Applications and details
for both are available at
the reception desk.

**Iyengar Yoga Centre
of Victoria
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria, BC V8V 3K3**

contents



COVER PHOTO
photography by
Cathy Campbell,
Saltspring Retreat
2005.

- 3 Reflections
by Shirley Daventry French
- 6 President's Message
by Silvia Vilches
- 7 Interview with Prashantji
by Richard and Kirsten Agar Ward
- 12 Volunteers
by Jane Munro
- 13 Money is a Sensitive Subject
by Wendy Boyer
- 14 Tree of Life
by Lori Webber
- 16 What's in a Level?
By Ann Kilbertus
- 17 Who are the Teachers?
By Leslie Hogya
- 18 Teacher Training Paper
By Greg Sly
- 19 Hawaiian Visitation
by Laine Canivet
- 20 Calendar

Newsletter Advertising Policy (Adopted February 20, 2004)

In keeping with the mandate of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Society Directors, 2004, to update, review and document policies and procedures, the newsletter committee submitted a policy which is a revision of the 1996 policy and has been adopted by the Board of Directors as follows:

1. Advertisements must not conflict with the aims of the newsletter of the VYCS.
2. Advertisements must be only for Iyengar Yoga
3. Priority given to advertisements regarding:
 - IYCV events
 - IYCV sponsored events
 - CIYTA events
 - Radha House/ Yasodhara Ashram



IYENGAR yoga centre OF VICTORIA NEWSLETTER

EDITOR Taimi Mulder

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Shirley Daventry French, Lauren Cox,
Greg Sly, Jane Munro, Susan Robinson,
Nancy Searing, Melissa Worth

DESIGN / PRODUCTION Cady Graphics

PHOTOGRAPHY Cathy Campbell,
Taimi Mulder, Lori Webber

ADS / ANNOUNCEMENTS
Nancy Searing

ILLUSTRATIONS Lauren Cox

SCANNING Taimi Mulder

DISTRIBUTION Rosemary Barritt,
Krysia Strawczynski, Karin Holtkamp

MEMBERSHIP / MAILING LIST
Karin Holtkamp

PRINTING Hillside Printing

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

September 15, 2005

IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA

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

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

Send contributions, articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions to the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Newsletter: 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3. For information on activities and events, call 386-YOGA(9642) or visit our website: www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca.

Permission is hereby granted to reprint any of our material, except that copyrighted by the author or artists. When reprinting, please credit this Newsletter and send us two copies of the publication containing our material. Copyright material is only available with written permission.

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

COURSE REGISTRATION:

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

Phone:
250 386-YOGA(9642)

Refund policy:
Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.



SHIRLEY DAVENTRY FRENCH WAS AWARDED SENIOR CERTIFICATION FROM B.K.S. IYENGAR. SHE HAS BEEN TEACHING SINCE 1972 AND FOUNDED THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE IN 1976. SHIRLEY LIVES IN VICTORIA AND TEACHES WORLDWIDE.

The other day I had lunch with an old friend from out of town. Our friendship spans twenty years. Our paths first met in Vancouver airport on our way to the 1984 Yoga convention with B.K.S. Iyengar in San Francisco. She was a yoga teacher from the Prairies who after the convention, was going to spend a sabbatical year in Victoria. Our shared history has included much study and practise of yoga including travels to India. While she has visited Victoria regularly over the years, she has continued to make her home on the Prairies. I am always glad to see her.

Her *yoga sadhana* has taken a different direction from mine since we first met. Although she no longer teaches formal 'yoga' classes; yoga is a fundamental part of her life and its principles form the foundation of her work as a palliative care nurse.

As our lunchtime conversation roamed over many topics, she mentioned her introduction to yoga and how, after some brief teacher training courses she had attained an advanced teaching certificate. Of course, that was before she was introduced to Mr. Iyengar's work! This is a woman who has one of the most dedicated practices I know. She does not miss a day of her practice unless there are dire circumstances standing in her way. As she laughingly said to me: "Thirty-two years of yoga and I have regressed from advanced to beginner!"

The truth is that she is a mature student with the ability (and humility) to see her knowledge and mastery in perspective when weighed against giants in Yoga such as B.K.S. Iyengar. Contrast this realistic appraisal with the current popular yoga climate where students become teachers very fast, and in no time at all

they are offering teacher training courses followed, before too long, by advanced teacher training. In the Iyengar system, advanced teacher training is available only in Pune. It is not false modesty which prevents us from advertising ourselves this way, but reality of the enormity of the gap between our mastery of yoga and that of a true Master.

This particular friend has managed to diffuse the light of yoga throughout her life. It is enriching to spend time with such a person. From the beginning of my own spiritual journey I learned about the importance of surrounding yourself with things which would strengthen your resolve rather than distract you, and the value of association with people of like mind. This is what led to the formation of the Victoria Yoga Centre.

In the late nineteen sixties, I was in a very discontented frame of mind and thrashing around as I tried to do something about this. By nature I am an activist. I had been active in politics and this certainly generated a lot of energy, but fueled even more dissatisfaction with my lot. Derek and I had tried to change the Victoria school system, but that had also met with nothing but frustration. Of course, I had already attempted to change Derek with even less success. One day, I woke up with the novel thought that perhaps what needed changing was me which, as I quickly discovered, was easier said than done. I found my way into a yoga class, was privileged to receive instruction in Yoga from Swami Radha, and learned that the teachings of yoga promised liberation to those willing to practice and surrender.

To a certain extent I was able to bear this in mind when I was in class or away on retreat; but it was much more difficult at home. Too quickly I would fall back into old familiar patterns, particularly with my husband and children. But I had observed that I was not alone in this predicament. There was a small group of people in Victoria at that time who were attempting to make changes in their lives

*As she laughingly said to me:
"Thirty-two years of yoga and I have
regressed from advanced to beginner!"*

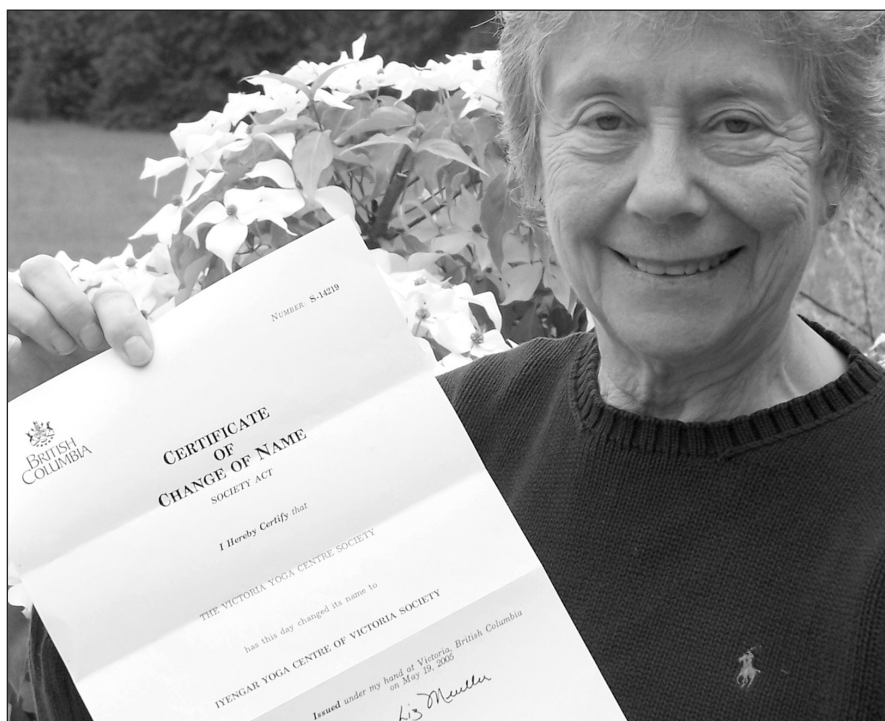
with yoga as one of their primary tools. I suggested to them that we get together to practise once a week at my home where I had a room large enough for group practice; and afterwards we had dinner and discussed our understanding of yoga, its implications and the obstacles we were encountering. It proved very valuable.

Then we discussed the idea of bringing Swami Radha to Victoria. Several of the group had attended a series of talks she had given in Victoria and been very impressed. So in addition to our Friday night gatherings we sponsored a series of weekend workshops with Swami Radha and some of her disciples. Most of these took place at my home, again because I had the space. Given that there was a great deal of interest in yoga and very few teachers, some of us began to teach.

This loose association of study groups, practice groups, teachers and students committed to yoga existed for six or seven years, until on one of my visits to Yasodhara Ashram, Swami Radha encouraged me to start a yoga centre.

Her idea of a yoga centre was very different from the idea of yoga as a business which is prevalent today. She saw a centre as a venue for study and practice of yoga from which the fruits of that practice would flow into the community in the form of karma yoga. "Selfless service will make you Divine!" was one of Swami Radha's familiar refrains. She certainly did not see it as a place where I, or anyone else, would make much in the way of income.

This is how the Victoria Yoga Centre came into being as a non-profit organisation. We continued our meetings in various houses, and made an arrangement to offer classes at the Y – another non-profit organisation. Serendipitously, the incorporation of the yoga centre coincided with the influx of the teachings of B.K.S. Iyengar into my life. There is a saying that when the student is ready the teacher appears, and this was certainly my experience with Iyengar Yoga. One Christmas on a visit to Yasodhara Ashram, I discovered that the early morning *hatha* yoga classes had undergone a metamorphosis. Swami Radha had invited a teacher who was trained in Iyengar Yoga and who had just returned from studying with Mr. Iyengar in Pune. Her



There is a saying that when the student is ready the teacher appears, and this was certainly my experience with Iyengar Yoga.

teaching was a revelation. After some initial resistance at being given a jolt out of my comfort zone, I became eager for more training in this method and followed a fork in my path which led me to Pune and my own chance to study with this great Master in 1979.

At my invitation, Norma Hodge, the teacher I had met at Yasodhara Ashram, came to Victoria once a month to teach Iyengar Yoga to those teachers here who were interested – and this was the majority of us in the yoga centre which underwent its own metamorphosis. Derek and I were the first Victorians to go to Pune; eight others came with me when I returned three years later. This trickle became a flow which continues unabated.

The transition to Iyengar Yoga was not a smooth one. Many students resisted the change at first; possibly because our teaching of Mr. Iyengar's method of Yoga was, to say the least, not very refined at this point in time. However, we persevered, sufficient students stuck with us, and we all learned.

Was it smooth sailing from there on? Of course not, that is not the nature of the yogic path. At times we thrived, energy poured into the centre, and at others we staggered along. One of the lowest points came when we decided to have a special board retreat at the Salt Spring Centre to explore how to regenerate enthusiasm. At a quick glance it was not a success, because person after person either arrived late or left early, and the whole purpose of benefitting from collective insights and a spiritual environment was sabotaged. If the board of directors of the centre were unable or unwilling to put time aside for the work, how could we expect others to join us?

By Sunday there were just four of us left. We were all discouraged and even angry at the low level of priority others had given to this weekend, but it was not a complete waste of time. Out of this experience came the realisation that the survival of the centre (which was the issue which had led to the organisation of this retreat) lay in the hands of the four of us. We had all served on the board for many years, two of us since the centre's creation; one other was the current president and the fourth person past-president. We had hoped the weekend would generate more energy for the centre, and in fact it did, but not in the way we had anticipated.

The four retreat stalwarts happened to be two married couples living close to each other in rural Metchosin. We decided to meet in a week's time at a country inn close to our homes for dinner and to formulate an answer to a question which had arisen as a result of our abandonment on Salt Spring. Were we prepared to invest any more of our energy in the Victoria Yoga Centre, or was it time for us to withdraw at the risk that the centre would wither away? After all, it is one of the main teachings of yoga that there is nothing permanent in this earthly life. After dinner and a lot of discussion, individually we came to the decision that we were prepared to give the centre one more year of our time. If the energy did not pick up and no-one else came forward to take leadership, that would be the end of the Victoria Yoga Centre in its current incarnation. So be it!

This signaled a change. Hitherto we had all been rather disgruntled with unrealised expecta-

tions of what others would or should do. Such energy repels rather than attracts. From this day forth the centre had the positive energy of four people which attracted others. Clearly its demise was not yet nigh.

Although the centre has been in existence for nearly thirty years, we did not open our own space until four years ago. Several times we had come close, but did not follow through because we felt that we still did not have the energy for such a commitment. We continued at the Y where we expanded our program in Iyengar Yoga and added a three-year teacher training program. In 1984, B.K.S. Iyengar had come and seen for himself the work we were doing. He encouraged us to build on this, and this had been accomplished.

Eventually, as the twentieth century came to an end, we decided we were well established and vigorous enough to move out on our own. Thanks to the then president, Leslie Hogya, this dream became reality in the fall of 2001. All those who enjoy the centre today owe a great deal to Leslie and her team of dedicated volunteers. This was another of those occasions when someone with positive energy attracted those of like mind to accomplish a major goal.

Today we are on the threshold of another major change. A year ago my friend and colleague, Linda Shevloff, formerly of Victoria but now living and teaching in Hong Kong, decided to change the name of her centre to the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Hong Kong. One day, receiving a copy of their newsletter with the centre's new name emblazoned at the top, I said to Leslie; isn't it time we changed our name?

This has been another idea which kept coming up and which we have shied away from because of the time and expense involved in meeting the necessary requirements of the Non-Profit Societies' Act in British Columbia. Also there was considerable emotional attachment to the old name under which we had functioned for so long.

Happily, on this occasion Leslie agreed with me at once. Our program has been devoted to B.K.S. Iyengar and his work for nearly thirty years. It was time our name reflected this. Leslie took this suggestion to the board of directors on which she still served in the capacity of past-

president, and they approved it. When I went to India last December I took with me a letter officially requesting Guruji's permission to make this change. Gladly he gave it, and I quickly relayed this good news to Victoria.

There were still several hurdles to overcome to reach this goal, but the task has been accomplished and we have legally changed our name to reflect the work we have been doing for many years and continue to do day in, day out in the manner and spirit of Iyengar Yoga.

Guruji has shown confidence in us. What an honour it is to have his name in our title! An official celebration of this name change will take place later this fall. Meanwhile, it is important to consider that the energy and effort which has brought us to this place has to be sustained. For all of you who value and have benefitted from the work of the Victoria Yoga Centre, we hope to benefit from your continued involvement in and support of The Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria. The demands of *karma yoga* are inexhaustible, but the fruits are infinite. ॐ

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 wisely, and are as relevant in the 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.

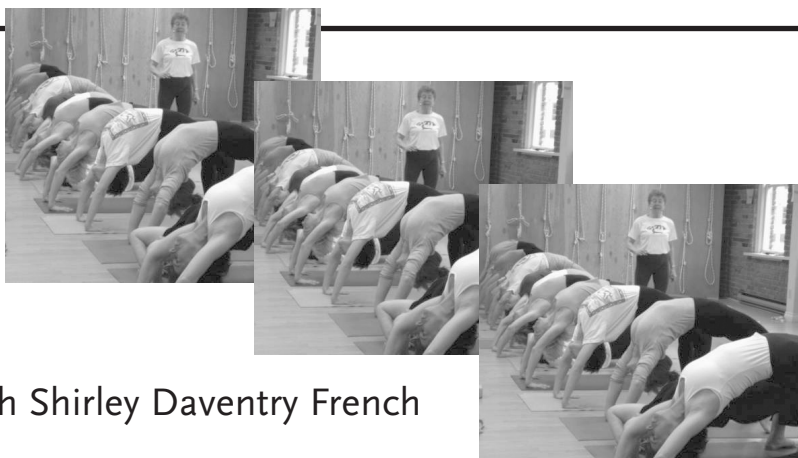
6 - 8 pm Friday, December 2, 2005

Fee: \$35 + GST for members, \$40 + GST for non-members

Registration open October 3 for members
and October 17 for non-members

Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria, 250 386-YOGA(9642)

Going Deeper



An Iyengar Yoga Workshop with Shirley Daventry French
December 3 & 4, 2005

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 December 2004.

The 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. In this special weekend, local students have the opportunity to learn from her in a workshop setting.

Saturday, Dec 3: 11 am - 1pm, 3 - 5 pm

Sunday, Dec 4: 10:30 am - 1 pm

1:00 - 1:30 pm refreshments

**1:30 - 2:30 pm debriefing
for observers**

Fees:

\$105 + GST for members

\$120 + GST for non members

\$ 75 + GST for observers

**Registration opens August 8 for members
and August 22 for Non-members**

**Contact: Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
at 386 -YOGA (9642)**

President's Message

By Silvia Vilches, President

I am very pleased, as President, to announce that we have officially become the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Society (IYCV).

Last year we received Gururji's blessing to be officially associated with his name. This spring there was a small delay with the legal registration of our name change, as a clerk apparently did not recognize "Iyengar" as a unique name! In order to appeal this decision, I brought along the Time Magazine feature showing Mr. Iyengar as one of the 100 most notable people of the 21st century, although in the end I think they recognized their own error.

I notice that people around the Centre are already feeling very pleased to be able to identify as the "Iyengar Yoga Centre." This seems to me to encourage precision and

clarity, both sentiments in keeping with our studies, and something that makes me feel taller and prouder (pretty good results for words!).

I encourage all members and students to come and help celebrate our official conversion on Wednesday, December 14th, the occasion of Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar's birthday, which we always commemorate at the Centre.

There will be more news about the event in the next newsletter. Until then, thank you to everyone who worked together to bring this change about at the Centre, and thank you to the long line of gifted teachers, from Patanjali, through Mr. Iyengar and on, through his son, Prashant, and daughter, Geeta, and through to our own dedicated teachers, from Shirley on.

Namaste

Weekend Workshop with **MAHYAR RAZ**



One of Canada's most senior teachers, Mahyar Raz, is Director of the Iyengar Yoga School of Toronto and founder of the Yoga Institute in Tehran, Iran. Her studies include time in Pune and work with 'Modern Techniques in Medical Yoga' at the Gupta Yoga Hospital in Lonavla, India. She interprets the work of B.K.S. Iyengar, Prashant and Geeta with artistic flair and promises all a charming and challenging weekend.

September 23-25, 2005

Friday 6:30 - 9 pm

Saturday 10:30 am - 1:30 pm and 3:30 - 6 pm

Sunday 9 am - 12 pm

Prerequisite: six months of Iyengar Yoga.

Fees: \$203.50 + GST for IYCV members
\$233.50 + GST for non-members

To register, drop in or phone: 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 3K3
250 386-YOGA (9642)

Refunds offered only if your space can be filled; subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

Interview with Prashantji

October 2004

Prashant S. Iyengar was interviewed in October 2004 by Richard and Kirsten Agar Ward. This interview was first published in Iyengar Yoga News, No. 6, spring 2005. It is with the kind permission of Prashantji and the IYN editor, Philippe Harara, that we reprint it here.

Prashantji, we'd like to conduct an interview with a view to publication in Iyengar Yoga News which is the magazine of the Iyengar Yoga Association (UK). And probably only a small proportion of the readers have been to Pune and probably they don't know your teaching, your classes, so we think the readers would find your ideas very interesting and we'd like to relay them to help them in their practice.

Prashantji: About interview. What is an interview? It should be an inter-view. I cannot be giving my inter-view to people I don't know or lay people...we speak our hearts to people we know very well. This word interview has that meaning. You can't expect someone to give an interview - a pressman comes and says I want an interview. Secondly it should be "inter-view" another meaning of inter-view. And in that case, both should be on the same level. So you and me can be having an interview as students of Gurujii, exchange thoughts, whatever. So that word in English I somehow don't like it. What it means or what it should mean would be completely different than interview. Prashant's view. Somebody's view. Ok proceed.

Ok the first question. At the beginning of the classes you've been talking about how the poses are starkly physical and you've been showing us various methods to progress forward from that.



"Visayavati va pravrtti utpanna manasah sthiti nibandhani." Interact with the object in such a way that it will enoble your mind.

Yes. See it's a very simple thing. *Asanas* are one of the eight limbs. and they are called *yogasanas*. They are not postures. It has been wrongly translated into English. It is a problem of that language. They are *asanas* and they don't mean postures. They are *yogasanas*. What is yoga? Yoga is restraint, of mind, mental fluctuations. So if you do a posture which is heading towards, leading towards a yogic state. Merely assuming a physical posture, a physical contortion is not yoga. So if it is a *yogasana* it must be leading towards a

yogic state. An important thing for you and me commoners who have not attained yoga, who are students of yoga, we must attain neutrality, tranquillity, virginity, sublimity, nobility, these noble qualities of mind. So *yogasanas* are those postures which help you turn out that state of mind.

Which Patanjali specifically mentions.

Yes he says "*Sthira sukham asanam prayatna saithilya ananta samapattibhyam*" [Yoga Sutra II 46-47]¹ *ananta samapattibhyam* – is a meditative state, engrossment in the infinite. So it must be a posture which facilitates the process of meditativity.

He mentions Sthira sukham asanam. He says that the postures should be very firm in the body, very steady in the mind and giving a sense of benevolence and that's something we miss out on...

True.

...this benevolence. We remember the body, we may even remember the mind, but often the benevolence is forgotten.

True, yes. So it is steadiness of body, mind and both. It is *sukham*, benevolence of body, mind and both. That has to be attained through *asanas*. So our endeavours should be in that direction. Now usually a student makes an endeavour in *asana* in attaining a posture

*Our eyes are not merely meant to see.
Our eyes can worry. Our eyes can speak.
Our eyes can emit love, can emit anger.
Everything can be done by the eyes....*

attain the contortion. Then maintain the contortion for a longer time. Or they have the tolerance to suffer for a longer time and he doesn't go for peace, comfort, tranquillity, all those qualities.

What he goes for is 'When will the teacher say to come up? I'm going to hang on. I'm going to stay until the teacher says to come up.'

Yes, that is true.

So there's a kind of grip. Immediately you get into the grip in the asana.

Yes and that's why if you have seen, observed in some classes I have not said "Come up and change the side", I have said "Go on your own." Because you evolve your pose. When you have evolved your pose it is the time you should know how to undo the pose. You can't undo the pose anytime, anywhere in any condition. What is the use in undoing the pose when the pose is rotten, or inefficacious, or ineffective and even negatively effective. You stay there. Your whole might is put in and then you stay, stay, stay, stay. You are about to die and then you come up! That is not the time to come up! You are anyway going to come up helplessly, hopelessly haplessly. That's not the process of coming up. Just as you go with a positive mind, the execution of *Trikonasana* – how do you go? You go with that proper observation, proper restraint and observances are taken care of. But when we come up, we come up helplessly, haplessly, hopelessly or when the teacher says come up, we come up.

Not gracefully.

Not gracefully. But we come up because the teacher has said or because we can't stay any more. Or we come up because

there is nothing to stay for and that's why we come up...(laughs).

Exhaustion.

Exhaustion, or there is nothing to explore, there is nothing, no creativity, you might be able to stay physically. And there is no point in staying, it's a boredom, or you come with a disgust. 'I have done sufficient *Trikonasana* on the right side, let me come up.' That's not the way to undo a pose. You have to undo in a proper state of mind.

One of the things you were talking about was how you can use your eyes to change your mind. I found that very interesting. Can you expand on that?

Yes. Now, if *asanas* have techniques on the plane of body, body techniques are there, skeleto-muscular techniques are there. There are also techniques on the plane of senses, and there are techniques on the plane of mind. If you apply them then you will get a more composite effect of an *asana*. So there are techniques of senses. Like *pratyahara*.² *Pratyahara* is a complete technology of senses. And Patanjali speaks about those techniques these effects and those should be applied. If *asana* has to be meditative how can you say that there should be no *pratyahara* but go to meditation?

Yes.

Do you follow? Because that's one of the links. Actually it is the threshold between external practices and internal practices. So how can I say "Enter my house without crossing the threshold"? It's not possible. So it's a simple logic that if you are going to evolve meditativity in an *asana* you have to see that you touch the

pratyaharic aspects also. How do we touch? So that's called Sensology. Senses. How to use the senses. What to do with senses. If you have heard my set of five cassettes on Sensology and Organology. Our eyes are not merely meant to see. Our eyes can worry. Our eyes can speak. Our eyes can emit love, can emit anger. Everything can be done by the eyes. So the eyes are not just cameras, receiving the images and giving the image to the brain. It's not just perception. They are motor organs, they are cognitive organs. They can speak, they can make gestures. They can make you understand. They have a language. They have a language of love, hatred, aversion, dislikes whatever, whatever. So the eyes are doing so many functions, why not eyes meditate? Eyes can meditate. Eyes can be pensive. See when you are worried, eyes show the worry. When you are thinking, eyes show the thinking. When you are pensive, eyes show the pensivity. Why not understand there is a meditative technique of the eyes also?

So how to use the senses nobly is a technique given in the first chapter by Patanjali where he speaks of process of mind purification, 31-32 onward. He speaks about like exhalation, retention, *prananyama*, there *Visayavati va pravrtti utpanna manasah sthiti nibandhani*.³ Interact with the object in such a way that it will enoble your mind. So if you look at a lotus flower in a florists' shop how do you look at it? If you look at that same flower in your beloved's house, how do you look at it? If you look at the flower in a temple, how do you look at it? It's the same flower but the way of looking at it is different.

Because the meaning is different.

Yes. So you can crazily look at a flower or you can nobly look at a flower. How do you look at a flower nobly? So looking at a flower you can ennoble the mind, looking at a flower you can make your mind crazy, you can make your mind delirious. You can make it passionate. So

there is a technique to make the mind noble by looking at the rose. That is the sensory technique.

And Patanjali covers that.

Yes.

Very interesting.

From the point of view of our readers who haven't been in the class how would you explain how to do that practically when doing yogasanas?

Well, practically I have explained eye visions. Like outer eye vision, see when you are looking at a panoramic view, mountain range, whatever, then you require a wide-angled lens. When you look at a flower, you can have a tunnel vision, but when you look at a farm or an orchard of roses then you have panoramic view, you look at it differently. But when you are looking at one flower in a flower vase you can be looking at it with a tunnel vision. So when you look at a panoramic view you have outer eye awareness. You have wide-angled lenses, you have the awareness in the eyelid corners, so it's a wide-eyed,

outer eye awareness. If you are trying to search a small thing you converge on it on the floor, so then it is inner eye awareness. Your awareness is near.

Close-up, microscopic.

Yes, microscopic. So the eyes are used differently. Suppose you are thinking, you do this. But if you are trying to remember your eyes go up. You are trying to remember the past, your eyes go up. Because the past records are here! It's our mysticism. So then your eyes go up, or when you are brooding your eyes are down. When you are meditating your eyes go back. So hind eye awareness, outer eye awareness, inner eye awareness.

So you should start feeling *asanas*.

Trikonasana, when you start feeling, your eyes are different than if you are trying to see your *Trikonasana*. Suppose you are doing right in front of a mirror. Then look at the image, reflection, in the mirror, you look in one way. But if you imagine, what is my back doing? How is my spine, shoulder blades, buttock bones? So if you try to think of the pose you do get different eyes.

The other methods of your perception, you also talk about how first when you do the pose the mind and the breath serve the body and then gradually the breath changes and comes to serve the mind. So you can use the breath a bit like a sense organ.

Yes

It's partly an organ of action and partly an organ of perception. And on this subject of how the transformation from the body to the mind takes place, how can we structure our practice to facilitate this transformation? For example in the class last night you worked us hard for the first hour in one way and then it changed. I particularly noticed when you had us doing Viparita Dandasana on a chair, and how when you gave us the raised blankets the perspective of the pose changed straight away. So there's partly a subjective attempt to move from the body to the mind but there's also the use of materials, props. So in people's practice how would you advise them to try to approach this, this transformation? Because as you said some people just come for the work out. Whereas for us it was a work out then it was a work in. So how can people go from this work-out to the work-in.

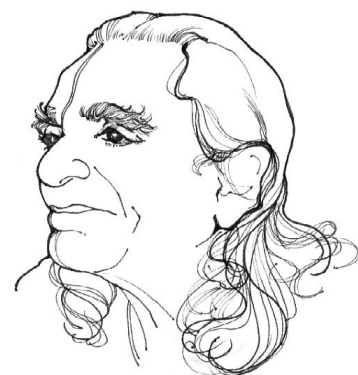
In the Light of Yoga

**Come celebrate the 87th birthday of Yogacharya
B. K. S. Iyengar at this special benefit workshop.
Music and food provided!**

Wednesday, December 14, 2005, 5:30 - 8:00 pm

Fees: \$45 + GST members
\$50 + GST non members

To register, drop in or phone
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202 - 919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)
www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca



Refunds offered only if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

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.

True, yes. To start you must go for the workout because the body has to be rendered fit to serve the higher aspects of your being like mind and awareness and consciousness. So we should not start our practice with transcendent, what do you call, motives. We have to start working on the body. Bathe the body, prepare the body, and therefore serve the body by mind, by breath, by every force, try to work on your body. So when the body has been given so much, thereafter the body is rendered fit to serve higher purposes and make use of it. Like you give your child so much. Why is it? So that when the child is grown up he can be giving something, if not to you, to someone else. He should be able to give. Now he cannot give anything to anyone, except you he can give joy to you as parents. But why do you give so much to your child? So that when it grows up the child can give to others. Similarly when the body has been served so much, let the body be given a chance to serve the others. So after serving the body you have to start serving the breath. Body serving the breath, mind serving the breath. The second stage is breath should be served, breath system should be served, prana should be served. So when that instrument is also served it is also rendered fit so the mind can be served thereafter by breath and body both. So in the first stage serve the body, second stage serve the breath, in the final stage, make them serve the mind. And there starts *yogasana*.

And you said the other day that often in the course of the yoga class you get to the fit state at the end of the class and then you go away. Whereas it's really the beginning.

Yes (laughs)

This paradigm if you like, this yoga paradigm is where it begins.

That is true.

So is there any way that people can build or does it happen naturally? Do you think that they're faster to get to that state through...



When you do an asana try to strike neutrality. ...if reflective practices are there then... yoga is not dangerous. But practising wrongly and under garb of yoga is dangerous.

Yes as one matures, the time locked in preliminaries will be lesser and lesser and lesser. Once you mature then you require one hour, but then once you know that this is the *modus operandi*, you can do that in half an hour or lesser time also. Because you were not knowing the *modus operandi* yesterday. That you had to work on the body first and then because you are going to work on the mind. So once you are matured you know the *modus operandi* you can have a fast forward of preliminaries. And then you lose less time in preliminaries. And then you have more time left for essential practice.

And it seems in your classes that some poses are quite key in turning the practice around, for example early last week we did a few standing poses, then we did Supta Padangustasana, which had a profound

effect. But at the beginners level the effect is not so much profound, it's more a sense of quickly hitting the physical limitation, so presumably when a person matures in their practice some poses quickly light or spark quickly come and there are poses like Viparita Dandasana, others maybe Sirsasana and so on, but like you say, the transformation comes at an earlier stage and not profoundly.

Yes true. Read about this, my book will be coming shortly, already it has gone to the publishers. It is called *Alpha to Omega of Trikonasana*. Now there I have said what is the level of beginners, what to teach beginner. The beginners should be taught the pose in piecemeal manner, lopsided. If you keep the legs, don't bother about the chest. If you keep the chest don't bother about the legs. Allow them to make mistakes which are not dangerous. Now if you demand from the soles to fingers and feet to head, it should be perfect, then it is too much demanding from beginners. The beginners should be taught the pose in compartments. So they will know how the legs are in *Trikonasana*, then somewhere they will know how the hips are in *Trikonasana*, then how the back is in *Trikonasana*, then how the chest is in *Trikonasana*. But if you demand everything from a beginner it is too much. So beginners should be taught in a piecemeal manner.

Because they can't link.

They can't link. So they should be taught this is how the legs are, this is how the feet are this is how the arms are, this is how the back is and how the chest is, this is how the head is. And then at second stage you must make them do two things at a time. One is an invariable factor, like feet and knees, feet and thighs, feet and hips, feet and back. So that they know how the feet work for all other parts of the body. And sometimes knees are the invariable; knees and feet, knees and shin, knees and thigh, knee and ribs, knee and back, knee and spine,

knee and chest. So they know how the knees work for every other part of the body. Sometimes hips, sometimes sternum, sometimes shoulder blades. So two things at a time; one is invariable and the other one is variable. So this is at the second level they should be taught. And in the third level they should be taught *Trikonasana* with different sequences. *Trikonasana* done usually...you know standing poses are done at the beginning of the class, practice. So it is always given the status of the starter soup. It should not be treated a starter soup. So sometimes do *Sirsasana*, so it's a different mind set. So the perspective of standing poses will be different after *Sirsasana*. So sometimes give them after head balance, sometimes give them after twistings. Sometimes give the standing poses after backbends. You can also try forward bends, or after ropework or jumpings. So different elements will be at work. Now if you do the standing poses after jumping, vigorous jumping or with jumping, it is done with the element of air. All this about elements is there in that book. If you do after, say gastro-enterological movements, or twistings, or backbends, it is done with the element of fire.

So there's a difference....

Yes. So they can feel the difference, they don't every time treat it as a starter soup and then treat it this way.

And that's necessary so that they can really penetrate the pose.

Yes, penetrate and they get a different perspective of a pose. They do in different mindset.

So in a sense you could say that Trikonasana doesn't really exist except in relation to something else.

Yes.

It exists in relation to when you got up in the morning...

That's true.

...or when you do Sirsasana or when you do Tadasana, or when you do Bharadvajasana, something like that. It's hard to define it until you can say what came before and what came after.

Yes. And the other aspect is the beginners come to learn. So beginners are only learners, actually we wrongly call them a student. Who is a student? A student is one who studies. Who can study? Who knows a bit of it can study. A raw beginner is a learner, he is not a student. He doesn't know ABC. So he is coming there to learn. So raw beginner is a learner. So once he has learned *Trikonasana*, you can make him study *Trikonasana*.

Yes.

Do you follow? So sometimes a practitioner should be doing to learn and sometimes doing to study, sometimes doing to consolidate and sometimes doing to mature. All these paradigms are described in that book. What is *Trikonasana* done for learning? When you are learning you can do more and more and more and more because you are exploring unexplored, undone. See beginners, keeping the palm at the ankle; if he has to go down he has never done before, so it's a new thing, so it's a new method, so he's learning. Taking the palm right down. So he learns something. Or he stays longer. If he stays longer he will learn something because easily he might have taken 10 seconds or 15 seconds or one day you say "Stay there for one minute", so it's a different experience. Then he learns there.

And they enjoy that because of the novelty in it. If you produce novelty then they learn.

They learn. ॐ

Continued in Nov/Dec 2005 issue.

Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Editor's end-notes. All the following definitions are from B.K.S. Iyengar's *Light on Yoga Sutras*:

¹Yoga Sutra II. 46-47: *Asana* is perfect firmness of body, steadiness of intelligence and benevo-

lence of spirit. Perfection in an *asana* is achieved when the effort to perform it becomes effortless and the infinite being within is reached.

²*pratyahara*: withdrawal of senses into the mind

³Yoga Sutra I. 35: Or, by contemplating an object that helps to maintain steadiness of mind and consciousness.

Quote from B.K.S. Iyengar's new book *Light on Life*, page 9:

After all, the goal of yoga may be ultimate freedom but even before this is achieved, there is an incremental experience of greater freedom as we discover ever more self-control, sensitivity, and awareness that permit us to live the life we aspire to, one of decency; clean, honest human relations; goodwill and fellowship; trust; self-reliance; joy in the fortune of others; and equanimity in the face of our own misfortune. From a state of human goodness we can progress toward the greater freedom. From doubt, confusion and vice we cannot.

Short WORKSHOP

Winter Solstice Workshop

With Ty Chandler

Saturday Dec 20, 6-8pm

Sunday Dec 21, 6-8pm

Cost: \$60 + GST for members,
\$66 + GST for non-members

Refunds only offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

Volunteers

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

by Jane Munro

PROOFREADER

For the past three years, Susan Robinson has proof-read this Newsletter. Six times a year, she spends a couple of evenings going over every article, advertisement, heading, and picture caption for typos and inconsistencies. "I read each Newsletter cover-to-cover and get a lot out of it," she explains. The graphic designer emails page proofs to Sue who prints them out and marks them up, then hands them back to the editor who approves her changes before sending the issue off to the printer. As proof-reader, Sue attends Newsletter meetings and works closely with each of the volunteer editors: Taimi Mulder, Greg Sly, Melissa Worth, and—until her recent move to Vancouver—Gwynneth Powell. She says, "I like being part of what's happening."

Sue makes "being part of what's happening" look easy: teaching both Mathematics and English in a Victoria high school; hiking the West Coast Trail with another young mother while their husbands take care of the kids; biking

around town with her three-year-old daughter in a trailer; traveling and working abroad; and viewing volunteering as an inexpensive way to make a contribution, participate in a community, and develop skills. "Living overseas makes you like talking to people. Volunteering is a way to do that," Sue says. When she and her husband arrived in Victoria, newly wed and unemployed, one of the first things they did was to start volunteering.

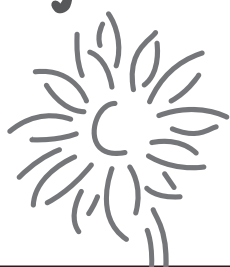
Yoga entered Sue's life in Australia. Her long-term sport is swimming (which she's also coached), but she was also into rock climbing, hiking, surfing and kayaking. Sue found yoga's inner focus similar to the detachment and concentration she experienced climbing a mountain. Once back in Canada, she discovered the Victoria Yoga Centre and started attending Marlene Miller's classes. She also studied with Greg Sly, Gwynneth Powell, and Lauren Cox. Now, she attends a class taught by Shirley Daventry French and other senior teachers.

Yoga is what I do to replenish and rebuild my energy

Sue's always been active, but feared having a baby would squelch her vitality. "Yoga is what I do to replenish and rebuild my energy," she says. Plus, yoga helps her in difficult situations when she's teaching. "I stand in *Tadasana*, remember to breathe, and detach from what's going on." When she gets stressed-out, her students ask, "Did you do yoga this morning?" Sue aims to get up in time for a twenty-minute practice before leaving for work. "Yoga keeps me in better shape than I'd expect," she observes. "At school, we just did a three-day canoe trip, and I wasn't even sore."

Sue's active and generous life is nourished and supported by yoga. Her volunteer work as the Newsletter's proofreader seems an exercise of inner freedom that gives her a whiff of her own fragrance. ॐ

Thank
you!



Victoria Iyengar Yoga Centre volunteers are everywhere

SUMMER CLEAN-UP

Lois Badenhorst
Joan Douglas
Betty MacNaughton
Roselyn Grey
Rosemary Barriett
Leslie Hogg
Bruce Cox
Sue Riddell
Jim Riddell

FRONT DESK VOLUNTEERS

Mark Davies
Jean Ives
Denise Meyers

SUMMER BOOK SALE

Rosemary Barriett
Amanda Mills

WORM GODDESSES

Heather Hobbs
Mary Hayes
Lois Badenhorst

SPARKLE PATROL

(While Ty is away)
Doug Hart

HELPING WITH THE DINNER

for the July Intensive
participants at Leslie
and Giles Hogg's
Joan Douglas
Joan Wade

Money Is A Sensitive Subject

By Wendy Boyer

Asking people for money, even for a deserving organization, is a difficult task! But the Iyengar Yoga Centre did ask and many members donated to our first annual fundraising campaign. The Centre raised \$9500 from donations. The campaign costs for stationery, postage and administration were approximately \$700, bringing the net revenue from the campaign to \$8750.

The campaign started with a direct appeal letter, written by Shirley Daventry French and mailed to all yoga centre members in January. A second letter, written by Leslie Hogya, followed in March. Because the Iyengar Yoga Centre is a registered charity, all donors received a tax receipt.

On April 29th the Board passed the following motion about the use of the donated funds: "That the net campaign

funds be placed in a special purpose fund. The special purpose fund may be used for long term projects such as, for instance, an endowment or a capital campaign, but not for general operations or short term projects. We further move that these funds be put in a one year G.I.C., and that the interest be reinvested, and the investment certificate may be cashed only on a motion from the Board."

Many thanks to all who contributed. ॐ



with Corrine Lowen

December 19 - 23, 2005

6:30 - 8 am daily

Fees: \$90 + GST members,
\$100 + GST non members

Registration:
Oct. 17 members,
Oct. 24 non members

Drop in or phone
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria,
202 - 919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC

(250) 386-YOGA (9642)

www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca

Refunds: only offered if your space
can be filled and are subject
to a \$10 cancellation fee.

**B.K.S. Iyengar
is coming
to North America!**



B.K.S. Iyengar will deliver the opening
keynote address at the

**Yoga Journal Conference
in Estes Park, Colorado**

September 26 - October 2, 2005.

Guruji will be present in the morning classes
taught by senior Iyengar Yoga teachers
during the Iyengar Yoga Intensive
September 26 - 29.

He will also lead a closing Q&A on
Thursday morning, September 29.

The conference brochure and registration
information are available at:
www.yogajournal.com/yjevents/estespark.cfm

Tree of Life

by Lori Webber

If I was to add anything to this article, it would be how grateful I am to all of the teachers I have had at the Yoga Centre. Your wisdom, enthusiasm, and openness in your teaching and the breadth of your knowledge always amaze me. I think it was Shirley, at the Salt Spring Island retreat, who spoke about a thirst for yoga: as you practice yoga, your thirst for it grows and grows. I think it is wonderful that all of you teach in such a way as to bestow on your students both a thirst for yoga and a way to satisfy our thirst.

I was diagnosed with severe Pulmonary Hypertension in May 2003.

Pulmonary hypertension, as defined by the Pulmonary Hypertension Association, is a rare blood vessel disorder of the lungs in which the pressure in the pulmonary artery (the blood vessel that leads from the heart to the lungs) rises above normal levels. My symptoms are shortness of breath, fatigue, chest pain (angina) and an irregular heart rhythm.

PH has diverse and sometimes complex causes. My Pulmonary Hypertension (PH) was caused mainly by a congenital heart defect called a Ventricular Septal Defect (VSD). A VSD is a hole in the heart between the right and left ventricles. This causes extra blood to be shunted to the lungs and, over time, damages the blood vessels of the lungs.

With PH the arteries of the lungs constrict and narrow and the blood vessels become stiff and unwilling to respond. Cells die or lose their ability to obtain and carry oxygen. My doctor uses the metaphor of a tree to describe the appearance of lungs. A Magnetic Resonance Image (MRI) shows normal healthy lungs having many large main limbs leading to infinitely smaller

branches. Our lungs are a tree of life for our body. A person with PH has main limbs with an ever decreasing number of smaller branches. Eventually, the main limbs start to wither as the disease progresses and more blood vessels lose their ability to carry oxygen. There is some discussion now as to how much regeneration is capable in the lungs of people with PH.

While the VSD was the main cause of my lung disease, there were other events that also damaged my lungs. My pregnancy in 2002 put a huge strain on my heart and lungs. Three days after my son's birth, I developed a very rare blood clot of the lungs called an amniotic embolus. So rare and fatal is this event that one nurse remarked, when I began to recover from the embolus, that I must be meant to be here.

The organs of our bodies are connected in ways even doctors still do not understand. While my heart and lungs were strong enough to withstand the pregnancy and embolus, my body went into shock, specifically my thyroid, and I developed postpartum hyperthyroidism. While I, and the doctors, thought I was recovering from the embolus my resting heart rate rose to 140 bpm, causing even more blood to be shunted to my lungs. For months the thyroiditis remained undiagnosed until suddenly I could no longer lift my baby up or walk across a room without getting so out of breath I had to sit down. After an ultrasound of my heart doctors began to suspect Pulmonary Hypertension.

I enrolled in a Yoga class at the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria in March 2003 as thyroid medication began to normalize my thyroid, bringing my heart rate down and lessening my severe shortness of breath. Looking back now, I



am amazed I found yoga in the midst of being a new mother with severe hyperthyroidism, struggling with breath and the news that I needed a heart/lung transplant. I could barely climb the stairs to the second floor of the Victoria Iyengar Centre's yoga studio!

I started an experimental medication in May 2003, to which I have responded very well. The medication relaxes the arteries in my lungs. While I still get short of breath, I can now walk with my little boy to the park. My thyroid disease seems to have disappeared. I credit yoga entirely for this. My thyroid hormones have returned to and, most surprising to the doctors, stayed normal for such a severe case of hyperthyroidism. My doctor says I am far from needing a new heart or new lungs.

I have good days, when I almost don't notice my shortness of breath, and fewer bad days when I get fatigued just walking from one room to another. Struggling to pull oxygen into your body, feeling as if you can't get enough breath, is a terrifying experience. Yoga has truly transformed the experience of breath for me. I believe yoga has helped me physiologically, emotionally and, surprisingly, on a spiritual level.

Yoga has brought a discipline to my life that allows me to sustain a normal daily existence. Just as I have to pace

myself in my yoga practice, I have learned to pace myself in my daily activities to combat my symptoms. Yoga has brought calm to my mind and body so that when I have bad days, I don't get so scared. My irregular heart rhythm has almost disappeared. Yoga has alleviated the depression that comes with being told you don't have long to live and being physically limited after years of being very active.

I was very angry at my body for being so weak and betraying me. One of my teachers once said, after a rigorous backbend: "And now the body has grace, it thanks you." Through my yoga practice I have grace for my body. My heart and lungs that have lived through so much continue to sustain me! I am grateful for yoga in allowing me to experience my body in new ways and for the experience of yoga itself. In May of this year, two years after my diagnosis, my doctor said he is amazed with my progress. PH is a progressive disease. Although I still have a severe form of this disease, rather than worsen, I have improved. On my last visit my doctor said "It must be the yoga." ॐ

LORI WEBBER IS A LEVEL 2 STUDENT AT THE IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA. SHE IS GRATEFUL FOR THE WONDERFUL DOCTORS AND STAFF OF THE PULMONARY HYPERTENSION PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA HOSPITAL, EDMONTON.

Upcoming IYAC

Assessment Dates

Oct 21-23, 2005
Introductory I/II
London ON
Winnipeg MB

Dec 9-11, 2005
Introductory I/II &
Junior Intermediate I
Montreal QC

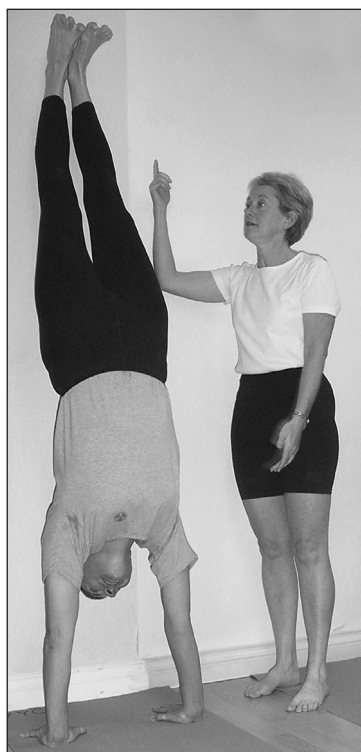
Teacher Training and Junior Intermediate Workshop for Levels 3 & 4 students

WITH CHRIS SAUDEK | NOVEMBER 4 - 6, 2005

Teacher Training

Fri. 9 am - 12 pm, 3 pm - 6 pm

Open to all certified Iyengar yoga teachers, or those in Iyengar yoga teacher training programs.



Junior Intermediate Workshop

Sat. 10:30 am - 1:30 pm,

4:00 pm - 6:30 pm,

Sun. 10:30 am - 1:30 pm,

4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Open to Level 3 & 4 students able to hold headstand and shoulderstand for 5 minutes or more.

Note: Chris will teach an extended Level 4 class Monday, November 7, 4:30-7:30 pm (times to be confirmed). Open to Level 4 students only. There is a nominal surcharge for students registered in the Level 4 class.

A devoted student of the Iyengars for more than 20 years, Chris studied extensively at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute in Pune. Her training as a physical therapist gave her valuable background for her study of yoga. She is a precise and disciplined, caring and innovative teacher. Chris is the director of the Yoga Place in La Crosse, Wisconsin and is certified as a Senior Intermediate teacher of the Iyengar method.

Member Fees

\$340.00 + GST Teacher Training and Workshop
\$220.00 + GST Workshop

Non member Fees

\$375.00 + GST Teacher Training and Workshop
\$240.00 + GST Workshop

Please be committed to staying to the end of the workshop both days. Registration opens September 12, for members and September 26, for non-members

To register, drop in or phone: 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 3K3
250 386-YOGA (9642)

Refunds offered only if space can be filled; subject to \$10 cancellation fee.

What would Level 1, 2, 3 or 4 look like by any other name? How can we evolve to continue to build and strengthen and deepen our students in this vast subject? These are a couple of the questions we have been working with as a group of teachers set out to design the fall schedule over the summer months.

This is the way we used to have it

Traditionally, we have had classes from Level 1 through Level 4 with other specialty classes such as 55 and Better, Special Needs, Back Care and others.

This is where we are going

The experience of many years has taught us that there is an overlap in Levels 2 and 3 both in the skill level of the students and the asanas which can be presented. Students are often unsure when or how to make the shift from Level 1 to 2 or from 2 to 3. After much deliberation, we have decided to chart a course towards the following structure for our classes: Introductory (Level 1), Intermediate (Levels 2 and 3), Advanced (Level 4).

We will continue to offer special classes and hope to eventually expand some of the intermediate classes to 2 hour sessions over longer time commitments such as 16 weeks or more. The reasoning for this is to further develop our students along the path of Iyengar Yoga from the strength of a solid foundation.

This is how we will get there

Beginning in September, 2005, there will be more Level 2/3 classes as well as an offering of specialty classes. There will only be one special needs class this term due to a temporary absence on sabbatical of available qualified instructors, but we hope to have two classes going again in the new year.

We will retain some Level 2 classes and one two hour Level 3 class to bridge the gap as we change over the next few terms. Students will now be able to progress from Level 1 (beginner) to Level 2 or 2/3 (intermediate) when they have a good ability to hold shoulderstand in the room and a developing understanding and increasing stability in the standing, sitting and forward extension asanas. This usually takes a minimum of 3 terms.

If any confusion arises during this time of transition, a student should consult their current teacher regarding how to proceed.

At this stage of development, the difference between the Levels is as follows:

LEVEL 1 (BEGINNER)

Will introduce standing, sitting, forward extension and some restorative *asanas*. *Asanas* from the shoulderstand cycle will also be introduced. Students will develop mobility as they work towards stability.

LEVELS 2 OR 2/3 (INTERMEDIATE)

Will teach all of the above with longer holdings, more detail and introduction of headstand. More complex inversions, twists and balancings will be added IF the class is ready. The teacher will assess if this is possible and give options to support varying abilities of the students.

LEVEL 3 (INTERMEDIATE)

Will teach and develop all of the above for a 2 hour class.

LEVEL 4 (ADVANCED)

Subtleties will be added at this level to all of the work above. More advanced *asanas* from *Light on Yoga* are introduced. Home practice is necessary to progress. Students are challenged to overcome both inner and outer obstacles for alignment from without to within. A deeper exploration of the living philosophy of Yoga as it links to the work of BKS Iyengar continues in this class as the student evolves on the path of Yoga.

We welcome all feedback along the way as we implement these changes over the next few terms. ॐ

Congratulations

These candidates achieved certification during the Introductory I/II assessment in Comox BC, June 2005

Introductory II

Melissa Perehudoff, Kelowna, BC
Jane Stedman, Comox, BC
Karyn Woodland, Victoria, BC
Darcia Fenton, Kelowna, BC
Corrine Lowen, Victoria, BC
Hilary Phillips, Flesherton, ON
Jeanette Merryfield, Victoria, BC

Introductory I

Annie Okuda, Galiano Island, BC

LIGHT ON TEACHERS | Who are the teachers?

By Leslie Hogya

The Victoria Yoga Centre has very high standards of teacher training and certification. We have a top faculty of teachers here. We have a cluster of teachers with high levels of certification, more than in any other yoga centre in Canada. The teachers are:

Senior Intermediate III - Shirley Daventry French

Junior Intermediate III - Leslie Hogya, Marlene Miller, Linda Benn, Ann Kilbertus and Lauren Cox

Junior Intermediate I - James Currie Johnson, Ty Chandler and Robin Cantor

Introductory II - Melissa Worth, Christopher Lea, Wendy Boyer, Jo Anna Hope, Greg Sly, Wies Pukesh, Jeannette Merrifield, Corrine Lowen, Maggi Feehan, Carole Miller, Karyn Woodland and Nancy Searing (Carole teaches yoga in the faculty of physical education at the University of Victoria, Karyn and Nancy teach in outlying communities)

Preparing for certification - Britta Poisson, Karin Holtkamp, Charles Campbell, Rosemary Barritt and Glenda Hingley.

We follow the international standards established by our teacher in India, Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar. Our teachers must complete a three-year apprentice program, after they have already demonstrated a commitment and knowledge of yoga by attending classes for a minimum period of two years. After the apprenticeship period they must sit for a national exam, which includes written, practical and teaching components.

After the first Introductory certificate, teachers are expected to continue to do ongoing professional development such as attending classes, workshops and teacher training meetings each month. We encourage them to travel to the yoga

institute in India. Teachers are expected to maintain their own yoga practice. Our teachers take a First Aid course as well as study anatomy and physiology for their exams.

After a year or two at the Introductory certificate level, teachers then can sit for higher levels of certification which are the Junior Intermediate levels I, II and III and then the Senior levels. Each level has a different syllabus. The poses progressively become more challenging and yet link back to the fundamental points learned in the level one classes.

Our faculty of teachers is under the supervision of our senior teacher, Shirley Daventry French. Shirley is one of the five most senior teachers in Canada. Shirley's credentials are impressive; she has traveled many times to India to study directly with Mr. Iyengar. She is in high demand for teaching classes and workshops. She has taught throughout Canada, in places as varied as Kelowna, Saskatoon, Calgary, Vancouver, Prince Edward Island, Toronto, Ottawa, and St. John's Newfoundland. She has given special courses at Hollyhock, an educational retreat centre on Cortez Island, BC, and in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. Internationally she has taught in Great Britain, in several U.S. cities, and goes yearly to Hong Kong to teach.

Marlene Miller and Leslie Hogya have both traveled often to India and were certified by Mr. Iyengar in 1997. Along with Shirley, these three teachers from Victoria became part of the first group of assessors who helped bring the certification process to the rest of Canada. Marlene and Leslie now hold the Junior Intermediate III certificate. Since then Lauren Cox, Linda Benn and Ann Kilbertus have become national



IYCV teachers Ann Kilbertus and Leslie Hogya, Junior Intermediate III instructors.

assessors and also hold the Junior Intermediate III certificate. Recently Robin, Ty and James made the big jump from Introductory II certificate to Junior Intermediate I.

All the other teachers at the yoga centre have an Introductory certificate or are preparing for their assessment. Check out the biographies of the teachers on the web site: www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca. By many of these names you will see a small trademark symbol. This certification mark means the teachers are part of a worldwide community of teachers qualified under this method. More of these marks will appear on these pages, as the teachers must be certified for one year before applying for the right to use it. This is a mark you will find as you travel the world and it is your assurance of excellence in the Iyengar tradition.

All teachers have been trained in the same method and yet each one brings their own unique insights and voice to their classes and workshops. We work together in cooperation and in the Light of Yoga. ॐ



Observations on Working with an Injury

by Greg Sly

When I injured my back, I took the opportunity over the subsequent six weeks to work therapeutically with four different back care practices from *The Path to Holistic Health* (B.K.S. Iyengar, 2001, pp. 297- 305). My area of focus was the lower and mid-back sequences. The injury itself came as the result of repeated backbends and twists; overly rajasic action which exceeded the capacities of my somewhat injury prone lower back, or is that my unfocussed mind? My recovery from this injury has been instructive and progressive in terms of my awareness and my practice, as well as my teaching.

The lower back, middle back, upper back and cervical spondylosis practices were composed of essentially the same or very similar poses. Each practice was set up in groupings of poses that were either shortened or extended to therapeutically target a specific area of the back. All practices consisted of standing poses, twists, supported backbends, supported forward extensions, and supported poses from the shoulderstand cycle.

In general the higher up the back the therapeutic practice aimed at, the more prevalent were twists. There was an increase in repetitions and/ or variations as well as the twists being sequenced right at the beginning of the practice.

When one has suffered an injury the exploration of the prescribed sequence and the accuracy of the working of each pose is more a compulsion than an option. Throughout these practices I found that I was attending to details more deeply than I may have previously; doing a therapeutic sequence gave more focus and intensity to my otherwise more general practice.

In the standing poses I was firstly aware that it was these specific poses that were prescribed and not other standing poses, so there were inherent characteristics of these poses that bring balance and health to the back. Standing poses begin with the foundation so my increased attentiveness began with the feet and worked its way up:

– In *Tadasana*, bridging across the metatarsal arch and feeling more than my usual grounding.

– In *Trikonasana* maintaining the pressure of the big toe mound of the forward foot and extending that point up the entire leg into the perineum, keeping also the buttock of that leg moving forward. The action of the back leg intensified from the outer edge of the foot up into the outer hip which was rolled back. From the integrity of this foundation the spine extends laterally and the two sides of the trunk are made equal. The root of the movement of the joint is precise and deep; the release is deep, the energy moves through the joint and healing feels instantaneous.

– In *Parsvakonasana* the front leg action remains firm into the buttock where it sometimes is lacking; awareness is there of the firmness of the sacrum and the tucking action of the tailbone. The back leg is pressing back strongly bringing firmness into the buttock of the back leg, completing the grip around the sacrum. From this foundation the rotation of the trunk is aided by the forward arm's pressure on the outside of the front thigh and the extension of the upper arm and hand back down into the outer edge of the back foot.

– *Ardha Chandrasana* is taken with precise detail attended to in the pelvis:

The standing leg is energised from the points of the foot up into the perineum; the upper leg is rotated from the hip back and the spine is extended laterally from heel of the raised leg through the sacrum to the crown. My awareness of this pose as one that is especially good for the lower back motivates greater precision and attentiveness of all the actions; I have trust.


Doing the backbends was characterized by the heightened intensity of working carefully with the injury, and doing the twists involved similar heightened intensity with the addition of increased depth and sensitivity due to the many repetitions in different forms of the twist. This was somewhat of an awakening to the wonderful effects of twists, which I intend to include more prominently and regularly in my practice.

The Seated Poses were of special interest. One specific issue of alignment was illuminated as I was working, early in the recovery: to avoid the pain in my right sacral area while simply sitting on a chair or more complicatedly, in *Dandasana* or *Upavista Konasana*, I found that rather than trying to “place” the lumbar in the anterior-posterior median line by the tilt of the pelvis, the action of pressing downward into the sitbones and upward through the crown of the head brought the spine into its median line through extension. This removed the pain completely.

These are very good practices to have been introduced to for the purposes of teaching, and the depths of the lessons are profound as my back is repaired and renewed. ॐ

Hawaiian Visitation

By Laine Canivet

 On a recent trip to the Hawaiian island of Kauai, I read the following in the *Ultimate Kauai Guidebook*: “Up the Kuamo’o Road, part some hairpin turns...is Kauai’s Hindu Monastery. This is an incredible place, but they only give free tours once a week (it varies, depending on the Hindu calendar). It’s set in an absolutely idyllic environment next to the Wailua River and a stupendous waterfall that you can’t see any other way. This temple is built entirely of hand-carved stones from India. Some stones take as long as seven years to carve, and there are 4,000 of them (gee, and we buy pre-sliced cheesecake because we’re too impatient to cut it up). They say it’s the only pure stone temple being built anywhere in the world and should be complete by 2010. If you get a chance, a tour is highly recommended.”

Intrigued, three friends and I decided to go on the tour. A young, well-spoken monk who told us about himself, the monastery and the temple under construction greeted us.

The monastery was founded by Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami – an American who has done much to promote Hinduism in North America. Currently, about forty monks live at the monastery. Half are swamis and half are students. Students need to renew their commitment every two years, and our guide was on the first year of his second commitment.

Even though the purpose of the tour was to visit the temple that is under construction, we were invited to enter the monastery’s temple. Its centrepiece is a 700-pound, 39-inch tall, perfectly pointed, six-sided, smooth crystal that represents Absolute Reality. It is the

world’s largest crystal of its kind and was found in Arkansas. It now sits in a place of honour, surrounded by four silver cobras and a five headed cobra, the symbol of *kundalini shakti*, above it.

Also at the Hawaiian monastery is a large business office containing everything needed for a modern publishing enterprise. Not only are the monks involved in the temple construction, they are prolific publishers, offering study courses, an international magazine called “Hinduism Today”, a daily news service and a resourceful Hindu website: www.Gurudeva.org. It was here, in the Hawaiian business office that the monks designed the temple and the artwork for its 4,000 rocks, scanning and emailing the designs and plans to India.

To reach the temple’s construction site we walked through lush gardens, past pools, a river and a waterfall, with our guide describing botanical highlights. Many of the tall trees are, amazingly, only twelve years old. A six-day hurricane in 1992 swept away much of the island’s vegetations.

At the temple construction site there were three working experts, brought from India for the duration of the project: two stonemasons and the construction overseer. The huge granite blocks are quarried and carved in India using traditional tools and methods. Wooden pegs are hammered into the rock then moistened with water. As the pegs expand, the rock cracks. The pegs are driven more deeply into the rock and moistened again. In this way, large slabs are quarried. Still in India, following the plans received by email, the rocks are cut to within inches of their final size, and the artwork is carved onto their surfaces, using chisels and files. While most rocks are building blocks, some are purely

ornamental, such as the lion with a free-rolling ball in its open mouth – all carved from one rock. One by one, over the years, as the engraving is slowly completed, the decorated rocks are shipped to Hawaii. Here they are painstakingly chipped to their final size by the two stonemasons. Apparently, when the rocks are finally assembled, the fit so closely that only a piece of paper can be inserted between them. However, cement is being applied to prevent seeds from growing between the rocks and causing damage to the temple.

Every day without fail for the past six years a monk has taken a digital picture of the temple and its visitors and posted the photo to their website. In this way, anyone who is interested can watch the temple’s progress. Apparently temple costs are funded solely from ‘love’ donations. Not one dollar has been borrowed from a bank!

If ever you go to Kauai, I highly recommend a visit to this temple. When I was there, they were very proud of the gold leaf dome that had been put into its proper place the previous week. It makes the temple finally look like it is coming together, even though there is still much work to be done. ॐ

LAINE HAS BEEN PRACTICING YOGA FOR THREE YEARS AND HAS BEEN ENROLLED AT THE IYCV FOR THE LAST YEAR. SHE IS IN LEVEL 2 AND STILL TRYING, WITHOUT MUCH SUCCESS, TO MEMORIZE THE INVOCATIONS TO PATANJALI. SHE IS (INDISTINGUISHABLE) IN THE CROWD PHOTO ON THE MONASTERY’S WEB SITE FOR NOV 17, 2004 (WWW.HIMALAYANACADEMY.COM).

IYENGAR
yoga center
OF VICTORIA

calendar

SEPTEMBER

- 6-11 Registration Week
- 6 Term 1 begins
- 17 Teachers' Meeting
- 23-25 Weekend Workshop with Mahyar Raz
- 26-Oct 2 B.K.S. Iyengar – Estes Park, Colorado

OCTOBER

- 14-15 Inspirations from India with Ann Kilbertus, Melissa Worth
- 22 Teachers' Meeting
- 21-23 Introductory I/II Assessment in London, ON
- 21-23 Introductory I/II Assessment in Winnipeg, MB
- 31 Term 2 Begins

NOVEMBER

- 4 Teacher Training with Chris Saudek
- 5-6 Junior Intermediate Workshop for levels 3 & 4 with Chris Saudek
- 7 Extended level 4 class with Chris Saudek (details TBA)
- 18-20 55+ Fall Retreat at Saltspring Centre with Leslie Hogya and Wendy Boyer
- 26 Teachers' Meeting

DECEMBER

- 2 Sutra Workshop with Shirley Daventry French
- 3-4 Going Deeper with Shirley Daventry French
- 9-11 Introductory I/II & Junior Intermediate I Assessment in Montreal
- 14 In the Light of Yoga workshop – Mr. Iyengar's Birthday celebration
- 19-23 5 Day Sadhana with Corrine Lowen
- 21-22 Winter Solstice Workshop with Ty Chandler

JANUARY 2006

- 21 Teachers' Meeting
- 27-29 Heart of Yoga with Shirley Daventry French

FEBRUARY 2006

- 4 Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria AGM
- 11 Short Workshop with Lauren Cox
- 25 Teachers' Meeting

MARCH 2006

- 25 Teachers' Meeting

APRIL 2006

- 14-16 Workshop with Manouso Manos
- 29 Teachers' Meeting

MAY 2006

- 21-22 Workshop with Stephanie Quirk
- 25-28 IYAC Conference and AGM at the University of Victoria (Guest teacher Stephanie Quirk)

JUNE 2006

- 2-4 Saltspring Retreat with Shirley Daventry French

2006 Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada Conference and AGM, University of Victoria, May 25-28, 2006

GUEST TEACHER STEPHANIE QUIRK

The IYAC conference begins Thursday May 25 at the University of Victoria with a Restorative Class taught by Stephanie Quirk, who will also lead Teacher Training Sessions May 26 & 27. Price approx. \$400 + GST (includes bed and breakfast at the University and most meals.) Stephanie leads a general workshop for students in level 2 or higher at the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria, Sunday May 21, noon - 3 pm, Monday, May 22, 10 am - 2:00 pm.

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 December 2004. Shirley's significant understanding of the teaching comes through in her direct approach.

Giving workshops at both the 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.

VICTORIA IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE
PRESENTS

The Heart of Yoga

**An Intermediate Workshop
with Shirley Daventry French**

January 27-30, 2006

**For Levels 3 and 4 students or Level 2 students
who have completed at least 2 terms**

Friday, January 27, 6:30-8:30 pm

Saturday, Jan. 28, 11 am-2 pm, 3:30-5:30 pm

Sunday, Jan. 29, noon-3 pm

Fees: \$185 + GST members
\$205 + GST non members

Registration opens
December 8, 2005
for members,
December 13
for non members

To register, drop in
or phone Iyengar Yoga
Centre of Victoria
202, 919 Fort Street
Victoria, BC

(250) 386-YOGA (9642)
www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca

Refunds offered only if your
space can be filled; subject
to a \$10 cancellation fee.



Radha Yoga Centre

FALL CLASSES ARE IN SESSION

Fall classes are in session, including Dream Yoga classes. For our complete schedule, please check our website: www.radha.org/victoria

SWAMI RADHA ON DREAMS

"The yogic method of working with dreams emphasizes independence and stresses understanding ourselves as individuals. Our dreams are our own creations, and as we study them we learn our personal language of the unconscious. Making our own discoveries is a very joyful process and gives us the courage and strength to go on. By finding answers within, we gain self-confidence....We can look at how, in our own lives, we have grown up to understand and use language. We should not think the the process we began as children has ended. Learning becomes more cultivated, more refined, more expanded. We learn to use our tools more carefully. If you become aware of how you use words, you may discover why in the East the power of speech is called the devi or goddess."

— excerpt from *"The Realities of the Dreaming Mind"* by Swami Radha

NEW FROM TIMELESS BOOKS:

The Devi of Speech:

The Goddess in Kundalini Yoga

By Swami Sivananda Radha

"Changes in ourselves are frequently unnoticed. They come to the foreground, however, when attention is given to the use of words and language."

In this elegant small book, newly released, Swami Sivananda Radha invites you to discover the connection between language and the creative forces of the Divine.

www.timeless.org

time to renew

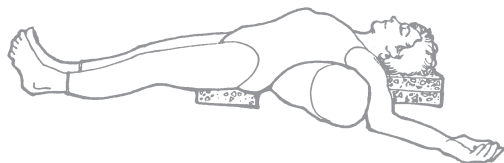
This is a reminder that the
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
membership expired
on December 31, 2004.

The membership subscription fee is
\$40 + GST, effective June 1, 2005,
(Canadian residents add 7% GST)
and is renewable each January.

Membership benefits include:

- 5% discount on all classes
- free practice times at the IYCV
- 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 (at
right), and send to the Iyengar Yoga
Centre of Victoria.*



IYENGAR
yoga centre
OF VICTORIA SOCIETY

Membership and Newsletter Subscription

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

**Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Society,
c/o Karin Holtkamp, 202-919 Fort Street,
Victoria BC V8V 3K3**

Membership/subscription fee is \$40 plus GST,
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

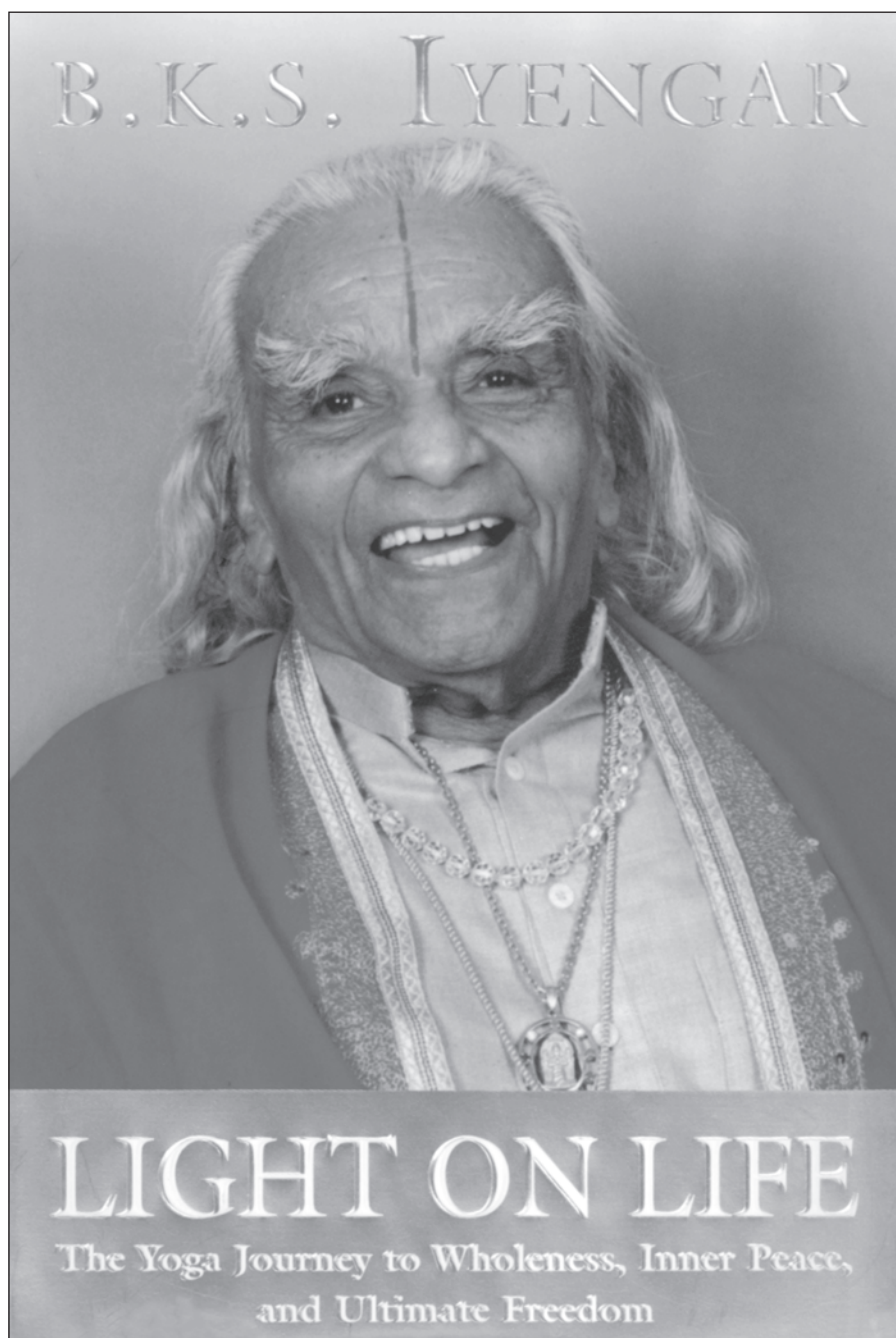
☐ Receipt required

Membership benefits include 5% discount on
classes, free practice times at the IYCV, timed
practices, early registration and discount on
workshops, borrowing privileges in our library,
eligibility to become a board member and
eligibility for scholarships for workshops.



IYENGAR yoga centre OF VICTORIA

Celebrating
the arrival of
B.K.S. Iyengar's
Light on Life



"The Light that yoga sheds on Life is something special.
It is transformative. It does not just change the way we
see things; it transforms the person who sees."

– from the Introduction to *Light On Life*

Going Deeper

An Iyengar Yoga Workshop
with Shirley Daventry French

December 3 & 4, 2005



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 direct student of the yoga Master B.K.S. Iyengar and one of North America's most experienced teachers of his method of yoga. She has taught in Victoria since 1972 and gives workshops both nationally and abroad. She has been travelling regularly to Pune, India to study with B.K.S. Iyengar for nearly 30 years, most recently in October 2005.

Saturday, Dec 3: 11:00 am - 1:00 pm, 3:00 - 5:00 pm

Sunday, Dec 4: 10:30 am - 1:00 pm
1:00 - 1:30 pm refreshments
1:30 - 2:30 pm debriefing for observers

Fees: \$105 + GST members
\$120 + GST non members
\$ 75 + GST observers

Registration October 3, members
October 17, non-members

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

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.



FREE

Friday Night VIDEO

NOVEMBER 18, 6:35pm

Come and join us for a movie.
Get inspired by watching yoga master
B.K.S. Iyengar demonstrate asanas.
Bring your partner, bring a friend.

Victoria Iyengar Yoga Centre
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria, BC

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 wisely, and are as relevant in the 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.

6:00-8:00 pm Friday, December 2, 2005

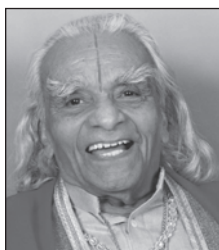
Fee: \$35 + GST for members, \$40 + GST for non-members

Registration open October 3 for members
and October 17 for non-members

Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria, 250 386-YOGA (9642)

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

contents



- 3 Reflections**
by Shirley Daventry French



- 4 Light on Life**
Book Review by Leslie Hogya

- 5 Tree for Three at Three**
By Greg Sly

- 6 Interview with Prashantji, part 2**
by Richard and Kirsten Agar Ward

- 12 Transformation at the Student Intensive**
by Adia Kapoor



- 11 Postcard from France**
from Lauren Cox

- 13 A Leap of Faith**
by Leslie Corcos

- 14 Team Teaching**
By Yvonne Kipp

- 17 Practicing Yoga**
By Jane Munro

- 19 In Our Mailbox**

- 20 Calendar**



Newsletter Advertising Policy (Adopted February 20, 2004)

In keeping with the mandate of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Society Directors, 2004, to update, review and document policies and procedures, the newsletter committee submitted a policy which is a revision of the 1996 policy and has been adopted by the Board of Directors as follows:

1. Advertisements must not conflict with the aims of the newsletter of the VYCS.
2. Advertisements must be only for Iyengar Yoga
3. Priority given to advertisements regarding:
 - IYCV events
 - IYCV sponsored events
 - IYAC events

COURSE REGISTRATION:

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

Phone:
250 386-YOGA (9642)

Refund policy:
Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.



IYENGAR yoga centre OF VICTORIA NEWSLETTER

EDITOR Greg Sly

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Shirley Daventry French, Lauren Cox,
Taimi Mulder, Jane Munro, Susan Robinson,
Nancy Searing, Melissa Worth

DESIGN / PRODUCTION Cady Graphics

PHOTOGRAPHY Cover Photo used courtesy
of Raincoast Books Vancouver. Guruji in
Namaskarasana in Tree for Three at Three
photo by Jaki Nett. Other photos by Melissa
Worth, Karin Dayton, Leslie Hogya.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nancy Searing

ILLUSTRATIONS Lauren Cox

SCANNING Taimi Mulder

DISTRIBUTION Rosemary Barritt,
Krysia Strawczynski, Karin Holtkamp

MEMBERSHIP / MAILING LIST
Karin Holtkamp

PRINTING Hillside Printing

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
November 15, 2005

IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA

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

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

Send contributions, articles, photographs, drawings, information or suggestions to the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Newsletter: 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8V 3K3. For information on activities and events, call 386-YOGA (9642) or visit our website: www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca.

Permission is hereby granted to reprint any of our material, except that copyrighted by the author or artists. When reprinting, please credit this Newsletter and send us two copies of the publication containing our material. Copyright material is only available with written permission.

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



SHIRLEY DAVENTRY FRENCH WAS AWARDED SENIOR CERTIFICATION FROM B.K.S. IYENGAR. SHE HAS BEEN TEACHING SINCE 1972 AND FOUNDED THE VICTORIA YOGA CENTRE IN 1976. SHIRLEY LIVES IN VICTORIA AND TEACHES WORLDWIDE.

At Shirley's request this issue's Reflections is taken from the archives of our newsletter. Today the yogic path is the same as in November of 1990, when Shirley's words were first printed to shine light on the spiritual life. (ed.)

Just about everyone who comes to a yoga class wants to feel better – physically, mentally, psychologically, maybe even spiritually (although that is often not understood until later). Something is hurting, life is full of stress, there is no sense of purpose, there has to be more to life than this! Exhaustion, tension, creaky joints, stiff and aching backs, whiplash from a rear-end motor vehicle accident, realization of one's own and one's loved ones' mortality – these are some of the reasons which bring people to yoga.

Can yoga do anything to help? Yes, if you are prepared to do it. This will involve taking an honest look at yourself and your life, practicing regularly, making some changes and learning to accept what you cannot change. If you want a panacea, which will make all your troubles go away without any effort on your part, forget it. If you want a practical philosophy that will help you to surmount obstacles, and live a full, responsible, accountable life, then keep going.

If you do decide to carry on then you will be faced again and again with the question: do I really want to make this effort? Is it worthwhile? Yoga is a quest for the highest in all aspects of life. It's odd that the question whether it's worth making the effort should even arise. Strangely, many people prefer to settle for second best or, if they are experiencing a period of comfort and contentment, delude themselves into believing that

this will go on forever. It won't. Look at your life, the lives of others, the world and its history. Isn't this enough to convince you? One wit said that the only thing we can count on is death and taxes; there is something else – change.

The world I live in, everything in it, myself and others, are changing all the time. This is a given. Am I going to be an innocent victim, helpless, reacting to external events? That's one choice, commonly made. Yoga raises another possibility: to live in a world of my own making – inner and outer. Yoga offers me a choice between being a willing or unwilling participant in my evolution.

Good news? Not everyone seems to think so, otherwise we would have hoards of people lining up for yoga classes, clamoring to study its philosophy and follow its various practices. That is not so. As Swami Vivekananda stated in his book on Raja Yoga: "If one proposes to teach a science to increase the power of sense enjoyment, one finds multitudes ready for it. If one undertakes to show the supreme goal, one finds few to listen."

It is not easy to be a yoga teacher. Most of our students would prefer to be entertained and diverted from their problems, rather than have them exposed even when this exposure is accompanied by ways of removing or, at least, minimizing them.

At teachers' meetings I often hear the comment that introductory classes are the most difficult to teach. Certainly they have their challenge. It's important to find a balance between giving too much, too soon, and holding the attention of the student while teaching them some fundamentals. With experienced students, the problem becomes more complex. What I find most demanding in teaching a class of experienced students on an ongoing basis, especially when many of them are teachers themselves.

It's relatively easy to come in now and then as a substitute, with a fresh voice,

If you want a panacea, which will make all your troubles go away without any effort on your part, forget it.

manner and approach, and hold the interest of the class. There is no shortage of different ways of working with *asanas*, so new techniques are always available which will stimulate, attract and amuse. The mind is restless, easily distracted and drawn outwards. Yoga, as Patanjali tells us in his second *sutra*, is the control of the fluctuations of the mind.

A substitute or visiting teacher, someone other than your regular teacher who has developed their own seeing can bring a fresh look on an old problem and help a student break through barriers or become unstuck and move on. This is very valuable, and one of the reasons we have visiting teachers. But this can also provide a diversion, and help you postpone dealing with the very thing you need to face – which is also one of its attractions.

Quite often, when a significant change is about to happen, there is a period of frustration, a feeling that you are going nowhere. A good teacher will recognize this, and urge you to persist with the practices which have brought you to this place: the verge of discovery. They will definitely not attempt to make it easy or do it for you. They will ask you to continue with the discipline and practise honestly.

One of the benefits of teaching an experienced group, week in and week out, is that it demands that one's own practice is maintained at a high level. There is also the challenge to bring a fresh approach to familiar postures, and be creative without losing sight of the framework of yoga and its purpose.

In the beginning everything is new and interesting. Those students who stay after the first two or three classes begin to feel more alive, more energetic, and to see the possibilities of change within themselves. They are eager and grateful. This doesn't last.

Experienced students have made most of their easy changes. They have learned discipline, persistence, developed strength and stamina. They have experienced many ups and downs, and know that yoga is not an easy path. They have persevered in the face of difficulties. At the same time, the ego, recognizing a threat to its existence, has been doing its own work: entrenching itself more firmly, practising more subtle seductions. As its defen-

sives begin to crumble, it will intensify its efforts to confuse the unsuspecting student of yoga and persuade them that that which feeds the ego is really that which uncovers the self.

Nothing illustrates all of this better than an intermediate backbend class, where students who really should know better, having been shown again and again, hold on tenaciously to their bad habits, such as turning out the feet, rolling out the thighs and compressing their lower back. Or forward bends when instead of intensifying the effort to straighten the legs and maintain this straightening action, the knees release and thighs lift up allowing the head to come closer to the legs and the truth to slip further away.

Beginning students may not know – yet – that they are bending the knees, or bending the elbows in *Virabhadrasana I*, or that their right angle is 130 rather than 90 degrees. The body's sense of proprioception is still poorly developed. There is ignorance, but it is of an innocent nature.

The same cannot be said of more experienced students whose deviations have been pointed out to them again and again. There is a median line in each posture. There are principles involved in this work. Beginning students have not yet grasped this idea. Intermediate students have generally had a glimpse, which is one of the reasons they keep going. Yet they are still unwilling to make a sustained effort. This is also ignorance but of a more dangerous nature; powerful forces are at work trying to distract us.

Once, at a workshop with Ramanand Patel, at the end of a hardworking session he asked if there were any questions. Rather than focusing on the work we had been doing, a woman asked him a question about the philosophy of yoga. He told her he would answer her question when she was able to hold her kneecaps up. Although I had thought her question was more of the "please notice me" variety than a genuine desire to know, I was surprised by his response, thinking of it as a put down. Now I understand. How can a mind which is unable to concentrate for a minute or two on a simple action, be ready to receive the truth? There is no room for it, that space is already occupied. ॐ

Light on life

The Yoga Journey to Wholeness, Inner Peace, and Ultimate Freedom by B.K.S. Iyengar

Review by Leslie Hogya

In the Introduction of B.K.S. Iyengar's new book, *Light on Life*, there are words that inspire and set forth a path for the yoga student to follow. In his words, "This book is about life. It is an attempt to light the way for you and other spiritual seekers."

This is a breathtaking handbook for self-transformation, full of insights, and yet humble and full of practical examples from B.K.S. Iyengar's very remarkable life.

Yoga philosophy speaks of levels, layers, or sheaths of being. The Sanskrit term is *kosa*, and these layers are explored in the book in an inward progression. Chapters 2-6 explore these sheaths, moving from the physical layer, to the energy body, to the mental sheath, the intellectual, and finally the divine body.

Chapter 2, Stability, explores how *asanas* can affect the physical body. "Freedom in the posture is when every joint is active. Let us be full in whatever posture it is we are doing just as we should be full in whatever we do in our lives" (pg 35).

Vitality, chapter 3, is an exploration of the energy body, through the practice of *pranayama*, control of the breath. "Retention (of the breath) after inhalation is the fulfillment of the individual's potential for divinity" (pg 77).

It is essential as a yoga practitioner to understand the workings of the mind, the mental sheath, which is the topic in chapter 4, named Clarity.

Chapter 5, Wisdom, explains the difference between mind and the intellectual body, this sheath that leads us to wisdom. "To live deliberately is to walk like an adult, to have balance, direction, and purpose and to walk in growing

freedom and assurance toward the ultimate freedom" (pg 169).

Bliss, the title of chapter 6, is the approach of the divine body. "Meditation is bringing the complex mind to a state of simplicity and innocence but without ignorance."

In the final chapter, Living in Freedom, Iyengar explores the idea of *Samadhi* or ultimate emancipation, union of the individual with the divine. In this chapter he talks about why *Savasana* is considered the most difficult posture, and explores its connection to time. Included is a discussion of the stages of life and the yogic description of ethical living through the *yamas* and *niyamas*.

Many passages are as startling in their imagery as this one:

Savasana is about shedding, [like] the snake sloughing off its skin to emerge glossy and resplendent in its renewed colors. We have many skins, sheaths, thoughts, prejudices, preconceptions, ideas, memories, and projects for the future. *Savasana* is a shedding of all these skins, to see how glossy and gorgeous, serene and aware is the

beautiful rainbow-colored snake who lies within. We even lie on the round as the snake does, with the maximum possible surface of our bodies in contact with the earth (p. 232).

This book is an inspiration for us to live life to our fullest through the path of yoga, "Yoga offers both understanding and a blueprint for action. It offers them everywhere, to all people, at all times" (p. 236).

The reader could open the book to any page and would find equally inspiring words as those above. It is a rich resource and will take many readings to glean the beauty held within its pages. This is a book to return to again and again for inspiration, and in the words of the title itself, for wholeness, inner peace and freedom. ॐ

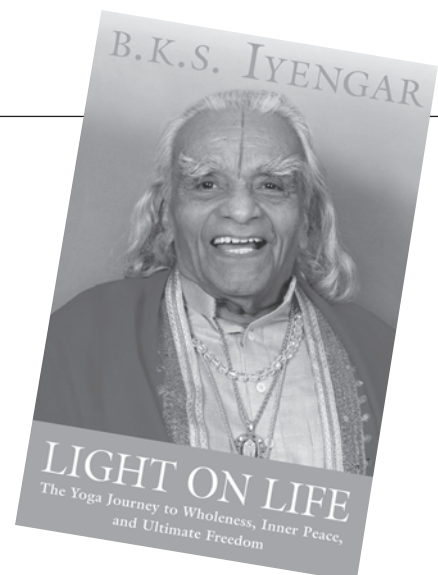
Light on Life

B.K.S. Iyengar
with John J. Evans
and Douglas Abrams

Raincoast Books
Vancouver 2005

available through your local
bookstores and at the IYCV

Cost is \$32.00 + GST



Dear Guruji,

All of us at the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria send our warmest wishes as you celebrate your 87th birthday.

We also wish to send our congratulations on the publication of your latest book, *Light on Life*, the distilled wisdom of 70 years of persistent and devoted practice, and a must-read for every yoga student.

This past year has been a monumental one for you, with your five-city U.S. book tour, and guest appearance at the *Yoga Journal* National Conference in Colorado in September.

Victoria teachers Leslie Hogya and Carole Miller attended the Colorado Conference. Upon her return, Leslie, who has studied with you in Pune many times, said, "Guruji was amazing." We all feel fortunate indeed to be the recipients of your expert guidance and inspired teachings both through your books and, more directly, through our senior teachers.

It has been a monumental year for us, too, highlighted by the changing of the name of our Centre to the **Iyengar** Yoga Centre of Victoria.

This Centre is blessed with many karma yoginis/yogis, without whose volunteer efforts our Centre could not exist.



We have a dedicated, competent, and visionary Board of Directors who steer our course. We have Leslie, who puts in the many hours needed to keep the Centre running smoothly. And there are many others who support our Centre in a myriad of ways, from putting together our Newsletter to sweeping the floors!

We continue to train teachers according to your guidelines. The Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria now has a complement of locally trained teachers which includes: 12 Introductory II teachers, three Junior Intermediate I teachers, five Junior Intermediate III teachers, and of course our

beloved Shirley Daventry French, who holds a Senior Intermediate III Certificate. (At the time of writing, Shirley was at the Ramamani Institute in Pune.)

We also have 5 teacher trainees preparing for certification.

We are planning to celebrate your birthday with a Practice and a Party! There will be asana, music, food, chanting, and a kids' yoga demonstration, on Wednesday, December 14, 5:30-8:00 pm.

On this day, and every day, Guruji, we send you grateful blessings from the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria on Vancouver Island.

—Karyn Woodland

Tree For Three At Three

Tree for Three at Three was a continental event that took place on Sunday September 18, at 1:00 pm Pacific Time. Synchronized at 3:00 pm from Ann Arbor, Michigan, all participants across Canada and the US stood in *Vrksasana* for 1 1/5 minutes on each side, to celebrate the beginning of B.K.S. Iyengar's visit to the West, and launching of his new book *Light On Life*.

In Victoria this event was a great success as it was well attended and many people brought their children. Leslie prepared us with a reading from this important new text, and then lead us into the Tree pose before finishing with savasana. This was followed by a members' timed practice lead by Ty Chandler.

Leslie received a letter from Mr. Iyengar on the day before the event:



Above, Leslie Hogya.
At top, Tree for Three
at Three forest.



Dear Leslie,

I am touched and could not believe that you are all organizing a national celebration on my visit—Tree for Three at Three. It is a great honour and I respect you all for this affection.

Yes, *Vrksasana* is apt as the Tree of Yoga is growing healthily through the efforts of you all and I hope this healthy tree blooms with Spiritual contentment in you all.

B.K.S. Iyengar

Interview with Prashantji - Part 2

Conclusion

Prashant S. Iyengar was interviewed in October 2004 by Richard and Kirsten Agar Ward. This interview was first published in Iyengar Yoga News, No. 6, spring 2005. It is with the kind permission of Prashantji and the IYN editor, Philippe Harara, that we reprint it here.

Prashantji: Do you follow? So sometimes a practitioner should be doing to learn and sometimes doing to study, sometimes doing to consolidate and sometimes doing to mature. All these paradigms are described in that book. What is *Trikonasana* done for learning? When you are learning you can do more and more and more and more because you are exploring unexplored, undone. See beginners, keeping the palm at the ankle; if he has to go down he has never done before, so it's a new thing, so it's a new method, so he's learning. Taking the palm right down. So he learns something. Or he stays longer. If he stays longer he will *learn* something because easily he might have taken 10 seconds or 15 seconds or one day you say "Stay there for one minute", so it's a different experience. Then he learns there.

And they enjoy that because of the novelty in it. If you produce novelty then they learn.

They learn.

Because novelty and the learning go together. Whereas study often involves repetition, going over the same material, thinking what have I done....

Yes, everyone is not qualified to study. You must know to some extent. Privilege for a student and one who studies is that he can make mistakes deliberately and correct that. But know how a mistake occurs, when does it occur, why does it occur and how it should be prevented and how it should be corrected. So he



"At times make them watch the breath. Is it spasmodic, is it sporadic, is it bumpy, is it asthmatic? Or is it comfortable? Is it efficacious? Does it have freedom from fatigue. Does it have traversing freedom, or is it stuck somewhere?"

can make a mistake deliberately. You should not allow a beginner to commit a mistake. He will make mistakes anyway! But we should not allow him to make a mistake. But a student who is studying can make a mistake. I'll dull my leg in *Trikonasana* and I'll see what happens.

Not for the beginner.

Not for the beginner. But the student can make mistakes inside the danger

zone, not outside the danger zone.

So if it's knees you're focussing on then you don't worry about the chest. You say well next week maybe chest.

Yes

I see. You referred last evening to how poor we are as pupils at writing agendas for our practice. Now you've written an agenda in a sense with your book Alpha to Omega of Trikonasana. So how should we approach this in our own practice, to putting it right?

Yes. Now say in yesterday's class you should decide that you are going to use your hands for your chest. And then see how you use your hands. Otherwise usually we do whimsically. It strikes, we do it. Our chest is not open, we do use it. So you have to decide as you work that I am going to use my hands for my back, hands for my chest, hands for my shoulders.

I'm not just going to open my chest I'm going to use my hands to open my chest

Hands. And see how I use it and how I should be using it. Because when you are in that practical act you know how you are using wrongly and how you could have used it better. So this learning process is very subjective and that is why you must have agenda. That I am going to use my hands for tailbone. I am going to use my hands for thoracic.

Systematic

Systematic. And then see how you use it.

Then you will know how you should have used it, how you have not used it.

Methodical and not rambling.

Yes, not rambling. Otherwise we ramble without a proper itinerary, like you go from Sydney to Boston, you come back to Melbourne and go to New York. A stupid way! Once you have gone to Boston you should finish New York and when you are in Sydney finish Melbourne. Why come to Melbourne from Boston! So you know from the feet we go to the head, head to back, back to knees, knees to chest, chest to ankles, ankles to hips. In sporadic itinerary so that should not be there, you must have a scheme. And that's why there needs to be an agenda. If you have an agenda, you know you are going to start *Sirsasana* from the palms and arms and shoulders and then you proceed. The moment you jump up you think of the feet, oh my palms are not right and you come down to ground. It's not proper.

Yes. People tend to feel that some poses, for example, the more complex ones, are more important than other poses, but you explained how actually it's the motivation in your approach that is the important thing not the particular pose. So how can people get a sense that they are progressing in their practice?

Well the basic concept is that certain difficult poses are considered as advanced poses. They are not advanced poses. In that case Gururji in the intensive courses would have spoken about *Kapotasana* longer than *Tadasana*. Why are intricacies given in *Trikonasana* and *Tadasana*? Because you can negotiate, you can execute and you can manage. But then in *Kapotasana* he did not explain sixth metatarsal, fourth metatarsal and instep and outstep. Those are complicated poses, they cannot be advanced poses. You cannot advance in *Kapotasana*, because you cannot observe intricacies. You can observe the intricacies in poses like *Trikonasana*, *Tadasana*. That means

Trikonasana you can advance more the yogic state than *Kapotasana* or *Vrsikasana*. *Vrsikasana* cannot advance, it has a limit. Now those poses are only good because they can help your *trikonasana* improve.

Yes, they refer back.

Yes. Actually they are subservient poses. They help you to give you better clarity in *Tadasana*, better tolerance in *Trikonasana*, *Tadasana*. Better penetration in *Tadasana*, *Trikonasana*. Having done *Kapotasana* you will have better penetration. So they are actually subservient poses, they are secondary poses. But they are wrongly understood as advanced poses. So the improvement has to be seen in the motive of the student. What does he...what is his drive? What is he trying to attain in *Trikonasana*? Is he trying to attain knee perfection, toning muscles, toning leg muscles or back muscles? Or is he aiming at higher aspects of mind? I want neutrality, composure, tranquillity. So that is advancement. What is the drive? What is the motivation? Motivation tells you about what is your hierarchy. I am aiming for *Kapotasana* and *Vrsikasana*. That doesn't mean you are an advanced student. Maybe a 20 years or 14 years or 15 years girl. She will apply for it and she can do it. So you can't brand her she is an advanced student, she does *Vrsikasana* or whatever. You can get a supple girl she will do everything!

And she'll do the photogenic pose. You were talking about photogenic poses and mindogenic and breathogenic. If one isn't accustomed to observing things in the way that you've been talking about, how can you know that you're doing it in a breathogenic way or a mindogenic way? How can you be sure you're on the right lines?

Yes that's what the teachers have to explain the student. They have to prepare them that as you all the time observe the body and try to attain precision, perfection of the body condition.

At times make them watch the breath. Is it spasmodic, is it sporadic, is it bumpy, is it asthmatic? Or is it comfortable? Is it efficacious? Does it have freedom from fatigue. Does it have traversing freedom, or is it stuck somewhere? So make them observe the breath so they can understand the breath is free or not free, is it spasmodic or rhythmic? So once they are aware of it they will start watching the breath and they will also try to strike the breath postures. That in *Sirsasana* my breath should not be spasmodic. It should have rhythm. So they will become breath aware. So at some point in time you have to make them breath aware, not all the time keep them

Iyengar Yoga Centre
of Victoria

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

All members welcome!

Saturday, February 4, 2006

When: 1:00 to 3:30 pm
Where: Iyengar Yoga Centre
of Victoria, Suite 202,
919 Fort Street

Program: Asana practice
1:00 - 2:00 pm
Annual General Meeting
(Business includes
election of Board Members,
special resolutions,
and Annual reports)

Tea will be served

Nominations for the Board of Directors
and non-Board liaison positions are
NOW open. Please contact an IYCV
Board Member or teacher for
nomination information.

body aware. Perfection of the body, alignment of the body, physical body. They must go towards the breath and see that the breath is also given that status. That body aligns with feet, that the body should be aligned, perfect, good, centred etc. Let the mind also be centred. Why not give centering to the mind? And so the mind also should be quiet, serene, unvibrating, unrambling. So that mind also has to be attended to. So teachers have to give this perspective to students, that often watch the breath also, and see that you do the pose for the breath and get to that. And do *Viparita Dandasana* for the breath and do it for the mind. In that case you are not going for hard calf muscles and hard quadriceps.

Yes. And there are perhaps intermediate stages which can point the way, for example, in Sirsasana if you have a problem upper back then if you focus the breath on the upper back to try to make the upper back function properly, rhythmically...

True.

...it takes you more towards the breath and it somehow shifts the emotion of the pose...

Yes.

...and then you've also talked about how the breath can be associated with certain types of emotion, for example in pranayama the inhalation is humility and then the exhalation is surrendering. So if people can go, thinking how to go from body to breath, and from breath to mind, then there are these stages where, I know you've taught, where you culture a breathisation, if you like, of the physical part, and an observation of the breath to see what the emotion is to make the mind more noble, so it's at these substages as well, so its very interesting how they arise.

Yes, True. Even in the case of the body. If you take *Sirsasana*. If you become thigh aware watch the state of mind, and become face aware. Now the face is also a physical part. Thigh is also a physical part. There are muscles, there are muscles. But when you become thigh

"Let the mind also be centred. Why not give centering to the mind? And so the mind also should be quiet, serene, unvibrating, unrambling."

aware it is a rough mind, tough mind, conative mind. But if you become face aware it becomes tender mind. So even varying body awareness, if you try to feel different parts of the body, how do you feel the skin of the palm and how do you feel the skin of the foot? Now that's also skin and this is also skin. How do you feel the facial skin and how do you feel the skin of the sole? That's also skin, but you have different mind. So even in body awareness you can make them aware. "Now start feeling your face." It is a physical part of the body. Your awareness is tender, gentle. So feel your thighs and feel your calf muscles in *Sirsasana* or *Tadasana*, it's a different mind. So within the body itself you can see that the mind can be made multifaceted, and they can realise it, they can feel it. Now when you are going to feel the breath, similarly the breath in different parts. How do you feel your breath in the nostrils? If you have to feel your diaphragm it's a different way of feeling it, it's a different mind. So like you feel the breath in the back, you feel the breath in the spine, you feel the breath on the laterals, you feel the breath in the breath, you feel it in the floating ribs, or abdomen. It's all different mind there. So the whole....

Multifaceted.

Multifaceted. Make them aware. Otherwise mind is mind – theoretically body is body, mind is mind. It is multifaceted, Make them aware. Make student aware that the body is multifaceted, the mind is also multifaceted, the breath is multifaceted.

Yes. I think this is the problem we often have with the practice is that if you say the constituents are body, breath, mind, people tend to think block, block, block.

Mm true.

And without seeing the interpenetration. Another question – often in your classes you've been critical of the way Iyengar teachers approach the subject of yoga, for example you talk of them being alignment fanatics. How would you advise them to refine their approach to the subject?

Yes basically higher teachings are all on interpretation. See when you are teaching the child, the child doesn't interpret, 'egg' or 'apple' or whatever. It doesn't interpret. It has to just learn. But higher education training is always interpretation. So the word alignment has not been properly construed, by students. Now see alignment is of the body. Actually the body can never be aligned. Because what is on the right side body is not on the left side of the body. Do you follow? It's not even body right-sided, half weight and left side has half weight. It's not like that. The organs have different sizes, dimensions. Different organs are in different parts of the body. You don't have right liver and left liver, right lung and left lung and right stomach, left stomach. What is on the right is not on the left. What is on the left is not on the right. So the body alignment itself is not a proper thing. Alignment is always in the mind. Your mind can be aligned. Like substance, water. If you put it in a vessel it is going to maintain the level everywhere. Do you follow? So water will be aligned in that vessel.

The content.

Content will be. So basically alignment is of the mind. *Samatwam yoga mukshate* is the definition. Now that *samatwam* is of the mind. The mind can be even. The body can never be even. Even if you cut your body in half it will not be even. If you have to divide the body in weight then you will cut the body in a different

shape. The two sides will be different in form, shape and volume. If you divide it in weight. So the question is whether you are going to divide in weight or dimensions? So the alignment of the body...it's not that you have to be in balance *Tadasana* not back, not front, not right, not left. So why call it alignment? It's not proper word. And it doesn't convey proper meaning also.

Right. I see.

Now how can you be aligned in *Trikonasana*? Right leg has more weight, if you are doing on the right side. Left leg has less weight. How will you align? You cannot make the weight even on two legs in *Trikonasana* or *Parsvakonasana*. Because the body has gone to one side.

Yes. It's as you say mentally and therefore internally, so that was my supplementary question. What should be aligned so that pupils do not become fanatics of alignment?

The mind should be even. So if the mind has to be even it means mind should be neutral. Mind should not be

"In an asana we have to strike neutrality of the mind, it is not polarised towards success or failure, loss or gain, excitement or anxiety or worry."

not polarised towards success, towards failure. If I am doing *Trikonasana* and I am brooding or I am having worry or I am not getting what I should have got or I could have done better, Guruji does better. I am not doing good. This is not an aligned mind. The mind should be neutral. Whether you get or don't get. The mind should be neutral. That is alignment of the mind. So in an asana we have to strike neutrality of the mind, it is not polarised towards success or failure, loss or gain, excitement or anxiety or worry. So the mind should be neutral, centred, which means that you don't aspire, there is no, what you call, brooding, there is no grudge. Otherwise

many times students start with a grudge. "You do better, I don't do better." This is not the way of practising. He does whatever he is qualified to do, I do whatever I am qualified to do.

Yamas and Niyamas.

Ah yes. Alignment is that mind should be neutral in an *asana*. When you do an asana try to strike neutrality. Balance of mind. Not going for dualities. Success, failure or loss, gain, etc. etc.

You were saying, I think it was last night, that inspiration is more important than aspiration.

Aspiration should not be there. "*Abhyasa vairagya*" [Yoga Sutra 1.12] Dispassion is the means of yoga. Now how can you say that you aspire dispassionately? It's a contradiction! In all other endeavours we must have passion. We are passionate students of art, science, whatever, whatever, business. We must be passionate students. But yoga is a spiritual subject and that's why there is a first condition "dispassion is the means of yoga". You can't be aspiring. You can be inspiring,

In the Light of Yoga

Come celebrate!!!

A very special benefit workshop will be held to honour the 87th birthday of Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar and to commemorate the official name change of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria.

Wednesday, December 14, 2005, 5:30 – 8:00 pm

All proceeds from this workshop go to the B.K.S. Iyengar Scholarship Fund which assists Iyengar Yoga teachers, training teachers and committed students to attend classes at the Iyengar Yoga Institute Pune, India.

All those who support the B.K. S. Iyengar Scholarship Fund with donations larger than the \$20 (+ GST) tuition fee for the asana class will be issued a tax receipt for the amount given above the tuition fee.

\$35 – Tadasana Supporter \$75 – Sirsasana Supporter

Donations of any amount are gratefully accepted at any time to the Scholarship Fund. Tax receipts will be issued.



Music and food provided! Kids Yoga Demonstration, Chanting and Asana practice with Ty Chandler.

Fees: \$20 + GST, Kids under 15 FREE

To register, drop in or phone
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202 - 919 Fort Street, Victoria BC
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)
www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca

but not aspiring. If you aspire, you are passionate. If you are passionate then you are polarised.

I see. And you said something in the class it was again last night how often as students of Iyengar yoga we're intellectually constipated and emotionally constipated and may be even a little bit physically constipated! So could you expand on that? How this stasis arises?

Yes, both are given, taken Iyengar yoga as a very physical yoga, rigorous physical yoga. They sincerely work very, very hard. Then what happens? They become rough and tough. They become intolerant. Then they become unaccommodative, or they lose the emotional tenderness. Those who are working very hard in *asanas* they will never be emotionally tender. They will not be understanding others. They will want everyone to understand them but they will not want to understand anyone. You know physical practices always take to that state. See if you have worked very hard cleaning your house, somebody comes and spoils your house, you get infuriated. But if I just decided mentally I am going to clean my house on Sunday. Tomorrow I am going to clean my house, and somebody comes and spoils your house on Saturday, it doesn't bother much because you haven't done anything physically. You have only



planned mentally. That I will start from kitchen, then I'll go to this room, that room and finally bedroom or whatever. So you have just planned on cleaning the house and somebody spoils it, you, it doesn't agitate you much. But you have cleaned the house physically, somebody comes and slightest thing he does, he is abused or cursed. So those who put a lot of physical effort its always the case that you become intolerant. If you have put mental effort, you won't be intolerant. And that care has to be taken, if I have worked absolutely physically because Iyengar system is rigorous practice and rigorous physicality then they put a lot of physical effort and then something goes against it then they won't dare.

What you've said in the class is that we you should work actively, passively, reflectively, and then you've used a lot of other adjectives....

Yes.

...so what people are doing is they're working actively they're not working reflectively...

True yes

...they're not working passively. They're not working thoughtfully.

Like yesterday, if you use that essential paradigm every time in your practice maybe for 10 minutes, 15 minutes during your session, then you develop that mature mind. You become tolerant, you become accommodative. But if you do hundred *Viparita Dandasanas* and then somebody comes and offends you, you will slap him! But if you have done long half *Halasana* and *Viparita Karani* and someone offends you, you neglect! You have done *Pranayama*, or done passive poses, somebody says something, you neglect. Why? Because you have tolerance then. So we have to see that a part of our practice is to essential paradigm, so that we develop these qualities, we culture that mind and you don't become intolerant and have fights in all Associations. It's very, very heartbreaking, Guruji's did for so many years in all these countries, everywhere, even in India, it's same thing here also. And lot of frustration for him actually, although he doesn't show.



Fall Retreat at Saltspring Centre November 18-20, 2005

Are you over 55, and have some yoga experience? Come to Saltspring with Leslie Hogya and Wendy Boyer.

Fees: \$310.00 + GST members
\$340.00 + GST non-members

Registration:
September 1, members
September 15, non-members

Shared accommodation. Begin at 4:00 pm Friday with a restorative class before dinner, end after a delicious vegetarian lunch on Sunday.

To register, drop in or phone:
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria, BC, V8V 3K3
250 386-YOGA (9642)

Refunds only offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

Yes. I know he's suffered a lot.

Yes he's suffered a lot. Such a hard work he put in, you know he did so much of good intentions and now people are fighting within themselves.

So if people practice to become gentler and tolerant then it's the right thing to practise?

Yes. True. Yoga should give you an extra tolerance then you had ever before. It has become the other way round. People were better before!

It's this benevolence again. If people miss it out...

Yes, true.

...stop to reflect.

True, true. See if reflective practices are there then you definitely...Yoga is not dangerous. But practising wrongly and under garb of yoga is dangerous. This is what happens. They say "I practise yoga regularly" but what actually they practise is unyogic and that is more harmful. If you don't practice, doesn't matter,

It can become destructive.

Yes, true.

Is that what you meant when you said it's worse that you know something not to do it than if you were to remain ignorant.

Yes. Some people are better who don't practise at all. Than those who are working rigorously, seriously, vigorously. They were better 20 years back. And people say that they were better people, and now they are unaccommodative, intolerant and hard and agitated, they agitate other, they also get agitated by slightest things. That tenderness is not good. If they don't practice this tenderness, they get that tenderness. They can develop it evilly.

Pride comes up

Pride yes. One of the saints has said that pride is most delicate thing, although it looks to be very stubborn. A slight bubble, blow a bubble on it...

A pinprick.

Yes pinprick.

Last question. What are the differences between civilisation and culture?

Yes this is all modern metropolitan life. And our etiquette. Why do we have etiquette? We show that we are polished. We are understanding, we have all the tolerance, all good qualities. But it's all face. Things that we show on the face. All the time showing a smiling face and then inside we have devilish face. So in civilisation we try to fool others. Mannerisms, etiquette

Accomplishments. People want their children to be accomplished.

Yes. Behaviour yes. Now what is the behaviour? Behaviour is always with someone else. Now if you are locked in your room behaviour question doesn't come. The conduct comes there if you are in your room all alone. What is your conduct? The conduct is on test when you are all alone. Behaviour is never on test when you are all alone.

And so the civilisation is about behaviour?

Yes it's about behaviour, that we should be good to others. Culture is something intrinsic and inherent.

Thank you. ॐ



Thank you to Meg Seaker of Kaslo, B.C., for her donation of a series of videos of Mr Iyengar during his visit to Sydney Australia. She also donated two copies of Iyengar, His Life and Work. The books and videos are now in the library for all to view.



Teacher Training and Junior Intermediate Workshop

FOR LEVELS 3 & 4 STUDENTS

with

CHRIS SAUDEK

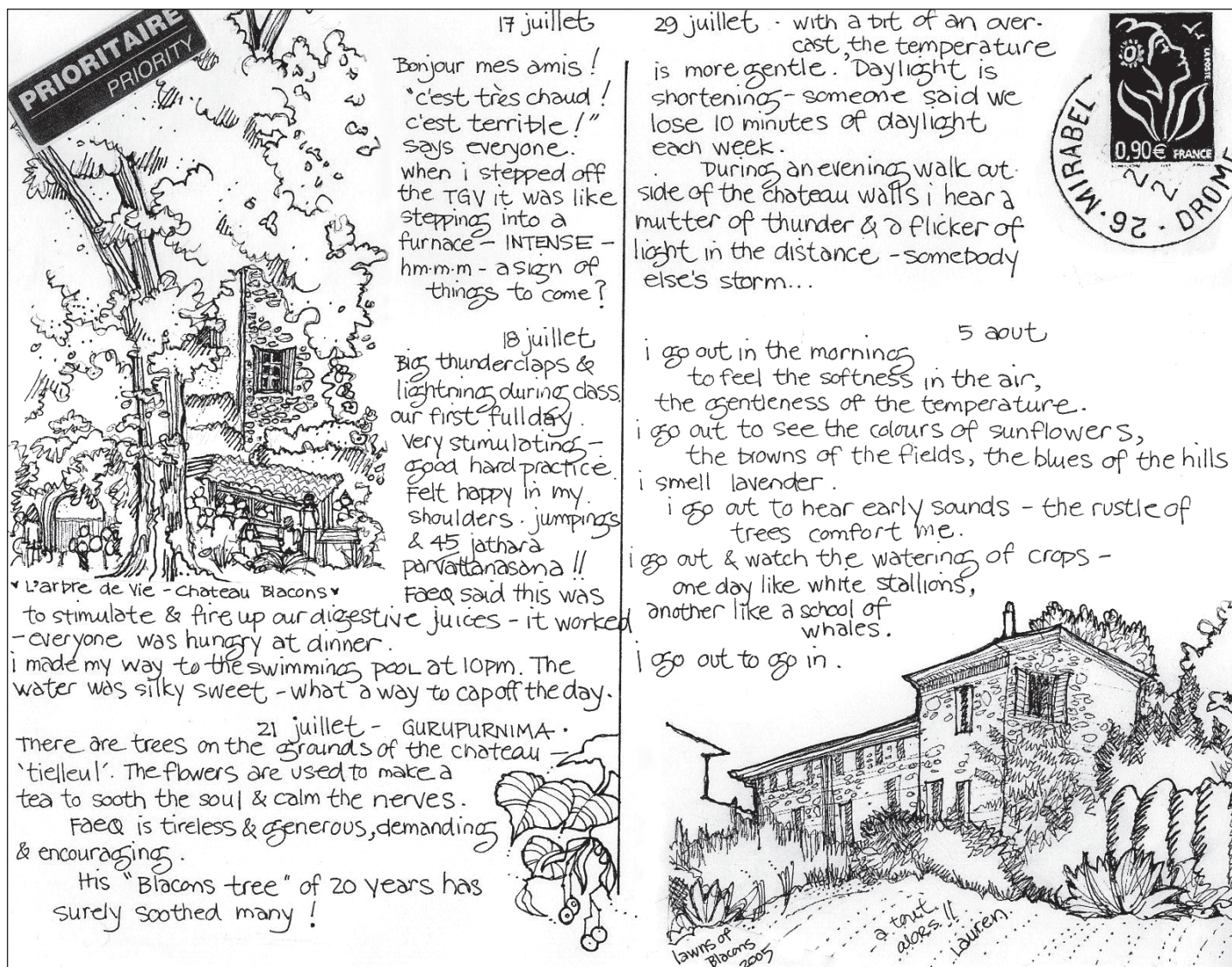
NOVEMBER 4-6, 2005

For more information call
The Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
250 386-YOGA (9642)

Postcard from France

from Lauren Cox

LAUREN COX IS ONE OF IYCS'S SENIOR TEACHERS. SHE HOLDS A JUNIOR INTERMEDIATE III CERTIFICATION, HAS BEEN TO THE INSTITUTE IN PUNE SEVERAL TIMES, TEACHES SPECIAL NEEDS, PRE & POST NATAL, LEVELS I-IV, AND HAS TAUGHT IN HONG KONG. SHE IS A TEACHER TRAINER FOR OUR CENTRE AND CONTRIBUTES OFTEN WITH HER ARTWORK AND ARTICLES.



IYAC

Assessment Dates

Dec 9-11, 2005, Montreal QC

Introductory I/II & Junior
Intermediate I

June 16-19, 2006, Calgary

Introductory Level I/II

June 16-19, 2006, Saskatoon

Introductory Level I/II

October 13-15, 2006, Toronto

Sr. Intermediate I

November 17-20, 2006, Victoria

Jr. Junior II

"Every illness is in reality a part of ourselves, it is a part of our manifestation. According to yogic philosophy, diseases and suffering are the fruits of our past actions. In that sense we are responsible for what we have created. If we confront affliction through yoga, we awaken a new awareness of tolerance and endurance, as well as a true sympathy for others in their afflictions. These qualities indicate the degree of development we have reached. So why not take adversity positively? Certainly it is an alarm signal, but it also contains the seed for its own resolution and transcendence."

B.K.S. Iyengar from "Light on Life" pg. 52

Transformation at the Student Intensive

by Aidia Kapoor

Yoga Sutra 1.33: *“maitri karuna mudita upekshanam sukha duhkha punya apunya vishayanam bhavanatah chitta prasadanam.”*

At the beginning of the Student Intensive workshop, our instructors, Ty and Lauren, gave us each a copy of *Yoga Sutra* 1.33 and asked us to think and reflect upon it over the week. At first reading, I found the text to be pleasant, but could not understand why they had chosen this *sutra* for the week. “Through the cultivation of friendliness, compassion, joy, and indifference to pleasure and pain, virtue and vice respectively, the consciousness becomes favorably disposed, serene and benevolent.” It is a pleasant thought, but what does it have to do with yoga? I put the *Sutra* aside and decided to wait and see if the week would give some illumination.

We started the first day with a timed practice, and on the second day added a *pranayama* practice before 2 hours of *asana*. Each day included learning some prayers, chanting, and discussions about yoga and its philosophy. Ty and Lauren led us through a rigorous week of practice, teaching us in a demanding but supportive way that left me feeling challenged but wanting more. In the afternoons I was acutely aware of my body from the morning’s practice, and could not get Ty and Lauren’s voices out of my head. “Lift the border of the nipple chest! Don’t let that leg waver!” etc. We worked that week harder than I had worked in practice before. Deep *pranayama*, intense and strong *asana*, and conscious attention to details: It was challenging and not to be taken lightly.

Friday morning, at the end of a powerful week, we gathered together to discuss the *Sutra*. Some offered insights,

“After all, the goal of yoga may be the ultimate freedom but even before this is achieved, there is an incremental experience of greater freedom as we discover ever more self-control, sensitivity, and awareness that permit us to live the life we aspire to, one of decency; clean, honest human relations; goodwill and fellowship; trust; self reliance; joy in the fortune of others; and equanimity in the face of our own misfortune. From a state of human goodness we can progress toward the greater freedom. From doubt, confusion and vice we cannot.”

B.K.S. Iyengar, “Light On Life,” pg. 11

but largely it was students sharing their personal interpretation of what the *Sutra* meant. Apparently I was not the only one struggling with the meaning, but most people seemed very interested in the “indifference to pleasure and pain” part. We discussed this for some time, with some students sharing their thoughts. But the question kept burning in my mind: What does this have to do with the yoga we have been practicing all week? I did not get my answer.

The week ended with me feeling no closer to understanding the secrets of this *Sutra* than when I had begun. Through a demanding five days of *asana*, *pranayama*, prayer, and philosophical discussion, I still could not see what cultivating a pure mind had to do with anything that we had done that week. I felt defeated, exhausted from the rigours of the week, and overwhelmed by the amount of work I knew I had still to do to progress. That night I began to question: Why am I doing this then? What is the point of this yoga? What exactly am

I trying to progress towards? What does it mean to be “good” at yoga? A week of intense practice and I feel exhausted, frustrated, and overwhelmed – what am I doing this to myself for? I knew if I could not answer these questions, then I should give up this practice altogether. Lauren and Ty had showed us this week that this yogic path is hard work and not an easy path. If I did not understand my commitment to it, I should get out now.

The next day was Saturday and in the afternoon I went with my neighbours to Beacon Hill Park, to meet and practice yoga with a friend who had also been in the intensive that week. We went through a long and gentle practice outdoors which was a welcome change from the demands of the week. I observed my neighbours, who were newcomers to yoga, laughing as they lost their balance, making faces at some of the poses, and struggling to contort their bodies. How nice it must be, I thought, for them to just stretch

and feel good without having to think about it so much!

As I lay in the grass in *Savasana*, I thought about this and wished my relationship with yoga had not become so complicated over the week. But why had it become that way? And then the answer came to me: I had been looking at *Sutra* 1.33 in the wrong way! It's not that we do yoga to become serene, this *Sutra* says that without the cultivation of a pure mind, yoga is simply all the work we have been doing this week. Stretching, breathing, praying, is all just stretching, breathing and praying unless we are doing this with intent – the intent to cultivate a pure mind, a mind that is full of friendliness, compassion, joy, and indifference to pleasure and pain, virtue and vice; a mind that is favorably disposed, serene, and benevolent. This is why we do yoga and this is what practice is for.

I laughed as I lay there, thinking how Ty and Lauren had given us the answer the first day, but it had taken me all week to see it! Here I had been stuck on the text of the *Sutra*, trying to take it apart and make sense of it, when all I had to do

was step back and look at it as a whole and in its relationship to my practice. And then the answers flowed. Just as in the way we spend all class on points ("Lift the border of the nipple chest! Don't let that leg waver!" etc.) we aren't truly practising until we are able to drop all that and just be in the pose, I was only able to understand the *Sutra* when I dropped the words and savoured its message: With pure intentions the practice of yoga will lead to transformation. ॐ

"As we explore the soul, it is important to remember that this exploration will take place within Nature (the body), for that is where we are and what we are. Our specific field of exploration is ourselves, from skin to unknown center. Yoga is concerned with this fusion of nature and soul because this is the essence of human life with all of its challenges, contradictions and joys."

B.K.S. Iyengar, "Light On Life," pg.6

A Leap of Faith

By Leslie Corcos

When I received a wonderful invitation to Victoria for Shirley's Junior Intermediate I/II Intensive I emailed back: "Here I am living in Yemen! I've had only 5 days of yoga instruction all year, albeit from Geetaji in Pune. Still, I can't possibly be ready for an intermediate workshop!" My friend replied, "Just come. Do what you can do. Stay at my house."

I took a leap of faith, and from August 15 to 19th drank deeply from the cup of knowledge offered by Shirley and the larger Iyengar Yoga community. Because of the skilful way in which our activities were facilitated we learned a lot from the collective knowledge of all the participants of the intensive. We processed our work with *asanas* and *pranayama*, in paired and group activities, and daily discussions.

We began with a videotape of Geetaji

scholarships & 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 for dates.

Scholarship applications for Weekend Workshops are due one month prior to the workshop. Scholarships for Special Events and Intensives are due two months before the event.

Student Bursaries are available to all students presently

enrolled in classes. To subsidize your term fees please apply three weeks prior to term.

Applications and details for both are available at the reception desk.

Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria, BC V8V 3K3

250 386-YOGA (9642)

"Yoga releases the crestive potential of Life. It does this by establishing a structure for self-realization, by showing how we can progress along the journey, and by opening a sacred vision of the Ultimate, of our Divine Origin and, and final Destiny. The Light that yoga sheds on Life is something special. It is transformative. It does not just change the way we see things, it transforms the person who sees. It brings knowledge and elevates it to wisdom."

B.K.S. Iyengar, Introduction to "Light On Life," pg. xxi

at her 60th Birthday *Sadhana*, in which she explained the terms *bahiranga*, *antaranga* and *antaratma* as three levels of one's *sadhana* (practice). Although I had heard these words in Pune, I was now to have an opportunity to explore their meaning more fully, and this thread of the teachings turned out to be woven throughout the intensive.

I "experienced" these terms through "doing." As I flailed and even collapsed to the floor in *bhujasana* and *lolasana* it became clear that I was working with only my outermost body, *bahiranga*. Later in *janu sirsasana*, a familiar *asana* I have practiced for years, I moved into it with the ease of meeting a loved one. Because there was no struggle through *bahiranga*, I felt myself moving deeper inside, towards *antaranga* and *antaratma sadhana*. As Geeta phrased it, I was able to move "somewhere deeper, to go in to

reach the soul." The *pranayama* work has made my breathing gentler and smoother.

In our teaching practice we were teamed up with at least one participant who was working towards their senior intermediate assessment, so discussions about how to choose, sequence and link the *asanas* were very instructive. My group helped me to prepare the teaching of my *asana* by guiding me into greater body awareness and into more self-directed '*ahimsa*'.

The Victoria Iyengar Yoga community exemplifies professionalism and a deep knowledge base combined with enthusiasm and generosity of spirit. From the support and encouragement of Shirley and all the workshop participants, I have returned to California a more knowledgeable and confident teacher. Thank you all. ॐ



Sirsasana II

Team Teaching

by Yvonne Kipp

Who among teachers has not felt the tremulous anxiety of teaching in front of one's peers? The thought is always present that I could have been so much better prepared. It is common (Teacher Training) knowledge that assessment brings out everything we know and more. Under duress there is little time for artifice or posturing. What we actually know will show.

This year there was a brilliant Junior Intermediate Intensive with Shirley Daventry French in Victoria. A main idea revisited was the critical importance of sequencing of the *asanas*. A series of poses dovetail and support progressive opening in their execution. One thing leads to another: from *bahiranga* to *antaranga* to *antaratma*.



Urdva Prasarita Ekapadasana

Penetrating from the external, the body, through to the deepest inner place in the soul itself. For me, working with the Junior Intermediate I and II syllabi brings a greater awareness of sequencing generally, and especially involve the

areas of the groins.

Working with three others in a group we put together a four-pose sequence from the J.I. syllabus and team-taught these to our peers. The learning was deep. Curiosity and investigation took us to a

new level of group inquiry. One of my favorite sequences was: *Urdhva Prasrita Ekepadasana*, *Utthita Hasta Padangustasana I*, *Trianga Mukhaikapada Pascittmottasana*, and *Krounchasana*. The linking of instructions in this sequence was in the thighs rolling in and pressing back or down, shoulders down and chest up, and respecting the asymmetry of the pose.

For me, so much more depth of each pose was visible, because each teacher has his or her own perspective on the practice and teaching of that pose. Combining the various ideas and paring and implementing them became a wonderful exercise in the precise science and art of teaching. This involved clarity in the actions of the pose, clarity of

speech in presentation, expanded attention towards the class doing the pose, and understanding of the integration of Yoga as a whole system. For all involved the experience was a revelation, because the Iyengar method is profound in its clarity and depth. ॐ

Your subscription
ends
with this issue!!!

See back page.

Workshop

with Stephanie Quirk

for students with 6 months or more Iyengar Yoga experience.

This is fabulous opportunity to study with someone who has a wealth of direct experience studying with the Iyengar family.

Sunday, May 21, 2006, noon - 3:00 pm

Monday, May 22, 2006 (Victoria day), 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Fees: \$ 160.00 + GST members
\$ 180.00 + GST non-members

Registration:

February 4, members

February 14, non-member

To register, drop in or phone

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

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.



Sri B.K.S. Iyengar, Honourary President

The Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada Presents Stephanie Quirk May 25-28, 2006 at the University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia In conjunction with the IYAC AGM

All Iyengar Yoga students and teachers are welcome!

Thursday, May 25

10:00 am - 2:30 pm Registration
3:00 pm - 6:00 pm Asana Class with Stephanie Quirk
(Dinner provided)

Friday, May 26

9:00 am - 5:00 pm Asana Class with Stephanie Quirk
(2 hour break - Lunch and Dinner provided)

Saturday, May 27

9:00 am - 5:00 pm Asana Class with Stephanie Quirk
(2 hour break - Lunch and Dinner provided)
A Celebration with Yoga and Music Sunday,

May 28

8:30 am - 11:30 am IYAC Annual General Meeting
(Light breakfast buffet provided)

Costs

Total cost for the weekend:

\$400 + tax before April 10, 2006
(includes lunches, dinners & accommodation
throughout the weekend)

\$440 + tax after April 10, 2006

Conference only: \$265 + tax

Extra accommodation: \$45 + tax per night (includes bed & breakfast in a private room). *Call the University of Victoria Housing office at 250 721-8395 to book extra nights.*

To Register: Cheques made payable to the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria and sent to: 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC V8V 3K3

Please mark IYAC Conference on the envelope.

For payment by VISA over the phone, please call the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria: 250 386-YOGA (9642) between 10:00 am - 1:00 pm Pacific time.

Practicing Yoga

Jane Munro

George, the alarm-clock-cat, scratched on the bedroom door at 6 a.m. *Tapah svadhyaya Isvarapraidehanani kriyayogah*—one of the few sutras I’ve managed to memorize—came to mind. Right: “Burning zeal in practice, self-study and study of scriptures, and surrender to God are the acts of yoga.”

Before starting *pranayama*, I fed the tabbies, went outside to grind the coffee so the buzz wouldn’t disturb my sleeping husband (a few stars dimly visible through the damp overcast), and prepared the fruit for our breakfast. I don’t wake up quickly; the chores give me time to surface, and make it easier to ignore Bob and my “to do” list for a while. They’re part of a bargain with the fear of being selfish when I disappear into one of my practices.

I’ve returned to practicing *pranayama* lying down, supported by a bolster. In class, a teacher corrected my neck by running her thumbs down the muscles from skull to upper back and pressing firmly into their roots where they attach to the spine. I know they knot up. It’s a challenge to keep the nape soft as the neck elongates and the head tilts far enough forward for the chin to rest in the hollow of the throat. Lying down helps.

My first attempt at following the breath failed. Clearing my mind was as challenging as relaxing the neck muscles. On a long exhalation, I imagined my thoughts floating out across the clearing like strands of fog. Curling round spruce branches, joining their drapery of lichen. Hanging out in the forest. Then, a little grief arose, as if I’d just banished myself.

Remembering how helpful it had been to write as if I were already dead (removing any possibility of outcome), I

Remembering how helpful it had been to write as if I were already dead (removing any possibility of outcomes), I tried following the in-breath as if I’d been permitted to wake up my body after it had died.

tried following the in-breath as if I’d been permitted to wake up my body after it had died. That got my attention. I felt a current of air like a creek flowing through my nostrils, pouring down the back of my throat, pooling in my lungs, and the lungs expanding rib by rib to take the breath in. With its retention, I could feel a tingle in my arms, fingers, shins. Then, the out-breath—across the clearing, into the trees—and the emptiness when it was gone, gut drawn back to rest on the spine, waiting for that little lift of the diaphragm, the return. Below the house, surf: a wave building, traveling a long way, spilling from its crest onto the beach, pulling back through gravel into ocean, and then another wave rising—like breath.

After half an hour, I walked downstairs with a big grin for Bob, who was already eating his breakfast. When I returned to my study the worries were back, but I could deal efficiently with the “to do” list.

The mysterious thing is that even my far-from-expert *pranayama* practice has been fruitful. The first winter I managed to do it most days was also the first winter I didn’t get a cold. I began to sleep easily for eight hours most nights. And, I began to crave my *asana* practice. So, why does taking time for it (and my writing and *asana* practices) remain a juggling act?

I know the voice who calls me selfish. Over the years, I’ve assembled a defense

against her. It works, up to a point. So, there is something else involved. Maybe laziness or inertia: getting carried along in a current of stuff that seems pressing and takes exertion to interrupt. But what if the very thing I love—feeling absorbed—triggers a subtle fear? Do I equate the nattering of my brain with staying in control of my life?

Back to the sutra and “the acts of yoga,” including *Isvarapraidehanani*—surrender to God. I’ve been exploring mantra use, but in the fashion of a toddler who, from time to time, notices a yellow truck and pushes it around the room. Could I trace my fear of surrender to its root, apply pressure, and let my mind discover what it would be like to release that grip? Would this ease my entry into my practices? A balancing act: self-control, mindfulness, and then...whoosh: letting go. Again, it’s like the breath. Or a wave, spilling over, surrendering its integrity. Those steady crashes blooming on the beach below my study.

There’s so much to learn! Sometimes curiosity is the cat calling me to the mat. ॐ

Short WORKSHOP



postcard from france: a blacons experience

With Lauren Cox

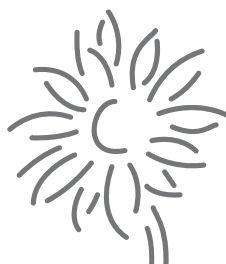
**Saturday, February 11, 2006
11:00 am - 2:00 pm**

Fees: \$45 + GST members
\$50 + GST non-members

Refunds will only be offered if your
space can be filled and are subject
to a \$10 cancellation fee.

Victoria Iyengar Yoga Centre volunteers are everywhere

Thank
you!



CLEAN-UP

Karin Holtkamp
Wendy Boyer
Leslie Hogya

PAINT TOUCH-UPS

Keiko Alkire

CLOSING CEDAR STUDIO

Bob Maher
Rosemary Barritt
Bruce Cox
Jim Riddell
Monica Dimofski
Sue Riddell
Nathan Cox
Britta Poisson
Diane Nadeau
Caron Rollins
Ty Chandler

Hilary McPhail
Byron Smith
James Currie-Johnson
Silvia Vilches
Tom Barritt
Greg Sly

HANGING BLINDS

Rosemary & Tom Barritt

WORM GODDESS

Many people take care
of our worm composting
system including:
Laura Roy

Short WORKSHOP



Winter Solstice Workshop

With Ty Chandler

**Saturday Dec 20, 5:00 - 7:00 pm
Sunday Dec 21, 5:00 - 7:00 pm**

Fees:
\$60 + GST for members,
\$66 + GST for non-members

Refunds only offered if your
space can be filled and are
subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

Sadhana

*"At winter solstice the light begins
to lengthen again. Invite the light
into your life with five days of
morning yoga; a gift of peace for
your body, mind and spirit."*



with Corrine Lowen
December 19 - 23, 2005
6:30 - 8:00 am daily

Fees: \$90 + GST members,
\$100 + GST non members

Registration:
Oct. 17 members
Oct. 24 non members

Drop in or phone
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria,
202 - 919 Fort Street, Victoria, BC

(250) 386-YOGA (9642)

www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca

Refunds: only offered if your space
can be filled and are subject
to a \$10 cancellation fee.



In our mailbox

Greetings,

My husband and I moved to Gabriola Island at the end of May, and now that we are more or less settled in I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone at Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria for the wonderful environment you have created in the yoga space at 919 Fort Street. I was fortunate to have spent almost two years in Victoria, and during most of that time I was signed up for at least two classes a week.

The professionalism and compassion of the teachers, staff and volunteers is very moving, and I especially experienced the depth of these qualities during the time I spent in the special needs class. Of course every class I attended, and every teacher who taught me during my stay in Victoria was special. I especially want to thank Linda Benn, Leslie Hogya, Ann Kilbertus and the volunteers in the special needs class – your support and skilfulness benefited my entire body and mind and I am happy to report that I have full mobility in my shoulder and arm (I'm still working on the strength part). I have been attending yoga classes on the island and hopefully in the fall I will be attending Kelly's classes in Nanaimo.

If anyone is coming this way please drop by.

Once again thank you for the quality, integrity and mindfulness that each of you contribute to society.

With palm to palm, Namaste
Vicki Robichaud

A love letter to my first three Yoga teachers on the occasion of my fortieth birthday

Almost six years ago I took my first Iyengar Yoga class. I had been attracted to yoga for years but had not pursued it. At the time of my first class I was an overweight smoker, resentful and angry to be back in Victoria having lived happily and creatively in Toronto for ten years, but...life such as it is had different plans for me.

We all have our own yoga beginnings. It was my second term with Linda Benn that resonated, and this is where my love letter begins. I consider Linda Benn my first yoga teacher and given the right occasion (my fortieth birthday for instance) I can become quite sentimental because yoga has become so important to me. A life without it? Unthinkable. Linda's combination of warmth and reserve had me confused and things felt a bit upside down. No amount of well executed *trikonasanas*, eagerness and sincerity could catch her attention, yet she seemed very attentive to the guy next to me...what was so special about him? My blurted out questions and curiosity

were not necessarily encouraged or praised. I remember enthusiastically asking her after class one day about "Light on Yoga", and she suggested that I start with other "simpler" yoga texts to begin with (remember, this is all filtered through my memory). She never did praise me, or appear to notice that I was working so hard. "Why?" I wondered, but would then find myself quickly distracted by her teachings. Looking back I can see that unbeknownst to myself I was indeed "working hard"; I was learning to find my own sense of self worth. If Linda had told me that I was "great" or "special", how wrong that would have been. How did she know the work I needed to do? I don't crave the praise or need a feeling of specialness so much these days. I attribute a truer sense of my self worth to Linda and her teachings, without question.

My second teacher was Ty Chandler. My first class with Ty was the week that her Mother had died. She informed the Sunday level one group that she was in mourning and, through clearly bereaved, proceeded to teach. I felt sympathy, empathy and compassion, but I was also intrigued by her ability to be so open and then so quickly deflect the energy off herself and direct our attention to her teachings. That class has stayed with me ever since.

My third teacher is Lauren Cox who just today demonstrated what seemed to me a flawless *Parsva Bekasana* at age 53. Why is it that it is Lauren's image that comes to mind when I know I can and should work harder? Lauren's silence speaks volumes.

Six years later, I am a fit non-smoker with no regrets. Yoga has enriched my life. On the occasion of my fortieth birthday I give gratitude to the lineage of teachers: my first three teachers Linda Benn, Ty Chandler, and Lauren Cox, our senior teacher Shirley Daventry-French and especially B.K.S. Iyengar for bringing me this gift of yoga.

Namaste, Karin Dayton

*"Pain comes to guide you.
When you have known pain,
you will be compassionate.
Shared joys cannot teach us this."*

B.K.S. Iyengar, "Light on Life," pg. 52

IYENGAR
yoga centre
calendar

NOVEMBER 2005

- 4 Teacher Training with Chris Saudek
- 5-6 Junior Intermediate Workshop for levels 3 & 4 with Chris Saudek
- 7 Extended level 4 class with Chris Saudek (details TBA)
- 18 Friday Night Video
- 18-20 55+ Fall Retreat at Saltspring Centre with Leslie Hogya and Wendy Boyer
- 26 Teachers' Meeting

DECEMBER 2005

- 2 Sutra Workshop with Shirley Daventry French
- 3-4 Going Deeper with Shirley Daventry French
- 9-11 Introductory I/II & Junior Intermediate I Assessment in Montreal
- 14 In the Light of Yoga workshop – Mr. Iyengar's Birthday celebration
- 19-23 5 Day Sadhana with Corrine Lowen
- 20-21 Winter Solstice Workshop with Ty Chandler

JANUARY 2006

- 21 Teachers' Meeting
- 27-29 Heart of Yoga with Shirley Daventry French

FEBRUARY 2006

- 4 Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria AGM
- 11 Short Workshop with Lauren Cox
- 25 Teachers' Meeting

MARCH 2006

- 25 Teachers' Meeting

APRIL 2006

- 14-16 Workshop with Manouso Manos

- 29 Teachers' Meeting

MAY 2006

- 21-22 Workshop with Stephanie Quirk
- 25-28 IYAC Conference and AGM at the University of Victoria (Guest teacher Stephanie Quirk)

JUNE 2006

- 2-4 Saltspring Retreat with Shirley Daventry French
- 16-19 Introductory Level I/II Assessment in Calgary, AB
- 16-19 Introductory Level I/II Assessment in Saskatoon, SK

JULY 2006

- 10-15 Teacher Training Intensive - Introductory Levels with Linda Benn, Leslie Hogya, Ann Kilbertus

AUGUST 2006

- 7 -11 Teacher Training Intensive - Junior Intermediate Levels with Shirley Daventry French
- 20-25 Footsteps of Patanjali Retreat at Saltspring Centre with Shirley Daventry French & Leslie Hogya

SEPTEMBER 2006

- 28 Sutra Workshop with Shirley Daventry French
- 29-30 Going Deeper with Shirley Daventry French

OCTOBER 2006

- 13-15 Senior Intermediate I Assessment in Toronto, ON

Junior Intermediate Workshop
For levels 3 & 4 students
with Manouso Manos

Manouso Manos is one of the few teachers who has enjoyed Mr. Iyengar's constant supervision for over two decades. He holds an Advanced Senior teaching certificate, awarded by Mr. Iyengar to only two teachers in the United States.

In class, Manouso methodically lays a solid foundation and progressively refines each of the asanas. His dynamic teaching style, insight and enthusiasm, combined with his in-depth knowledge of yoga, has made him an extremely popular workshop teacher throughout the United States and internationally.

April 14-16, 2006

Friday, April 14, 6:00 - 9:00 pm

Saturday, April 15, 10:30 am – 1:30 pm, 3:00 - 6:00 pm

Sunday, April 16, 10:30 am – 1:30 pm

Fees: \$250.00 + GST members
\$275.00 + GST non-members

Registration:
January 20, members
January 27, non members

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

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

VICTORIA IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE PRESENTS

*The Heart
of Yoga*

**An Intermediate Workshop
with Shirley Daventry French**

**For Levels 3 and 4 students
or Level 2 students
who have completed at least 2 terms**

Friday, January 27, 6:30 - 8:30 pm

Saturday, Jan. 28, 11:00 am - 2:00 pm, 3:30 - 5:30 pm

Sunday, Jan. 29, 12:00 - 3:00 pm

Shirley is a direct student of the yoga Master B.K.S. Iyengar and one of North America's most experienced teachers of his method of yoga. She has taught in Victoria since 1972 and gives workshops both nationally and abroad. She has been travelling regularly to Pune, India to study with B.K.S. Iyengar for nearly 30 years, most recently in October 2005.

Fees: \$185 + GST members
\$205 + GST non members

Registration opens December 8, 2005 for members,
December 13 for non members

To register, drop in or phone Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202- 919 Fort Street Victoria, BC
250 386-YOGA (9642)
www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca

Refunds offered only if your space can be filled;
subject to a \$10 cancellation fee.

January 27-29, 2006



Time to Renew!

This is a reminder that the
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
membership expires
on December 31, 2005.

The membership subscription fee is
\$40 + GST (Canadian residents add
7% GST) and is renewable each January.

Membership benefits include:

- 5% discount on all classes
- free practice times at the IYCV
- 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 (at
right), and send to the Iyengar Yoga
Centre of Victoria.*



IYENGAR
yoga centre
OF VICTORIA SOCIETY

Membership and Newsletter Subscription

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

**Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Society,
c/o Karin Holtkamp, 202-919 Fort Street,
Victoria BC V8V 3K3**

Membership/subscription fee is \$40 plus GST,
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