

January / February 2006



IYENGAR yoga centre OF VICTORIA



Detachment brings discernment: seeing each and every thing or being as it is, in its purity, without bias or self-interest. It is a means to understand nature and its potencies. Once nature's purposes are grasped, one must learn to detach oneself from them to achieve an absolute independent state of existence wherein the soul radiates its own light."

— Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, Pg.15, Introduction

IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA 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: \$185.00 + GST IYCV members
\$205.00 + GST non-members

Registration opens:
December 8, 2005 for IYCV members
December 13, 2005 for non-members

To register, drop in to or phone the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)
www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled
and are subject to a \$10.00 cancellation fee.

January 27-29
2006

IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

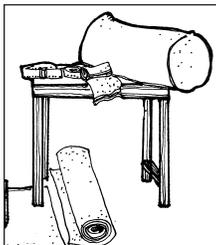
All members welcome! Saturday, February 4, 2006

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

If you have thought you would like to
serve on the Board of Directors for the
IYCV, or on a Committee of the Board,
applications are being accepted in the lead
up to the Annual General Meeting in
February, 2006.

Applications are at the front desk
and any queries may be directed to
Rosemary Barritt or Amanda Mills,
c/o front desk.

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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 IYCV.
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

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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

January 15, 2006

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.

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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.

From Comfort to Newness *the legacy of Norma Hodge*

The Canadian Iyengar community lost one of the pioneers of Iyengar Yoga in Canada when, after a long and debilitating illness, Norma Hodge died on October 25th 2005 aged 83. According to those who were with her at the end, Norma “passed gently and gracefully into the Light”.

I was in Pune studying at the Iyengar Institute when I received the news of her death. It was an especially poignant place to be because it was through Norma that I was able to go to Pune for my first visit in 1979. We worked literally side by side in the classes most of which were taught by Mr. Iyengar himself. In those days at the Institute in the first class you were given a spot where you remained for the most of the course. If you were small you would generally be placed in the first or second row; my place was on the left of Norma at the very front.

This is not where I would have gone had I been allowed a choice, as it was my first visit and I would have preferred to be a little less visible. At six feet tall, Derek who was also a student in this course, was at the back; and he looked at me in my exposed position somewhat smugly. However, it was only a few minutes before we all realised that it really did not matter where you were in the room, Guruji’s eyes took it all in and everyone was equally exposed. It was both an honour and a responsibility to be working next to the woman who had prepared me for this

moment. I had heard the stories of Guruji demanding of a student: “Who is your teacher?”, and if this happened to me I did not want to disgrace Norma.

My first contact with Norma Hodge was at the end of 1976 at Yasodhara Ashram. Derek and I had spent three months there in the winter and decided to return for a few days between Christmas and New Year. Early each morning at the ashram there was what they called a *hatha* class and in those days the asanas were taught in a rather laid back fashion with a lot of relaxation periods in between. Derek and I arrived at the ashram late one evening after a vigorous day of skiing followed by a long drive on icy roads. We were tired, but nevertheless the following morning I arose to attend the class looking for a chance to relax after my exertions. Derek decided to stay in bed.

I entered the room where the class was being held, took out a thick foam mat, lay on it and covered myself with a blanket. This was how we had started most of our classes earlier that year. But change was in the air! No sooner had I settled myself than I sensed someone coming near to me and heard the following words :

Wake Up!

Get Up!

Put your blanket away!

Clearly this was a command rather than a request, so I opened my eyes to see a grandmotherly looking woman with white hair standing over me. In that era there was a television programme which Derek and I enjoyed called *Rumpole of the Bailey*, about a British High Court barrister who referred to his formidable wife as “She Who Must Be

Not only was I expected to exert myself but to align myself - a word which hitherto had not featured prominently in my yoga.

Obeded". There appeared to be no choice. I instantly obeyed Norma, and so began my first full class of Iyengar Yoga!

Not only was I expected to exert myself but to align myself - a word which hitherto had not featured prominently in my yoga. Norma corrected my postures, and I was not at all used to this. Who is this woman? I asked myself after one strong adjustment. We were expected to hold the asanas for much longer than I was used to. Previously I had been told to hold a long as I was comfortable. Now I was being asked to move from comfort to newness; a phrase which became our motto for Norma's work.

At the end of the class I was not sure that I liked it, although it was decidedly interesting. But I went back the next morning, a little more prepared, a little more open minded, and intrigued to see what she would dish up today. Derek remained in bed again. After the class I sought him out and, knowing we only had one more day at the ashram, prevailed upon him: "You must come to class tomorrow. This woman is really good. She knows a lot".

The next morning Derek did come to class and, like me, was impressed by Norma's teaching. We had both read Gurujī's book, *Light on Yoga*, during the course we had taken that winter. In fact, I had written a book report on it. But the practical experience of his method was another matter altogether. After class we stayed behind to talk to Norma. We learned that she had just returned from Pune where she had been taught directly by Mr. Iyengar, and we were excited to find she lived in Coquitlam, a suburb of Vancouver. Eager to learn more about this method of practising yoga, we asked whether she would consider coming to Victoria on a regular basis to teach us. And so this unexpected, unsought meeting led to the birth of Iyengar Yoga in Victoria.

For a number of years, Norma came once a month. On Friday evenings and all day Saturday she taught a small group of experienced students, mostly teachers. On Sunday mornings she taught a beginners' group in my home studio, giving those of us who were interested in teaching this method the chance to observe her.

The core group working with Norma became smaller as some teachers decided it was not for them - too physical, too strenuous, too intrusive. and so on. Some of them were decidedly uncomfortable being touched and particularly being corrected. As we were all teaching in the Y program at that time, it was a tumultuous period. I had to defend against accusations by some of these teachers at the Y that Iyengar Yoga was unyogic, and that it was bad for people's backs. It helped our credibility that Derek, who was running a clinic for stress management and musculo-skeletal problems, was teaching Iyengar Yoga to his patients. It was at this period that we began the newsletter to educate people about the full potential of yoga for physical, mental and spiritual health. Many of the early articles are about our work with Norma.

It was through Norma that Derek and I got our first chance to study with Gurujī in 1979. She prepared us well, although it is really an impossible task to be prepared for B.K.S Iyengar. My second visit was in 1982, accompanied by eight others from Victoria, including Carole Miller and Marlene Miller (no relation) As Norma had done with Derek and I, I had done my best to forewarn and forearm the Victoria students so they would get the most out of their time with Gurujī. However, at the end of the first class Carole came up to me and said: "Shirley, it's like having a baby: no-one can tell you what it's like!"

Those early workshops with Norma built a firm foundation of Iyengar Yoga in Victoria. In addition to Carole and Marlene, another present day elder of our community, Leslie Hogya, joined this weekend group. Also a student was Donna Fornelli who later moved from Victoria to set up Iyengar Yoga communities first in Halifax and then in Ottawa where she currently resides. At Yasodhara Ashram, Norma met yoga teachers from Edmonton and Calgary, Alberta, initiated them into the intricacies of the Iyengar system and encouraged them to make the pilgrimage to Pune. It is interesting too that another of our centre's intermediate teachers of today, James Currie-Johnson, got his start in yoga with Norma in Vancouver.



Norma Hodge

A few years after we met Norma, she decided to leave the city and move to a small island off the coast of Vancouver Island where she had spent her childhood. Derek and I were aghast at this because we thought the skills of this talented and knowledgeable teacher would be lost. How wrong we were! On her property on Gabriola Island, Norma built a small studio, and students came. Soon a thriving community existed there which drew students from many communities on Vancouver Island.

One of these students was Margaret Lunan, who moved to central British Columbia to establish the vibrant Okanagan Valley Iyengar group which now runs The Kelowna Yoga House. While still living on the West coast, Margaret became the teacher of Vicky Catchpole of Courtenay and before leaving trained her to teach. In turn, Vicky has established a thriving Iyengar community in that area.

A quiet, dignified, soft-spoken

Guruji has said, about accepting fees for our teaching, that we have to charge something because we require money to live, but we must make sure we give more than we receive. Norma understood this very well and gave in abundance.

woman, Norma was transmogrified when teaching into a sergeant-major who would brook no nonsense. The Divine had sent us a teacher capable of melding a group of neophyte yoga teachers with an eclectic mix of training into strong, committed Iyengar Yoga teachers.

Particularly here in Victoria, but throughout western Canada, and in many of Canada's major centres of Iyengar Yoga, Norma Hodge left her imprint. As those who trained with her in those early days progressed and grew into strong teachers in their own right, Norma relished this growth. When her health broke down preventing her from

making any more trips to Pune herself, she continued to encourage her students to return, and was always eager for news.

When teaching *asana* classes became impossible, Norma continued to teach yoga and its philosophy as the Director of Radha House in Comox. It was here in this up-island community where she died, surrounded by family.

Norma taught me as much about karma yoga as she taught me about *asana* and *pranayama*. A registered nurse in her youth, that spirit of service stayed with her throughout her life. It would probably sadden her at the trivialisation and commercialisation of yoga which is

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 IYCV members
\$275.00 + GST non-members

Registration opens:

January 20, 2006 for IYCV members
January 27, 2006 for non-members

To register, drop in to or phone the
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)

www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10.00 cancellation fee.

prevalent today. Norma gave so much so generously and modestly without any sense of self-importance or self-aggrandisement. Guruji has said, about accepting fees for our teaching, that we have to charge something because we require money to live, but we must make sure we give more than we receive. Norma understood this very well and gave in abundance.

On the day I learned of Norma's death I went to the library in the Institute in Pune to tell Guruji. I spoke to him of my gratitude to her, for all she had taught me and for being a conduit to him in Pune, and of the tremendous role Norma had played in the growth of the Victoria Yoga Centre into an Iyengar Yoga Centre. Nodding as he heard the news, he sent his blessings and condolences to her family.

In Pune, in the midst of a month of classes taught by Geeta and Prashant, I reflected on Norma and her teaching. As I have become a more experienced teacher myself, I am better able to appreciate what a superb teacher Norma was. Her classes were vibrant and illuminating, linking the asanas together in a sequence which would provide not only physical benefits and releases, but which left you strong, clear minded and free.

Norma Hodge embodied the maxim of B.K.S. Iyengar that:

*From freedom of the body
comes freedom of the mind,
and then ultimate freedom*

Perhaps a fitting end to this article and an appropriate memorial for Norma would be for all who read this it to pause for a moment, be grateful for those mentors who have lighted your way along the yogic path, and never forget the spiritual gift they gave you.

May all of us in Victoria continue to be grateful for the Light which Norma Hodge brought into our lives. May her journey continue in the Light, and may her Soul rest in peace. ॐ



B.K.S IYENGAR YOGA RETREAT

August 20 - 25, 2006

**With Shirley Daventry French
and Leslie Hogya**

Take a walk in the **FOOTSTEPS OF PATANJALI**

Let Shirley & Leslie be your guides at this spiritual retreat centre on beautiful Salt Spring Island off Canada's west coast.

Immerse yourself into daily Pranayama & Asana practice. Be involved in lively discussion through group participation into the ancient teachings of the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali.

The centre's cozy turn of the century farmhouse sits amid 70 acres of meadows and forest. It is renowned for its organic gardens and lovingly prepared meals. (see their website www.saltspringcentre.com for location & maps) Wednesday afternoon is free time to discover the delights of the island: Ganges, artisan tours, beaches or book a spa treatment at the Centre.

Shirley Daventry French is a senior student of B.K.S. Iyengar. She has studied at the Ramamani Memorial Institute in Puna many times, most recently in October 2005. She is the founder of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria, B.C. Students from across Canada and around the world have studied with her both at home and abroad. Shirley has a quick wit and inspiring zest for life. Her skill with language brings an unforgettable clarity to the finer points of her teachings.

Leslie Hogya has been studying Iyengar Yoga since 1972. She has travelled to India 6 times. She most recently studied with B.K.S. Iyengar in Colorado in September, 2005. She holds a Junior Intermediate III level of certification and is part of the assessors team for Canada. She has served many years on the Board of Directors and is Manager of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria. Leslie has shared her experience as an Iyengar teacher in British Columbia and as far away as Thailand. Students are drawn to Leslie by her welcoming personality and warmheartedness. She is the "Earth Mother"!

Fees: \$994.00 + GST IYCV members – shared accommodation
\$1050.00 + GST non-members – shared accommodation
\$894.00 + GST IYCV members – camping – must supply own equipment
\$950.00 + GST non-members – camping – must supply own equipment

Registration opens:
January 27, 2006 - \$200 deposit required to hold your space –
full payment is due June 1, 2006

To register, drop in to or phone the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)
www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

After June 1 refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled
and are subject to a \$10.00 cancellation fee.

Props are an integral part of practice for Iyengar Yoga students. However, we have to evolve in our understanding on the use of the props. This concept was clearly demonstrated by Guruji during his presentation and later articulated by Prashantji during his explanation. This article has been composed on the basis of the learning during these [Yogacharya BKS Iyengar's 85th Birthday] celebrations.

Why Do We Use Props?

The following article was first published in Yoga Rahasya, Vol. 11 No 1, 2004. pp. 41-46.

Ask any Iyengar Yoga student on what makes them different from any other yoga practitioner? They will promptly list out their “attributes”.

These would include their “ability” to sequence *asanas*, stay in the *asanas* for prolonged duration of time, emphasis on alignment and of course the use of props. Props and “Iyengar Yoga” seem to go hand in hand. But how many of us really understand why and how we use the props? We may have attained many experiences but we have not been able to “grasp” or catch these experiences.

The way we use the prop, what we learn from it and what we apply from this learning will depend upon our calibre and the hierarchy in our practice. A disabled patient would be using the prop as a crutch while Guruji would be using the same prop to reach the innermost depth of his own self.

A prop as a crutch:

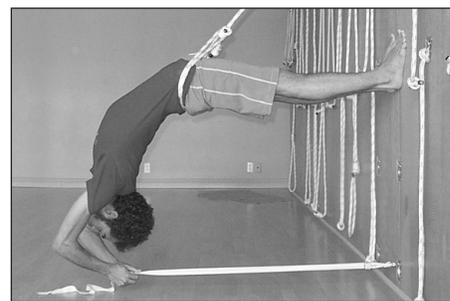
Today hundreds of thousands of patients with problems ranging from slipped disc, arthritis, cervical spondylosis to heart ailments and hypertension have benefited from the practice of Iyengar yoga. A belt, a rope, a crepe bandage, a block are their life-support systems.

Most of these patients would never have benefited from the practice of the classical *yogasanas* as they would never have been able to do them if not for the props. Ask a patient with cervical spondylosis to roll the trapezius muscles back. Even if they know the anatomical position of the muscle they have no access to it. Adjust the rope around their back of the neck for “tractions” and observe the sigh of relief on their face!!

Ask a heart patient to open the chest and see the difference when one places a block behind the chest as in *Sharapanjarasana*. Medicines can keep people living but yoga props gives one life. But, we need to grow beyond the use of these props as crutches. After all, a critically ill patient is weaned off the ventilator as he starts improving!!

“A prop is a prop when it is no longer a prop.”

– Prashant S. Iyengar



Charles using ropes for Dwi Pada Viparita Dandasana 9



A prop to annihilate fear:

Fear can devastate an individual but a prop can help one overcome fear. *Abhinivesa* is literally translated as clinging to life or as fear of death. In our practice, it is the fear of losing our balance or fear of falling. It is one of the impediments, an obstacle in our practice. How many of us would have managed to learn *Sirsasana* if we never had the wall behind us? How many of us who are stiff and heavy would have learnt *Sarvangasana* if not for the chair? Fear also impedes our progress. When we are doing the *asana* independently, there is always a spot, an area, a region where we “cling on to” for the fear of falling. For

example, while doing *Virabhadrasana III*, we tend to be on the outer heel and outer ankle of the foot, which is on the floor as we have this “false notion” that it is giving us stability. In reality, it is the outer portion of the back of the heel, which brings in stability. When we use support for our arms, the weight on the heel of the bottom leg automatically shifts towards the back of the heel and stability sets in. Thus, we need to identify the region where fear is holding us back in each pose. Observe what changes are brought about in this *abhinivesic* region when we use props and then try to imitate that action when we perform the *asana* independently.

A prop brings in physical and mental stability.

Guruji has often said, “*asana* is not motion but co-ordinated and harmonious actions”. However, the more difficult the physical positioning of the body in an *asana*, the more physically unstable we are. We are constantly moving and therefore fail to experience the *asana*. The props serve as a support to help us stay for longer duration in an *asana* and therefore experience the transformations the *asana* brings about. I wonder how many of us would be able to stay for 7-10 minutes in *Viparita Dandasana* independently. We may use our will power but along with that we may be using our lips and jaws too!! But, it is common for most of the “Iyengar Yoga” students to be doing *Viparita Dandasana* for 7-10 mins on a chair. In fact, many of us look forward to the freshness and coolness of mind that *Viparita Dandasana* brings us especially when our head is also supported by a bolster.

It is very difficult to keep the consciousness (especially the mind) in a stable state even if we do manage to “stabilise” and balance ourselves physically in an *asana*. The *citta bhumi* constantly wanders and is in the *ksipta* (distracted) or *viksipta* (alternating) state.



PHOTO: TIMES COLONIST/ DEBRA BRASH

Under the instructions of a teacher in class, we may be better focussed (but the instructions of a teacher are also a prop!). But, it takes just a split second for the consciousness to wander especially when we are performing the *asana* independently. The use of props aids the *citta bhumi* to be in an *ekagra* (one pointed state) for longer duration of time.

A prop aids in bringing humility:

I wonder if any of us would have realised this but whenever we use a prop for any of the *asanas*, we automatically start to involute and introspect. Thus, there is no space for pride. Sage Patanjali has very clearly said that progress in our practice of *asana* leads us either towards *apavarga* or *bhoga*. Many of our neo-yogis can fall from the grace of yoga because of pride of “achievement”. The use of props ensures that there is no room for pride

and the practitioner retains humility, which should be one of the most important tenets for a practitioner.

A prop to objectify the brain:

As has been explained in the previous issue of *Yoga Rahasya* (YR 10.4; pg. 40), we tend to use our heads much more than our senses. We tend to work and direct with the brain rather than spread our intelligence across the entire body. The brain continues being a subject - directing the rest of the body all the time. When does the brain get a chance to rest? When does the brain get a chance to feel the quietness and tranquility? Even if we are doing a “relaxing pose” like *Savasana* - the brain directs the body on how to rest. The only time that a brain can be objectified by even a beginner is when they are using the props. The thoughts cease naturally. For example, when we are doing *Sirsasana* on the rope, the brain

Short WORKSHOP



**postcard from france:
a blacons experience**

With Lauren Cox

**Saturday, February 11, 2006
11:00 am - 2:00 pm**

Fees:
\$45.00 + GST IYCV members
\$50.00 + GST non-members

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10.00 cancellation fee.

becomes totally quiet. This quietness is not dullness but an active passivity! This objectification of the brain also happens when our head is rested on a bolster in Adho Mukha Svanasana. We are more stable, quieter and we can stay longer than what we can independently.

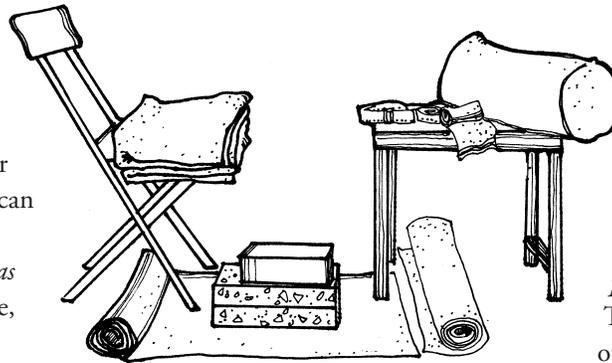
That is the reason that when *asanas* are done prior to a pranayama practice, we perform many of the *asana* with our head rested. This prepares our brain for the active passivity necessary for pranayama.

A prop brings in the feeling of lightness:

In the 43rd sutra of the *Vibhuti Pada*, Sage Patarijali says that an accomplished yogi attains lightness in the body and he is even able to levitate. This sutra clearly gives us a clue as to what we should aim for in our practice of *asanas*. We all “enjoy” the *asana* when the body feels light. That is exactly what the props do. For example, when *Ardha Chandrasana* is performed with the support of the tressler and the lifted hand is used to revolve the chest, the chest opens. We are able to take in the cosmic energy as the chest opens. Thus, we never feel the fatigue but instead feel light and energised by the *asana*.

A prop develops sensitivity in the practitioner:

As beginners, we start our *asana* practice through the gross body. We tend to use only the muscular body but as we continue, we need to attain the sensitivity to feel the *asana* through the skin and the senses. The prop aids in developing the sensitivity. For example, when we are performing standing *asanas* against a tressler, we can learn what the source of action is. Once we make any particular action we can study the range of its effects. Sparsa, contact, is an important component of practice. Sensitivity develops when we have some external contact and that is how the props guide us. It is for us to use this



Many beginners often tend to unknowingly block or grip the udana sthana while doing the asanas especially the twisting asanas and also in sitting pranayama. Such practice can be harmful to the practitioner.

sensitivity to trigger our intelligence. The props give us a spark of light but we fail to catch it. For example, when we are doing *Ardha Chandrasana*, the leg on which we stand tends to become shorter. The moment we perform the same *asana* with the tressler, it automatically becomes longer. It is for us to “catch” what the prop does to us. In *Sarvangasana*, the frontal thighs tend to collapse if we stay longer in the *asana* and they feel very fatigued. But, if we loosely tie a belt around the bottom calves and move the legs outwards to touch the belt, we will observe that the frontal thigh muscles naturally recede towards the bone and there is no fatigue in the thigh muscles. So we have to study what the props do to make us perform

the *asana* with greater ease. Their use sparks our intelligence. We have to “catch” these sparks and clues that we get with the props. We should then try to incorporate them while performing the *asanas* independently.

The props helps to adjust the pranas in our system.

The prana vayus are the life force in our system. We are comfortable in any *asana* as long as these vayus are balanced. For example, when the udana sthana is tensed or udana vayu overused, the throat and along with it the brain feels choked. Many beginners often tend to unknowingly block or grip the udana sthana while doing the *asanas* especially the twisting *asanas* and also in sitting *pranayama*. Such practice can be harmful to the practitioner. The use of props automatically adjusts the *prana vayus* in our system. For example, *vyana* naturally drops while doing *Savasana* on the floor. The *vyana* pervades the entire system and can be observed on the lateral sides of the chest. But, the *vyana* naturally lifts when a bolster or pillow is used to vertically support the spine in *Savasana*. In *Urdhva Mukha Svanasana*, the *samana* (located around the abdomen) and the *vyana* tend to drop. However, when *Urdhva Mukha Svanasana* is performed with the palms on a chair or a *Viparita Dandasana* bench then the *samana* and *vyana* both get lifted. We feel lighter and energised.

We should not always use a prop as a crutch or a sofa to flop ourselves on! We should be very clear in our minds as to why we are using a prop for a particular *asana* on a specific day. We should use the prop to trigger our intelligence and generate life in our practices just as Bheesma Pitamah used the bed of arrows to trigger his intelligence and keep himself alive! ॐ

Paddling, Balance and Yoga

By Alex Mann

Imagine that you are trying to stay balanced, sitting on a small Swiss ball, and that your feet are off the ground. Now imagine that the ball is floating on water. That would be like the first time trying to stay upright in an Olympic sprint kayak (or K-1). As a relatively new K-1 paddler, I have a newfound and profound appreciation for the skills of others who race this boat.

In accordance with race rules, our K-1 was built 17 feet long, 20 inches wide, and weighs about 26 pounds. To make the boat faster, designers follow the word – but not necessarily the spirit – of the rules. The widest point sits well above the water. From there, the hull comes down in a “V” so that the width of the bottom is only about 7 inches. The actual width of the hull at the water line might be about 13 inches. Your shoulders extend out beyond the boat on both sides.

My partner Lynn and I have been paddling for about 7 years, starting in 50 foot Dragon Boats and then trying six-person Hawaiian outrigger canoes, solo outrigger canoes, marathon canoes and (very recently) racing kayaks. We have been drawn toward these light, tippy boats because in them you feel the water more. With each paddle stroke, the boat

The thin hull runs like a blade through the water, and every current, eddy or gust of wind can catch the boat or your paddle, affecting movement and balance.



Lynn Sanderson with the Olympic K-1

can lift and surge forward. The thin hull runs like a blade through the water, and every current, eddy or gust of wind can catch the boat or your paddle, affecting movement and balance. Typically for new K-1 paddlers, we have taken many unintentional swims – but after a few months of practice, they are happening much less frequently (thank goodness!).

These boats are also more responsive in another way. Any unbalance or asymmetry in your body translates into boat movement. It might mean that the boat is steadily heeled over to one side, or it might wobble and roll as you move through the paddle stroke. Core strength, symmetry, and balance are critical. The boat will quickly tell you if your body is not in balance. It is not forgiving.

Paddling is highly repetitive. To correct a problem of unbalanced or stressful movement, you first have to be aware of it – but then once corrected, I have heard that it takes at least two thousand paddle strokes to reinforce a new habit. We came

For me (even as a total beginner at yoga), I find that the repetition of the forms of the asanas helps me not only to extend range of motion, but also to modify the sequence that took me through that range.

to Yoga looking for something that would increase our awareness, and also help change and challenge deeply ingrained habits. For me (even as a total beginner at yoga), I find that the repetition of the forms of the *asanas* helps me not only to extend range of motion, but also to modify the sequence that took me through that range. As the moves are both new to me and described in detail, I can't easily ad-lib or revert to unconscious habit. I become very aware of imbalance and restriction. I hope to have some of that awareness, balance and extended range available to me for other activities – I feel that I will carry my yoga practice back into my paddling, or whatever else I do.

I am really enjoying the challenge of Yoga. Coming to Yoga from a competitive background, both Lynn and I are surprised and impressed by how much strength is required to move through the poses properly. We have been trying to follow the idea behind the postures and movement to the best of our understanding – and I am very glad that when I make a mistake I don't end up swimming! ॐ

Water, Homoeopathy and Yoga

By Greg Sly

The rains have come again to the west coast. The winter rains in this region are the fluid movement of earth's cleansing juices.

From the practice of *pranayama* we know that the qualities of prana far surpass those of simple air. "Prana is the energy permeating the universe at all levels...the principle of life and consciousness...It is equated with the real Self (Atma)." *Light On Pranayama* pp.12

Water too has qualities that surpass its chemical formulation.

A recent movie called "What the Bleep Do We Know?" presents rather well an exploration of spirituality through the tenets of modern quantum physics. Although I am not conversant in this realm of scientific concepts I did glimpse some of the many truths that this movie seeks to reveal, through the good artistry and presentation of its producers. These truths all pertain to gaining our inner freedom through an examination of our habits, in the light of the character and behavior of basic elements of time, light, and water. At each revelation I found myself thinking "I see that in my yoga practice", or "I have seen that while in repose in an *asana*", or "*Savasana* is like that sometimes."

One stunning revelation involved electronic microscope photographs, of water that had been recently conditioned by being spoken to in various emotional tones. I remember three distinct photographs (although there may have been more).

The first tone spoken was warm, friendly and harmonious, which produced a photograph of water that resembled a butterfly in its shape-

symmetrical from side to side with wing lobes extending out, up and down. This was a radiant and expressive shape. Secondly the water was addressed with "You make me sick. I'm going to kill you." The resulting photograph here was of a shocked and wounded texture. The previous symmetry was gone, although a circular shape remained with scattered remnants randomly around it. Kind of like a bomb had gone off. The third photo was of water that had been given the message "I love you." The symmetry was now from top to bottom as well as side to side, with crystallized arms radiating outward, like a snowflake. Radiating joy. Stunning.

"Yoga is symmetry."

— BKS Iyengar

"Yoga is symmetry."—BKS Iyengar

If our words can have this effect on water, what effect do our thoughts and words have on each other and on ourselves? We are approximately 90% water. Thought, word, and deed are the elements of the quantum yogi.

This truth about elemental water may give us inner guidance as we engage *svadyaya*, self-study, and look again at our selves. We may know the *saatvic* crystallized state of well being that comes after practicing a sequence of poses well taught or followed. We may be quite familiar also with *rajasic* or *tamasic* states that indicate to us a need for pacifying or energizing poses, or to practice more regularly. We may have observed while practicing that these ancient postures have a way of allowing the movement of cleansing waters within us to restore

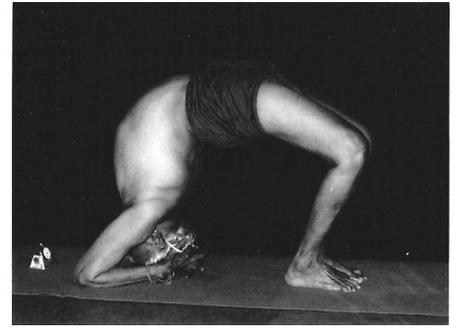
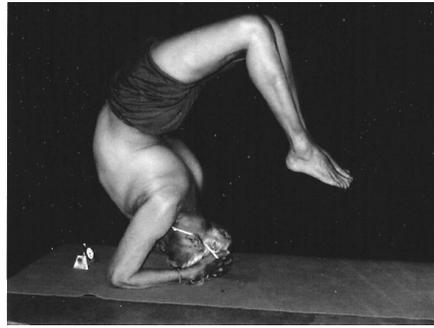
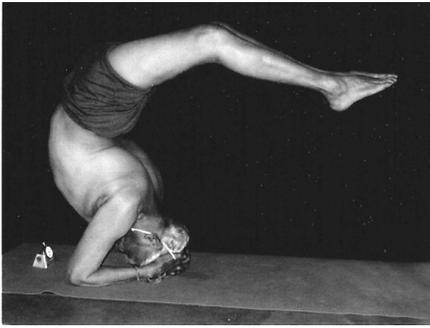
balance, carrying away toxins, bringing firmness to the body, steadiness to the intelligence, revealing benevolence of the spirit, and *saatvic* illumination. (II.46 *sthira sukham asanam*) Our thoughts, words and deeds are formative of our inner, and outer reality.

A branch of naturopathic medicine called homoeopathy artfully employs the healing principle that like cures like. Symptoms produced by an agent of disease can be cured by ingesting a minute amount of the same agent. These medicines are prepared in successive dilutions of water. The diluted element becomes so diminished that often science cannot conceive of there being any molecules of the element remaining in the medicine, yet this is when it becomes most potent as a cure. This phenomenon has been referred to in other studies as the "memory of water".

Opening ourselves to the concept and reality of prana as the universal force brings undeniable benefits, through practice of *pranayama*. We now have good reason to believe that the element of which we are mostly made up—water—is impressionable far beyond previous thought. We have come to yoga for various reasons and have all become witness to the fact that "if you work on yoga, yoga works on you." Our thoughts, words and deeds profoundly affect our own well being, potentially creating crystal clarity from the dross and confusion that cloak our innocent and programmable minds and bodies.

Yoga creates space in time for elemental (earth, air, fire, and water) reconfiguration towards *saatvic* bliss, which reveals the intelligent and benevolent design of life itself.

Om, Om, Hari Om. ॐ



Estes Park, Colorado

by Leslie Hoga

800 people were on their feet cheering and clapping for Sri B.K.S. Iyengar when he arrived at the Iyengar Yoga Conference in a large hall on the YMCA conference grounds, in Estes Park, Colorado. Gururji arrived with his arms stretched overhead, exclaiming: “I am thrilled!” For the four days of the conference, he talked and taught with boundless enthusiasm at 86 years of age! The format was to be that senior teachers from the United States would conduct the class, and he would supervise. The first teacher had just begun to speak, when immediately Gururji stepped in to re-teach *tadasana* (mountain pose), having us root the inner big toe completely to the floor.

Before most of the main events, we chanted the *sutras*, following the text on large overhead screens so that all could participate. The second morning we learned one of the *sutras* Gururji had been quoting the day before, *Hridaye cittasamvit* (III. 35), which roughly translates as: “by meditation on the heart, the yogi acquires knowledge of the consciousness”. On the second morning Gururji was welcomed with 800 voices chanting *Hridaye cittasamvit*. On the third morning we greeted him with the Guru chant: *Guru Brahma, Guru Vishnu, Guru Mahadeva*.

On Friday, the first morning of the general conference, we were not supposed to see Mr. Iyengar again except

for some special events. I was waiting
*How can we go
to divinity
without knowing
human relationships?*

with about three hundred others in the now reduced hall (half of it had been turned into a retail area) for Manuso Manos to arrive. Suddenly there was a surge and we jumped to our feet as Gururji’s energy, generosity, and enthusiasm accompanied Manuso into the room. He continued teaching that day, and again the next day, when he came in with Patricia Walden. I felt so blessed to be given all this extra time with him!

The classes in *Pranayama* were given in the afternoon, and my class was taught with sensitivity by Dean Learner, who said that the instructions were given explicitly by Mr. Iyengar.

Step blankets to support back, do not make a sharp cliff of the blankets, but step them back.

Lie in *savasana*
Sit for *brahamari*
Sit *ujayi*
Lie down again
Sit for *kumbhakha* (retention)
savasana

In the keynote address, Mr. Iyengar

revealed some of the details of the evolution of his practice to what it is today. He explained how he moved from the bones and joints, and journeyed inward so that the head and heart unite and penetrate further to the crown of knowledge. (In future newsletters, we hope to have this address transcribed).

The following day there was a delightful question and answer period conducted by Annette Benning, a talented film star, and long time Iyengar student. Her questions included one involving his study of yoga in relation to alignment, and he replied: “My intelligence did not present itself in any way but in *asana*”.

Some other things he said that I noted during the week:

“Temples. The temple at the side of the head; it is soft there so you can enter into the soul.

“On alignment: it must be in relation to something. Come back to the bones. The bone is in the center of the leg, the muscles protrude because of the ways we move and repeat actions.”

“*Asana* guides me”

“I am a holy man but defined as such by my dress. I am holy inside.”

When asked about *santosha* (contentment,) he said only stupid people and saints find *santosha*. Ordinary people will not find contentment, they must learn to find *santosha* in their discontent.

One of the highlights of the question and answer period was when he spoke eloquently about his marriage to his wife and partner Ramamani. In marriage, he said, there is a balance of two different minds. How can there be peace in the world when two people in a marriage cannot even get along? It must be give and take. Later in the week he talked about how he purposely chose the life of the householder. How can we go to divinity without knowing human relationships?

In response to a question on depression, Guruji had John Schumaker swinging from *halasana* (plough pose) to *paschimottanansa* (seated forward bend) 10 or more times, saying "This is brain washing!"

The setting was as inspiring as his words. The conference center is high in the Rocky Mountains where elk roam the meadows, and mountains ringed us on all sides. The aspen trees were turning gold, and most days the sun shone

warmly down on us. One evening when we were invited to come up and greet Mr. Iyengar, several of us from Canada came up at once and said, "Welcome from Canada!" He looked at us and smiled and said, "I was wondering about my Canadian students, now I am happy. Bless you all." ॐ



Thank you!!!

- Bob Maher and Hilary McPhail for transporting props back and forth from the storage unit.
- Sheri Berkowitz and Genny Dark for programming support.
- Shirley Daventry French, Cynthia Harnadek and Caron Liedtke for their contributions to the library.
- Sue Riddell washing the blankets and mats.
- A big thank you for the early Christmas gift from Joan Richardson and Charles Douglas of a new DVD player. Come and watch our DVDs!
- Welcome and thank you to new volunteers Margo Reimer and Bonita Barnard who work at the front desk on Monday and Wednesday afternoons.

The IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA PRESENTS

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.

This is a general workshop designed for students.

Sunday, May 21, 2006, noon-3:00pm

Monday, May 22, 2006 (Victoria Day), 10:00am-2:00pm

Fees: \$160.00 + GST IYCV members, \$180.00 + GST non-members

Registration opens:

February 4, 2006 for IYCV members, February 14, 2006 for non-members

To register, drop in to or phone the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)

www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled
and are subject to a \$10.00 cancellation fee.

IYAC

Assessment Dates

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

Guruji is in Estes Park!

by Jim and Sue Riddell

Those words jumped out at me from an email confirming that we were signed up to attend the Yoga Journal's 10th Annual Conference in Estes Park, Colorado on April 24th. Although the Iyengar Intensive was full, we decided to attend the Main Conference and all day Intensive, and that way get as close to Guruji as possible.

Six blankets, 2 mats, 2 blocks, 2 straps. It doesn't sound like a lot but took a bit of doing to organize along with our camping gear for the anticipated side trip to Utah after the Conference. We encountered only some minor difficulties at the Victoria Airport as we arrived late for our 5:30 am. flight. While being dressed down by security staff a small credit card size Swiss Army gadget was found in my purse, which was a Christmas present from our son. Of course I wanted to keep it so ran it back to the car and made it back for boarding time by mere seconds. Never a dull moment and we were on our way!

We arrived in Denver hungry, picked up our rental car and got promptly lost, ending up on a toll road. Where is Estes Park? Is this a real place, will we ever arrive? We finally found our way and settled in to a Kamper Kabin at the Estes



T-Shirt of the Conference

*All these yoga people
are in town, and
I heard that they
don't even eat!*

Park KOA, awakening in the morning to the bugling of the rutting Elk. We also awoke to nausea and headaches, which were symptoms of altitude sickness at 7,500 feet. We were thankful to have 3 days to adjust before the conference started.

Taking short walks around the town of Estes Park it was hard to believe Mr. Iyengar was really nearby, but there was the banner on the main building proclaiming "Welcome Sri B.K.S Iyengar"!! It was a beautiful setting, with

mountains surrounding us on all sides of the complex. As we were out for breakfast at what was to become our favorite restaurant in Estes Park we overheard a fellow diner comment "All these yoga people are in town, and I heard that they don't even eat!" They were shocked into silence when normal looking us responded with "Sure we do!"

Once we were registered the time flew by quickly. Although we didn't meet Mr. Iyengar personally his energy was there, and it was fantastic. Words cannot explain it. We felt like we were part of the Iyengar Intensive class when Rodney Yee commented daily on the details of events, classes, and instructions. We were like sponges, soaking it all up.

Classes we took included Moving Waters of the Body, Moving Into Difficulty, Forward Bends, Home Practice, Jumping Iyengar Style, Backbends, Finishing Poses, an Ayurveda 101 lecture, and a film Friday night featuring Dr. Geeta Iyengar. Mr. Iyengar's Keynote Address and conversation with Annette Benning were highlights of the very full days. We enjoyed the Conference immensely. Thank you Guruji for coming to North America, we are truly grateful for your teachings. ॐ

Congratulations

The following candidates achieved certification during the Introductory I/II assessment in London, ON and Winnipeg, MB in October 2005:

Introductory II

Corrie Vorlaufer, Richmond, BC
Karen Clements, Winnipeg, MB
Norma Janes, Courtenay, BC
Deborah Peake, Vancouver, BC
Katalin Szauer, Williams Lake, BC

Lisa Towson, Winnipeg, MB
Glenda Hingley, Sidney, BC
Lynda Montis, Maple, ON
Brigitta Ortner, Toronto, ON
Lisa Lelliot, New Germany, NS
Brooke Garnet, Toronto, ON

Susan Richardson, Flesherton, ON
Cathie Smith, London, ON
Richard Jezior, Mississauga, ON

Introductory I

Ida Robinson, Toronto, ON

IYCV Goes to Washington DC

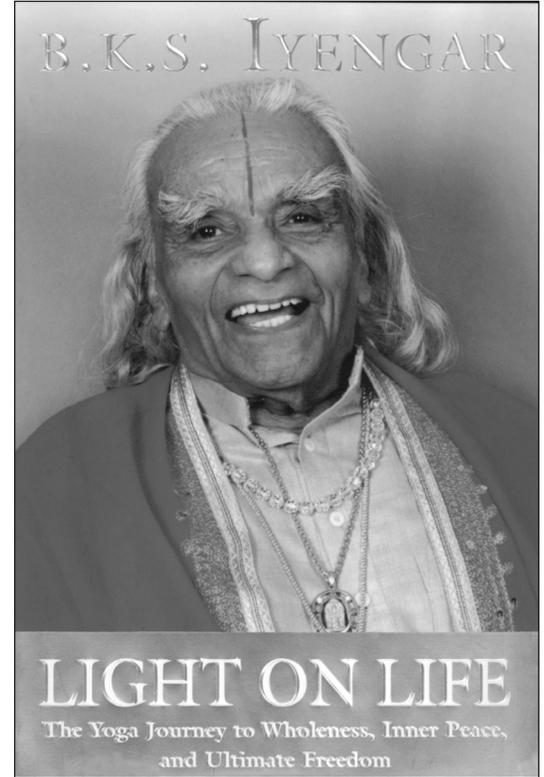
by Adia Kapoor



In mid-October, I had the privilege of traveling to Washington, D.C. for Guruji's visit as part of the *Light on Life* book tour. I took a few classes at the Iyengar yoga centers in both Washington and New York City, and attended the tribute to Guruji and book "signing" in Washington. It was a journey well worth the effort, and I am pleased to share the experience with the IYCV.

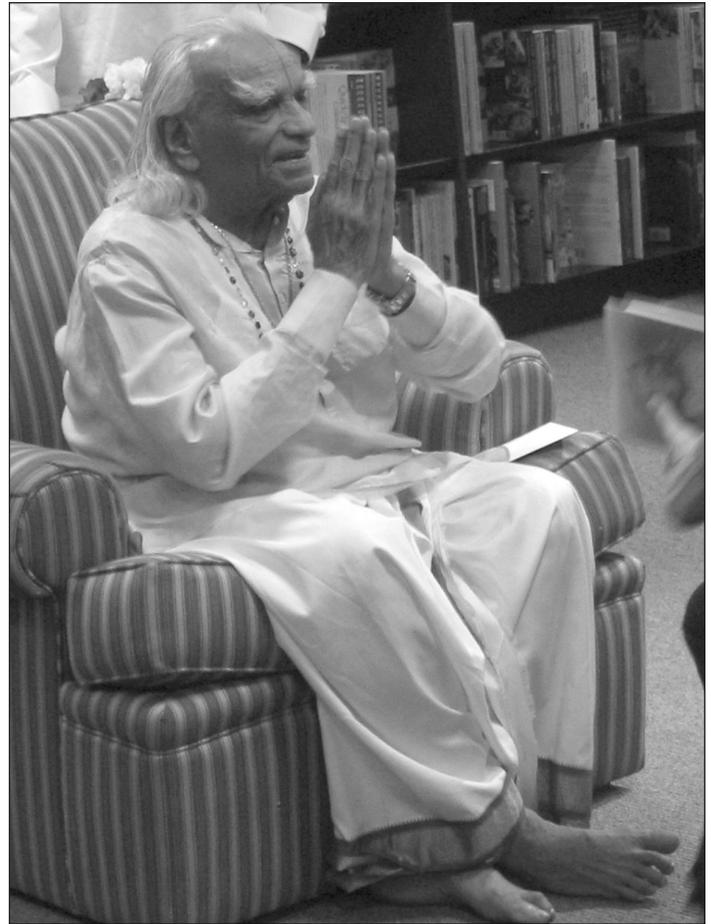
The Iyengar studios in both DC and New York employ many certified instructors and are quite large - DC has over 2000 students in four locations throughout the greater Washington area - and classes were quite expensive in comparison with Victoria. But the quality of teaching was excellent and left me feeling quite pleased that, no matter what city I am in or what teacher I studied with, Iyengar classes are true to the Iyengar method. There is something very comforting about connecting with a global network of individuals like yourself, all treading the same path. I encountered a welcoming community in both cities, and teachers who were happy to teach me. John Schumacher, Director of Unity Woods Yoga Center in Washington, was quite pleased to know that Shirley is our teacher (and he sends his regards!). The most enjoyable part of all was savouring the small differences - how the props are the same or slightly different than ours here in Victoria, how the rope wall is constructed, the ambiance of the studios, etc. - while feeling quite comfortable and at home.

We each got about ten seconds with him, but it was long enough to touch his feet and say thank-you. And he touched my head in blessing. It was enough to be in his presence and I hope he could sense the gratitude in our hearts.



On October 18, a crowd of 2000 gave Guruji a roaring ovation at George Washington University's Lisner Auditorium. Guruji was so warmly welcomed by John Schumacher, who described him as "Love itself", and dignitaries from the Indian Embassy, who praised him for spreading Indian traditions and values globally, that I felt very strongly for Guruji, sitting calmly in the front row listening to distinguished individuals extoll his many accomplishments and virtues, and thought how very embarrassed I would feel in his position as the star of the night! All these people gathered here just to see him! What a feeling that must be.

Local musicians performed classical Indian music on the sitar, tabla, and tanpura, while six long-time Unity Woods teachers, including one who was seven months pregnant, gave an astonishing and adept *asana* demonstration. This was followed with an excellent film about Guruji's life. Then there was a short interview with John Schumacher, during which Guruji finally took



Gururajji distributing "Light On Life"

the stage. John had told us in class previously that he had four questions to ask Gururajji. He only was able to ask three in the time allotted, as Gururajji, took each question and "ran with it". I jotted down notes as fast as I could! Below are some snippets from that talk.

Q1. - How do you find time to practice as a householder?

Gururajji - Health is a necessity. You have to make time. You have time for everything else! Saying you have no time is a way of escaping. Think constructively and you can find time. Steal time. No book says you have to practice hours at a time. Find time while waiting for rice to cook. Or doing laundry. Look after yourself. When you keep yourself happy, those in your life will be happier. It is all in your mind

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You have time for everything else! Saying
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Think constructively and you can find time.
Steal time. No book says you have to
practice hours at a time.*

- your mind is getting in the way of leading a healthy life. Watch your treacherous mind. Find time and you will enjoy life better than you are doing.

Q2. Talk about the importance of taking care of our fellow men.

Gururajji - It is the duty of each individual to keep their body healthy. By health, I mean awareness. Where there is awareness, there is health. My own suffering taught me to be compassionate. Using pleasing words is not being compassionate. Be merciless to the source of your disease. Is there any subject that gives you back the energy you have spent, except for yoga? Humanitarianism is not only social uplifting, but caring for each organ. The beauty of yoga is the heart gets cleansed. Today, medicine is only on the intellectual level, not the emotional. Heart is the seat of universal consciousness. Blend the

intellect of the head with the intellect of the heart. People who live on intellectual intelligence are few. Asanas put the subconscious seat above...and blend the consciousness to guide you. That will bring humanitarianism. That is what yoga gives you all.

Q3. You have the reputation of being a stern teacher. What role does humour play in yoga?

Guruji - You do not see my intensity and love for my students. I correct them fast so they do not hurt themselves. I am being stern or rough on the part of the body that is doing harm, not the person. My body moves quickly to help the person who is wrong. I love all my students and I don't want them to suffer. I come with love. You misread me. If I was stern and harsh, I don't think I would have millions of students all over the world.

The next day, Guruji made a personal appearance at the Barnes & Noble in downtown Washington. Signed copies of *Light on Life* were made available for purchase, and then we were able to join a receiving line to greet him. As there were hundreds of people there, we each got about ten seconds with him, but it was long enough to touch his feet and say thank-you. And he touched my head in blessing. It was enough to be in his presence and I hope he could sense the gratitude in our hearts.

Details about the entire *Light on Life* book tour and the events in each city Guruji visited can be found on the *Light on Life* website: www.lightonlife.org. ॐ

And he touched my head in blessing. It was enough to be in his presence and I hope he could sense the gratitude in our hearts.

Chris Saudek Teacher Training and Junior Intermediate Workshop Review

By Ann Kilbertus

Chris Saudek knows how to lay down a good foundation. She began her weekend workshop with us by drawing our attention to the *niyama santosa* (contentment). The participants in the workshop were experienced practitioners, but she emphasized the importance of knowing our limits and at the same time working with *tapas* (burning zeal) in our own practice.



Chris Saudek and Ann Kilbertus.

This, she said was the sign of maturity in a seasoned practitioner.

For example, if we observed someone who had a gifted ability in a certain pose, rather than wishing my pose looked like that, why not cultivate the opposite thought (*pratipaksabhavanam, sutra 2.33*), such as: oh how wonderful that they are doing such a beautiful presentation of this *asana*.

We worked steadily and deeply through sequences where links were made from instruction to instruction, followed through from *asana* to *asana*, culminating in a three hour grand finale level 4 class on Monday evening.

Chris explained that it is not just a matter of having a goal such as getting up in arm balance. The mind should be involved with much more than the goal. She urged us to be in the present with what is happening now. "Yoga is a process...the main thing is transformation. Watch yourself in your life. Yoga should make us look at ourselves in some way."



Nancy Searing watchful in Parivritta Janu Sirsasana

As teachers, we carefully use words to guide students into action. However, Chris suggested that we not to get too attached to the words but rather observe where the action is in the body, and then observe which parts receive the results of that action.

For example, in a sequence of instructions for *parivritta janu sirsasana*, we bend the right leg from the root of the thigh and take it back by drawing the inner right knee back with the hand. The right heel goes to the right groin without shifting the hips. From there, we extend the trunk diagonally out between the bent and straight legs, arms reaching forward. Keeping the left side long, bring the left arm beyond the left foot and walk the fingers out beyond this foot. Extending out through the arch of the left foot, place the right hand on the right hip. Then, bending the left elbow,

*Yoga is a process...
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take the left foot in the left hand, thumb side pointing to the floor. Pressing the left thigh down, bring the left side trunk through to the right and forward towards the left foot. Right side ribs move up and back. Taking the right arm up, catch the left foot. Maintaining that, turn the spine and chest to allow the head to turn and look up.

Although there were no direct instructions to take action on the sacroiliac joint, the leg and torso instructions allowed this joint to elongate so sacroiliac jamming is prevented. Thus, the sacroiliac joint receives the actions set in place in the other parts of the body.

Chris has an inspiring ability to transmit the basic principles of an asana and to carry them through into more complex poses without losing the thread. She makes this ability appear effortless, but it belies years of disciplined practice and self-study (*svadhyaya*).

Those of us fortunate enough to have attended this workshop have much more work we can now take back to our own mats. In the words of Geeta Iyengar: Not only to “do,do,do” , but to “watch the change”. ॐ

IYENGAR YOGA ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

Conference and AGM Scholarships available

4 - \$100.00

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Applications and information:
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)

Requests from the Suggestion Box

- How about a Restorative class on Fridays from 5:00-6:00 pm?
- Could there be a level 2/3 class Friday night?
- Is it possible to have more practice times?

IN RESPONSE:

Right now on Fridays we have an all levels drop-in at 5:00 and also a level 2 at 5:00. As we are currently running two studios, there is no more space for additional classes! There is a Gentle Yoga class on Wednesday at 4:30, which is much like a Restorative class.

There are level 2/3 classes every other night and on the weekends.

For additional practice times, there needs to be a teacher present to supervise the space, and no teachers seem to have additional time when the studio is empty.

We will try to accommodate these requests in the future.

Leslie

Feel the Bones: Mahyar Raz workshop

September 23-25

By Taimi Mulder

Mahyar's workshop was the usual Friday night, all day Saturday, and Sunday morning sessions, however, as all who attended immediately realized, there was nothing usual about this dynamic woman.

Mahyar is a small, strong, and on first appearance, a somewhat fierce woman. She is the Director of the Iyengar Yoga School of Toronto and founder of the Yoga Institute in Tehran, Iran, between which she divides her time. She studies with the Iyengars in Pune each year and works with 'Modern Techniques in Medical Yoga' at the Gupta Yoga Hospital in Lonavla, India. I am told that you can hear BKS Iyengar in her voice, her turn of phrase and vocal inflection, and this is not difficult to believe. Her strict and no-nonsense demeanour does not belie the gentleness and grace that exist just below the surface. She spent the workshop insisting that we find this within ourselves by learning to compact our joints, feeling our bones and exploring the flow of energy in each pose.

During the weekend Mahyar had the opportunity to work with each student individually. As a good yoga teacher will do, she invariably managed to pick the biggest sticking point for each person. For myself she pointed out that my difficulty with balance was due to lack of weight on my metatarsals. She taught me how to feel these bones in *tadasana*, and with more subtlety, how to feel them also with my feet in the air. I have practised with awareness in my metatarsals ever

since, and feeling those bones (no easy task for me) seems to be the beginning of unlocking many secrets. I've spent my whole life putting my weight on my toes and bypassing my metatarsals. Likely it will take quite some time to restructure that action and all its associated actions, such as bringing the calf muscle into the bone. For other students she would demonstrate how they could find the pose within him or herself, invariably finding the particular area that they needed to open, move, and feel. Several students exclaimed, "I had surgery there!" And what each may have previously thought impossible became possible. As Mahyar became fond of saying "You can pay the surgeon or you can pay me."

*You can pay the surgeon
or you can pay me.*

The assistant she uses most frequently stands at the front of the class, occasionally lying down, moving its many white bones at her direction. The skeleton had quite a practice! On it she showed us why the upper arm must stay close to the ears when extending in handstand and backbend, in order to press against the top of the scapula moving the shoulder blade further down and into the back. She showed us why the head of the femur must be compacted into the hip socket before rotation to the side so that it doesn't jam. Mahyar taught us to compact the knee joint instead of just bending it. She



Aligning the front leg in trikonasana

taught so that we were aware of the alignment of bones in a pose and how, when it was right, this naturally brought about all the external points Mr. Iyengar teaches for that pose. She taught that learning to feel the energy flow in one's body, aligning with it and learning from it is one of the greatest teachers. And we each possess it.

Then this small woman, so full of grace, departed. She touched each of us in her passing so that we too could carry a larger portion of grace into our own lives. ॐ

*She taught that learning
to feel the energy flow
in one's body, aligning
with it and learning
from it is one of the
greatest teachers. And
we each possess it.*

Keeping the Doors Open

Jane Munro



Amanda Mills has set aside time in her chock-a-block schedule (she owns a real estate appraisal and consulting company, and serves on the boards of several non-profits) to reflect on the volunteer work she's done for the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria. She's slender and attractive, calm

and composed, gracious and welcoming. She's agreed to talk in the hope that her story will inspire others to come forward and volunteer. In particular, she'd like members to "step up to the plate" and join the Centre's Board of Directors.

"Anyone can help. We need all kinds of skills: people to work with the financial committee, membership committee, newsletter committee, volunteer committee, maintenance of the plant, advertising and promotion, marketing our props and books. The primary criteria are that Board members must belong to the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria, and must be willing to give time—in some cases, not a lot."

Although Amanda has been "doing yoga" for more than thirty-five years, she describes herself as an "at times delinquent practitioner." One benefit of serving on Board is that this has "solidified" her "commitment to yoga." She says, "it certainly ratifies one's own practice and dedication."

Also, she has found it "quite valuable" and "very interesting" to have an insider's view of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria's growth and development over the past four years. Because the organization is based on "individual dedication to practice yoga and carry out the philosophies of Iyengar yoga," members share "a very, very strong determination to make sure the Centre is successful."

Before joining the Board, in the spring and summer of 2001, Amanda helped locate, lease, and renovate the 919 Fort Street space. Finding a physical home for the Centre was a community effort, involving many phone calls and much

One benefit of serving on Board is that this has "solidified" her "commitment to yoga." She says, "it certainly ratifies one's own practice and dedication."

"I admire greatly the direction they have followed and their total commitment to Iyengar yoga, and their skills at disseminating the teachings."

traipsing around the city to view various buildings. The group had much to consider, from parking to renovations, but the critical question became, "Would Shirley like it?"

Amanda first met Shirley Daventry French in a yoga class in the late sixties at the Y. A group of women, some from that class including Amanda, began meeting on Friday evenings in one another's homes. Later Shirley, Derek, and others founded the Victoria Yoga Centre Society. But by then, Amanda—who'd completed her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre at the

The 22nd Annual Retreat at the Saltspring Centre is Coming!

June 2-4, 2006
With Shirley Daventry French

This is your opportunity to attend the annual retreat on beautiful Saltspring Island and participate in a weekend of Iyengar Yoga with Shirley Daventry French. Renew your Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria membership so you can be in the front of the line for an opportunity to participate in this wonderful event.

Fees: \$325.00 + GST IYCV members - shared
 accommodation in the house
 \$280.00 + GST IYCV members – camping
 \$250.00 + GST IYCV members – commuting
 Add \$35.00 + GST to the above prices for
 non-members

Registration opens:
March 17, 2006 for IYCV members
March 24, 2006 for non-members

More information in the next issue.

University of Victoria in 1971, had left Canada. When she returned to Victoria in 1987, she was impressed with the work they had done. "I admire greatly the direction they have followed and their total commitment to Iyengar yoga, and their skills at disseminating the teachings."

For thirteen of the fifteen years Amanda lived and worked abroad, she was in London. She did a variety of things: "managing a jewellery art gallery (international artists); selling/letting residential real estate; administration in a multi-media promotions company with national and international clients; managing a family holding company in Malaysia." She had grown up in Hudson, Quebec, a lakeside community near Montreal. Her father's work as a pilot and the family's interest in the wider world brought people from many places into their home. She went to finishing school in Switzerland, and came back with French that sounded posh to the Quebecois. Now, as an independent business woman, she is a former president and board member for the Intercultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA) and the Victoria Chinese Commerce Association.

One of Amanda's refrains at the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria's Board meetings is to remind everyone that, while a non-profit may not aim to make money, it is "in the business of keeping the doors open!"

"I'm extremely proud of how the Centre has developed over the four years we've been in our current building. When we moved in on Day One, we were a fledgling organization; we've grown into a very successful, very solid organization. That's due in great part to all the teachers, staff, volunteers, and students." It takes many hands to keep the doors open. 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 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, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)**



Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada

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

10:00am-2:30pm Registration
3:00pm-6:00pm Asana Class with Stephanie Quirk

Friday, May 26

9:00am-5:00pm Teacher Training with
Stephanie Quirk

Saturday, May 27

9:00am-5:00pm Teacher Training with
Stephanie Quirk

Saturday Evening A Celebration Dinner

Sunday, May 28

8:30am-11:30am IYAC Annual General Meeting

Fees

Total cost for the weekend:

\$400 + GST before April 10, 2006
(includes classes, single room in UVic dorms, and
breakfasts, lunches and dinners)
\$440 + tax after April 10, 2006

Commuters/ Conference only: \$265 + tax
(includes classes plus most meals)

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, or for MORE
INFORMATION and/or a BROCHURE, please call the
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria: (250) 386-YOGA (9642)
between 10:00am-1:00pm Pacific time

IYENGAR
yoga centre
calendar

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
- 28-Sept 1 Student Intensive with Lauren Cox & Ty Chandler

SEPTEMBER 2006

- 28 Sutra Workshop with Shirley Daventry French
- 30-Oct 1 Going Deeper with Shirley Daventry French
Teachers' Meeting

OCTOBER 2006

- 13-15 Senior Intermediate I Assessment in Toronto, ON
Teachers' Meeting

NOVEMBER 2006

- Junior Intermediate I Assessment in Victoria, BC
Teachers' Meeting

DECEMBER 2006

- In the Light of Yoga workshop - Mr. Iyengar's birthday celebration
Sadhana with Corrine Lowen
- 21-22 Winter Solstice Workshop with Ty Chandler



Time to Renew!

This is a reminder that the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria membership expired 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

March/April 2006



IYENGAR
yoga centre
OF VICTORIA



Knowledge grows when action
and analysis synchronize.

– B.K.S. Iyengar



IYENGAR YOGA

Teacher Training Intensives

Fees for each course:

\$560.00 CDN + GST IYCV members
\$600.00 CDN + GST non-members

Registration now open.

To register, drop in to or phone
the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)
www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

July 10-15, 2006

With Leslie Hogya, Ann Kilbertus

Introductory I & II Syllabi for uncertified Iyengar Yoga teachers

This six-day course will build your understanding of teaching Iyengar Yoga based on the foundation of a good practice. Peer teaching, pranayama, philosophy and anatomy will be included. Leslie and Ann are experienced teachers in Junior Intermediate III through the Iyengar Yoga association of Canada and are qualified I.Y.A.C assessors. They are involved in teacher training in Victoria as well as outlying British Columbia and Yukon communities.

Preference will be given to members of I.Y.A.C. and those planning to do their assessment in the near future.

August 7-11, 2006

With Shirley Daventry French

Intermediate Junior and Senior syllabi for certified Iyengar Yoga teachers

This in-depth course offers the opportunity for certified Iyengar Yoga teachers to work with a master teacher and prepare for assessment at the Junior Intermediate I, II & III, and Senior Intermediate I levels.

Shirley is a direct student of B. K. S. Iyengar who awarded her a senior teaching credential. She has been teaching Iyengar Yoga for thirty-five 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.

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

A deposit of \$150.00 CDN will reserve a place. Full payment is due June 2, 2006. If you cancel by June 2, 2006 your deposit minus 10% will be refunded. After June 2, 2006 refunds will be given only if your space can be filled.

Junior Intermediate Workshop For levels 3 & 4 students *with Manouso Manos*

April 14-16, 2006

Friday, April 14, 6:00 - 9:00 pm

Saturday, April 15, 10:00 am - 1:00 pm, 3:00 - 6:00 pm

Sunday, April 16, 10:30 am - 1:00 pm

THIS WORKSHOP IS FULL

To add you name to the wait list, drop in to or phone

Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria, 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)

www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10.00 cancellation fee.

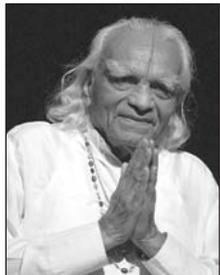


No Classes
Easter Long Weekend

Friday, April 14 -
Monday, April 17, 2006

Manouso Manos
workshop only

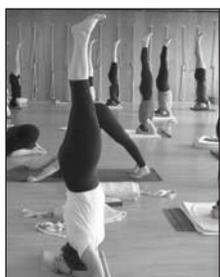
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Omission:
In the January/February
2005 issue, photo credit
for "Estes Park,
Colorado" (p.11) (at right)
belongs to Jaki Nett.



PHOTO: JAKI NETT

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 IYCV.
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 Melissa Worth

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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
March 15, 2006

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 Iyengar 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 (250) 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.

Best wishes from Guruji

December 16, 2005

My Dear Leslie,

Thanks a lot for sending me the forms for Bellur trust donation and also happy to note that all of you enjoyed my latest book and May God bless you all to reach that level sooner or later.

I am also happy when Shirley requested to lend my name for the Centre at Victoria, I was happy. I am sure that the Centre will grow from strength to strength with so many teachers on hand.

I wish you all the best wishes and may the Centre grow from leaps and bounds.

Convey my good wishes to one all.

B.K.S. Iyengar

Editor's note: The Bellur Krishnamachar Seshamma Smaraka Niddhi Trust was established by Guruji to improve the quality of life for the local villagers of Bellur, Guruji's birth village. Donations to this trust have resulted in providing clean drinking water, opening a high school and the erection of the first temple dedicated to Patanjali. The next task is to build a first-aid and public health centre.

The IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA PRESENTS

Workshop with Stephanie Quirk

for students with six 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.

This is a general workshop designed for students.

Sunday, May 21, 2006, 12:00 – 3:00 pm

Monday, May 22, 2006 (Victoria Day), 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

Fees: \$160.00 + GST IYCV members, \$180.00 + GST non-members

Registration opens:

February 4, 2006 for IYCV members, February 14, 2006 for non-members

To register, drop in to or phone the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)

www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled
and are subject to a \$10.00 cancellation fee.

Can you help?

If you have a spare digital camera
or portable CD/tape player,
the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
would like to give it a good home.

Please contact the front desk
at (250) 386-YOGA (9642).

Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada

ASSESSMENT DATES

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 17-19, 2006, Victoria
Jr. Junior II



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

There were two yoga teachers in Victoria when I started yoga. One was a woman who taught at the Y which is where I began. The other was a man who taught in a community college. Both were middle aged. Both had lived in India. The woman had grown up there with her British parents under the Raj. The man had been an officer in the British army in India and certainly had a military bearing. In those days yoga was a growing interest among the community of hippies who had converged on the west coast of Canada; but the demeanour of these two teachers was far more conservative reflecting their background. Using yoga *asana* as a primary spiritual tool, their classes were disciplined, structured, and linked to the philosophy behind these practices.

Unpretentious but self-possessed, these teachers awakened in me a thirst to know more about yogic teachings. I was impressed with their non-attachment to their students. In fact they each encouraged us to take classes with the other, and even made an effort to throw us out from time to time emphasizing the importance of establishing a personal practice rather than becoming dependent on a classes.

As far as I could see, neither of them had a yoga master or a particular tradition; but clearly both of them were eadeavouring to put what they taught into practice in their own lives. They exuded integrity.

As interest in yoga and demand for classes grew, both of these teachers trained a few people to teach. My teacher, Jessica Tucker, started a modest teacher training program at

the Y. I do not know how the man, Gordon Limbrick, trained his students, but two or three of them began to teach. Jessica believed that teaching yoga was an offering and one should not seek to be paid, so in the beginning everyone who taught at the Y was a volunteer. On the other hand, the teachers trained by Gordon were not volunteers.

Jessica's teacher training took place once a week in the afternoon for two hours and, as I recall, it lasted ten weeks. She did not advertise; participation was by invitation only. When Jessica approached me to see if I was interested in taking this course, I told her I had never thought about teaching yoga, but would give it some thought. In my youth I had begun to train as a school teacher but had decided it was not for me. I did, however, have experience of teaching fitness and swimming. When I had thought it over, I decided to take the teacher training course, more to deepen my knowledge of yoga than to teach.

One day, soon after the course ended, Jessica was seeking a teacher for an extra class at the Y. She looked at me and said that she didn't think I was ready, and I readily concurred. I was in no hurry. Two weeks later, seeking a teacher for another class she asked me if I could teach it. Apparently I had made a lot of progress in those two weeks!

Then, as now, yoga had exploded on to the scene; but there were significant differences. It was the height of the Vietnam War and in North America there was widespread repudiation of Western values and culture. People were "tuning in and dropping out".

Before I actually stepped through the door into a formal yoga class, I had been involved for several years with self-study in groups variously called encounter or sensitivity groups; although there was little sensitive about them some of the time as freedom gave way to licence. Derek and I sent our children to a free school based on the ideas of A.S. Neill and the Summerhill school he founded in

Jessica believed that teaching yoga was an offering and one should not seek to be paid, so in the beginning everyone who taught at the Y was a volunteer.

England. To the consternation of my mother, I rejected my proper British upbringing. Worried about me, in one letter she enquired if I were having a nervous breakdown! *You have such a nice husband, nice children, nice house in a beautiful place. Why do you want to disturb things?*

In those early days, although many people were digging into yoga and other Eastern teachings, few wanted to teach and the supply of teachers dragged behind the demand for classes. Today, many a yoga teacher with a few (sometimes very few) years teaching behind them offers teacher training. This is often followed in a short time by advanced teacher training. One teacher I know makes no bones about the fact that teacher training is a way of making money and keeping a studio afloat.

At the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria, we field questions regularly from people who are interested in our teacher training who have never taken a class in Iyengar Yoga; sometimes they have never taken a class in any form of yoga! When told they would be expected to study with us or other certified teachers for three years and then apply, this is the last we see of them. Reasons for wanting to teach yoga have been as varied as “I am unhappy teaching school and thought I might take up yoga teaching instead” to “I’m getting older and don’t know how much longer I can teach aerobics”.

For those wishing to get certified

It is a question of first growing up and accepting full responsibility for oneself and one’s life; then learning to discriminate between that which strengthens us and that which weakens us, that which takes us closer to the Light and that which takes us to the darker side of our nature.

quickly there are weekend teacher training workshops like one I saw advertised by something called YogaFit. In fact it was not even a full weekend, only Saturday and Sunday. In those two days, along with how to choose various angles from which to market yourself, they also found time to teach the History of Yoga. In the words of the infamous advertising by the Liberals in our recent Federal election: *I am not making this up.*

When I started to teach, the popular image of a yoga teacher was someone with flowing hair and flowing robes; and I must confess I grew my hair, stopped wearing makeup and put away my smart European clothes. Nowadays, advertisements and magazines are full of youthful, slender, beautiful women and handsome, muscular men, all of them extremely flexible. I don’t know how many times someone has said to me: “I couldn’t do yoga. I’m not at all flexible”. Depending on how categorically this statement is made, I might venture to suggest that perhaps taking a yoga class could make you a little more flexible. What a novel idea?

It is sad that yoga is so tied up with body image these days, but committed students have to begin somewhere and their reasons will be as varied as the individuals involved. Mine was that I emigrated, had three children in four years, a very busy husband, and no extended family support in this strange country. I did not have to worry about physical survival like Catherine Parr Trail

and Susanna Moodie, the two English sisters featured in the wonderful biography *Sisters in the Wilderness* by Charlotte Gray. Compared to their ordeal, I was pampered. However, while my physical needs were well taken care of, my spiritual needs were not and I did not know what to do about this. The very first yoga lecture I heard from Swami Radha gave me not only hope of making sense of and coping with my predicament, but tools to use for this purpose. It was like a breath of fresh air coming into my life.

I was already teaching when this meeting occurred, and could see how vast a gap there was between what I had learned about yoga and the wisdom of Swami Radha, wisdom tinged with a good dose of common sense. I wanted to learn more and in the winter of 1976 went to Yasodhara Ashram to take their three month residential Teacher Training Course. To say that this course changed my life is not an exaggeration. Unlike some people I knew, for me this did not result in changing husbands or jobs or where I lived but rather required a substantial change within me and one which I struggle to this day to sustain. It is a question of first growing up and accepting full responsibility for oneself and one’s life; then learning to discriminate between that which strengthens us and that which weakens us, that which takes us closer to the Light and that which takes us to the darker side of our nature.

Perhaps this course made me a better teacher, and certainly I learned much about teaching yoga; but its significance was in learning how to delve into the vast body of spiritual knowledge and practice which lie at the heart of yoga, and how to use these teachings in all aspects of my life. Physical discipline has never been difficult for me but to modify my behaviour and see the Divine Light in others - now that was and frequently still is a challenge.

Shortly after I had taken this course, Swami Radha changed its name. Of the

fourteen participants, many had little or no prior knowledge of yoga. The course gave them a broad introduction but not deep knowledge, which could not be acquired in such a short time. It was sufficient to build on but not to go out and teach. This would be premature. So the name of this course was changed to Yoga Development Course, and those who completed the work of this course and were interested in teaching could go on to take teacher training in various aspects of yoga.

The demands of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria's teacher training program reflect the demands of our Guru, B.K.S. Iyengar. True, he has a large worldwide following, but he is not interested in quantity but rather in quality. In Toronto in 1993 when he told us that we had to begin the process of certification and assessment, he was aware of opposition to this idea from some of his senior students, and he emphasized that he did not care if only two or three people went along with this: we had to make a beginning.

Opposition to certification certainly delayed the process for several years, but eventually Guruji's wishes prevailed. The first certificates were issued to a few of his senior students at a Canadian intensive in Pune in 1997. The first assessment took place the following year. More than two or three people did stay with the national association, and now we have approximately 145 Canadian certified teachers and waiting lists for many of our assessments.

Sometimes these teachers are discouraged at how meaningless the term "certified yoga teacher" has become. To be certified in Iyengar Yoga is an undertaking which requires a long term commitment, and those who persevere and are awarded a certificate with the signature of B.K.S. Iyengar treasure this piece of paper which is recognized and respected worldwide.

These reflections were prompted by



Teacher training is ongoing. Teacher Greg Sly is challenged to find clarity in Virabhadrasana III.

our most recent teachers' meeting in January 2006. The teachers' group affiliated with our centre comprises 48 teachers. The majority are from Greater Victoria but others come from up-Island (meaning mid or northern Vancouver Island), from various Gulf Islands and mainland British Columbia communities. Our most distant member is from Whitehorse in the Yukon. While few of the out-of-towners can attend our monthly meetings regularly, they come here from time to time. At present, in addition to eight local apprentices we have six from out of town. When they come to Victoria it is often for a week or more of study where they attend some classes, observe others, participate in discussions with their primary mentor and take part in whatever events are happening at the centre during that time.

The way we organize our teacher training at the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria is through a teacher training committee of six teachers: Linda Benn, Lauren Cox, Leslie Hogya, Ann Kilbertus, Marlene Miller and myself. In addition to our monthly meetings the six of us meet regularly to review the progress of trainees plus any problems which have arisen

regarding teachers and teaching. What is working well; what is not? Where do we need to focus our energy? Where do we need to make changes?

Who are the members of our teachers' group? If you are a certified Iyengar Yoga teacher interested in our centre and the teacher training which goes on here, you can be affiliated with us. The core group consists of certified Iyengar Yoga teachers who teach or take classes and workshops at our centre. They must first become a member of the non-profit Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria Society; then pay an extra small fee to join the teachers' group. They will receive notices of meetings at which all of them will be welcome, and any other pertinent information regarding teaching and training which we have gathered in Victoria. All who teach at our centre and all of our trainees are required to join the group. For other interested teachers it is an option which they may take up if it interests them.

Our teacher training program is affiliated with the Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada and follows criteria which came directly from B.K.S. Iyengar. Most of the training for Introductory certifica-

From a colleague who was in Pune in January, I was told that Geeta repeatedly asked, often in frustration, why so many people want to become yoga teachers. Prashant cautions us against seeing it as a vocation rather than an avocation.

tion is done by my five colleagues on the committee, and I am involved primarily with postgraduate training for higher levels of certification. Before taking on anyone new, we must make sure we have the time and energy, because it is a great responsibility to train teachers to the exacting standards of a Master such as B.K.S. Iyengar.

When applications are received they are read and discussed, and we do not accept everyone. Often an applicant is asked to focus on his or her practice for six months or longer and then reapply. They will receive guidance in how to establish a personal practice, because this is the foundation for becoming a good teacher. They do not have to be adept but willing to look honestly at their limitations - physical and emotional - and apply the techniques and teachings of yoga to overcoming them as best they can. As Guruji has said: *Some can do and cannot teach; and some can teach and cannot do.* Ideally one can both teach and do! Certification involves assessment in teaching and practice, as well as a written examination on practical aspects of yoga, anatomy and physiology, and philosophy.

From a colleague who was in Pune in January, I was told that Geeta repeatedly asked, often in frustration, why so many people want to become yoga teachers. Prashant cautions us against seeing it as a vocation rather than an avocation. In fact, the very first question on the application for our teacher training program is: "Why do you want to become an Iyengar Yoga teacher? What are your

expectations? Please take time to answer this question with full consideration." This theme will be revisited often during their training.

Our monthly teacher training meetings give teachers of different levels of expertise and varied experience, the opportunity to explore both practical and philosophical questions related to yoga with each other. They are usually well attended. Twenty eight teachers and trainees came to the meeting I mentioned earlier in this article. I had sent them out a letter asking them to reflect on some questions beforehand, and the whole group provided many responses to the following questions:

What makes the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria a non-profit organization?

How do you profit personally?

After this discussion we divided into four groups; each took one of these questions and brought their ideas back to the whole group:

How can we keep the yoga centre healthy?

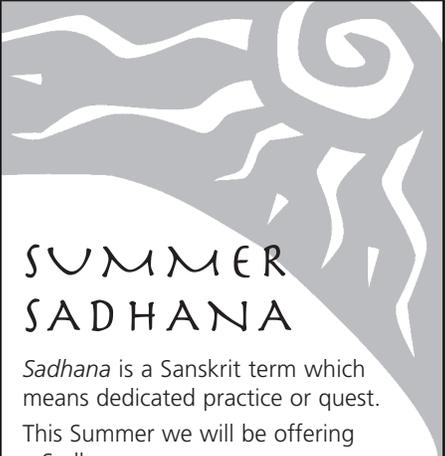
How can we nurture the spiritual?

Is it fair how we pay teachers?

Are expectations too high?

In my letter I had raised the question: *Have we become an anachronism?* The consensus of our meeting seemed to be saying: NO - even in the competitive environment of yoga today, there is a place for us.

I say Amen to that. ॐ



**SUMMER
SADHANA**

Sadhana is a Sanskrit term which means dedicated practice or quest. This Summer we will be offering a Sadhana.

**July 26-30, 2006
6:30 – 8:00 am
With Robin Cantor**

See next issue for more details.



**Come to the
Friday Night
Gathering**

**Friday, March 31, 2006
6:30 pm**

We are pleased to announce that our guests for the evening will be visiting from The Salt Spring Centre

Let's all join together for a musical evening of Kirtan (chanting)

Please bring a vegetarian dish to share at the Potluck Dinner to follow the Kirtan

Admission: Minimum \$5.00 donation to go to The Salt Spring Centre & their Orphanage Project

Take a Walk in the footsteps of Patanjali

B.K.S Iyengar Yoga Retreat

August 20 - 25, 2006

With Shirley Daventry French
and Leslie HOGYA



***Let Shirley & Leslie be your guides at this
spiritual retreat centre on beautiful
Salt Spring Island off Canada's west coast.***

Immerse yourself in daily
Pranayama & Asana practice.
Be involved in lively discussion
through group participation into
the ancient teachings of the
Yoga Sutras of Patanjali.

SHIRLEY DAVENTRY FRENCH

is a senior student of B.K.S. Iyengar. She
has studied at the Ramamani Memorial
Institute in Puna many times, most recently
in October 2005. She is the founder of the
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria, B.C.

LESLIE HOGYA has been studying Iyengar
Yoga since 1972. She has travelled to India
six times. She most recently studied with
B.K.S. Iyengar in Colorado in September,
2005. She holds a Junior Intermediate III
level of certification and is part of the
assessors team for Canada.

FEES:

\$994.00 + GST IYCV members
– shared accommodation

\$1050.00 + GST non-members
– shared accommodation

\$894.00 + GST IYCV members
– camping – must supply own
equipment

\$950.00 + GST non-members
– camping – must supply own
equipment

A \$200 deposit required to hold
your space and the full payment
is due June 1, 2006

To register, drop in to or phone
the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202-919 Fort Street,
Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)
www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

After June 1 the \$200.00 deposit
is non-refundable.

Guruji

on his First Public Classes in the West

Fifty-one years ago, Guruji first visited Europe to teach Lord Menuhin, his family and friends. He continued teaching the elite of the Western world for several years before embarking on teaching the commoners.

***Yoga Rahasya** interviews Guruji on his experiences on his first public classes in the West and the difficulties he faced adapting to a culture so different from his own.*

Guruji, you started going to Europe in the 1950's to teach Lord Menuhin and his family. When did the idea of conducting public classes first come to your mind?

No doubt, I was teaching only the elites in my first few visits to Europe. When Menuhin invited me, he himself being an elite person, all his contacts were the elites of western civilisation. All the elites of the western world, Aldous Huxley, Julius Huxley, used to come to Gstaad for a month. Since that was the time, I too was invited to be in Gstaad, it was only natural that I started getting contact with such people.

It so happened that in 1958, when I returned to India after I had talked at the House of Lords, a correspondent of the *Times of India* interviewed me. He contacted me directly at the airport and asked me to come to his office. He interviewed me for an hour. He talked about many things. I told him that I was teaching the Queen Mother of Belgium at the age of 84 as this was the first time that I had taught somebody so old. The next day he wrote in the paper "The king of all exercises is yoga and Mr. Iyengar only teaches Kings and Queens." That report made me feel really sorry. It had an imprint on my mind.

So when I went back to Europe in 1960, after a gap of two years, I requested Mr. Menuhin that I be allowed to teach common people also that the next time I would be interviewed, I could say that I not only taught Queens and Kings but taught scavengers and sweepers too! That is what I had in mind and I think I succeeded.

When I started public classes in 1960, I had only 3-4 people in my class. It was not a success. The charges were 10 shillings per class and people were not ready to pay even that. They would laugh at me. Then when I returned in 1961, I had pre-planned what to do. I had written letters to the Asian Music Circle and to Menuhin to organise lectures and demonstrations in various places in London. The lecture demonstrations, especially the practical demonstrations

attracted more people to come to my class. So, in my next trip, I had 21 to 25 students in my public classes. I taught in a garden behind Menuhin's house and slowly, very slowly more people started coming which today as you can see is uncontrollable.

How did you inform people that you are going to start public classes?

There was no publicity at all. The Asian Music Circle had a monthly newsletter and they had mentioned in that Mr. Iyengar is going to take public classes. Nothing beyond that was mentioned and people were asked to phone Angela Marris or myself for the details.

What was the immediate response from the few students who came? Were they attracted or were they hesitant?

Those who came to me in the beginning were all yoga practitioners. There were only 4 or 5 people. They were not raw students without any basic knowledge. They would jump from one position to another doing nonsensical things. So, naturally I thought, "let me tap those who have done yoga, are doing yoga." I started giving them a systematic method of practice and a sequence of how to follow one *asana* after the other as per the anatomical structure of the body. That is how I started and built up.

They were practicing very enthusiastically. They were already teachers so I told them that if you want to teach then teach in this way. They did not want to accept this new method because it was strenuous, strong and powerful. They used all the words that you use today. This method is very strong, very demanding, very powerful. You need the will power to do it and all that.

There were dropouts but there were others who stuck to this method saying that when there is a right method then why go back to the old method. You teach those who come to you and those who don't come we don't teach. That is how it went on. I also gave a lot of performances for the public.

When they used to comment that it is very demanding, tiring, exhausting, did it ever tempt you to change and dilute your method?

No. I had Mr. Menuhin as an example. I told them, "Do you think that Mr. Menuhin would have become a top class violinist if he had not strained?" Curzon, Aldous Huxley all

strained. For what purpose were they straining? Were they straining for worthless things? Art demands something and you have to accept it and do it.

What was the interest in the elites that you were teaching? Some like Menuhin and Curzon may have been genuinely interested but there may have been some who came to you because Menuhin has asked them to?

Many came because Menuhin told them. They were casually interested not genuinely interested.

Did that dishearten you?

No, it did not dishearten me. I thought that they were at least saying that yoga has done them good. So, they had respect for the teaching. They had a casual interest but because they were known in society as musicians their words carried weight on others who genuinely came to learn. So casual practitioners had a great deal of power to state that they were influenced by yoga to some extent and the others genuinely started doing.

How was life in London in those days? It was not an easy city to live in and life in 1960's UK and in India would have been dramatically different? How was it with you?

It was physically tiring on me. My time was completely utilised by each and every one. There was no free time. I used to be working from morning 7.00 to 1.00 and then again in the evening 3.00 to 7.30 or 8.00 pm. There were no outsiders, only Menuhin's friends.

When you were alone in London was there any problem with reference to food?

In those days, there was no vegetarian food available. When I used to say I am a vegetarian, they used to call me a "grass eater." Cows only eat vegetarian food and I was called a "grass eater!"

How did you manage food for one whole month?

I started giving them a systematic method of practice and a sequence of how to follow one asana after the other as per the anatomical structure of the body. That is how I started and built up.

Well, today I will be honest. In hotels, I was told I will be given vegetarian food but not one knew what vegetarian food was. They gave me boiled potatoes, fried potatoes, fried bean. These were the two-three dishes that I got and that had an effect on my liver. It would give me pain and I would live on coffee and fruits. I had to control my temptation from asking for anything. They also used to have biscuits so I had to live on bread, honey, biscuits and coffee.

How did the things gradually change?

My mind was solely on how to make yoga popular in the western countries. That was in my head so I did not pay much attention to rest of the things. But I was handicapped because of lack of nourishment. I was becoming weak. I do not blame anybody because nobody knew what vegetarian food was.

Geetaji has mentioned in one of her interviews that whenever Guruji would return from his foreign trips he would be very thin.

Yes, That is true.

What about transport and travelling and life in general?

Nothing, absolutely nothing! See, if I had to give money out of the hundred dollars, which I earned how could I maintain my family? So, when I was in England to teach Menuhin I used to walk 6 miles from Hampstead to Heidelberg. I was walking early morning. Buses were not running at that early hour. So I used to walk from Hampstead and then walk back.

An old couple helped me with my accommodation. Once I was staying at a

lady's who had 33 rooms. Menuhin had arranged for that. After 15 days, she refused to even give me food. I could not tell Menuhin that she is not treating me well. She said, "He had asked me to accommodate you for 15 days. You can stay but you will not get anything." I waited for two days and then told Mr. Menuhin all that happened.

Fortunately at that time I knew Sylvia Mehta. She used to bring something for me to eat from the shops. There was an old couple that was staying in a small house in Hampstead. They had one sitting room, one bed and a kitchen. They said that I could use their kitchen for my practices if I had no objection. They said that we have to act as ambassadors. "If a foreigner is in trouble, it is our duty to oblige!" and obliged me they did without charging me. They gave me a place free of cost. So, 3-4 years I used to go and stay with them only.

UK is not very famous for its weather. Was your practice different?

No, I did not change my practice at all because I was afraid, that the quality of my practice would suffer. So whether it was cold or hot, I retained my practice. I never changed it. I was keen to give performances after performance to attract people. I could attract more if they saw directly than talking on the subject. So, that's why I had to be fit as a fiddle. I had to keep my body fit so that I could give a demonstration whenever I was asked to do so. That's why I was practising vigorously.

Certain old students of yours who I met said that they first saw you on television and that attracted them towards yoga.

I went whenever they called me. That's why I had to be ready to give a demonstration and naturally I had to keep my body trained. All of a sudden they used to ask me, "could you show the most difficult pose that you like?" So, had to start with *Vrsbhikasana* as that is the most difficult pose.

How can one bend suddenly? So, I used to keep myself ready so if anytime they asked me to do an *asana*. I should do that also. So, I attracted people only by showing complicated poses because they were not happy with *Trikonasana* or *Paschimottanasana* or standing on the head.

They wanted me to do most difficult poses like *Kandasana*, *Padangustha*, *Dhanurasana* and all that. My mind wanted to show what the human body could do beyond science – what medicine felt was not possible.

The 50's and 60's were a few years after independence. Did you find any kind of discrimination?

Racial discrimination was definitely there. It was actually humiliating in the early days. When I got down in England, the first thing they said was, "Oh! Here is a slave, he has come from India." Indians, for them, meant slaves.

For example, I stayed in a hotel in Kensington as Mr. Menuhin had said, "You stay in this hotel as I always stay here when I am in London." It was in 1954. It was my first trip to London and I had no friends in London. The manager came to my room and said "Sir, you are an Indian and you cannot have breakfast or lunch with the rest of our guests. You can order whatever you want in your room. It is embarrassing for us to keep you here but we have to host you because Yehudi Menuhin is our customer. If we say no to you then he may not stay in our hotel. So, we are allowing you to stay but you can stay only in this one room. You have to walk the stairway and go out and come in and you cannot mix with all people." So that was then.



How did you feel then?

It was very humiliating! But my mind was made up! "Whatever happens, I have come to do yoga." My object was how to make people to learn yoga? It took me six years to make yoga popular in London. It took years for them to accept that we were also independent people.

Also, in America when I landed in 1956, I was told, "you are a coloured man and you cannot go out first." I used to walk fast. When I went to the gate they said, "you cannot go!" I asked, "Why?" and they said, "because you are a coloured man. The white man goes out first then the coloured men are supposed to go."

How was it with students? Did they accept it easily?

Students accepted me well. The students who came to learn were genuine students. I created interest to some extent. They loved my way of teaching. They appreciated my teaching. They were all asking me, "Can we do like you?" and this ignited interest. So they were all genuine. No students had any inferiority complex.

How does it feel today if you consider how you struggled?

The broad mindedness has come from petty mindedness. A tremendous broad mindedness has come both in America and the Western countries.

In 1960, you were struggling to get few students. Today, the students are struggling to get a glimpse of you. How do you feel about the change over?

(Laughs) That is a mystery. I really cannot tell. In the early days I used to make people see my demonstrations. But when I gave demonstrations in The Barbican and Westminster Hall, the houses were full! Three to four thousand people that watched, were attracted and I had to build up that interest in yoga for them to appreciate it.

When you see it as a gradual transformation, it feels very possible but when you see it as point A and point B it just doesn't seem possible? What do you think about it?

It happened. It is a mystery. Probably my way of living also had an added interest in them. First of all, I was a vegetarian and the amount of work that I was

doing surprised them. How can a “grass eater” have so much strength and endurance? This was the turning point and my life became an ideal for them.

We were all moving together after the classes. We would go to the garden, talk and exchange views about their culture, our culture etc. That is when they realised that how this man who eats so little had that endurance. We cannot jump along with him; we cannot walk to keep pace with him. That also may be one of the reasons that made them respect the subject.

When I was talking to all those students in Manchester, they said there were more women who took yoga initially.

In the early days, when I started teaching, there were more ladies classes. The mentality then was that man had a physical power. Man considered himself to be very powerful and a woman just his embodiment. I could see that mentality there much more than in India.

Secondly, there was freedom of divorce there. If a woman became fat, if there was no glamour then the man could divorce. So, there were more emotional disturbances in the women. Even today, in the Western countries, they are intellectually powerful but emotionally weak. They cannot withstand even a small bite! This fear complex in women made them come to yoga. Yoga helped them maintain their figure and emotional balance.

In the early days, when I started teaching, there were more ladies classes. The mentality then was that man had a physical power. Man considered himself to be very powerful and a woman just his embodiment. I could see that mentality there much more than in India.

The Western men thought they were strong when I did something interesting. I used to take jumpings, like what they call “power yoga” now, in the ladies class and made them feel strong. It made women develop that feeling that they were not weak. So, when the men gradually also started coming to class – though there were not very many, when I started taking jumpings, the women were doing more than the men.

It was the ego?

The ego. It was the turning point. “We cannot stand with these women who practice for hours together with Mr. Iyengar.” Later on, the numbers of men and women increased. So, I made women feel that they are as strong as men.

Were you doing this intentionally?

Yes. I was doing it intentionally. When I started, even my question was also “why more women were coming to my class.” I had to question myself “why men were not attending?”

I started asking, “Why is it that they are not coming to class?” They said, “We have got strength, we have got power, we have got this, and we have got that.” The pride of men came out in their talks. Then I thought I should make women feel the power and that is why I started taking balancings, jumpings, and built in that character. Men started thinking, “What is this?” I said, “You come and see.” So, with a dose of humour, I started pulling them towards my side and then I made them do exhaustively like women.

Many men actually said that they followed their wives to class. One of them also said that when his wife wanted to come to India, he was worried because in those days, many women followed “Gurus” to India and left their families. One of them actually came and visited you in India before letting his wife come to Pune.

Yes, it did happen. For example, there was a lot of opposition when I was to teach the orthodox Jewish women in England from 1964-65. I gave a demonstration first where both men and women were invited to watch me. I told them that yoga was nothing to interfere in their way of thinking. What they were doing was for health and happiness. Then they had no objection.

I told them that they could also join and I had no objection teaching both of them. I conducted a class in the presence of their husbands. I had to adjust and touch them while teaching but at the end of the class they said that they had no objection to me teaching their women. So now you know that Orthodoxy existed in 1960’s and 70’s in London! Later, when I started regular classes, men would sit in a corner and come in after the class was over. I did not know that they were there and they would tell me that they were watching from the windows! Then yoga became popular in their community. They respected me and said that this is a different man altogether. They were very happy.

Today there is a lot of reservation with reference to religion. At that time, was there any religion coming in the way?

It was. As I said, in the early days I never spoke of philosophy. If I spoke on philosophy they would say I am speaking on Hinduism. So, I was not able to speak on the philosophy of yoga. I used to speak on how to keep physically healthy and mentally happy. If you read the early magazines on Yoga for Health they would say in their editorials that he is ruining the name of yoga. It is a philosophical subject

and he has got it down to physical health and happiness. There were all those attacks on my teaching. So I had to face this as well as that. If I did not speak on philosophy, then the magazines were attacking me and if I spoke on philosophy then they would say I am speaking on Hindu religion. So you can understand the state when I was to make yoga popular. I had to come down to the basics and I stuck to the basics. "Basics" means physical body and harmony of the mind.

When did the change start occurring then?

It took me nearly 15-20 years to even recite the invocation to Patanjali. It was gradual and I could not jump. I had to be gradual so I could adapt myself to their culture. I had to adapt to their culture. And, according to their culture I had to decide on what words should I use which would be liked by them.

When the Westerners first come here for the first time they say about the culture shock. What happened to you when you went there for the first time?

I had the same shock. Being an Indian, leading a vegetarian life, it was difficult for me. I had to give demonstrations in bars. I had to give a demonstration there if people gathered or showed interest. It was very difficult for me. I said, "I will just give a demonstration and come out." So once Mr. Menuhin told me, "Mr. Iyengar you have to learn to be with them. You cannot restrict yourself. Take a glass with you, as long as they give you something you just take a little and just walk, don't drink. Who asks you to drink?" It is your choice whether you drink or don't drink. Hold the glass and go around and round."

I had to transform myself to fit into their style of living. I am happy that he guided me. I used to feel nausea when they ate meat. I told him, "I can't eat I feel like vomiting." He guided me again "don't look at the meat at all, don't look at their plates. Look at their faces, look at your dish." That is why I say he is a

great friend of mine. He guided me how to live as per the western culture. He educated me.

You never commented on their life-style?

No. People used to smoke and drink in my presence, I could not force them not to so I told them, "I cannot bear the smoke so I'll go and sit on the other table. Those of you who do not smoke can come and sit with me on the other table. I cannot sit when you are smoking, if you are drinking it does not affect me but the smoke definitely affects me. So you drink wine and I'll drink water. It does not make much difference to me."

Then I went on changing them. I told them, "Is it fair for you people to smoke just after you finish yoga and then you speak about pollution? Switzerland is such a health resort and you people come here, smoke and pollute it. Why do you smoke at this beautiful airy place? You come here for health and what do you do? You come here and lead the life of a city." So that's how I started guiding them. I started changing them in this friendly manner.

Then when they came to know that Iyengar never touches alcohol then they used to ask my permission if they could drink. First they used to drink without asking. Later they started asking me. Then, slowly I said do you think it is worth drinking in my presence? It was not a sudden transformation. I was tolerant. If I were not tolerant then yoga would not have become a popular subject. My inner voice was guiding me. "Don't comment on their way! You have to propagate and popularise yoga."

So, you earned respect. You did not demand respect.

It took me a long time. Later they were afraid to drink and smoke even in my presence. Even if they were smoking they would see me and immediately drop the cigarette down. I said why do you do that. If you have guts then continue smoking, otherwise don't smoke. So I

started in that way. It took me time. It took me 15 years to win them. Now anyone can go and talk on philosophy but then at that time it was not easy for any yoga man to be with local people.

Another thing you must know that lots of yogis from the different ashrams were there in the West at that time. Indians would attend their sessions. There were no Indians coming to my class for the simple reason that "he is a hard taskmaster." Indians were not ready for hard taskmasters. So all my students were foreigners while there were mainly Indians in the different conferences.

Why did the Indians not come? They did not want to spend money?

No. They felt that they knew yoga. At least they are coming now. They had pride that they can do *Padmasana* and therefore they knew yoga. I had to start from that mentality. I had to build up and it really was a Herculean task.

That is what I have built up in yoga. I got that respect for the subject. I told you long ago when I went for the first time to London the first question was at the customs. "Have you got notes in your stomach? You swallow so many things according to yoga so you must swallow notes!" They were interrogating me to such an extent.

In 1954 in Switzerland, I was invited to give a yoga demonstration but at the time of demonstration they said we would not allow you unless we search you. You cannot carry a matchbox, you cannot carry a blade, you cannot carry a cloth because that was their impression about yoga. I was only in my trunks. I lost my temper and said, "You want me to take off my trunks? Is it not humiliating?" I did not speak of philosophy then but could you philosophise at that moment? So from that time what I built up today, the growth is mysterious.

Today Gururji they are advertising yoga business plan and they make money telling you how to run a business in yoga.

There was an article in the *Economic Times* about the Government of India wanting to patent 1500 *asanas*. They asked me my opinion and reply was that all the monies should go to the rishis who are not alive today. As they are dead on whose name would you patent it? The knowledge belongs to them and we are only copying from there. I said, "Out of 1500 *asanas* which one are you going to patent? Which do you prescribe?"

Suppose a man in *Hanumanasana* keeps both legs straight, the other one tilts his knee, then what do you call it? It is a patent? The pose has changed. The person will say it is not a patented *asana*.

They also ask me about the props. Iyengar made the props but the Americans and the Westerners are earning from it. Does that mean that I should not give? It is going to the public so I am happy. In that sense I can call myself a rishi because I have not taken any money from anyone.

Is it not an achievement that a hospital is asking for all the props? They used to call me a furniture yogi but what I did by introducing these innovations is become like a leech to yoga. Those who do yoga on props cannot leave yoga.

Yoga became popular because of the props because extension and relaxation goes together. They say sit for meditation. I say do *Viparita Dandasana* on the bench and the brain relaxes.

Independently you cannot relax but with the props you can relax. You will not feel exhausted if you are doing *Trikonasana* by holding the tressler. This is what I had given. I made people get attracted to yoga.

But nobody knows my way of teaching. My idea was, "how can you make them stick to yoga?" In the beginning I told you, I was called a hard taskmaster. He is powerful. Iyengar yoga is so powerful that it needs tireless determination to do so it is not worth it. So naturally I thought how to make them to experience the extension and relaxation

Biological relaxation gives neurological strength.

together. So props help. You do *Sirsasana* on the rope, are you relaxed or no? Does anybody know what it makes you? They say he is doing with support.

When I asked a few of the doctors in Mumbai on what is the difference between doing *Sirsasana* on the rope and *Sirsasana* on the floor? They did not know. Biological relaxation takes place in *Sirsasana* on the rope but there is psychological demand when you do *Sirsasana* on the floor. Biological relaxation gives neurological strength.

Nerves are a medium between biology and psychology. Neurology is between psychology and physiology and supports each other. *Teja* (fire) is the fulcrum between the five *tattvas* (*prthvi, ap, teja, vayu, akasa*). It can play with *prthvi* and *akasa*. So props are like a hub for one to get full benefit. I have given biological relaxation.

What happens when you do *Viparita Dandasana* on a chair? Do you use the brain to work or does your biological body extend? You do not know these things. You feel that the *asana* is done with comfort. What happens when you do *Sarvangasana* independently and when you do it on a chair? You see the temples hitting out when you do it independently. But the moment you do it on a chair then the temples do not hit out. What does that mean?

All the props are meant for neurological control, which is the hub for higher and lower actions. It is a balancer but nobody understands. Have I to go on? I kept it as a mystery.

Neurological body is the medium between psychology and organic body. That is why you have to work on neurology. Yoga is completely a neuro-

logical science. It is hundred percent a neurological science.

People say do meditation. Close your eyes and relax. What is the meaning of that? Don't function psychologically. Don't drop your spine. Keep your spine erect. Have you ever thought of all these things? They don't explain because they themselves do not know.

Neurology is the hub of the life force. And that is why we have to study each *asana*. Are you working on the muscles? Are you working on the bones? We have to understand the *sapta dhatus*. It starts from *rasa*. *Rasa* means fluid. Joints are fluid. So *rasa* begins from the joints. Then if you move the *rasa* then *rakta* flows. Have you got this connection? Without lubrication of the joints there is arthritis. And that is why the blood does not circulate. So because of *rakta* circulation, *mamsa* develops. Now what does the *mamsa* do? It fans. So, the muscles should tone the outer body as the muscles should tone the inner body. What is that inner body? *Majja* (marrows) so if the muscles do not send the blood to the marrows, then how can bone generate blood? What is the reason for osteoporosis? Ask any doctor and he can explain. Old age is what they would say. The muscles are not used to move towards the bone so when the muscles stop moving towards the bone, the blood supply diminishes.

This is the mystery of yoga for which you need to know the depth of the *asana*. ॐ

This article was first published in Yoga Rahasya Vol. 12 No. 3; 2005. Many thanks to Rajvi Mehta, Yoga Rahasya editor, for giving us permission to re-print this article and for kindly providing us with the accompanying photographs.

Congratulations

The following candidates achieved certification during the IntroductoryII/ Junior Intermediate I assessment in Montreal, QC in December 2005.

Junior Intermediate I

Ginette Dion, Montreal, QC
Sylvie Lapointe, Mascouche, QC

Introductory II

Marie-Claude Gervais, Montreal, QC
Baya Hammoudi, Montreal, QC
Christine Michaud, Montreal, QC
Ginette Tremblay, St. Bruno, QC
Susanne McAdam, Montreal, QC

Timed Practices For IYCV Members

FREE OF CHARGE

Saturday, March 18 & Saturday, April 22, 2006
12:00 noon – 2:00 pm

Prerequisite: Completion of 3 terms of Level II

Please note: During a timed practice, no instruction is provided. Familiarity with Sanskrit names of the asanas in the Level I & Level II syllabus is recommended.

The Arbutus Studio will be open at 11:30 am for warm up and set up.

scholarships & bursaries

**Members' 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, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)

The 22nd Annual Retreat at the Saltspring Centre

June 2-4, 2006
With Shirley Daventry French



This is your opportunity to attend the annual retreat on beautiful Saltspring Island and participate in a weekend of Iyengar Yoga with Shirley Daventry French.

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:

\$325.00 + GST IYCV members - shared accommodation in the house
\$280.00 + GST IYCV members - camping
\$250.00 + GST IYCV members - commuting
Add \$35.00 + GST to the above prices for non-members

Registration opens:

March 17, 2006 for IYCV members
March 24, 2006 for non-members

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

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



PHOTO: 2005 MICHAEL JP OAKES

Namaste

It is with John Schumacher's kind permission that we reprint an excerpt of his article originally published in the winter 2006 issue of the Unity Woods Newsletter, Washington, DC.

Inspired, awed, grateful, loving: these words come to me as I write, still awash in the afterglow of B.K.S. Iyengar's visit. For me personally, it was a wonderful opportunity to be with a man who has changed my life in ways profound and all encompassing and for whom I have such love and respect. How I spend my time, how I ply my craft and earn my livelihood, how I view my life, its purpose, its direction - all these things that constitute so much of what my life is have been deeply influenced by Mr. Iyengar.

As a yoga practitioner, I revere him as my teacher. When I am with him either in India or here in America, he continues to open doors in my practice that not only do I not know how to open, I don't even know they exist. Every morning that I practice, which is most mornings of my life, he is with me. I hear his words guiding me more deeply into the poses or refining the quality of my awareness of my breath. I look at *Light on Yoga* and study his sequences or examine his poses. I feel the touch of his hands awakening and adjusting my body to guide the movement of intelligence and energy.

At age 87, his own practice continues to be amazing and inspiring. It's not just that he still does things I can only dream about doing. It's that, after 70 years of practice, he still maintains an astonishing fascination with and intensity in his practice. His enthusiasm

is full of innocence, and like the delightful exuberance of a child, infectious. I always enjoy my practice, but after being around Mr. Iyengar, I find myself approaching it with heightened fervor and increased curiosity.

As a yoga teacher, I honor him as a role model: knowledgeable, creative, perceptive, indefatigable, inspiring. When I am inclined to be casual in my teaching, to be satisfied with just a good job, my observation and recollection of his relentless pursuit of excellence in presenting the subject and in getting the best from his students goads me to try harder, to give more, to ask for more. His unending exploration of ways to make yoga accessible to his pupils triggers my own desire to find ways to educate and assist my students. And seeing the incredible skill he has developed through persistent practice urges me to study more deeply so that I might become a better teacher.

As a human being, I cherish his example of joyfulness, generosity, and compassion. In an interview that appeared during his visit here, *The Washington Post* called him "the happy yogi". And he is. He laughed a lot and enchanted everyone with an impish sense of humor and a quick wit. What's more, his laughter and joy come not at anyone's expense, but simply from his love of life. That love is contagious. The Iyengar Intensive during the Yoga Journal Conference in Estes Park was a love fest. It started with everyone thrilled to be there, eager to see again or for the first time this man who had touched us all, directly or indirectly. And when he arrived at the hall that first morning, the cheer that went up, the sustained applause, the inescapable love directed toward him, took even him, I think, a little by surprise. Our love reinforced the love he felt for us, gave to

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us, and has given to us for years, and so the spiral of love soared upward. After class, it was still there in the way people greeted each other on the paths between classes and spoke to each other in the dining hall.

In the classes, he gave unstintingly of his knowledge to the students and teachers. He was not scheduled to teach during the conference; at 86, he is formally retired from teaching. But for each of those three days, he taught a large portion of the three-hour morning class, guiding the teachers to better ways of teaching and sharing a wealth of information with the students. It would have been tiring for a person half his age. Even so, he had the energy to give the opening keynote address to the General Conference, participate in a two hour question and answer session, engage in a nearly two hour public conversation with Annette Bening, and still leave most of his entourage in the dust.

Beyond that, in and between the classes, he worked therapeutically with a number of people to alleviate their suffering and show them how to use yoga to improve their health. And during his visits to the various cities, including here in Washington, he often gave up his own practice time to help the senior teachers who were practicing with him. He instructed us how to work with our own problems and then how to use what he had shared with us to help others with similar issues.

Now those who know me know that I'm not one to gush or float off into lala reveries, but I say what I am about to

In the classes, he gave unstintingly of his knowledge to the students and teachers.

say because I feel that it is true. It seems to me that B.K.S. Iyengar has reached a place (I'm sure he would say as a result of practice) where he can take the love that is directed toward him and not get caught in it. He is able to allow the light of love in and shine that light back out with such power and radiance that to be around it is to be in love - not romantic, dreamy love; not the "you are so much greater than I am" up-on-a-pedestal kind of love, but the love that comes from the joy of being in the presence of a clear mind and an open heart.

For me, more than his innovations, his incredible insights, even more than his remarkable compassion and healing skills, the example B.K.S. Iyengar gives of the power of yoga to elevate oneself to a state of loving grace is his greatest gift. He has said it himself: All the other yogas — *Karma Yoga* (the yoga of action), *Jnana Yoga* (the yoga of the mind), *Raja Yoga* (the yoga of meditation) — all culminate in *Bhakti Yoga*, the yoga of love and devotion, the yoga of the heart, and he is its shining example. His visit was short, but its light will be with us for a long time to come. ॐ



Thank you!!!

- All the volunteers who helped make the In the Light of Yoga, B. K. S. Iyengar 87th birthday celebrations a big success.



- Especially to Ty Chandler as the main organizer, her kids and teens and their inspiring performance.
- The musicians at the birthday celebration.
- Melissa Worth for leading the practice.
- Sue Riddell for the cake.
- The IYCV board for bringing extra food.
- Everyone who came.
- All to those who helped wash dishes or helped in any way!!!
- To the following for their contribution of resources, dollars, time, muscles, energy!
Audrey Finch
Bruce Co
Nathan Co
Patricia Irwin
Lisa Tang
Brian Abbott
- To all who have donated to the annual fundraising campaign for the Iyengar Yoga Centre.

**REMEMBER -
IT'S NEVER TOO
LATE TO DONATE!**

Update your bookmarks!!!!

The Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria has a new website

www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

Have Mat Will Travel

Amaresh Bill Wilson

It was time to end my self-imposed ban on air travel (in efforts to not harm the atmosphere). That, in combination with a U.S. boycott, had made me a virtual prisoner in Canada for the last three years. The \$449 return airfare to Amsterdam was the kicker, and on an airline that still allows you to take a bike for free! (As I write this, unfortunately Paris burns and return airfare there is only \$298).

With my classic 70's Peugeot touring bike safely stowed in the belly of the Airbus and my yoga mat carried on, I was prepared to endure the agony of a cramped 9 hour flight. But what luck, the seat beside me remained unoccupied and I gratefully filled the space. Being able to sit in *Sukasana*, breathing with an unrestrained width, straightening limbs at will – is that what First Class is all about? I was too modest to roll out my mat in the aisle but, rolled or folded, a mat provides much better support than those overly soft, compressible airline pillows and blankets.

My forty-day trip had only two fixed events, I had registered to run the Amsterdam marathon, and I planned to spend my last week at the B.K.S Iyengar Yoga Institute and Centre of Amsterdam (IYCA) on Victoria teacher, Ty Chandler's recommendation and high regard for its founder, Cle Souren.

I spent my first four weeks cycle camping and in almost constant motion. It is an amazing country for a cyclist with

an incredible infrastructure of cycle paths and no hassling for not wearing a helmet. I intended to drop in on any yoga studio I encountered, but the availability of yoga classes is very sparse by Victoria standards and I only ran into one yoga studio outside of Amsterdam.

My *asana* practice slipped as it became colder. It was too cool, dark or wet in the mornings or late afternoon. Sitting practices were not a problem; my tent was my cave. Wouldn't it be wonderful if parks could offer just a roof to practise under, similar to Victoria's now closed Checker's Pavilion?

As the weeks rolled by, it felt good to finally be heading back to Amsterdam. Mind you, I wasn't looking forward to the marathon. My marathon training had fallen by the wayside and my long run to date was the Land's End half marathon just before I left Victoria. I was looking forward to yoga classes at the Institute though, and my first class was to be the very next morning after the marathon. I would simply take it easy in the run and be in fine shape for class. I ran a slow but very enjoyable marathon through a spectacular route of cheering spectators with perfect running weather. A very well organized event – there were even hot showers and a free sports massage waiting at the end of the run, somewhat mitigating the effects on my body of just running double the distance.

As I was cycling to class the next morning from the campground the rain

started, my hands were freezing, the cold was creeping into sore muscles and I considered turning back. Why would I want to return to a familiar place (a cold wet tent) rather than the unfamiliar, the new place? Fortunately, I pushed on.

I arrived at the IYCA cold, wet, tired and sore. On entering, I immediately felt the warmth of the studio and the people. I realized an Iyengar student is not a stranger at any Iyengar studio and there is a home away from home throughout the world.

Here was bright, spacious studio with high ceilings, tall windows, solid wood floors (with an uncanny resemblance to British Columbia fir), shelves and shelves of familiar props (and some not so familiar), a most solid masonry rope wall, curved glass block dividing wall, halogen lighting – very nicely done! And quiet, the first quiet I had experienced since arriving in Holland, free of the perpetual traffic noise one hears outside in this small, flat, densely populated country.

I introduced myself to Cle who struck me as having a remarkable mix of qualities – approachable yet penetrating, possessing a succinct sharpness without being blunt. Amsterdam students and teacher trainees are fortunate to have this senior teacher. I also obtained the distinct impression that knowing who my teacher was and knowing Ty, that Cle would expect just as much effort from one of Ty's students.

Perhaps it was because I had been in perpetual motion for the past month, perhaps it was IYCA's yoga mats – the heaviest, most solid mats on the face of this earth, but I've never felt so grounded even before the class began. My fellow students were a mix of nationalities, and though most were multilingual, instruc-

It seems to me that B.K.S. Iyengar has reached a place (I'm sure he would say as a result of practice) where he can take the love that is directed toward him and not get caught in it.

tion was in English for my unilingual benefit.

Cle did not demonstrate any *asanas*; you must listen to and follow his words. It makes a great deal of sense as, it seems, does everything Dutch. Just consider: you don't have to be able to see the teacher or, worse, turn in a pose to see; there are teacher trainee-spotters in the lower levels to demonstrate or adjust if need be; the teacher is able to watch both students and teacher trainees at all times; and last but not least, one becomes more internally focused and entirely in the present neither knowing what is coming nor the end.

It was not long before Cle had my weaknesses pegged and was calling out specific instructions to me by name – hiding in the back corner was not even safe from his eyes. In one class I had unknowingly positioned myself beside a star pupil and set myself up for an extremely long holding of *Parsvottanasana* while a comparative anatomy class

ensued. In the hallway outside the studio there are large pictures of Mr. Iyengar in classic form, which allowed further comparisons to be made during class.

One day after class, I was asked how Victoria differs. "It's essentially the same", I answered. "That's the great thing about Iyengar yoga" – something to consider in your travels.

P.S. As an exercise in non-attachment, and for the use of newsletter readers, I left my orange Peugeot in the bike rack by the canal in front of the Institute. The combination is 0108. ॐ



Short WORKSHOP

Sun Salutation Workshop

With Ty Chandler

Saturday June 17, 2006
1:00 – 3:00 pm

Fees:
\$45 + GST members,
\$50 + GST non-members

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



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 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Registration Asana Class with Stephanie Quirk
Friday, May 26	9:00 am – 5:00 pm	Teacher Training/Asana clas with Stephanie Quirk
Saturday, May 27	9:00 am – 5:00 pm	Teacher Training/Asana class with Stephanie Quirk
	Saturday Evening	A Celebration Dinner
Sunday, May 28	8:30 am – 11:30 am	IYAC Annual General Meeting

Fees

Total cost for the weekend:
\$400 + GST before April 10, 2006
(includes classes, single room in UVic dorms, and breakfasts, lunches and dinners)
\$440 + tax after April 10, 2006

Commuters/ Conference only: \$265 + tax
(includes classes plus most meals)

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, or for MORE INFORMATION and/or a BROCHURE, please call the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria: (250) 386-YOGA (9642) between 10:00 am – 1:00 pm PST.

The Process of Yoga

David Gelzinis

It was just over two years ago that I was having some problems with my back. Initially, I didn't think too much of it; I had been a fairly rough and tumble kid growing up and was still involved in a number of sports as well as training with weights at the gym several times a week. It was sore, but I just figured I'd tweaked something and it would sort itself out. Well, it didn't! In fact it kept getting worse until I was living with a continuous burning sensation in my lower back.

At this point I accepted there was something more serious going on and it was time to stop playing the tough guy and go get checked out. After trips to the chiropractor and physiotherapist the verdict was delivered; my back was a mess (no kidding!). As mentioned though, I've always been very engaged in staying active and staying in shape to avoid these sorts of problems so I grilled the physiotherapist as to why it was happening to me and how to make it stop. He said start going to yoga.

...I beg your pardon?!

The long and the short of it is that, despite all the training and sports, which I thought were keeping me healthy, I wasn't doing all that great a job of stretching or with my flexibility and it was having negative results. My body had been able to compensate when I was younger but wasn't having any of it now that I was in my mid 30's.

My girlfriend though, who had been practising yoga for several years, was thrilled to hear the recommendation. On numerous occasions she had tried to sell me on the idea it would be fun to go to classes together – unsuccessfully I might add. I mean give me a break, real men don't do yoga. I had always viewed it as some flaky 'let's all get together and hang

I mean give me a break, real men don't do yoga. I had always viewed it as some flaky 'let's all get together and hang out on mats on the floor' sort of thing. I had never perceived yoga as a real form of exercise or anything else substantial for that matter, but here I was being forced to seriously consider what yoga actually was and what it could do for me.

out on mats on the floor' sort of thing. I had never perceived yoga as a real form of exercise or anything else substantial for that matter, but here I was being forced to seriously consider what yoga actually was and what it could do for me.

It's curious how your willingness to change opinion or revisit preconception is largely influenced by whom you are talking to. I was hurt and someone in the medical world had just told me yoga could help me get better. So real man or not, a couple of weeks later I found myself sitting on a mat on the floor at the Victoria (now Iyengar) Yoga Centre.

As I've already indicated, my initial motivation in taking up yoga was health. Work on my flexibility and it would eliminate the back problems *and* increase my athletic ability. That wasn't tough to justify to myself or explain to anyone else who asked and it's how I approached this new addition to my weekly schedule (which, by the way, is a major personality trait of mine; I live by my routines).

I'm also a very goal oriented individual so I found B.K.S Iyengar's technique of teaching the yoga *asanas* perfectly tailored for me; particular attention is paid to form and progressive stages of movement into a final position. Working toward outcomes also tends to

be a typical 'guy' way of approaching most aspects of life. We're problem solvers; don't come to us with an issue unless you are looking for a solution! Don't ask us to do something just for the sake of doing it; there has to be a tangible outcome and for me it was no different with yoga – at least in the beginning.

Ok, I don't want to be a hypocrite. I will admit that I am still largely driven by outcomes as opposed to the process and tend to judge my progression in yoga by how much deeper I can get into poses over time, whether I can touch my toes on a given week (darn those forward bends!), but I realize now that subconsciously things have slowly been changing for me over the past two years and I'm slowly finding out there's more to yoga than improving my *asanas* from week to week. And I still might not be aware of the change if it hadn't been for the occurrence of two events, this past fall, which allowed me to reflect on how I perceive and approach my practice of yoga.

First, I went to India for a month. Not because I had started practising yoga and wanted to visit its birthplace. I didn't go to Pune or the Iyengar Yoga Institute. In fact, I didn't practise yoga at all the entire time I was there. So why did I go to India, you ask? I guess the main

reason was I wanted to see and experience a completely different culture and well, India sure fits into that category. The point I'm trying to make though is that it wasn't the trip itself or the one-month absence from my training that affected my views on yoga. These were merely precursors to my return to Victoria and what came after.

The second event and the experience that made me rethink what yoga is all about and what it means to me came when I attended the *Going Deeper* workshop in early December. As many of you know Shirley Daventry French leads this workshop once a year. It's an opportunity for junior students to work with not only the senior-most instructor in Victoria, but also one of the most senior instructors in all of Canada. I saw this as an opportunity to participate in a longer session and hopefully do just what the title suggested, 'go deeper', to make some physical breakthroughs and move to a new level of practice (there's that focus on goals again).

However, arriving back in Victoria a week before the workshop and easing again into my training routine I was horrified to find how significantly my body had regressed. I was so stiff that it was difficult, not to mention quite painful, to move into many of the most basic poses. More importantly, I felt this was definitely going to blow any opportunity of 'going deeper' at the workshop. Realistically, I was more concerned about simply making it through the weekend in one piece.

What happened at the workshop though, was something quite unexpected and it occurred as I was laying in *Savasana* at the end of the Saturday morning session. Believe it or not I almost started laughing – an embarrassing situation if it had actually happened, given that *Savasana* is intended as a state of alert but 'silent' relaxation. The reason I wanted to chuckle though was because I felt so

Believe it or not I almost started laughing – an embarrassing situation if it had actually happened, given that Savasana is intended as a state of alert but 'silent' relaxation.

happy. I keep trying to find a better, more descriptive word for the feeling but I haven't had any success. It's weird, but it hit me at that moment how good it was to be back practising yoga.

As I continued to lie there reflecting on the feeling, I realized I had given up trying to make gains that morning, instead just participating in the event, observing and accepting where my body would let me go on that particular day and as a result I had really enjoyed the session. It also got me thinking about my last few classes before leaving for India and how different those had been. I remembered the feeling of being in a rut, distracted by preparations for my trip and frustrated that instead of continuing to improve I was sliding backward.

I believe most of you, like me, have a reason(s) for beginning and continuing to practise yoga: maybe to get over an injury or as a general form of exercise; maybe as a chance to get out and meet new people or maybe just the opposite, an opportunity to spend some time focusing on yourself. Eventually though, most of us question why we do things, whether we've achieved what we wanted and our purpose for continuing. I've heard more than one of my yoga teachers comment on this as experiencing a plateau, that the reasons differ from individual to individual and we must find our own way to bring meaning to our practice again.

Specifically, I was looking forward to Shirley's workshop as a means to move past a perceived, physical plateau in my training. In a curious twist of events though, by letting go of my goals and expectations, I realized it wasn't a physical plateau I needed to overcome at all,

but rather a mental one. I have to admit that I'm still trying to figure out where to go from here but I do know that letting go of some of my need to continually strive for measurable goals has allowed me to just participate and enjoy the process of yoga.

This may not be an earth shattering revelation to any of you but I did want to share it because I do believe most of us fall into the trap of focussing on goals and outcomes (especially we men). What I found is that if you are willing to put aside the reasons you practise yoga, even just for a short time, it might allow you to experience something completely new about yoga. It might even move you off a plateau you didn't even realize you were on.

Give it a try. ॐ



Junior Intermediate III teacher and teacher trainer, Marlene Miller working toward Vrschikasana I

Practising Yoga

Jane Munro

New Year's Day: I started sneezing as soon as I got up—went through several tissues while feeding the cats, and more while assembling breakfast. I stuffed tissues in my pockets and blew my nose vigorously before undertaking pranayama. The breath bubbled in my nostrils and hot flushes prickled my chest. A coughing fit overtook my first attempt at retention after exhalation. By the time I joined my husband for our first meal of 2006, it was undeniable: I had a cold.

The weird thing was, the same thing had happened last January 1st. Perhaps my immune system takes a beating during the festive season, or maybe catching a “minor virus” is the consequence of cuddling up with charming but infectious grandchildren. Anyway, I did learn something last year that made my experience with this year's cold much easier.

Here's what happened. Last year, I could not afford to be sick. I had work to do and needed a clear head. The previous morning, I'd embarked on the “short three-day course” that B.K.S. Iyengar describes in Appendix I of *Light on Yoga*. He says “whenever followed” it will “benefit the body and bring harmony to the mind.” So, even though my nose was running and my throat felt like I'd rubbed it on the cheese grater, I went to the mat planning to follow what I could of the second day's practice.

It began with inversions: a ten-minute *Salamba Sirsasana* followed by several of the headstand variations, then a ten-minute *Sarvangasana* followed by a variety of shoulderstand variations, and five-minutes in *Halasana*. At first, in *Salamba Sirsasana*, I was so congested that I could hardly breathe. I

remembered the instruction to breathe through your nose, no matter what, and persisted, though to begin with I had to inhale through my mouth part of the time. But, after about thirty slow breaths, my nasal passages felt clear. By eighty breaths, my sinuses also felt clear. It was amazing!

At that point, I looked up the prescribed practice for colds in Appendix II of *Light on Yoga* and saw that the second day's practice was sufficiently similar that I could add a few *asanas* to it and do both. Two hours later when I'd finished, I felt terrific. Clear head and chest, alert body, calm but intense energy: I was dazzled by the fact that the yoga practice had scrubbed the symptoms of that cold right out of me.

They remained in abeyance all day, though by evening I was tired and eager to go to bed. I could feel my cold returning like a slowly rising tide. In the morning, I woke with a runny nose. Once again, I went to the mat, this time combining the third day's practice with the cold practice.

One of the *asanas* in the cold practice that is not in the short course is *Kurmasana* (and *Supta Kurmasana*)—the Tortoise. It's a pose sacred to yogis which encourages you to turn your senses and energy inward—to withdraw into your shell rather than take on every battle. It felt very good to do *Supta Kurmasana* while battling a cold.

But then there's *Yogidrasana*, which I didn't even attempt. I read the instructions (it's like *Supta Kurmasana* flipped over, with the ankles crossed behind the neck and the hands gripped behind the buttocks), and looked at the photos of B.K.S. Iyengar in this position, and shook my head. There's no way (so far) that I can cross my ankles behind my



Salamba Sirsasana

neck. Not last year, and not this year. I found it interesting that skipping things I couldn't do didn't seem to diminish the value of the overall practice.

After finishing the “short course,” I continued to follow what I could of the cold practice, as needed. I did the same thing this year. And, once again, my “New Year's cold” has been a non-cold. I'd blow my nose while feeding the cats, do inversions when I got to the mat, and allow myself more sleep, but it's great to discover I can reduce the impact of a cold by practising yoga. ॐ



Student Intensive

August 28 - September 1
9:00 am - 12:00 noon daily

Learn how to establish and deepen your practice.

Level 2 experience required.

See next issue for more details.

Preparing for Pune

A veritable mountain of information was accumulated in the course of putting together this article! Realizing that the definitive *Guide to Pune* was beyond the scope of this newsletter article (or at least this writer), we provide instead a local perspective on Pune, featuring comments from Victoria Iyengar teachers who have studied at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute. (If you are planning a trip, you will find much additional information in the *Preparing for Pune* binder now in the library!)

What is the best way to prepare for classes at RIMYI?

Veteran Pune visitor Leslie Hoga recommends study with senior teachers who go there often. In Victoria we are lucky to have Shirley Daventry French who has been there many times. Take out the many videos we have in our library with Guruji and Geetaji teaching,” and, adds Leslie, “Practice!”

“Practise humility, curiosity, patience, presence,” suggests Ty Chandler.

“Practice!” is the succinct suggestion of Marlene Miller, another veteran visitor to Pune.

“Practice, practice, practice,” reiterates Joanna Hope. “Have no expectations and be prepared to accept methods of discipline and encouragement which may be quite different from what you’re accustomed to.”

“The classes are large—but you can’t hide from Geeta’s sharp eyes!” warns Robin Cantor.

“Practice!” confirms Nancy



A quiet morning in a popular Pune shopping area.

*Be humble. Leave your ego behind.
Be prepared for anything to happen.*

Searing. “Have an attitude of being grateful for the opportunity to be there studying with the Iyengars.” Nancy also thinks it would be helpful to “listen to someone speaking ‘Indian English’ before you get there, for example, Prashant’s Lyrical Yoga Sutras.”

Just in case you didn’t get the message, one last time... “Practice harder, deeper, and more thoughtfully than you ever have before,” says Maggi Feehan. “Work on your most dreaded poses, because you will likely have to hold these very same poses for unimaginable periods of time.”

What is the best way to prepare for the cultural experience of India?

“Many people are frightened about going to India,” acknowledges Robin. “They’re worried about getting sick, the culture shock, smog, and the high demands of the daily practice.” However, says Robin, “people settle in” after a few days, adding, “I recommend going with a positive attitude and taking a handkerchief!”

Leslie recommends prior study of “Indian classical texts, such as the *Yoga Sutras* and the *Bhagavad Gita*. Read up on the history of India, and current events,” she advises. “Look at books on Indian art.” And, “Let patience be your guide.”

Karin Holtkamp also advises patience. “Be prepared that things won’t always happen within the expected time-frame...Developing a sense of detachment and keeping an open mind will be helpful when navigating India.”

Just as practice was the favoured method of preparing for classes at RIMYI, detachment is a recurring theme when it comes to experiencing the culture of India.

“Go with an open mind,” says Nancy. “Don’t be attached to our North American cultural standards, and be prepared to practise detachment. You will see extreme poverty, possibly death and be constantly asked for money.”

Marlene suggests, “Allow a few days before and after the journey to let the cultural changes settle and to become acclimatized.”

Tongue firmly in cheek, Maggi describes an exercise which may be useful in preparing for Pune: “Lock yourself in a small, overheated closet with twenty other people and have horns blast in your ears, people shout at you in Marathi, and cars zoom around you for a couple of hours.”

“Simply surrender to the moment,” suggests Melissa Worth. “All sorts of things that Westerners may find difficult or alarming, things that are often hidden in the West, happen in India before our

Studying at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute (RIMYI)

Before applying to take courses at the Institute, a student is expected to have studied Iyengar Yoga for a minimum of eight years. Apply two years in advance of your intended visit. The *Preparing for Pune* binder in the library contains an application form to request enrolment in classes at the Institute. See also the Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada Teacher Training document.

What is the cost?

Cost depends largely on air fare, but you can budget \$2,000 for the flight, and an additional \$350 for internal travel. The Institute requires a deposit of \$150, and the remaining \$200 (US funds) when you arrive.

Accommodations cost anywhere from \$350 per month for apartments to \$1200 for a hotel room. Food is cheap—\$10 a day if you dine out; less if you have an apartment with cooking facilities. Total cost will likely be \$4,500-\$5,000.

Immunizations and Health Concerns

Check with your local health practitioner or a travel clinic. Usually recommended are vaccinations against polio, tetanus, hepatitis, and typhoid. Dukurool is suggested for intestinal upsets and/or cholera. *For more information, see the binder, Preparing for Pune, in the Library.*

Recommended Reading

- RIMYI - BKS Iyengar website
www.bksiyengar.com/modules/Institut/RIMYI/rimyi.htm
- Photos of RIMYI
www.yogaterry.com/about_terry_petersen1.htm
- “Light on Life at RIMYI” International Association of Yoga Therapist
www.iayt.org/publications/articles/hails.htm

eyes. Just go with the flow and smile. Be respectful of the culture and dress modestly. It’s really very freeing.”

Ty found that nothing could prepare her for arriving in Calcutta for the first time in 1990. She says. “India doesn’t work like that—your whole life is the preparation.”

If you could offer one piece of advice to another student going to Pune for the first time, what would it be?

Leslie: “Go a few days early to get acclimatized. Plan to stay near the institute. It’s good to be able to walk or take only short rickshaw rides. Don’t try and do too much. This cannot be over-

emphasized. The experience of classes and practice times fill the day, and is enough. The rest of the time will be taken up with meals, making notes, etc. Be humble. Leave your ego behind. Be prepared for anything to happen. Attend practice times every day you are allowed. Gurujī is usually there. What a great opportunity to practice in the same room with him.”

Ty: “Stay alert. Rest when you need to. Listen to your intuition. Soak it up! Have fun!”

Nancy: “Take advantage of all opportunities to practise, use the library – Mr. Iyengar is generally there daily and often

breaks into wonderful discourses – and participate in special events at the Institute. If you have time, see some of the rest of India, especially the caves at Ellora (and Ajanta), UNESCO World Heritage Sites.”

Joanna: “Ensure that the place you are staying is of sufficient quality and comfort – that it can be your haven as you are bound to encounter things, people, situations which may seem an assault upon your sensibilities. You will have experiences and responses on an internal level which will require you to take care of yourself. Ensure you have a place where that is possible. I stayed at the Span Hotel which cost \$20US per night. I chose to not have a roommate, knowing my great need for alone time. It was money well spent.”

Marlene: “Practise patience. Have a sense of humour. Use common sense.”

Robin: “Hiring a cook was the best thing we did. She was used to Westerners and all the washing precautions necessary

to keep us well. It was nice to come home to a home cooked meal. In a month, we had 30 different types of curry. We ate out occasionally.”

Maggi: “Go to India with a healthy body, an open heart, and a suitcase full of herbal supplements. In particular, take a combination of acidophelus, garlic pills and some form of citricidal like NutriBiotic for the stomach heebie-geebs. Also, take charcoal pills for when all hell breaks loose and your first chakra is on fire. More importantly, let India be your teacher. She is aggressive, demanding, and unrelenting, but she will lull your spirit and inspire your mind.” ॐ

COMPILED BY KARYN WOODLAND, WITH THANKS TO: ROBIN CANTOR, TY CHANDLER, MAGGI FEEHAN, LESLIE HOGYA, KARIN HOLTkamp, JOANNA HOPE, MARLENE MILLER, NANCY SEARING, GWYNNETH SOBEJKO, AND MELISSA WORTH. THANKS ALSO TO LINDA BENN, LAUREN COX, NORMA JANES, MELISSA PERUDHOFF AND JEANNETTE MERRYFIELD FOR QUESTIONS, COMMENTS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

For more information on Pune

Kirsten Agar Ward has written a very comprehensive guide, entitled *Going to Pune*, published in the Spring 2005 edition of *Iyengar Yoga News*. A copy of this article—plus a wealth of additional information, has been assembled into a binder labeled *Preparing for Pune*, which is now in the Iyengar Yoga Centre Library. Anyone anticipating a trip to the RIMYI in Pune is advised to peruse this binder as it contains a great deal of detail on everything from best airlines and accommodation to rickshaw drivers, Vedic Astrology, and etiquette in addressing Gurujii.

Palm to Palm, we thank you!

When our Victoria Yoga Centre group of teachers and students began planning to move our classes from the YM-YWCA to our own studio, I really did not consider that suddenly we would be running a small business.

Drew Yallop volunteered to help us launch the centre, and in September 2001 we began working in the front lobby, which fortunately included some office space, while the studio space was being renovated. People in hard hats carrying ladders, wielding brushes and dry wall tape bustled about as we answered the phone.

Drew established a class registration system, managed the accounts and banking needs and monitored everything associated with the business of running a yoga centre.

The first phone calls we received in our little office were thrilling, especially when they were from someone not already known to us. We were offering classes. People were coming to take them.

The money came in and Drew kept track of it and made sure teachers and the rent, heat, insurance, and other bills

were paid. This was a monumental task and he did this as a volunteer for the first two years we were in business.

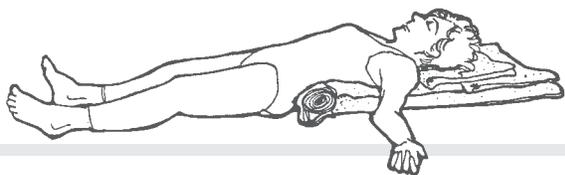
As our operations became more complicated, we began to advertise, printing flyers and hosting a more sophisticated web site.

Many days and nights would find him sitting cross-legged, typing and humming away as he entered data, made tables, and kept everything running. We weathered floods and fire.

The yoga centre is a busy place. There are countless details which need attention: the computer screen is flickering; the phone is not working properly; class information requires updating. What to do? Call Drew!

As time went by, we were able to offer Drew a contract so he could earn some money from all the effort he was making.

He never sought to have public recognition for all that he has contributed but now, Drew has resigned from the staff of the Iyengar Yoga Centre and I cannot let this event pass by unnoticed. Thank you! *Namaste!* ॐ



IYENGAR

yoga centre

calendar

MARCH 2006

- 18 Free Members' Timed Practice
- 25 Teachers' Meeting
- 31 Friday Night Gathering

APRIL 2006

- 14-16 Workshop with Manouso Manos
- 24 Free Members' Timed Practice
- 29 Teachers' Meeting

MAY 2006

- 21-22 Workshop with Stephanie Quirk
- 25-28 Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada Conference and AGM at the University of Victoria (Guest teacher Stephanie Quirk)

JUNE 2006

- 2-4 Saltspring Retreat with Shirley Daventry French
- 10 Teachers' Meeting
- 17 Sun Salutations Workshop with Ty Chandler
- 16-19 Introductory Level I/II Assessment in Calgary, AB
- 16-19 Introductory Level I/II Assessment in Saskatoon, SK
- 26-30 Sadhana with Robin Cantor

JULY 2006

- 10-15 Teacher Training Intensive - Introductory Levels with 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

- 23 Teachers' Meeting

- 28-Sept 1 Student Intensive with Lauren Cox & Ty Chandler

SEPTEMBER 2006

- 23 Teachers' Meeting

- 29 Sutra Workshop with Shirley Daventry French

- 30-Oct 1 Going Deeper with Shirley Daventry French

OCTOBER 2006

- 13-15 Senior Intermediate I Assessment in Toronto, ON

- 28 Teachers' Meeting

NOVEMBER 2006

- 3-5 Chris Saudek Workshop

- 17-19 Junior Intermediate II Assessment in Victoria, BC

- 18 Teachers' Meeting

DECEMBER 2006

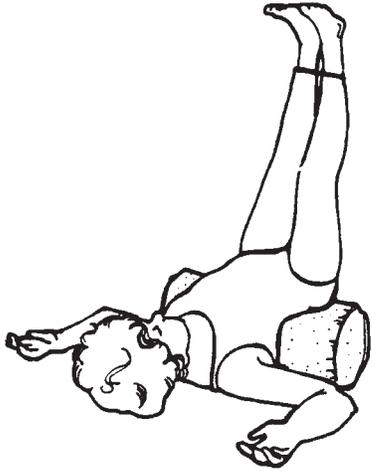
- 10 In the Light of Yoga workshop - Mr. Iyengar's birthday celebration

- 18-23 Sadhana with Corrine Lowen

- 21-22 Winter Solstice Workshop with Ty Chandler

JANUARY 2007

- 19-21 Heart of Yoga with Shirley Daventry French



time to Renew!

This is a reminder that the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria membership expired 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: _____

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Country: _____

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

Receipt required

May/June 2006



IYENGAR yoga centre OF VICTORIA



*Dr. Geeta S. Iyengar with CIYTA board members
at the Third Canadian Iyengar Yoga Conference
held in Vancouver, BC, 2001.*



IYENGAR YOGA

Teacher Training Intensives

Fees for each course:

\$560.00 CDN + GST IYCV members

\$600.00 CDN + GST non-members

Registration now open.

To register, drop in to or phone
the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)
www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

July 10-15, 2006

With Leslie Hoga, Ann Kilbertus

Introductory I & II Syllabi for uncertified Iyengar Yoga teachers

This six-day course will build your understanding of teaching Iyengar Yoga based on the foundation of a good practice. Peer teaching, *pranayama*, philosophy and anatomy will be included. Leslie and Ann are experienced teachers in Junior Intermediate III through the Iyengar Yoga association of Canada and are qualified I.Y.A.C assessors. They are involved in teacher training in Victoria as well as outlying British Columbia and Yukon communities.

Preference will be given to members of I.Y.A.C. and those planning to do their assessment in the near future.

August 7-11, 2006

With Shirley Daventry French

Intermediate Junior and Senior syllabi for certified Iyengar Yoga teachers

This in-depth course offers the opportunity for certified Iyengar Yoga teachers to work with a master teacher and prepare for assessment at the Junior Intermediate I, II & III, and Senior Intermediate I levels.

Shirley is a direct student of B.K.S. Iyengar who awarded her a senior teaching credential. She has been teaching Iyengar Yoga for thirty-five 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.

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

A deposit of \$150.00 CDN will reserve a place. Full payment is due June 2, 2006. If you cancel by June 2, 2006 your deposit minus 10% will be refunded. After June 2, 2006 refunds will be given only if your space can be filled.

Sutra Workshop

**With Shirley Daventry French
September 29, 2006**

This evening seminar will provide an overview of the yoga sutras of Patanjali and explore practical ways of making use of them as a guide for daily living.

Going Deeper

**An Iyengar Yoga Workshop with Shirley Daventry French
September 30 - October 1, 2006**

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 Daventry French is a long time student of B.K.S. Iyengar and has studied at the Ramamani Institute in Pune many times, most recently in October 2005.

See next issue for more information.



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IYENGAR yoga centre OF VICTORIA NEWSLETTER

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May 15, 2006

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 Iyengar 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 (250) 386-YOGA (9642) or visit our website: www.victoriayogacentre.bc.ca.

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



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COVER PHOTOGRAPH from left to right - bottom row: Marlene Mawhinney, Donna Fornelli, Geeta Iyengar, Marlene Miller, Leslie Hogya; top row: Joanne Sutherland, Shirley Daventry French, Sheri Berkowitz, Yvonne Kipp

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 IYCV.
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.



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

Shirley has recently returned from a sojourn in the warmth of Australia. Arriving back just as this newsletter was going to publication, and having to face the looming April 30th income tax deadline, she has had little time for reflection - other than on why she did not keep better track of her financial records! Therefore, we are reprinting a Reflections column from the archives which was first published in the Summer 1995 newsletter. Wind and the elements continue to play a prominent role in Shirley's life, as on a boat trip to the Great Barrier Reef in near hurricane force winds!

EARLY SUNDAY MORNING

Last night the wind returned in full force. It has been gloriously hot for a week, unusually hot for Victoria, and people everywhere have been complaining about it. Not me—I was happy. Granted, I did not have to go into town to teach or for anything else, and was able to enjoy the advantages of a cool house and shady deck or patio. The small community where I live, to the west of town, is close to the cold waters of the North Pacific and always a little cooler than the city itself. I love the heat and have often felt that I was meant to have been born in a warm country like Italy rather than England, and wondered whatever convinced me—when I decided to emigrate—to go to Canada rather than, say, Australia.

Although it is still early in the summer, everything is very dry here this year, tinder dry. The earth is parched and I know we need rain, but I revelled in our heat wave. While we may need rain, we do not need the wind—at least in my opinion. It must be good for something—if you are a sailor, for instance; but its benefits are hard to see as I observe its ravages in the garden, the broken and uprooted flowers, and the earth drier than ever. Derek and I once looked into the

possibility of a wind driven generator, but alas it was too expensive and impractical. I would feel better when the wind is blowing if it were providing us with electricity.

Our prevailing wind comes from the south-west. It is rarely a gentle zephyr, but a full force disturbing everything in its path—including me. Yesterday, as the weather began to change and the ridge of high pressure began to break up, I felt very aware of a disturbance within myself. I am not usually a clumsy person, but I dropped a dozen eggs which disintegrated messily on the hard tile of my kitchen floor. Later I broke a plate, spilled things, felt irritable. At night, I lay awake as the wind battered our large bedroom windows, listening to a cacophony of sound: trees rustling, branches banging against the house, the ocean churning. I could feel this commotion reflected inside of me and tried to calm myself by quietly observing my breath.

After a night of wild dreaming, I awoke still restless with the wind unabated, and thought about the energy which it unleashes. All over the world, citizens of various countries are wary when certain winds blow. Some of these winds have names: in France they have the Sirocco and the Mistral, in Egypt the Khamsin. In Tripoli, where I once lived, there was the Ghibli, a very hot, dry wind, full of sand, blowing straight off the Sahara desert, driving men mad (and women too). If you could, you stayed home, closed the shutters and windows, and waited it out, usually for three days. Another legendary wind is the Föhn, blowing off the north side of the Alps. The Swiss city of Geneva, which lies at their feet, has a very high suicide rate, and on

Yesterday, as the weather began to change and the ridge of high pressure began to break up, I felt very aware of a disturbance within myself.

investigation it was discovered that the number of suicides went up dramatically when the Föhn was blowing.

Our wind has no name that I am aware of, but I do know that when it is blowing the turbulence in the atmosphere is reflected in the internal climate of my body and mind. This is no time to make any major life decisions, such as selling the house or divorcing your spouse.

Perhaps I am restless also from yesterday's yoga practice, a vigorous one including balances, jumpings and backbends. For much of this year I have been forced to practise restraint in these postures because of shoulder and wrist problems creating pressure on some nerves and delivering a very sharp pain in the hand when I extended my wrist and tried to bear weight. Thanks to some intense work in Montréal recently with Faeq Biria, this pain has gone and I have been able to resume a full practice.

I spent most of yesterday clearing out my filing cabinet to free up some space. Before deciding whether to discard certain files or not, I read through some of the papers and reflected on their significance. Here was the story of my life for the past ten years or so. Clearing up the mess in my office is a form of yoga practice, and a necessary start to the sabbatical leave which I will be enjoying this fall. I really don't want this clutter to be there when I return from India.

The practice of yoga releases energy which may have been pent up for a long time. It is a powerful force, and if you are not careful, if you do not know how to balance your practice, that energy will run wild. Sometimes circumstances conspire in what we often describe as unrelated coincidences, to give us the opportunity to penetrate deeper and break through long established patterns of holding. This weekend, the vigorous asana practice, the clearing out of clutter, some powerful dreams, the gift of time and space plus the extra ingredient of the wind, offered me such an opportunity.

Carl Jung spoke of this in the term 'synchronicity', when certain events cluster together allowing us to penetrate deeper into the inter-relationship of psyche and matter.

Now the question arises, what kind of asana practice should I do today? A vigorous one, opening up yesterday's openings a little more, or a quieter form of practice such as forward bends attempting to calm things down. After all the wind is still at gale force.

For anyone who has established a regular practice, such questions arise regularly. How my life is unfolding psychologically and emotionally, the rhythms of my body, my state of mind, health, energy level, the cycles of sun and moon, the mood of the country, the mood of the people around me, the weather, the winds—these, and many other factors are ingredients which I have to consider in determining which asanas to assemble into a balanced sequence of practice.

Today is the July 1st long weekend. I do not have to teach. I have been shopping and the house is well stocked. I do not have to go out at all, unless I choose to. Enough food has been prepared so I do not have to cook, unless I wish to. The house is clean. I do have some upcoming deadlines, but I have made lists, the work is in hand, I have looked at how to make best use of my time during the coming week. Today, I have the luxury of being able to turn inwards, dig deeper and destabilise further, if I choose to.

On the path of the householder, with professional and family responsibilities,

this is not always so. If I go away to an ashram or spiritual centre my primary focus is my spiritual practice. Whenever I go to India, my primary focus is my spiritual practice. With only myself to look after, I am able to immerse myself in the work. I am very fortunate to have such periods to devote to my spiritual development, but spiritual work can and *must* be done at all times everywhere and not put in a separate compartment. Special time must be set aside for specific devotional practices such as asana and pranayama, whose benefits will spill over into all of your life—and that is the purpose of this life, to evolve spiritually.

In Victoria, each day, I endeavour to keep my spiritual practice as my primary focus—but here it has to be juggled with family, business and household affairs as I follow the practice of right livelihood. I have to function in a professional and competent manner, and sometimes this leads me to hold back where I might otherwise venture, or make an effort to put an end a period of confusion when I would really benefit from letting it run its own natural course.

Recently in Montréal, I came out of an intense class of seated forward bends taught by Faeq Biria, and experienced difficulty in walking on these two strange legs which articulated very differently in the hip sockets from the legs with which I am familiar. Fortunately, I did not have to walk far neither did I have to drive a car, so I could allow myself to experience this strangeness. To drive safely, I would have had to pull myself together, reassemble my old self. Instead, with the advantage of being away from home,

*The practice of yoga releases energy
which may have been pent up for a long time.
It is a powerful force, and if you are not careful,
if you do not know how to balance your practice,
that energy will run wild.*

I was able to experience my state of discombobulation as freedom from the known. When I can trust this process, then the possibility exists of creating something new.

SUNDAY EVENING

In his *yoga-sutras*, Patanjali says that *prakriti* or nature is composed of three forces: *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, which are known collectively as the three *gunas*. They go through phases of equilibrium and imbalance, and the nature of their relationship to each other is subject to perpetual change. *Sattva* is luminosity, *rajas* is vibrancy, and *tamas* inertia. The changing influence of these qualities gives form to our life, and when their balance is disturbed a creative process unfolds.

In *How to Know God*, a translation and commentary on the *sutras* by Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood, the authors illustrate the vital role that all three *gunas* play in the creative process with the analogy of a

sculptor who has the idea of sculpting a figure. First he finds a piece of clay, inert, representing the power of *tamas*, its formlessness an obstacle which has to be overcome. The force of *rajas* is required to make the effort to do the work of sculpting the figure. When sufficient rajasic energy is generated, a clay figure is created. *Sattva* alone would be simply an unrealised idea.

What did I realise today? First, after writing a few notes for this article, I did a vigorous practice of inversions and drop-overs, allowing plenty of time to calm down with shoulderstand cycle and other quietening postures. As a result my concentration improved, and I was able to focus the energy released. I got on with this and some other writing, continued to clean up my office, cooked a traditional English Sunday dinner for Derek and his mother of roast lamb, roast potatoes, peas and mint sauce, and a vegetarian feast for myself. Later, we watched a movie together, and the wind died down. ॐ



No classes will be held

**Monday, May 22 to
Sunday, May 28**

due to the
Iyengar Yoga Association
of Canada conference
and AGM at the
University of Victoria.



Sri B.K.S. Iyengar, Honourary President

Presents

**Stephanie
Quirk**

May 25-28, 2006

at the University of Victoria,
Victoria, British Columbia.
in conjunction with the IYAC AGM.

The conference is FULL.

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202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C.
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)
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Thursday, May 25	10:00 am – 2:30 pm 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Registration Asana Class with Stephanie Quirk
Friday, May 26	9:00 am – 5:00 pm	Teacher Training/Asana clas with Stephanie Quirk
Saturday, May 27	9:00 am – 5:00 pm	Teacher Training/Asana class with Stephanie Quirk
	Saturday Evening	A Celebration Dinner
Sunday, May 28	8:30 am – 11:30 am	IYAC Annual General Meeting

Fees

Total cost for the weekend:
\$400 + GST before April 10, 2006
(includes classes, single room in UVic dorms, and breakfasts, lunches and dinners)
\$440 + tax after April 10, 2006

Commuters/ Conference only: \$265 + tax
(includes classes plus most meals)
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, or for MORE INFORMATION and/or a BROCHURE, please call the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria: (250) 386-YOGA (9642) between 10:00 am – 1:00 pm PST.

Guruji on "Citi-Sakti"

A transcript of the talk given on Guru Purnima

This article was first published in *Yoga Rahasya*, Vol.10, No.4; 2003. (Glossary follows article.)

Today, I will be speaking on the last word of the last sutra in the last chapter in Patanjali's yoga *sutra*. I do not know if any of you even remember this word. Patanjali ends the yoga *sutras* with the word *citi sakti*. *Citi* means the *atman* - the soul. *Sakti* means it's power. So, *citi sakti* conveys the characteristics of the *citi* - *atman* and its character in the form of the power of that *atman*. Hence, the word *citi sakti* which is the intelligence of the *atman* which is known as the power of the soul.

Many of you are beginners in your practices and have not crossed the hierarchies to be able to understand and experience the meaning of this word. *Citi sakti* is *atmabala* - the power of the soul, the glory of the soul. In order to experience this glory of the soul, Patanjali in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th chapters explains the various facets of *astanga yoga* - *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi*.

We, as neophytes, have to understand the qualities of power. We have:

- *sarira bala* - physical power as you read now about power yoga,
- *mano bala* - power of the mind,
- *buddhi bala* - which is the intellectual power. The mind after it reaches its exalted state of awareness and wakefulness enters the *buddhi* in the form of wisdom as discriminative knowledge, which according to Patanjali is *viveka-khyati*.
- *Citi sakti* - the power of the soul. When *viveka-khyati* in your *sadhana* reaches its exalted intelligence, only then appears the *citi sakti-atmabala* - the power of the soul.

Wisdom plays a very important role because that wisdom is nothing but the power of the soul - *citi sakti*. The *atman* has no extra power. The *buddhi*, the *vivekaka-khyati* is the *sakti* of the *atman*, of the soul. You need to understand how much you have to filter your discriminative thoughts in your practices to



PHOTO: JAMES CURRIE-JOHNSON

reach that exalted state of oneness with the soul, with the *atman* or the *citi*. These are the hierarchies in practices. However, most of you have not crossed the first two hierarchies to evoke wisdom in your *sadhana*.

As *sadhakas*, you have to know at what time the *sarira* - the physical power has to be used, at what time the mental power has to be used, at what time the intellectual power has to be used and at what time you have to bring *citi sakti* which is nothing but intuitive - intellectual power. That which springs or sprouts from the self, itself. That is intuitive knowledge.

These are the four facets in our *sadhana* and this *sadhana* has been explained by Patanjali as *abhyasa*, *vairagya* and *anusasana*. *Abhyasa* means practice, *vairagya* means detachment from the worldly objects and attachment towards the *atman*. *Anusasana* is the command to discipline yourself. A command that comes from the *atman*. You can understand these internal connections with your *sadhana*.

Sadhana has also got different sheaths. *Sodhana kriya*, *sosana kriya*, *shamana kriya* and *sobhana kriya*. *Sodhana kriya* means searching in your practices, what is coming- what is not coming? How to remove the darkness in our own *sadhana* which egoistically veils the knowledge getting to flow in the limited frame of the soul which is the body. *Sodhana* is the search and is the beginning of the *sadhana*.

The second phase of *sosana* is filtering or re-studying and re-charging when you are doing your *sadhana*. Where has the *prana* or the energy and the *prajna* the intelligence faded from your attention in the *sadhana*?

Then comes *shamana* (*shamana* means quietness or tranquility) *kriya*. After using the physical power, the mental power and the intellectual power, one has to learn on how to quieten all these three as their vibrations veil the power of the *atman* from entering in. Unless and until *shaman kriya*, has been brought into the power of the body and the power of the

mind, the power of the *atman* cannot enter.

What happens when it does enter? *Sobhana kriya*. *Sobhana* is *subha*, auspiciousness. Thus, *shubha kriya* or auspiciousness enters in your *sadhana*. You have to practice such that *shubha*, auspiciousness in the power of the body, in the power of the mind, in your power of the intelligence, in the power of yourself has entered in your practices.

The next question is how do you get the *sarirabala*, the *manobala*, the *buddhibala* to come together to see, to feel, the fourth characteristic *bala* - the *atmabala*? Patanjali has explained this in various ways. In the first chapter, he speaks of *tasya vacakah pranavah*. *Tasya pranavah* becomes *japa*, *artha* and *bhavana*. If *japa* and *artha* are graced by a Guru then the *sadhaka* experiences the *bhava* - the *bhava* of the soul.

He explains this in the second chapter as *tapah svadhyaya Isvarapranidhana*. *Tapas* is to conquer the *sarirabala* and *manobala*, the power of the body and the mind. How to master it and how to sublimate it, is the character of the *tapa* which is nothing but *japa*. Because *tapa* is removed by *japa*, *tapa* is removed by *tapas*. *Tapa* means afflictions. Then comes *artha* in the form of *svadhyaya*, i.e. to develop *jnana* - the knowledge. That knowledge is acquired through *abhyasa* which is nothing but *tapas* which is nothing but *sadhana* which is nothing but *sadhana*.

Then you come to the meaning of *artha*. *Artha* is to understand how to restrain so that the *nama* - the *japa* moves without *citta vrtti avastha* where the *citta* (consciousness) is stable without any *vrttis*, any fluctuations. This state of consciousness inertly appears once in a while in your *sadhana* or in *japa* in *abhyasa*. *Svadhyaya* is brought up to understand the meaning of life, the meaning of your existence, the purpose of your life, the aim of your life. All this is *svadhyaya* which is nothing but the *jnana margam*.

When *nama* and *artha*, when *tapas* and *svadhyaya* are coordinated then *Mahesvara*, the Lord, is in your hands. You reach a state in your *sadhana* when each and every part, every sheath is nothing but the *atman*. You are touching the *atman* and nothing more. Thus, he explains the *sadhana kriya* in the form of *tapas*, *svadhyaya Isvarapranidhana* as *japa*, *artha* and *bhavana*.

Then, in the third chapter he moves to *dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi*. It may be difficult for you to understand *dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi* because it is known as the *antaranga sadhana*. When you are in *Tadasana* and when you go from

You have to practice such that shubha, auspiciousness in the power of the body, in the power of the mind, in your power of the intelligence, in the power of yourself has entered in your practices.

Tadasana to *Trikonasana*, the one that makes you, the perceiver, move to *Trikonasana* as an object, that means yourself, your soul transforms yourself into an object using the external vehicles of the soul like the body which is made of the *sapta dhatus*. That is known as *bahiranga sadhana*.

This *bahiranga sadhana* is then used to bring the body and the senses, the peripheral

body under control. Then work on the mind and intelligence begins. This is *antaranga sadhana*. Going beyond the intelligence and working directly from the intelligence of the self is *antaratma sadhana*.

It may be a little difficult subject for you to grasp but this is the foundation. This is the end of *sthira sukham asanam*. Do not translate this *sutra* as others have done so, "comfortable sitting is an *asana*".

What is *sthira sukham asanam*? When you are in the movement this *atman* becomes a *graatyan* - an object to catch, an object to perceive. These three words, *grhitra grahana grahya* have been explained in the first chapter. When you are in the movement then the very I becomes he, because it becomes an object. The moment you reach the pose, moving from *Tadasana* to *Trikonasana* through the *citi* - the *atman* becomes the object but it is the *atma sakti* which makes you to move, not the *atman*.

Where is the division between the *citi* - the *atman* and the power of the *atman*? You have to learn to differentiate that. This differentiation takes years of practise. It has taken me 70 years but who knows it may take you 7 months or 7 years because I am putting the seed into you. I had no seed. I had to find the seed from the seedless state. In your movements, you are not using the *citi* but you are using the *citi sakti*. You are using the power of the consciousness but not the power of the Self.

You commence your practices with body power and mind power but you have to go not only beyond these two but also the intellectual power to realize what is *grhitra grahana grahya*. When you are in the *asana* the *sarirabala*, the *manobala*, the *indriyabala* are quietened. You catch a glimpse of the soul in the *asana* because the soul exists everywhere if you are not using, or you have dissolved, the power of the body, the power of the mind and the power of the intelligence. When all these are dissolved, a certain power comes on its own. That is intuition which you grasp. That is *citi sakti*. You do not stay in the pose as a timer or for the sake of circulation but because the subject has turned into an object in the process of going into the pose.

You grasp it because that object becomes still. The *atmabala* fades after grasping it but you do not realise it. You have not even studied when *sarirabala* fades, when *manobala* fades or when *buddhibala* fades.

You might do and then you may relax in the pose giving a wrong meaning to *prayatna saithilya ananta samapattibhyam*. I have made that effort and now let me release that effort. You have not learnt anything by releasing that effort. Something sprouts from that part while releasing the power of the body, the power of the mind, the power of the intelligence and that is what you have to learn. So, after grasping the object into a subject - the *grahana*, *grahya* becomes *grahana* then from that *grahana* it is not *citi sakti* which is used but it is *citi* that helps you. It is a delicate process in one's *sadhana* which may take years or centuries to grasp.

That's why I said I will start with the last word of the last *sutra* of the last chapter.

Then when you come to *Tadasana* from *Trikonasana*, you don't use the *citi sakti* because you go advertently and come inadvertently. When you go advertently to the pose, you use power, when you come out from the pose, you come inadvertently, you use the *citi* but not the power. The transformation take place so soon that it does not even strike you that these *parinamas* (transformations) are taking place in the process of *shisti*, *stbithi* and *laya*. *Shisti* means going into the pose, *stbithi* means staying into the pose, *laya* means coming out of the

pose. So, then you learn what is *sthiram, sukham asanam*. Now I will connect this with *dharana, dhyana* and *samadhi*. When you go into the pose, you are in the state of *dharana* because the subject has become an object so you objectively try to grasp how to do *Trikonasana*. This is what the teacher explains - on how the leg should be, how the hip should be, how the waist should be. Putting all these various divisions into a single unit to perform the *asana* is the process of *dharana*. When the *grahya* - the soul which has become an object in the process of doing - stabilizes itself from motion (since there is no further generation of the pose because you have reached the finale of the pose). That advancement is internal, that which has become an object. That is what you try to grasp to remain stable in that *asana*. And, if you do not release the power of the body, the power of the mind and power of the intelligence then how can you be in an *ananta avastha*? *Prayatna saithilya ananta samapattibhyam*. To experience the *ananta* which has no end.

Soul is eternal, it has no end. How do you reach it? Not by making an effort and relaxing the effort but by relaxing the power of the body, the mind and the intelligence. When they are sublimated, a new strength in the form of *atmabala* sprouts. You have to catch that and make it stable to remain in that position as long as the object which transformed into the subject has reached the state that is also sometimes the subject. When the object says that I want to stay then that is nothing but the same soul. That is why the English terminology of

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Fees:

\$325.00 + GST IYCV members - shared accommodation in the house

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Registration opens: March 17, 2006 for IYCV members

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

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$50 cancellation fee.

seeker and the seer. The seeker is also the same, the seer is also the same. The seen is also the same. There are no differences. In order to experience the *ananta avastha* - the eternal state in that position is *sthira sukham asanam*.

Thus, going into the pose is *dharana*, staying in the pose is *dhyana* and releasing from the pose is a state of *samadhi*. That means *vyutthana citta* in the art of going, *Nirodha citta* in the art of staying and restraining all the other powers (of the body, mind and intellect) and maintaining only the eternal power. You come up with *prasanta citta*. Your brain becomes empty when you come up. When you go into the pose the brain acts, when you come up the brain is passive. Have you studied all those things? Then you understand what an *asana* can give you.

These three aspects of movement are known as *dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi*. *Dharana* is not separate, *dhyana* is not separate and *samadhi* is not separate. Patanjali has said that they are not separate but they show a division in the process - like an object, instrument of object, instrument of subject and subject. *Grhitra grahana grahya*.

He then proceeds in the third chapter. *Bhutendriyas* have their own *dharma laksana avastha parinama*. *Dharma laksana avastha*. *Asana* is your *dharma* as you have come here to learn, so what you do becomes your *dharma*. Then the teacher guides you with various attribution of that *asana* so that you become and grasp something from that *dharma* of that *asana*. Each *asana* has its own *dharma*. Each movement has its own *dharma*. So, attribution from the Guru is a necessity. There are degrees of qualifications in each *asana*. Even in *Tadasana* there is lot of qualification. What you do as *Tadasana* is not *Tadasana*. There are divergent parts in your body though you are standing in *Tadasana*. There is no total *ekagrata*. There is no awareness. Patanjali also explains to us about *santa* and *udita* - rising thoughts and quietening thoughts. When there are no rising thoughts and quietening thoughts then there is *ekagra citta* as there is no movement at all. But in your *Trikonasana*, sometimes you stretch your big toe, sometimes you stretch your sole, sometimes you press your heel, sometimes you be on your left leg, sometimes you are on the right leg, sometimes you forget your back, sometimes you forget your chest, is it not? If you think of the leg you forget about your lower trunk. If you turn your head you forget about your shoulder blades. That is why Patanjali explains why a Guru is needed to develop in you that *laksana parinama*, attributive qualities of each *asana*, each breath. When you experience that qualitative attribution then you come to a state of *avastha*.

Our *sarirabala*, *manobala*, *buddhibala* goes on changing but *atmabala* does not change. So, the yogi has to reach that *atmabala* which has no alterations at all and that *avastha* state where there is no oscillation, no vacillation and that state is *sthira sukham asanam*.

Having explained the effect of this *dharma laksana avastha*, Patanjali says you understand the past, the present and the future. Now, though I can explain to you in *asanas* you may not grasp because that motion which you follow, the range in *Trikonasana*, the range in *Parsvakonasana*, the ranges in *Ardha Chandrasana*, the ranges in *Virabhadrasana C* are not identical so it consumes time. Range consumes time, range consumes space. You may grasp this if you are doing it but now while sitting. So, I will now come to *pranayama* because you are all sitting.

Pranayama has got three aspects - *puraka-kumbhaka-rechaka-kumbhaka*. For the time being I will stick to *puraka rechaka kumbhaka* for you to understand. When you are doing *puraka*, inhalation, you only think about your lungs. Whether my lungs are filled when I take a deep breath, is it not? But the characteristic of *puraka* is that inhalation cannot be done without the power of *atma*. You cannot inhale by *citi* but only by *citi sakti*. See the subtle intricacies. When you are inhaling through the *sakti* of the *atman*, though you are in the *vartaman kala* - the present state, you are taken to the future in *puraka*. Your mind without any thought, your *buddhi* without any oscillation just follows time. As it follows time, you do the *kumbhaka*, you hold the breath. *Citi sakti* in inhalation acts as an object because *prana* inside and *prana* outside are the same. So macro energy enters in the system in the form of *puraka* and in *kumbhaka*, the macro and the micro get together, unite together, that is known as *jivatma paramatma samyoga*. Union of the individual with the universal. So cosmic force, macro force comes in contact with the micro force and they unite together in the art of *kumbhaka*.

What do you do? I do for 20 minutes as you have read this in books. But, what does the text say? The text only says experience the state of the present, the time of the present in the retentive state when the retention is done with *atmabala*, I am not speaking of *manobala* or *sarirabala* as they all come under timings. But, when you use the *atmabala* you feel the *prana sakti* - the universal force entering in, co-mingling with the individual. Both are held together in *kumbhaka*. So, as you hold in *kumbhaka*, there is no movement in the *atmabala* or the *sarirabala* or *buddhibala* or *manobala*. There is no movement. The moment there is movement, it means that you are in the future or the past. You have to study that. But, as long as the *kumbhaka* - the retention is stable. *Kala* (time) does not count. Time just runs like a straight line. The object and the subject are united at the time of *kumbhaka*. Macropower and micropower are united at that time and in the process of *rechaka* (exhalation) there is no *bhavisya kala*. It is *citi* and not *citi sakti* which releases the breath. Though you are in the present, it shows you what the future is. *Vartaman kala* is dormant - both in *puraka* and *rechaka*, *vartaman kala* is completely latent. But in *kumbhaka* it is potent. You have to study all these things. When you

are exhaling, you cannot go to the future but you are living in the past, observing the present in the form of breath. Breath flows in the present but the inner knowledge takes you to the *bhuta* without thinking of the past. So that is known as the *atita anagatam jnanam*. In *pranayama* you learn what is the past time, and what is the future time, what is the present time.

When you start *puraka*, it is *citi* which triggers. *Citi* triggers its power *citi sakti* to draw in the breath. When *citi sakti* fades in inhalation, inhalation comes to an end. This is the time for *kumbhaka*. When the differentiation starts between *citi* and *citi sakti* - that is time for exhalation. Intuition says start *rechaka*. *Rechaka* has no *sakti* but only *citi*. At the end of exhalation and beginning of inhalation is *citi*. There is no beginning or ending. If you can trace that then that is the position of the *citi - citi atma bhumi*. Each breath starts with the source and mingles with the source at the end. So life is a cycle. This means that *atman* is eternal. This is the meaning of eternity. This is the realisation of the self. Start at the source and again reach the source. Your exhalation is complete only when the *bala* of the exhalation *rechaka bala* reaches the source *citi*.

Your *sadhana* should be such. You should scratch and search. Probably something of what I have said may enter into your system. It may sprout someday but may surface much later for you to grasp it.

So macro energy enters in the system in the form of puraka and in kumbhaka, the macro and the micro get together, unite together, that is known as jivatma paramatma samyoga. Union of the individual with the universal. So cosmic force, macro force comes in contact with the micro force and they unite together in the art of kumbhaka.

On the *Gurupurnima* day, the Guru always gives some knowledge and I have thrown some knowledge on how to acquire the physical *bala*, the mental *bala* and intellectual *bala*. After acquiring it, how to control it and after controlling when to sublimate it. Not how to sublimate but when to sublimate. You have to differentiate that in order to sublimate, only *citi* is enough or *citi sakti* is needed? Then after sublimation, it is only *bala* that is needed or is *citi* needed? I am sure one day or

the other you are going to experience this so that the head and the heart will shine like a brilliant full moon. That is why *Gurupurnima* is considered as an important occasion for the students so that *apoorna* light, the limited light is made to expand by the attribution of the qualitative aspects of yoga for you to develop. Then, you reach the state of *sthirata*. That is *purnima* where your brain and heart do not wax or wane but they remain burning with the lamp of the soul not with the flame of the *buddhi* or *manobaja* or *sarirabala*. Let the heart and the head both shine uniformly like the full moon on the *purnima* day. Hope you experience this one day.

Training of mind and body leads to awareness of the soul. ॐ
Guruji B.K.S Iyengar

Scheduled Practice Space for IVYC Members

Sundays 12:30 - 3:00 pm & Mondays 6:30 - 8:00 am

Schedule is subject to change, please call 386-YOGA (9642) to check the schedule.

Please note:

- The supervising teacher is not there to teach or lead a practice.
- Bring your own practice sequence or find a sequence in one of the available books.
- The door may be locked, just knock loudly.

Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada

ASSESSMENT DATES

June 16-19, 2006, Calgary Introductory Level I/II

June 16-19, 2006, Saskatoo Introductory Level I/II

October 13-15, 2006, Toronto Sr. Intermediate I

November 17-19, 2006, Victoria Jr. Intermediate II

Glossary

abhyasa – Practise, repetition

ananta – Infinite, eternal, boundless, inexhaustible

antaranga – Internal, interior part

antaratma – Universal Self

anusasanam – Instructions, directions, code of conduct, advice, order, command, introduction or guidelines given in procedural form

atma, atman – The individual, individual spirit

artha – Means of livelihood, purpose, means, the second of the four aims of life

avastha – A condition, state

bahiranga – External part, external limb

bala – Moral and physical strength

bhavana – Feeling, understanding, reflection

bhuta – Living beings

bhutendriyesu – The elements, body and sense organs

budhhi – Intelligence

citi – The self, the seer

dharana – Concentration, attention, focusing, sixth of the eight aspects of *astanga yoga*

dharma – First of the four aims of life, science of duty, religious duty, virtue

dhatu – Constituent element or an essential ingredient of the body

dhyana – Meditation, reflection, observation, contemplation, seventh of the eight aspects of *astanga yoga*

ekagrata – One-pointed attention on the indivisible self

grahana – Act of seizing, catching, accepting, grasping, instrument of cognition

grhitr – One disposed to seize or take, the perceiver

graatyan – An object to catch, perceive

indriya – Senses of perception, organs of action, mind

japa – A repetitive prayer

jivatma – The living or individual soul

enshrined in the human body, the vital principle, that principle of life which renders the body capable of motion and sensation

jnana – Knowledge

kumbhaka – Retention of breath

kala – Time, period of time

kriya – Action, an expiatory rite, a cleaning process

laksana – Character, quality, distinctive mark

laksana parinama – Transformation towards qualitative change

laya – Dissolution, rest, repose, coming out of the pose

Mahesvara – The Lord

mano – Mind

marga – Path

nirodha citta – Restraining consciousness

parinamas – Transformations

prajna – Awareness

prana – Life force, vital energy, breath

pranayama – Expansion of the vital energy or life force through restraint of the breath. Fourth of the eight aspects of *astanga yoga*

prasanta citta – Tranquil consciousness

prayatna – Persevering effort, great exertion

prayatna saithilya ananta samapattibhyam

puraka – Inhalation

rechaka – Exhalation, emptying of the lungs

sadhaka – Aspirant, a practitioner

sadhana – Practice

sakti – Power, capacity, faculty, representing the power of consciousness to act

samadhi – Putting together, profound meditation, eighth and final aspect of *astanga yoga*

santa – Appeased, calmed, pacified, quietened

sapta – Seven

sarira – Body

Shamana – Quietness or tranquility

shamana kriya – Finding quietness and tranquility in your practices

shisti – Going into the pose

shubha, sobhana – Auspiciousness

sodhana – Searching, purification, cleansing

sosana – Filtering or re-studying and re-charging

sthira – Firm

sthira sukham asanam – Sutra II.46

sthirata – Firmness, steadiness, stability, fortitude, constancy, fixity

sthiti – Stability, staying in the pose

sukham – Happiness, delight

svadhyaya – Study of the Self, study of the spiritual scriptures

Isvara pranidhana – Surrender of oneself to God

tapa – Pain, sorrow, heat

tapas – Austerity, penance, spiritual practice, devoted discipline, religious fervour

udita – Ascended, manifested, generation, rising

vairagya – Renunciation, detachment, dispassion

vartaman – The present

viveka-khyati – Discriminative intelligence, crown of wisdom

vrtti – Waves, movements, changes, functions, operations, conditions of action for conduct in consciousness

vyutthana – Emergence of thoughts, rising thoughts, outgoing mind

Reference:

B.K.S. Iyengar's *Light on Yoga*, *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, and *Light on Pranayama*

Major conference here!

IVCY hosts Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada Conference

Leslie Hogya



The Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria is playing host to the yearly Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada conference. Iyengar teachers and students from St. John's Newfoundland, Fredericton, Halifax, Charlottetown, Montreal, Quebec City, Toronto, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Calgary,

Edmonton, Vancouver, BC Island communities, and of course Victoria will attend.

Stephanie Quirk is the guest teacher for the conference. Stephanie has been at the Iyengar Institute in Pune for many years, practicing and learning directly from the source of the teachings. She will be teaching classes at the Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada conference May 25-27 at the University of Victoria. The conference will be concluded on Sunday morning, May 28, with the annual general meeting of the association.

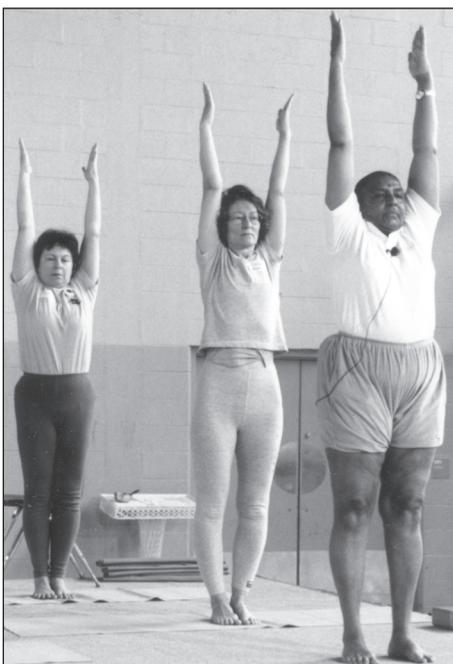
(Note: As all the Victoria teachers will be attending the conference, the Centre will be closed May 22-28.)

This organization began because of the inspiration of Sri B.K.S. Iyengar. In

1987, he met informally with the teachers from Canada while he was attending an Iyengar convention in Boston. He encouraged the Canadian teachers to work and learn together. Since then, Canadian teachers have faced a difficult task each year: to have a relatively small group of people plan and meet across such a vast country as Canada, crossing six time zones!

In 1990 Guruji returned to North America and the group held its first national convention in Edmonton. A structure was beginning to take place and regional representatives were formed to help pass on information in the pre-email era.

Guruji came to Canada again in 1993, this time to Toronto. He watched several classes and then decided to take charge, teaching everyone in a large dining hall. At this convention he declared that Canada had to join the rest of the world and start the process of certifying teachers. Marlene Mawhinney took on the task of creating this structure; the group hammered out the form



Above: Looking at bergy bits on the East Coast trail, Newfoundland, after the 2002 CIYTA conference (Charlotte Smith AB, Beverly Winsor NF, Marlene Mawhinney ON, Marie-Andree Morin QC, Jane Robinson NF)

Left: Dr. Geeta S. Iyengar teaching at 2001 AGM, Vancouver, BC.

During those years, it was almost easier for the group to meet in Pune when there were intensives than it was to meet in Canada!

of this process in the mid-1990s at Salt Spring Centre, (the last time the Victoria group played host to a meeting).

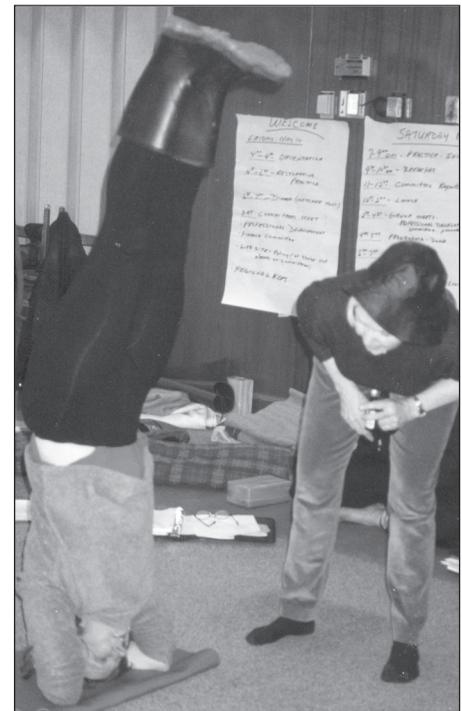
During those years, it was almost easier for the group to meet in Pune when there were intensives than it was to meet in Canada! In fact the next Canadian intensive was held in Pune in 1997; during that intensive Guruji awarded the first eleven certificates to some of the senior teachers in Canada to launch the certification process.

Yet there was still the task of becoming a formal association. Donna Fornelli, who has been the President, helped navigate the legal challenge to form the organization called the Canadian Iyengar Yoga Teacher's Association (CIYTA) with a constitution and by-laws. Recently Guruji wanted to

standardize all associations around the world and for all of these many groups to be called "Iyengar Yoga Association of [name]" and to include students in this association. Consequently the association has a new name: The Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada (IYAC).

Meetings are held annually across the country and attendance is usually about 30-40 teachers. The exception is when one of the Iyengars is present; the last big convention was when Geeta Iyengar came to Canada for the first time in 2001 for the yearly CIYTA meeting and she taught 350 students at once in the gym at UBC!

Now the group is poised to gather again; 120 people will congregate at the University of Victoria for this special event. ॐ



Leslie Hoyga (BC) being screeched-in at the 2002 AGM, Saint John's Newfoundland.



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 28 - September 1, 2006, 9:00 am-12:00 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 IVYC members
\$260.00 + GST for non-members

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

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$50 cancellation fee.

Take a Walk in the footsteps of *Patanjali*

**B.K.S Iyengar
Yoga Retreat**

August 20-25, 2006

With Shirley Daventry French
and Leslie Hogya



Let Shirley & Leslie be your guides at this spiritual retreat centre on beautiful Salt Spring Island off Canada's west coast.

Immerse yourself in daily *Pranayama* & *Asana* practice. Be involved in lively discussion through group participation into the ancient teachings of the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali.

SHIRLEY DAVENTRY FRENCH is a senior student of B.K.S. Iyengar. She has studied at the Ramamani Memorial Institute in Puna many times, most recently in October 2005. She is the founder of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria, B.C.

LESLIE HOGYA has been studying Iyengar Yoga since 1972. She has travelled to India six times. She most recently studied with B.K.S. Iyengar in Colorado in September, 2005. She holds a Junior Intermediate III level of certification and is part of the assessors team for Canada.

FEES:

- \$994.00 + GST IYCV members**
– shared accommodation
- \$1050.00 + GST non-members**
– shared accommodation
- \$894.00 + GST IYCV members**
– camping – must supply own equipment
- \$950.00 + GST non-members**
– camping – must supply own equipment

A \$200 deposit required to hold your space and the full payment is due June 1, 2006.

To register, drop in to or phone the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202-919 Fort Street,
Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)
www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

After June 1 the \$200.00 deposit is non-refundable.

SUMMER SADHANA

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

This summer we offer a 5 day Sadhana with Robin Cantor.

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

**June 26 – 30, 2006
6:30 – 8:00 am**

Fees: \$75.00 + GST IYCV members
\$82.50 + GST non-members

To register, drop in to or phone the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria.

202-919 Fort Street
Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)
www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10.00 cancellation fee.

Short WORKSHOP

**Sun Salutation
Workshop**

With Ty Chandler

**Saturday June 17, 2006
1:00 – 3:00 pm**

Fees:
\$30.00 + GST IYCV members,
\$35.00 + GST non-members

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

Journey to the Core of Being: Reflections on a Map of Involution

Corrine Lowen

The core of being is an unknown universe—as unknown to the ordinary person as the planets and the stars. We can see and accept the existence of the planets and stars; however unless we devote ourselves to study of them, we may know nothing of the intricate patterns of interrelationships in the organization and operation of the universe beyond ourselves. Likewise, our ignorance of the universe beyond extends to our ignorance of the universe that exists within the bodies in which we live. We accept our existence in the body as we breathe, sleep and eat and as the body demands those things of us. However, unless we study our own unique patterns of existence within the microcosm of the body, we will go though life never really knowing what lies within this skin, between these muscles and around these bones.

Yoga approaches the body as the first tool of self discovery, a tool of understanding which brings our consciousness beyond the physical tissue to glimpse and eventually to know the universe within. According to the ancient practice of yoga, we will know

freedom when we come to know the self. In yoga, coming to the core of self is a process of involution and integration, an inward journey that begins on the periphery. Through *asana* we learn to understand our bodies. As understanding develops in the body, the capacity of the breath naturally begins to expand. We begin to feel energized. When breath and body are energized, the capacity of the mind is sharpened. Within a sharp mind the intellect has room to develop and expand into the tissues of the body. As we gain knowledge through the use of our physical capacity and the awareness of our senses we begin to understand and to develop true wisdom.

Through the development and integration of the layers of body, breath, mind and intelligence, consciousness and conscience begin to vibrate in tune with all of the aspects of the self. Then, when integration comes, we gain the potential to access to the core of our being – deep in, past the layers of muscles and bones and breath, deeper than the mind or thinking or even knowing – we reach the core where the essence of the self resides. It is a place where we are nothing and

everything at the same time. This state of integration brings us toward an understanding of the light that lives within us, the true essence of core strength. How can we come to this core, so deep within the self that the senses alone cannot discern it? In his new book *Light on Life*, BKS Iyengar provides readers with a roadmap for this journey to the core of the self.

Light on Life explores yoga philosophy through a framework. There are a number of frameworks in yoga which we may use to help to understand ourselves and our relationship with the world. These include the eight limbs of yoga, the three qualities of nature, the five types of action and the concepts of the internal and the external quest. All are ways of looking at and understanding this systematic path of learning we call yoga. As we come to understand the path on which we are walking, we grow in our understanding of self and of the world in which the self resides. No matter which of these frameworks are taken as the starting point, all will come into play at some point in any in-depth examination of the subject of yoga. In *Light on Life* the framework is the *kosas*, or five sheaths of the body: physical, energetic, mental, intellectual, and blissful.

In *Light on Life*, BKS Iyengar states that “from the yogi’s standpoint, practice and philosophy are inseparable” (p. 108). The journey toward peace and wholeness is a conscious resistance to the outward pull of the joys and despairs of the sensory world. Mr. Iyengar describes yoga as an inward journey, which begins with the periphery and works toward the core. We begin with the body and then

We accept our existence in the body as we breathe, sleep and eat and as the body demands those things of us. However, unless we study our own unique patterns of existence within the microcosm of the body, we will go though life never really knowing what lies within this skin, between these muscles and around these bones.

come to involve the mind.

Through this process we learn to access our intelligence, and ultimately come to touch the soul. Mr. Iyengar's map follows the five *kosas*, or sheaths of the body, as they are called in yoga. Each sheath corresponds to an aspect of the body and to a quality of life

on which our good health depends. The following table shows the five *kosas*, their relationship to the body and the qualities they represent.

B.K.S. Iyengar lights our path forward, unveiling new ways of thinking about how one can approach this journey. He also lights the way back, to the ancient wisdom on which the foundation of his own development is built, the yoga sutras of Patanjali. In the reading of *Light on Life* I find myself at key points returning to the primary text, Iyengar's *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*. For example, in Chapter Two of *Light on Life*, Mr. Iyengar mentions Patanjali's Sutra II: 46. This leads me to re-read the whole section from Sutra II: 46 through Sutra II: 55 on *asana*, *pranayama*, and *pratyahara*. My return to the sutras is fully enriched by the commentary in *Light on Life* which

KOSA	BODY	QUALITY
Anamaya	Anatomical	Stability
Pranamaya	Energetic	Vitality
Manomaya	Mental	Clarity
Vijnanamaya	Intellectual	Wisdom
Anandamaya	Blissful	Divine

Diagram 1

The intelligence of the head experiences goodwill. The intelligence of the heart experiences delight. Performance of asana causes the intelligence to penetrate toward the core of being. As this penetration is refined, the asana becomes meditative.

provides new depth to the multi-layered quest for knowledge.

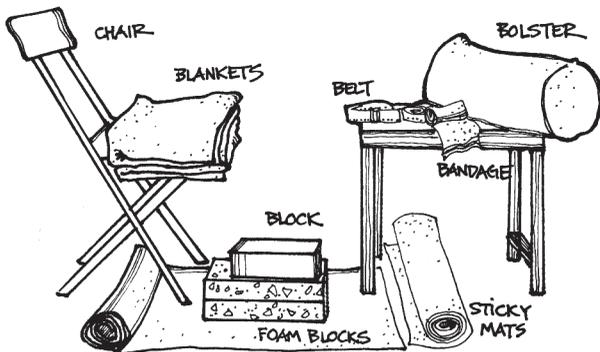
Mr. Iyengar translates Sutra II: 46- Sthira Sukham Asanam: *Asana* is perfect firmness of body, steadiness of intelligence and benevolence of spirit. (LYSP, 1993, p. 149) *Asana* is cultivated by cooperation between the fibers,

cells, joints and muscles – and the mind. The practice of *asana* clears the nervous system and helps the body's energy to flow without obstruction. Patanjali says that the performance of *asana* should be nourishing and illuminative with a body that is firm, steady and enduring. The intelligence of the head experiences goodwill. The intelligence of the heart experiences delight. Performance of *asana* causes the intelligence to penetrate toward the core of being. As this penetration is refined, the *asana* becomes meditative. (LYSP, 1993, pp. 149-150) (see diagram 1).

In *Light on Life*, Iyengar reminds us that action is movement with intelligence. I return to *The Tree of Yoga* and reflect upon what Mr. Iyengar describes as the stages of working in *asana* (see TOY p. 47). Here he describes how first we begin with direct physical action. This is

Yoga props for sale

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



Blankets	\$25.00
Block Foam (Chip)	\$6.00
Block Wood – handmade in Victoria	\$25.00
Bolster – handmade in Victoria	\$55.00
Eye Bags – handmade in Victoria	
- All proceeds to the Stephen Lewis Foundation	\$13.00
Sandbag – handmade in Victoria	\$20.00
Sticky Mat (German – Blue, Green and Purple)	\$30.00
Sticky Mat (Half Moon Studio)	\$22.00
Sticky Mat (Second Hand – please check for availability)	\$10.48
Straps (Regular)	\$6.00
Straps (Long)	\$10.00
Thai Mat Bags	\$27.00

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

LIGHT ON LIFE: KOSA	TREE OF YOGA: STAGES OF ASANA	LIGHT ON THE YOGA SUTRAS OF PATANJALI
Anamaya Kosa Anatomical Body Stability	Direct Physical Action Work on the peripheral body.	Conative Action Exertion of the organs of action.
Pranamaya Kosa Energetic Body Vitality	Cognitive Action Organs of action feel what is happening in the flesh.	Cognitive Action Perceptions of the results of conative action.
Manomaya Kosa Mental Body Clarity	Communication or Communion Bridge of the mind brings the intellect to the fibres, tissues and cells.	Mental Action Conative and cognitive action fuse. The mind becomes discriminative and guides conative and cognitive action to perform the <i>asanas</i> more effectively.
Vijnanamaya Kosa Intellectual Body Wisdom	Reflective Action The discriminative mind observes and analyses the feeling inside and outside the body.	Intellectual Action Rhythmic flow of energy and awareness is experienced evenly and without interruption throughout the channels of the body.
Anandamaya Kosa Blissful Body Divine	Total Awareness Spiritual practice begins.	Spiritual Action A pure state of joy is felt in the cells and the mind. Body, mind and soul are one.

Diagram 2

work on the peripheral body. From there we proceed to cognitive action where the organs of perception begin to feel what is happening in the flesh. Then, reflective action begins to involve the mind. The organs of action draw the mind toward the organs of perception. Here the mind acts as a bridge and brings the intellect to the fibres, tissues and cells. The mind sees with attention and remembers the feeling of the action. This brings us to a state of total awareness where physical, cognitive, and reflective action join together without interruption. Total awareness extends from self to the skin and from the skin to the self.

Diagram 2 outlines the relationship between the stages of *asana* and the *kosas* as described in *Light on Life*, *Tree of Yoga* and *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*.

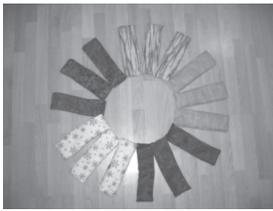
In the stages of *asana* description in *Tree of Yoga*, we can also see *asana* as a way of working through the *kosas*. Here

the first stage of *asana* is describes as physical action, work at the level of the *Anamaya Kosa* or anatomical sheath. In *Light on Life*, Iyengar described this sheath as stability. *Tree of Yoga* goes on to describe the second stage of working in *asana* as the moment when the organs of action feel what is happening in the flesh. In the third stage, the organs of action draw the mind toward the organs of perception. Through mental action we approach the clarity inherent in *Manomaya kosa* (the mental sheath). Then, as the mind begins to bridge the conduits of awareness between the fibres and the cells reflective actions brings us to approach *Vijnanamaya kosa*, the intellectual sheath where wisdom develops, and awareness is distributed evenly throughout the body. In the final stage of the performance of *asana*, total awareness, the action of all of the sheaths come together to the state of unity inherent in the *Anandamaya kosa* or the

blissful sheath where the divine is realized in a pure state of joy where body, mind and soul are one. Mr. Iyengar describes this as spiritual practice in yoga. Through this practice we begin our involution, an exploration of the universe within, and our journey to the core of being. ॐ

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Iyengar, B.K.S. (1993). *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*. London: Thorsons
Iyengar, B.K.S. (1988). *The Tree of Yoga*. Boston: Shambala



Don't close your eyes to Africa

Karyn Woodland



Have you seen the sumptuous silk eye pillows on display at the front desk? These lovely lavender-scented *Savasana* props will not only help you with *Pratyahara*, they are also helping victims of AIDS in Africa.

"Close your eyes for *Savasana*, but don't close your eyes to Africa" says Tea Scriven, a Metchosin yogini and maker of the eye pillows.

Tea has decided that all proceeds from the sale of her eye pillows will go to the *Stephen Lewis Foundation* supporting those suffering from AIDS in Africa. To date, through this innovative project, she has raised more than \$800 for the Foundation. *Now that's Karma Yoga.* ॐ

Coming
November 3-5, 2006

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 2006 issue.

Thank you!



Leslie Hogya for giving four and a half years of dedication, hard work and compassion as the general manager of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria. We all love her! She is a human North Star who had guided this centre with a unique brilliance that shines from her every cell and Soul. We wish her the best as she moves to other endeavours.

Charles Campell for all the beautiful art work he has done for the centre and for the useable copies of the sutra CDs.

Jennifer Erickson for donating a CD player to the centre.

New and former board members for helping us steer the course; many hours of work done by many people.

Silvia Viches, our President, who found herself with many more tasks than bargained for in 2005. She over saw: moving out of Cedar, changing our name, hiring a new manager and bookkeeper and dealing with banking and insurance issues. Plus chairing meetings and having many, many, many phone and email conversations!!! A very big and special thank you to Silvia.

Britta Poisson, Hilary McPhail, Monica Dimofski, Karin Holtkamp and Bruce Cox, our incredible staff! They had many demands placed upon them during various recent transitions.

Some people do things in such a quiet way, they are not thanked!

Chris Lea has been such a person. Our Patanjali statue in the Arbutus studio, the back bend bench, some of the photos of Mr. Iyengar, and other props appeared without fanfare thanks to Chris.

Ty Chandler who stays every Sunday so our members practice space is open and available.

Jim Riddel for making our new key holders!

Bruce and Nathan Cox for carting boxes to and from the storage locker.

To all the other people who help in large and small ways make our centre what it is: a place with heart.

The Bellur Trust

The following is a letter written on Guruji's behalf to help raise awareness and pledges to aid in Mr. Iyengar's project of helping the people in the village where he was born, Bellur, India. You may donate by filling out the inserted pledge form and follow the instructions at the end of the letter. For more information see the international Iyengar website at <http://www.bksiyengar.com>

Dear All,

This is a message on behalf of the Bellur Trust. As I am sure you are all aware the trust is making huge leaps towards realizing its aims, more recently the high school began with an overwhelming turn up from the village children, the trust is paying the fees of the tutors as well as the school uniforms and the midday meal. This is on top of the purchase of 16 acres, the extension to the existing primary school, the erection of the water tank, and on Guruji's personal initiative the construction of the temple complex which means that many of the village idols are now placed in their respective shrines. This is a great boon for the village life, and as it includes the world's first Patanjali shrine a great boon for all of us too – the villagers are saying that the fact that the

water tanks (dams) are all full (for the first time in seven years) is a sign that the gods are happy with what is happening for them.

The high school has been built and is now running; due to the heavy rains there will be a complete paint job done during the months of April/May. At the moment, under construction is the day hospital/clinic which will care for the surrounding area as well as the village of Bellur.

In the future the trust plans to construct a technical college, with vocational training schemes appropriate to the local area, and attached to the hospital a school of nursing.

So far the funding of these trust projects has come from primarily B.K.S. Iyengar (he has put in over 4 crore of his own money (about 40,000,000 rupees); other substantial contributors include of course Geetaji and Prashantji, and of course the generous donations from many foreign students, schools and associations, many doing special fund raising events for this cause.

Guruji is planning to submit another request to receive foreign contribution to the Indian Government in early April. For this he is seeking the pledge to donate

from all who wish to join in this cause.

Can all associations put out the word, via magazines and newsletters for their next submission?

We need to receive the signed donation forms here in Pune: Send by fax (+91 20 25656134), or by post (c/o BKS Iyengar, RIMYI, 1107-B/1 Harikrishna Mandir path, Shivajinagar, Pune 411016 India), or if electronically signed, by email to stephaniequirk@hotmail.com.

THE FORMS are downloadable via www.bksiyengar.com. Follow the links to Bellur and the Donation Form - fill it out and send via one of the methods above.

DO NOT SEND ANY MONEY!!!

This is important, as we only have to send any monies back.

Until the government approves the submission we cannot receive the money. The Trust is under constant scrutiny and can't be seen to be accepting any foreign money not already approved for.

PLEASE SEND ONLY THE FORM FOR NOW.

*Regards, Stephanie Quirk
for B.K.S. Iyengar*

scholarships & bursaries

**Members' 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, B.C. V8K 3K
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)

Treat yourself to one of our retreats!

by Leslie Hogya

Escape to the peaceful, nurturing atmosphere of one of Canada's beautiful Gulf islands for a weekend in June or a week in August.

The Footsteps of Patanjali, a five day retreat in August with Shirley Daventry French and Leslie Hogya will be an opportunity to delve into yoga philosophy. Yoga philosophy is a living and practical art – learning to stand tall in the mountain pose is all part of bringing yoga into everyday life.

Patanjali codified the yoga *sutras* 2000 years ago. By looking at various translations of these works the participants will have the opportunity to explore how these sutras are relevant to their own lives. Sri B.K.S. Iyengar's translation of this ancient work is *The*

Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. Verse 33 give us words to live by today and everyday, "through cultivation of friendliness, compassion, joy, and indifference to pleasure and pain, virtue and vice, respectively, the consciousness becomes favorably disposed, serene and benevolent." He elaborates with the following commentary: "this *sutra* asks us to rejoice with the happy, to be compassionate to the sorrowful, friendly to the virtuous, and indifferent to those who continue to live in vice.... This mental adjustment builds social as well as individual health."

Come and retreat with us. There will be daily *pranayama* and *asana* classes at both retreats. Enjoy the hospitality of the community and their wonderful cooks. Most food served at the retreat is

grown in their large organic garden. The shorter weekend retreat in June is nearly full at the time of publishing, call (250) 386-9642 for information on both retreats. (See the ads in this issue for more information on dates, prices, etc.) ॐ



Photo: Shirley Daventry French

Linda Shevloff, former editor of the newsletter who taught at the centre for many years, before moving to Southeast Asia where she directs the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Hong Kong.



Yoga Centre members chanting at Satsang, including founding member Donna Fornelli (l), now a resident of Ottawa and serving as President of the Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada

ANNOUNCEMENT

Do you have a credit with us?

Please use it next time you register!

OR

donate your credit to our class bursary fund!

THE IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA PRESENTS

Workshop

with Stephanie Quirk

This is a fabulous opportunity to study with someone who has a wealth of direct experience studying with the Iyengar family. This is a general workshop designed for students.

Sunday, May 21, 2006, 12:00 – 3:00 pm

Monday, May 22, 2006 (Victoria Day), 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

The workshop is FULL.

To add your name to the waitlist, drop in or phone:

Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria, 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)

www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10.00 cancellation fee.

Summer Sizzler

For maximum flexibility and versatility this summer, purchase one of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria'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.

IYc Summer Sizzler Pass

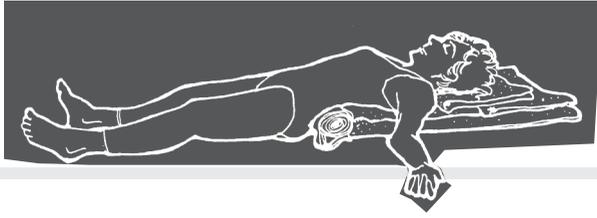
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or
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or
mix it up!



IYENGAR
yoga centre
calendar

MAY 2006

- 21-22 Workshop with Stephanie Quirk
- 22-28 No classes at ICYV
- 25-28 Iyengar Yoga Association of Canada Conference and AGM at the University of Victoria (Guest teacher Stephanie Quirk)

JUNE 2006

- 2-4 Saltspring Retreat with Shirley Daventry French
- 10 Teachers' Meeting
- 17 Sun Salutations Workshop with Ty Chandler
- 16-19 Introductory Level I/II Assessment in Calgary, AB
- 16-19 Introductory Level I/II Assessment in Saskatoon, SK
- 26-30 Sadhana with Robin Cantor

JULY 2006

- 1-3 No classes at IYCV
- 10-15 Teacher Training Intensive - Introductory Levels with Leslie Hogya & Ann Kilbertus

AUGUST 2006

- 5-7 No classes at IYCV
- 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
- 23 Teachers' Meeting
- 28-Sept 1 Student Intensive with Lauren Cox & Ty Chandler

SEPTEMBER 2006

- 23 Teachers' Meeting
- 29 Sutra Workshop with Shirley Daventry French
- 30-Oct 1 Going Deeper with Shirley Daventry French

OCTOBER 2006

- 13-15 Senior Intermediate I Assessment in Toronto, ON
- 28-29 Workshop celebrating Shirley Daventry French's 75th birthday
- 28 Teachers' Meeting

NOVEMBER 2006

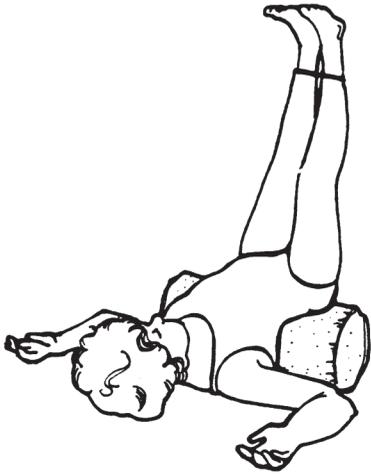
- 3-5 Chris Saudek Workshop
- 17-19 Junior Intermediate II Assessment in Victoria, BC
- 18 Teachers' Meeting

DECEMBER 2006

- 10 In the Light of Yoga workshop - Mr. Iyengar's birthday celebration
- 18-23 Sadhana with Corrine Lowen
- 21-22 Winter Solstice Workshop with Ty Chandler

JANUARY 2007

- 19-21 Heart of Yoga with Shirley Daventry French



time to **Renew!**

This is a reminder that the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria membership expired 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.

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IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE of VICTORIA

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2006 NEWSLETTER

Freedom for ALL

Relaxxxxxx why don't ya... Your not so special

Listen the Lord

Ask yourself "do you really need that new pair of shoes?"
A new pair of shoes?... sure why not.. learn to discriminate

How ever wondered what it might be like to become
invisible?.....at will

Presenting Patanjali

Inner Space Exploration...sign up today!

Who are you? Do ya wanna find out?

Acquire effective new communication skills

Walking on water? where have we heard that before?
Hey did you know that in fact, world peace begins within you!

The man who looks like a snake

This ain't no snake oil!!!

Get Real

say hello to the new you every moment of your life

Walking on water? where have we heard that before?

how do you get to enlightenment? practice practice practice

Ancient Indian Wisdom

Get over yourself

Tried + True

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not in this lifetime?...ok, well how about the next one?

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*Scheduled
Practice Space
for
IYCV Members*

**Sundays 12:30 - 3:00 pm
& Mondays 6:30 - 8:00 am**

Schedule is subject to change,
please
call 386-YOGA (9642)
to check the schedule.

Please note:

- The supervising teacher is not there to teach or lead a practice.
- Bring your own practice sequence or find a sequence in one of the available books.
- The door may be locked; just knock loudly.

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 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, September 29, 2006

Fee: \$35 + GST for IYCV members, \$40 + GST for non-members

To register, drop in or phone the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria,
202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K

(250) 386-YOGA (9642)

www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

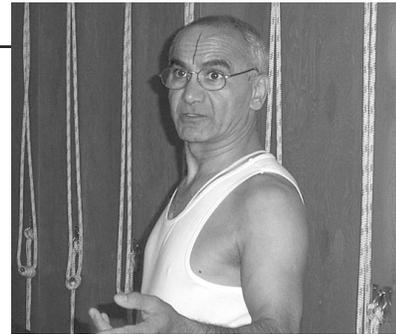
Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10.00 cancellation fee.

Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria 5th Birthday at 919 Fort Street

Happy Birthday
The Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
has been offering classes at 919 Fort Street
for 5 years!!!

Thank you to all our members, volunteers, staff,
teachers and board members for all your hard work
these past 5 years.

All of you have helped us grow!



Faeq Biria's Coming!!!!!! May 4-7, 2007

See the next issue for more information

See interviews with Faeq in past issues of the
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria newsletter
Part 1, July / August 2004
Part 2, September / October 2004

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IYENGAR YOGA
CENTRE OF VICTORIA

NEWSLETTER

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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 Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar.

The Newsletter, published regularly by the IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA SOCIETY, provides current information on events concerning Iyengar yoga in the Victoria area.

Send contributions, articles, photographs, 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 (250) 386-YOGA (9642) or visit our website: www.iyengaryogacentre.ca.

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

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Cover: Karin Dayton's practical interpretation of Patanjali's *yoga sutras*: "Thousands of Years of Satisfaction, Order Your Copy Today!"



Correction:

We apologize for the misspelling of Skjei Sharma's name in the Photography credits of our last issue. Skjei graciously donated her time and talents to photograph the 2006 CIYTA conference in Victoria, BC.

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 IYCV.
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:
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first published Feb 1992



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

Yoga lessons come in many forms. They are not restricted to the time we are in class or practising at home, but abound in the events of our daily life twenty four hours a day. Yes, even in our sleep and dreams.

The other day I had a yoga lesson of a different kind, and one which I prefer not to repeat, when I became a victim of that modern plague – rear-end motor vehicle accident. The conditions were ideal. It was pouring with rain, the pavement was slick with rivers of water streaming down the road, and visibility was very poor. As usual in Victoria, the traffic continued at its normal pace as if none of the aforementioned conditions existed.

I was travelling along the Trans-Canada highway in a line of traffic which came to a sudden halt. Fortunately, I had left enough space between myself and the car in front to stop with room to spare. Unfortunately, the driver of the heavy American car behind me had not! I was congratulating myself on the fact that I had good brakes, when my peace of mind was rudely shattered along with my car. The force of the impact propelled my Volvo into the car in front making it a three-car accident.

My car is ten years old, and recently I had been wondering if it was time to trade it in. My husband likes to keep reminding me that in Sweden, the average Volvo owner keeps his car for nineteen years. Why not? They are well built, solid, reliable cars, which handle well, run smoothly, and are very good in emergencies. Ten years ago, a

new Volvo (my first *new* car) was written off in a bad accident; the driver, my seventeen year old son, escaped with a fright and two small stitches in his scalp.

When dreaming of a new car, I had been thinking that perhaps next time I would get something a little more exciting than a Volvo. Maybe one of the streamlined new models with a spoiler on the back, low slung and fast. For many years I have driven “safe” cars. When I was single, I couldn't afford any sort of car, and in the first years of marriage we bought what we could afford, which wasn't much: second, third or fourth hand vehicles, small and light. Once we had children, we became concerned with safety and looked for a car with a proven safety record, and when our children turned sixteen and began to drive themselves, this became an even more important factor. Last year, we had an unusual amount of snow and considered getting a four-wheel drive vehicle. This year there has been none, so I had forgotten about that.

What really counts? Performance or safety? Style or substance? Is it possible to have both? How much energy should go into preparing for something which may never happen?

As the carnage on our roads testifies, any motor vehicle accident is potentially fatal. The other day, having satisfied myself that there was no threat to my life, I immediately became concerned about the threat to my way of life. Would I suffer from whiplash, a common injury in this type of accident? If so, or if there were any other serious injuries, what about my teaching? Battered, bruised and probably without a car, how would I teach my I classes tomorrow? What about the workshops that I was scheduled to teach next month? And what about my practice, which had been going so well recently? Would it have to be modified? Would I have

That, however, is not the nature of the Universe, which will make sure that from time to time you are brought face to face with the nature of your attachments and encouraged to let them go.

to practise therapeutically? For how long?

As I waited for the police to come, I sat in the car, trying to calm my scattered mind. I breathed slowly and deeply, and alternated between saying a mantra and doing the Divine Light Invocation (a practice learned from Swami Radha). I felt tearful and shaky, probably suffering from shock, but I could breathe easily so my ribs were not broken. I could move all my limbs, and the only real pain I felt was on my chest where the seatbelt had done its job well and restrained me from hitting either the steering wheel or the windscreen. One element of concern kept surfacing because I know, from some of the medical reports I have typed for Derek, that the pain from injuries such as whiplash does not always manifest immediately. However, in the present moment I was alright.

I have heard this sentiment many times from people who have suffered intense physical or psychological distress, that as long as they stay in the moment they are OK. It's only when the mind becomes caught up in "what if", that problems become unsurmountable.

I became aware of my attachment to a certain way of life: wanting to go on doing what I always do without interference. That, however, is not the nature of the Universe, which will make sure that from time to time you are brought face to face with the nature of your attachments and encouraged to let them go. If you ignore this warning, sooner or later you will be forced to let go.

This accident and its aftermath also involved other yogic practices of surrender and acceptance. Acceptance that the direction of my life on that day had changed its course, and would no longer unfold as planned. Surrender to the ambulance attendants who wished to examine me, and then take me to the hospital strapped to a board with a collar around my neck. I felt all of this was totally unnecessary, but they encouraged me to relax and let them do their job.

My body-mind is the vehicle in which my spirit travels from birth to death in this lifetime, and it is my responsibility (and no-one else's) to see that it is well cared for so that it can withstand the challenges that inevitably will come my way.

This process of surrender continued in the hospital, and having accepted it I began to enjoy and observe what was happening in an interested and slightly detached way. I was in very little pain, but I wondered if this was how someone who was severely injured would cope with their predicament. Probably, if they were already following some body-mind discipline such as yoga!

One of the reasons I came out of this accident relatively well was the type of car I was driving. Another was because I practise yoga. A spine and joints which have some flexibility are much more likely to survive such a trauma with minimal distress than those which are rigid. Muscles which are used to stretching and contracting regularly will stretch and contract in the impact of a collision much better than those which are chronically tight or loose. A person who is practising breathing exercises regularly will be more readily able to quieten the breath and calm the mind when dealing with a stressful event. Such an individual will be able to use all these tools to cope with both short and long term problems.

My car is the vehicle in which I travel to and from my work and play. Without it, I could not continue to live in my present home and would have to modify my life in many other areas. I choose my car carefully and maintain it well, so that on those occasions when it is called upon for optimum performance, it is ready. My body-mind is the vehicle in which my spirit travels from birth to death in this lifetime, and it is my

Acceptance that the direction of my life on that day had changed its course, and would no longer unfold as planned.

responsibility (and no-one else's) to see that it is well cared for so that it can withstand the challenges that inevitably will come my way. Yoga is the best life-time warranty that I know. If I practise regularly I will be in better shape to handle the vicissitudes of life. A wise investment will generate interest when

left undisturbed, but is there to cash in if necessary. The practice of yoga will generate reserves which can be called upon in times of need, and in both good times and bad will enrich your life immeasurably. ॐ

scholarships & bursaries

**Members' 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, B.C. V8K 3K3
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IYENGAR YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA
PRESENTS

The Heart of Yoga

**An Intermediate Workshop
with Shirley Daventry French**

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

Friday, January 19, 6:30 - 8:30 pm

Saturday, January 20, 11:00 am - 2:00 pm, 3:30 - 5:30 pm

Sunday, January 21, 12:00 noon - 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 4, 2006 for IYCV members,
December 11 for non-members

To register, drop in or phone Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202- 919 Fort Street Victoria, B.C. V8V 3K3
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January 19-21, 2007

SADHANA

CONCLUSION

Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar

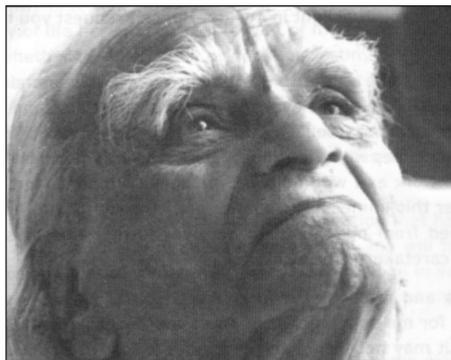
Guruji addressed an audience of 1600 people at the 10th Annual YOGA Journal Conference at Estes Park on September 29, 2005. This keynote address covered his yogic journey, from the peripheral body to the realization of the distinction between consciousness and the seer. This is the conclusion of the unedited transcript of this keynote address.

From here I moved towards self-education as the fifth step of the ladder of yogic knowledge and understanding.

We are made of five elements, namely, earth, water, fire, air and ether. To understand the function of the last two subtlest elements, I had to reintroduce the subtle form of practice for my intelligence to interweave in order to reach the remotest space in the body. For this, I had to go back to study and understand health in its wholesomeness which needed total attention and awareness,

This thought of attention and awareness drew me to different dimensions of health, namely, physical health, moral health, mental health, energy health, intellectual health, conscientious health and divine health. If all these various dimensions of health have to work in unison and concord, it needed holistic attention and awareness of intelligence and consciousness.

Actually health is nothing but awareness of life's force. As the river flows forward, life's energy too has only forward movements. As such the various facets of health follow the flow of life's energy. Health is like a live wire. If one touches the live wire, he gets a shock or burn. Similarly, the awareness of health has to prick the intelligence at once if some-



thing within the body gets disturbed. This disturbance in health means disturbance in intelligence and consciousness.

In order to bring this unison between intelligence and consciousness, I began to remodel the techniques of *asanas* and pranayama to feel the attention and awareness concurrently moving with motion, action, observation, reflection and absorption of each *asana* along with the breath to grasp the functioning of the consciousness and energy in this human body. This human body has five sheaths interwoven as anatomical sheath, physiological or organic sheath, mental sheath, intellectual sheath and the immeasurable space within – the space of cosmic bliss sheath.

Consciousness being the gateway to enter the core of the Being (the Capital SELF), I peeped into the states of consciousness.

Though consciousness is one, it has seven states of functioning. They are emerging consciousness, restraining consciousness, tranquil consciousness, indivisible attentive consciousness, *sattvic* "I" consciousness, slit consciousness and crystal pure consciousness.

Though Patanjali explains yoga as the restraint of consciousness, see how diffi-

cult it is to bring these various facets of consciousness under control. For me, consciousness is like a carry bag with different contents in different packets. It carries five fluctuations, five afflictions that may be physical, moral, mental, intellectual and spiritual. It also carries disturbing and distracting problems like disease, lack of interest, indecision, overlooking things, idleness, incontinence, illusive notions, disappointments, inability to pursue, aggravating further with distress, dejection, laboured breathing and tremors of the body. These disturbing factors may be in dormant, attenuating, alternating or fully active states.

So far I gave you thoughts on destructive contents. Let me take you to the other side of the consciousness, which carries components to uplift the practitioner from nescience or want of knowledge towards the crown of knowledge and wisdom to experience the eternal cosmic bliss. These constructive suggestions are to remain quiet after exhalation, contemplation on a luminous effulgent light, to live either in dreamy, sleepy or wakeful states or on a thing conducive to the heart.

Defining the bad parts and good parts of the consciousness, I had to go back to my earlier thoughts regarding the intellect of the head and intelligence of the heart. I had to communicate the facets of the various compartments of the head and the heart through trust, physical power, mental power, intellectual will and memory as a means to repose consciousness for it to move closer towards the soul and God.

As a river with its tributaries joins the sea, I would like to take your conscious-

ness with its tributaries to mingle and unite with the sea of the Soul.

Patanjali begins his teachings with the path of surrender – (*bhakti marga*) through – devotion on God (*Isvara Pranidhana*). Knowing that the *bhakti marga* (the path of devotion) is not possible for each and everyone, he takes us and proceeds towards the path or action (*karma marga*) and path of knowledge (*jnana marga*) through *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara* and *dharana* and ends up in *bhakti* in the form of *dhyana* (meditation). From this, one can conclude that *astanga yoga* – the eight petals of yoga cover action, knowledge and surrender of oneself to the supreme soul – God.

Thus, this *astanga yoga* makes the practitioners develop perfect action mingled with mature intelligence, which in turn brings humbleness in them to see all evenly and treat all equally. For this, he takes us to know the nature's power existing in each human being in the form of five elements and their atomic qualities, organs of action, senses of perception, mind, intelligence, consciousness, cosmic intelligence with the nature's qualities namely illumination, vibration and inertia, and then the soul and God or cosmic force.

He guides us to use these components of nature in conjunction with the soul to understand nature, and then pacify nature so that the *atman* or the soul or the seer rests and dwells in its own abode. The seer or the soul is stainless and choiceless. The soul being the perceiver, *astanga yoga*, as an instrument, helps the practitioner, who as a seeker, reaches ripeness in practice and sights the seer – the soul that was taunting as an object.

The principle of yoga is meant to remove that letter 'K' which is like a

thick intellectual cloud abiding in between the seeker and the seer. When this intellectual cloud 'K' is removed, then the seeker is transformed as a seer. This is how yoga practices take us towards the culminating end – the Light of the Soul on Life.

Patanjali terms '*sva*' as individual self engulfed with body and '*swami*' the soul as the Lord of the body. Lord Krishna – the Lord of yoga (Yogeshvara) – concurs with the thoughts of Patanjali and says in the 13th chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita* that the seer or the soul is the fielder (*ksetrajna*) and body, the field (*ksetra*). Sri Krishna explains the discrimination between the field – the body, and the knower of the body – the fielder as the Self and shows how these two get wedded together through yoga.

As the fielder ploughs, removes weeds, sows the best of seeds and nourishes them to get the best produce, Patanjali has given us *asanas* to plough the field, the body, to remove the unwanted desires that grow like weeds in the body, disturbing the tranquil state of consciousness. When the body is well ploughed, then the seer residing within this field, the body, yields the fruit of emancipation and eternal bliss.

If God is *vishva chaitanya shakti*, the cosmic energy is the *vishva prana shakti* or the universal source of life's energy. Cosmic energy inspires the aspirations of nature as well as the seer. Hence, I began to understand the importance of conjunction of energy with consciousness in *asanas* and *pranayama*, which led me slowly towards the *Light on Life*.

This is the sixth progressive lead that yoga gave me.

Cosmic life force is the breath of all life. This cosmic breath divides and sub-

divides into five main and five subordinate energies. While practising *asana* and *pranayama*, I have to co-ordinate these ten energies with various facets of the body and consciousness as a meeting point so that gladness, harmony, balance and concord is maintained with parity between the body, mind and Self.

Many *Upanishads* express that energy and consciousness are wedded together and diminish together. If one fades, the other also fades. If fullness is maintained in one, then the other also remains full.

With these new impressions I was lifted to the seventh stage of knowledge. This twin-ness of energy and consciousness made me to study the characteristics of *asanas* and began characterising the *asanas* through refinement and reach the state of singleness between intelligence and consciousness in each *asana*. For this I had to make successive sequential changes in my practices to observe the distinctive differences by arranging and re-arranging the *asanas* in conjunction with energy, intelligence and consciousness to get the single state of oneness between the field – body and its fielder – the Soul.

I have unknowingly and instinctively followed my *sadhana* which I surprisingly learnt later that the practice I followed was identical to the 7 stages mentioned in Patanjali's *yoga sutra* 11.27, wherein he says that through uninterrupted flow of discriminative awareness, one gains perfect knowledge which is of seven states. These are integration of the body, the senses, the breath, the mind, the intellect as well as the intelligence, the consciousness and last, the Self or the Soul.

I tell you with joy that I began my practice perspiring from the body to align its muscles and joints. From this gross perspiring state, I gradually proceeded through intellectual sweat along with the inspiration of the consciousness to align energy flow with the intuitive eye of the Self, embracing the remotest parts of its frontier, the body, from the

*If God is vishva chaitanya shakti,
the cosmic energy is the vishva prana shakti
or the universal source of life's energy.*

skin to the Self and from the Self to the skin, as a single unit,

Now my practices are directly dictated by the Core – the seed of knowledge and understanding, and not through the mind, intelligence or consciousness as it used to be earlier.

This right understanding of conjunction took me to the gates of that illuminating timeless eternal power – the Self – and the illuminative Soul's light on my life.

After hearing from me these various states of intellectual ascension that took place in me and in my practices, I hope you can rightly guess in what quality the *sadhaka* should be and what type of *sadhana* is needed to reach this level.

Patanjali categorises the practitioners into vehement, ardent, moderate and mild class. Svatmarama too categorises them as connative practitioners, cognitive practitioners, intimate and consuming practitioners. Siva samhita also distinguishes the practitioners as feeble, moderate, keen and supremely enthusiastic.

By these various classifications in practitioners, you can calculate that the span of time varies according to the efforts to reach the ultimate goal. If one

is highly intelligent, then practice of *asanas* influences the intelligence to be efficacious. I am again emphasising on the importance of *asana* and *pranayama* as these two are the only means to plough, eradicate desires, and through *pranayama* irrigate the body to make it fertile to taste the effect of the efforts in integrating the rivers of consciousness and energy to unite and mingle with the sea of the soul.

Similarly, you have to recharge the battery of energy to be of that high level through the practice of *pranayama* to receive that light of knowledge and wisdom that flashes at the ripe time as you ripen in memory and intelligence. These flashes of wisdom may come through sight or through vibrational feelings in the form of sound.

Thus my practice of yoga began from the grossest level and moved further in penetrating the most infinitesimally small cells of the body for the Self to feel its presence before their birth and death. This helped me in harmonising the body mechanism and led me to pacify the power of nature.

From this I learnt the reason why so many *asanas* were invented and discov-

ered for the yoga practitioners to practise so that each ingredient of the body lives in the stream of virtuous wisdom devoid of desires and ambitions; devoid of qualities of nature, in order to live and lead a radiant life with freedom, beatitude and benevolence. This is the true essence of light of yoga on Life's Light.

I devoted all my time on *asanas* as we have examples of great people of the past who reached the pinnacle of life by following one of the yogic principles like non-violence, truthfulness, and so forth. Yogi Yagnyavalkya reached the zenith through *pranayama*. I used my energy and intelligence to find out the greatness of each and every *asana*.

I took the clue from Patanjali wherein he says, *visayavati va pravrttiih Utpanna manasah sthiti nibandhani* (Yoga Sutra 1.35) "one may attain an exalted state of consciousness by becoming totally engrossed, with dedication and devotion in his object of interest". *Asana* being my subject as well as object of interest, this aphorism stuck to my heart and I practised them uninterruptedly to reach parity in body, intelligence and Self.

Most of the practitioners practised within the frame of their minds. But I

In the Light of Yoga

Come celebrate the 88th birthday of Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar at this special benefit workshop. Music and food provided!

**Sunday, December 10, 2006, 1:00 - 4:00 pm
See the next issue for more information**

Fees: \$45 + GST members, \$50 + GST non-members

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

went beyond this frame of mind. I interpenetrated in interweaving the life force with the body to the Self. As I had to give hundreds and hundreds of lectures / demonstrations (solo), I had to cultivate extrovertism and the skill of exhibitionism and explicitness which might have been a reason for people to misunderstand and misread my *sadhana*.

When I am in my practice – doing alone – I am totally an introvert, as I cannot practice with totality, without the other components of yoga being implicitly involved in my *asana* and *pranayama sadhana*. Without conjuncting all the components of yoga, it is impossible to do *asanas* independently and distinctly as a unit of its own. *Asana* is an integral part of the whole of yogic discipline. It only acted as an avenue for me, directing me in the journey of yoga to experience the wholesomeness and glory of it. Thus my yogic journey from Light on Yoga towards the Light on Life!

My Guruji might have specifically initiated me to *asana* wanting me to find the end point in each *asana* and as far as my intellectual capacity carried. I am happy to say that I fulfilled his dream by reaching the end of my journey in *asana* with spiritual contentment wherein I differentiated between consciousness and the core of the being and now I do the *asanas* from the intelligence of the Self and not with the intelligence of the consciousness.

The seeker in me has disappeared and only the seer in me directs my practices. As I practice *asana* daily with a religious sense, many are under the illusion, that I am still a seeker. Please note that I practise them daily because these *asanas* uplifted me and if I stop them, then my conscience pricks me and brands me as an immoral person. Secondly, if I say that I have savoured the flavour of yoga, you may brand me as an arrogant yogi and in humility, if I say no, then my critics will be jubilant but my conscience

knows the truth. Therefore, I follow the dictum “silence”. Hence let me advice you to practise without arrogance but with innocence in your head and heart.

To begin practice you all need to have some information on the subject. I have tried my best and explained the ways of searching, removing the errors by discretion, and to feel repose and tranquility so that you live in the lustre of brilliance of the real Self as I am living. I thank you all once again for your patience in listening to my harsh and rough voice and ask for your forgiveness.

Only, please take note of the best part of my address and unlock the yogic lock and dress it devotedly with discernment by the key of yogic wisdom so that the energy and wisdom flow perennially in each cell of your body, mind and intelligence so that you all live blissfully, as I am living in this spiritual empire.

May Patanjali's blessings be upon you all and once again I thank you. ॐ

Congratulations

Margot Kitchen, Calgary, AB, was awarded a Senior Intermediate II certification by Guruji, B.K.S. Iyengar in 2006.

The following candidates achieved certification during the Introductory I/II assessment in Calgary and Saskatoon in June 2006:

Introductory II

Stephen Boechler, Saskatoon, SK
 Sylvia Guenther, Toronto, ON
 Randa Westland, Hong Kong
 George Dovas, Hong Kong
 Jayne Lloyd-Jones, West Vancouver, BC
 Britta Poisson, Victoria, BC
 Christine Brown, Calgary, AB
 Karin Holtkamp, Victoria, BC
 Krisna Zawaduk, Kelowna, BC
 Skjei Sharma, Calgary, AB
 Traci Skuce, Cumberland, BC
 Kristine Hodge, Hong Kong

Introductory I

Sappho Balfour, Calgary, AB



Thank
you!



**Janine Beckner, Emma Richards
and Lori Webber for getting the
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
library even more in order.**

**All members of the IYCV board of directors who
sponsored the CPR course for IYCV teachers.**

**Jayne Jonas for assisting with a
merchandise mail-out and a
special delivery of India blankets
to Vancouver!**

Balancing the Belly: A Benefit of Prenatal Yoga

Susan Robinson

Being pregnant is interesting. It is an intense personal experience in full public view. Everyone has something to say about being pregnant. I should be used to this as I am a teacher and everyone has something to say about the education system. At the moment I am besieged with comments such as, “You are so big!” and “There is no way you are going to last until your due date,” and “It’s definitely a boy,” all said with such certainty. Occasionally I hear, “You look so beautiful.” This makes my day. Coming to yoga class is different though. People ask questions, with most wanting to know how yoga affects my pregnancy.

This is my second pregnancy and the second time I have practiced yoga throughout the pregnancy. Throughout both pregnancies I felt great, with no back pain or swollen feet to worry about. The first delivery was another story and I am now convinced that while you can do everything right during your pregnancy, the baby has a lot more control over things than you think. Hopefully this second baby will choose to enter the world in a different manner. So how has yoga affected my pregnancy?

This time around, with a four-year-old and a busy job, it has been difficult to find time to remember that I am pregnant. As soon as I started to show (and this occurred much earlier in this pregnancy!) people started to ask me how I was doing all the time. Thinking they were being polite I would respond fine, and how are you, but would only realize as the words were flying out of my mouth that they were enquiring about my overall well-being because of my pregnancy. Most



“It was in yoga class that I first really started to take notice of my pregnancy. It was here that people figured out something was different even before I started to show, and it was here that I was first forced to stop and think about how to adapt to the changes within my body.”

of the time I forgot that I was pregnant. I haven't ever forgotten I am pregnant in yoga class though. It was in yoga class that I first really started to take notice of my pregnancy. It was here that people figured out something was different even before I started to show, and it was here that I was first forced to stop and think about how to adapt to the changes within my body.

"Feet apart, reach up, create space for the baby – always create space for the baby." These words were spoken to me during a yoga class and have remained in my awareness of everything I do. Standing, sitting, riding my bike, I think of these words and adjust my position to keep the baby happy.

I have learned other things as well. *Ardha chandrasana* helps to relieve nausea, and *baddha konasana* and *upavistha konasana* should be done every day to help prepare for the birth. Backbends are to be avoided as well as any twists or other poses that compress the abdomen. Take it easy during weeks 10-13, in the transition from the first to the second trimester. *Savasana* is done lying on the side with a bolster between the legs and lots of support. (I sleep this way now, but it doesn't help. Nothing seems to help sleeping at the moment. This is probably a way to get mothers ready for the lack of sleep once the baby arrives.) Feet apart, always. Use support. Be quiet and still and listen to your body.



"Feet apart, reach up, create space for the baby – always create space for the baby."

This baby, just as my first child, has been surrounded by yogi-godmothers (and godfathers). I have been fortunate to have been surrounded by experienced teachers who have helped me learn how to adapt my practice both in class and at home. I continue to feel great, although it is now difficult to forget I am pregnant as the due date draws closer.

What I have gained from yoga during my pregnancy is balance. What we all gain from yoga. In the words of B.K.S. Iyengar, "Balance is the state of the present – the here and now. If you balance in

the present you are living in eternity." Yoga has helped me to balance my family and job with my pregnancy. It has given me the chance to focus on the life growing inside of me, something I might have missed this time in the midst of everything else. Lying in *supta baddha konasana* I feel the baby shift to my new position. And that is all that matters. ॐ

SUSAN ROBINSON PRACTICES YOGA IN VICTORIA, B.C. SHE IS EXPECTING HER SECOND BABY AT THE END OF THE SUMMER.

**Iyengar Yoga
Association
of Canada**

**ASSESSMENT
DATES**

October 13-15, 2006 Toronto
Sr. Intermediate I

November 17-19, 2006 Victoria
Jr. Intermediate II

March 16-18, 2007 Edmonton
Jr. Intermediate I

June 15-17, 2007 Kelowna
Introductory I/II

June 15-17, 2007 Ottawa
Introductory I/II
(In English and French)

October 19-21, 2007 Toronto
Introductory I/II

November 16-18, 2007 Vancouver
Jr. Intermediate II

April 18-20, 2008 Toronto
Jr. Intermediate III

July 2006 Level I & II Teacher Training Intensive

Taimi Mulder



Each year the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria runs a Level I/II

Teacher Training intensive for Level I/II teacher trainees. Students from all over the world have attended these intensives. This year 19 student teachers from across Canada and Mexico attended the six day workshop. Ann Kilbertus and Leslie Hoga have run this program for several years, taking over from Shirley Daventry French. Mornings were spent on *asana* and *pranayama* practice and assessment of the student teacher's own practice. Afternoons were spent on a variety of exercises designed to enhance a teacher's understanding of clarity in teaching, various methods of assisting students in *asanas*, *sutra* chanting, philosophy, and mock assessments. While a lot is expected of the student teachers and an extensive amount of material is covered, Ann and Leslie maintain a relaxed atmosphere throughout the week and the entire intensive somehow manages to be filled with laughter. Particularly delightful and touching are the student teacher presentations on the Friday afternoon. These are done individually or in groups and the format is open. This year these presentations ranged from a hilarious



Leslie Hoga and Ann Kilbertus

Assignment: Read the introduction to the sutras by B.K.S. Iyengar for Samadhi pada, especially on the section titled culture of consciousness. Think about the sutras 1.12 to 1.17 and prepare a presentation to help you further your understanding of the concepts of abhyasa (practice) and vairagam (detachment).

Sutras I.12–I.17 (Iyengar, B.K.S., Light on the Yoga Sutras)

I.12 abhyasa vairagyabhyam tannirodhah

Practice and detachment are the means to still the movements of consciousness.

I.13 tatra sthitau yatnah abhyasah

Practice is the steadfast effort to still these fluctuations.

I.14 sa tu dirghakala nairantarya satkara asevitah drdhabhumih

Long, uninterrupted, alert practice is the firm foundation for restraining the fluctuations.

I.15 drsta anusravika visaya vitsnasya vasikarasamjna vairagyam

Renunciation is the practice of detachment from desires.

I.16 tatparam purusakhyateh gunavaitrsnyam

The ultimate renunciation is when one transcends the qualities of nature and perceives the soul.

I.17 vitarka vicara ananda asmitarupa anugamat samprajnatah

Practice and detachment develop four types of samadhi: self-analysis, synthesis, bliss, and the experience of pure being.

“Game of Life” with game show host Gary Wong and delightful assistant Rose Marie Rodden, a “String of Life” collage from Linda Kusleika, Terice Reimer-Clarke, and Taimi Mulder, an essay on *abhyasa* by Athena George, a model airplane from Chitta Vritti Air from Stephen Stewart, juggling lessons by Elizabeth Adilman, the “Bhagavad Gita Colouring Book” by Charles Campbell, a skit on *vairagam* and the eight petals of yoga by Phofi McCullough, Alicia Ramos, and Charlotte Sandoz, a book review of “The Light and Dark” by Rosemary Barritt, an interpretive dance by Patty Rivard, a tearful soliloquy on “I Threw My Husband Out with the Garbage While I Was Downsizing” by Marcela Tuma, instruction on “Obstacles and Afflictions and Excuses for not Practicing and Renouncing” by Missi Hegyes, a Patanjali postcard by Karin Dayton (see cover), to recitation of a beautiful, inspirational poem by Marilyn Shepard. Some of these presentations are reproduced here.

Abhyasa: Practice

Athena George

Not far from the land where we are building our house lives a trombone player. He is a solitary man, and although we have met all our other neighbours, we have never met him. I’m never even seen him, as we live on a wooded mountainside with some distance between each property.

This man plays his trombone every day, morning and afternoon, for thirty minutes each time. He likes to practice

There were no wrong notes, only lovely music and gold light flashing off the trombone slide and bell as he played.

He likes to practice outside, so the low steady tones of a trombone sound across the mountainside twice a day. It’s always the same: scales.

outside, so the low steady tones of a trombone sound across the mountainside twice a day. It’s always the same: scales. He works with different pitches and intervals, but he always plays scales, like someone stepping up and down a flight of stairs, over and over.

For the first few months, when I heard him begin his daily practice, I would stop and listen, appreciating the contrast of the distant regular notes of the scales with the rushing wind and the calls of ravens and eagles. As the months went on, the repetition began to annoy me. Why wouldn’t he play a song? Did he have to play scales every day? Did he have to do it twice a day?

My other neighbours said that he had retired from a high stress job in the city—nothing to do with music—and he used the trombone to relax. Some neighbours liked the sound of the trombone; others had written him, asking him to muffle his horn. Whether we liked it or not, the trombone became part of our lives. Sometimes when the trombone player began his scales, my husband and I would sing along: “do re mi fa so la ti do.” Occasionally, we would turn on the radio to block him out. Many days we drowned him out working on our house, grinding saws and banging hammers.



Athena George

Before I met my husband, I lived alone for six years. Every morning I would wake, and in the quiet of my apartment, I would practice yoga for at least an hour. Through my practice, I lost weight, grew strong and calm, and eventually decided to train to be a yoga teacher. My friends marveled at my self-discipline.

And then, I fell in love with David.

Our lives joined and my quiet, steady yoga practice blew apart, as if hit by a tornado. I like change, and I love my new adventures with David, but there’s not a lot of time for yoga. In the past two years, we have had a big wedding, moved five times and camped out for months. We’re camping now out on our building site, trying to save money to finish our house. All the construction work has given me bursitis in both hips. I sit for an extra two hours a day, commuting farther to work, and I have gained weight. My yoga practice space is a 6’ x 8’ bit of porch off the bathhouse we built on our land. This square of porch is also the thoroughfare to the shower, David’s office/laundry room, sauna and terrace. Worst of all, an inner mean voice berates me for the days when I only get a short yoga practice or none at all.

Last weekend, David and I attended the annual Talent Show. Only 300

people live year-round on our Island, so we like to get together and entertain ourselves in the old community hall. That night the kids demonstrated karate, the tap dance class tapped to a few big band tunes, the woman from the general store read her poetry, and then, two people climbed onto the stage: a woman with a cello and an elderly man carrying a trombone.

"Is that who I think it is?" whispered David.

I checked my program and found his name. It was the horn-playing hermit from the mountainside. When he sat down, I expected him to play scales; that's all I'd ever heard him play. Instead, he and the cellist played a duet, some slow sacred music composed hundreds of years ago. He played with a clear, calm sureness. As I listened, I watched his hands pushing and pulling the brass slide up and down to find the notes, thinking how if his hand was a tiny bit higher or

*I was about to quit,
when, off in the
distance, from across
the mountainside,
came the low tones of
a trombone, stepping
up and down the scales.*

lower than it should be, then he would be playing the wrong note. There were no wrong notes, only lovely music and gold light flashing off the trombone slide and bell as he played.

The morning after the Talent Show, I woke, unzipped our tent and went to my square of porch off the bathhouse to do my yoga. While I was chanting the opening invocation, David cut past me to get to his office in the laundry room.

A few minutes later, David's teenage son and his son's girlfriend, who were visiting, asked if they could use the shower. The shower is about three feet from my yoga mat. These distractions irritated me and triggered a litany of complaints: I was hungry; my hips hurt; I felt chubby; my mat was half in the sun and it was too hot. I was about to quit, when, off in the distance, from across the mountainside, came the low tones of a trombone, stepping up and down the scales.

The trombone player's steadfast practice reminded to let go of the distractions as best as I am able—life will never be free from distractions—and to keep practicing. The mean voice inside my head went quiet and a new voice piped up, saying that I was doing pretty well with my yoga practice, considering all that was going on in my life. I smiled and returned to my mat. With renewed determination, I began again.

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 18 - 23, 2006
6:30 - 8:00 am daily

Fees:
\$90 + GST IYCV members
\$100 + GST non-members

Registration opens:
Oct. 16, 2006 for IYCV members
Oct. 23, 2006 for non-members

To register, drop in to or phone the
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)
www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled and are subject to a \$10.00 cancellation fee.

Short WORKSHOP

Winter Solstice Workshop

With Ty Chandler

**Thursday, December 21,
6:00-8:00 pm**

**Friday, December 22,
6:00-8:00 pm**

Fees:
\$60 + GST for IYCV members
\$66 + GST for non-members

Refunds will only be offered
if your space can be filled
and are subject to a
\$10.00 cancellation fee.

Citta Vrittis Air

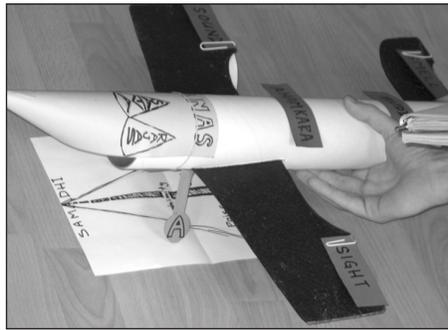
Stephen Stewart

Do you have the citta vrittis? Of course you do! So come fly Citta Vrittis Air and get to your destination safely!

This airplane is the connection between the body and *citta* (consciousness). *Citta* is composed of *manas* (mind), *buddhi* (intelligence), and *ahamkara* (ego or sense of self) and is connected to the body through the *jnanendriyas* or senses of perception. This



gives rise to the *citta vrittis* or fluctuations of the consciousness. Propelling the *vrittis* are desire and aversion. Flying the plane are the *gunas* with three pilots called *rajas*, *tamas*, and *satva* (the three qualities of nature: vibrancy, inertia, and luminosity). For Citta Vrittis Airlines to come in for a safe landing, the landing gear of *ashyasa* and *vairagya* or practice and detachment are required. The weather that obscures the landmarks and landing fields and cost Citta Vrittis Air much turbulence and a lot of jet fuel are self-doubt, worldly pleasures, judgement, expectations, results, sorrow, and laziness. Depending on the conditions the tower controller guides the planes through the clouds with sage advice:



- Self-doubt – “Be the change you wish to see in the world.” – *Mahatma Gandhi*
- Worldly pleasures – “Prepare, steady your mind, on this path no effort is wasted, no gain is ever reversed.”

– *Last year I taught a couple of classes in which we explored the perception of the 5 senses and how they affected one’s life patterns. I named the order in which I found them of importance and had the students do the same. It’s an incredible way to see how or what one is drawn to and what senses are least important in one’s life. This quote came out of our understanding and discussions of the Bhagavad-Gita.*

- Judgement – “Learn to let go of all that you fear to lose.” – *Yoda*

Judgement comes in many forms, towards one’s self and towards others. In many cases through our dis-ease with our life patterns or circumstances in which there is discomfort, pain, anger, or resentment. Judgement is fear based; the feeling that attacking or belittling a subject, object, or person will somehow make things better. This is my favourite quote by Yoda, the selfless and wise, from the latest Star Wars movie.

- Expectations – “Do or do not, there is no try.” – *Stephen Stewart*

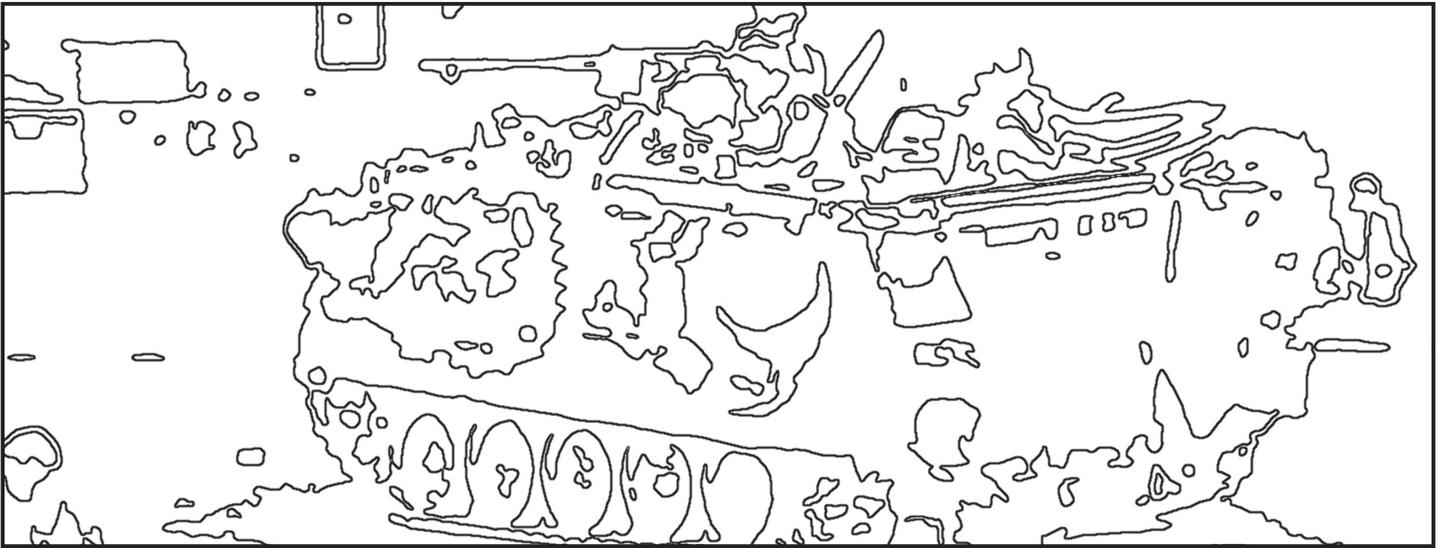
My devotion or drive to carry projects through can sometimes be arduous in nature and my expectations are sometimes quite high. Often my creativity or ideas seem vast and it becomes hard to determine which is the most important at the moment. In my enthusiasm I feel that I can do anything, thinking “oh yeah I’ll and do that.” This quote is directed towards myself and helps me to focus and decipher thought from true action.

- Results – “You have the right to your actions, but not the action’s fruits, act for the actions sake and do not be attached to ‘no action’.” – *Bhagavad-Gita*

Whether it is the end of a day, a practice, an argument, teaching a class, or going over in my head something I should have said, I find I confuse these emotions with the action and



Stephen Stewart calming the *vrittis* in supported Salamba Sarvangasana.



The Bhagavad Gita Colouring Book

dwell in the past, or sometimes just avoid what I fear. I chanted this one in Sanskrit.

- Sorrow – “Be beyond all opposites, anchored in attentiveness and free from all thoughts.”

I believe this quote is from B.K.S. Iyengar, but can't seem to find the reference. It really states a firmness, assertiveness, and strength that burns away sorrow and leaves only a warrior, confident and connected.

- Laziness – “Determination is worth nothing if it bends before discomfort.”
– Mahatma Gandhi

Many times through my day or life confidence and attentiveness are weak and distilled. Practice can seem impossible, a feeling of weakness, despair, and a sense of fatigue fills within me. Another great one from M.G. It always makes me think of doing backbends.

Bhagavad Gita Colouring Book

Charles Campbell
www.charlescampaart.com

Editor's note: Charles' "Bhagavad Gita Colouring Book" will be presented as a series throughout upcoming issues of the newsletter.

You don't have to delve very far into the *Bhagavad Gita* before you realize that it initially presents itself as a justification for war. Krishna speaks to an Arjuna despondent about the prospect of fighting kith and kin in a terrible battle. His words about action and duty, good and evil and the glory of God have a chilling familiarity with the contemporary rhetoric around Iraq and Afghanistan. Of course anything more than a cursory look at the

To act in the outside world you have to understand what is in yourself.



Charles Campbell

Gita reveals it to be anything but a justification for war. It is after all the text that Ghandi used to chart his path of peaceful resistance. But the much abused

metaphor of war remains; the battlefield of Kurukshetra its setting. Although it relates to our internal battle, the *Gita* still calls for action in the external world.

The Bhagavad Gita colouring book is an early attempt to understand the *Gita* in relation to present day events. The images are taken from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. With the text I tried to simplify some of the major themes in the first few chapters to the level of a child's story book. It is all presented as if it can be easily understood. Read this, colour in the pictures and you are on your way to doodle-art enlightenment. The more you see the *Gita* the more it seems to say you have to see yourself. No matter how clearly you understand the nature of conflict in the Middle East, to act in the outside world you have to understand what is within yourself. ॐ



Gary Wong and Rose Marie Rodden hosting the "Game of Life" game show with contestant Linda Kusleika, who earned her wings by managing to overcome many obstacles, such as chocolate and coffee.



Marcela Tuma, being so determined to downsize, managed to throw her husband out with the garbage – she can't find him anywhere.

Refining our Teaching

a Workshop for teachers and teachers in training

With Shirley Daventry French

March 23-24, 2007

Focusing on the evolution from Introductory to Intermediate teaching.

Friday, March 23, 2007 6:30 – 8:30 pm | Saturday, March 24, 2007 11:00 am – 5:00 pm
(1 hour lunch break time TBA)

Fees: \$120.00 + GST IYCV members | \$130.00 + GST non-members

To register, drop in to or phone the
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria
202-919 Fort Street,
Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3
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cancellation fee.



Elizabeth Adilman, learning to juggle by Friday. She finally accepted that she may not quite master that art in 5 days.



Rosemary Barritt's hippopotamus and snake take us through a book review of "The Light and the Dark – Part I". Stay tuned for the enactment of next year's chapter.



Phofi McCullough



Props

A class from RIMYI

Jayne Jonas

This was my first class at the Institute with Geeta Iyengar. I was at home, and yet not at home, at the Institute and with my body. I found myself being attentive to the voice and words of Geeta, while at the same time struggling to understand her Indian accented English.

Slowly I began to surrender my desire to be so utterly present, as I become attuned to the inner work. Realization and gratitude to all my previous teachers for their words and voices which trained me to listen to the words in any language and translate those words into actions of awareness in my body.

It was a great month.

What follows are the sequences of poses from Geeta's April 11, 2005, class and my own notes on the practice. For full instructions on the poses see: Iyengar, B.K.S., *Light on Yoga*; Iyengar, Geeta, *Yoga, a Gem for Women*.

Adho Mukha Svanasana

Adho Mukha Virasana

Uttanasana

Tadasana

Trikonasana

Parsvakonasana

Virabhadrasana I

Ardha Chandrasana



The front entry way to RIMYI - an almost lifesize sculpture of Mr Iyengar.



From Cave #16 at Elora.

Malasana

Sirsasana I

Supta Padangusthasana

Pasasana

Malasana

Sirsasana I

Pariipurna Navasana

Ubbhaya Navasana

Malasana

Paschimottanasana

Malasana

Paschimottanasana

Sarvangasana

Halasana

Savasana

POINTS

Standing Poses

1. Press middle thigh back to aid in extension of the lower back.
2. Direct buttocks towards the heels.
3. Belly soft but lifting up and in towards the spine.
4. Note opposing directions of forces in poses.
5. In *Ardha Chandrasana*, to make sure that the belly of the thigh of the up leg does not look three months pregnant, push it forward – take the muscles to the bone.

Pasasana

- 1 Sit with heels as close as possible to sit bones, heels together.
- 2 Bring sit bones to the floor.
- 3 Arms around shins.
- 4 Arms around ankles.
- 5 Soft belly.
- 6 Knees apart.
- 7 Bring chest through.
- 8 Hands around heels.

Wrap arms around and go to *Malasana*

Malasana

- 1 Lower and upper belly lift.
- 2 Thighs roll in.
- 3 Bring chest through thighs.
- 4 Head down.

Supta Padangusthasana

- 1 Laying on the floor, start with knees together close to chest (as in *pasasana*).
- 2 Hug shins.
- 3 Tailbone going towards the floor.
- 4 Lower back extended.
- 5 Sides of waist to the floor.
- 6 Buttock down on the floor (spine long).
- 7 Let left leg extend towards the floor, hovering a couple of inches above the floor.
- 8 As you lower left leg notice when lower back begins to lift.
- 9 Keep both sides of waist and lower back on floor.
- 10 Press belly of left thigh to floor.
- 11 See how the extended leg shortens through the lower back as you extend.
- 12 Same spinal and belly action as in *Malasana*. ॐ

Going Deeper

An Iyengar Yoga Workshop
with Shirley Daventry French
September 30 – October 1, 2006



This is an opportunity for Level I, II and III students to work with senior teacher Shirley Daventry French to explore yoga in a deeper way. This is also an opportunity for teachers to observe Shirley teach.

Shirley is a long-time student of B.K.S. Iyengar and has been to Pune to study many times, most recently in October 2005.

The founder of the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria, Shirley has been the driving force in making the Victoria Iyengar 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, students have the opportunity to learn from her in a workshop setting.

Saturday, September 30:
11:00 am - 1:00 pm,
3:00 - 5:00 pm

Sunday, October 1:
10:30 am - 1:00 pm
1:00 - 1:30 pm refreshments
1:30 - 2:30 pm debriefing
for observers

Fees:
\$115.00 + GST
for IYCV members
\$125.00 + GST
for non-members
\$80.00 + GST
for observers

Registration opens:
July 15 for IYCV members
July 25 for non-members

To register, drop in or
phone the
**Iyengar Yoga Centre
of Victoria**
202-919 Fort Street
Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)
www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

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

Shirley's 75th Birthday Workshop

Saturday, October 28, 2006
11:00 am - 5:00 pm

11:00 am – 3:00 pm
Shirley will lead the workshop

3:00 - 5:00 pm
Celebrate Shirley



Followed by a Celebration Dinner at the Spice Jammer
Restaurant, 852 Fort Street at 5:30 pm. Cash bar service.

Fees:

Workshop \$75.00 + GST

All proceeds from the workshop will go towards our
scholarship funds.

Dinner \$25.00 + GST + 15% tip = \$30.00

(Dinner reservations can be made starting September 18th
through Robin Cantor; limited seating available.)

Cheques payable to the "Spice Jammer Restaurant"
may be left at the IYCV front desk)

To register for the workshop, or to purchase tickets
for the dinner, drop in to or phone the
Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria

202-919 Fort Street,
Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)

www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

Refunds will only be offered if your space can be filled
and are subject to a \$10.00 cancellation fee.

The Symphony of Life

Karin Dayton

To fully appreciate the Art of Teaching, one need look no further than our Thursday Special Needs class. A typical week will be comprised of 15 students with varying specific conditions. In a “regular” class the teacher will individualize poses as required, so imagine, if you can, one big class – 15 different practices.

Ann Kilbertus might conduct a heart practice over in one corner. Leslie can often be seen orchestrating standing poses at the ponies, while Linda Benn practices her scales with the choir and, more recently, Robin Cantor has joined the woodwinds. This is how it seems sometimes, the teachers seem to dance around each other as students join in or move on like choreography. Props fly about the room, arrangements pile high, and new compositions are introduced each week. I expect that a

conductor’s baton will appear in Ann’s hand any moment now as she steps on her tiptoes to reach the high notes. And I can see that the effects of Yoga on these students is the same as it is for me, like listening to beautiful music and marvelling at it’s creation:

“Yoga is like music
The rhythm of the body,
the melody of the mind
and the harmony of the soul,
create the symphony of life.”

– B.K.S. Iyengar

Teacher Training & Junior Intermediate Workshop

FOR LEVELS 3 & 4 STUDENTS

WITH CHRIS SAUDEK | NOVEMBER 3-5, 2006

Teacher Training

Fri. 9:00 am - 12:00 pm, 3:00 - 6:00 pm

Times subject to change

Open to all certified Iyengar yoga teachers, or those in Iyengar yoga teacher training programs.

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.

Note: Chris will be teaching an extended Level 4 class Monday, November 6, 2006, 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.



To register drop in to or phone the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria, 202-919 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8K 3K3
(250) 386-YOGA (9642)
www.iyengaryogacentre.ca

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

Times subject to change

Open to Level 3 & 4 students able to hold headstand and shoulderstand for 5 minutes or more.

IYCV MEMBERS 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 for non-members

Fees subject to change.

REGISTRATION OPENS:

August 29, 2006 for IYCV members
September 15, 2006 for non-members

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



IYENGAR YOGA
CENTRE of VICTORIA

2006-07 calendar

SEPTEMBER 2006

- 4 IYCV closed
- 23 Teachers' Meeting
- 29 Sutra Workshop with Shirley Daventry French
- 30-Oct 1 Going Deeper with Shirley Daventry French

OCTOBER 2006

- 13-15 Senior Intermediate I Assessment in Toronto, ON
- 28 Shirley's 75th Birthday Workshop

NOVEMBER 2006

- 3-5 Chris Saudek Workshop
- 17-19 Junior Intermediate II Assessment in Victoria, BC

DECEMBER 2006

- 10 In the Light of Yoga workshop – Mr. Iyengar's birthday celebration
- 18-23 Sadhana with Corrine Lowen
- 21-22 Winter Solstice Workshop with Ty Chandler

JANUARY 2007

- 19-21 Heart of Yoga with Shirley Daventry French
- 27 Teachers' Meeting

FEBRUARY 2007

- 24 Teachers' Meeting

MARCH 2007

- 16-18 Junior Intermediate I Assessment in Edmonton, AB

- 23-24 Refine our Teaching, A Teacher Training Workshop with Shirley Daventry French

- 31 Teachers' Meeting

APRIL 2007

- 21 Teachers' Meeting

MAY 2007

- 4-7 Workshop Faeq Biria
- 24-27 IYCV AGM, Toronto

JUNE 2007

- 1-3 Saltspring Retreat
- 9 Teachers' Meeting
- 15-17 Introductory I/II Assessment in Kelowna, B.C.
- 15-17 Introductory I/II Assessment (English and French) in Ottawa, Ont.
- 25-30 Sadhana with Robin Cantor

Newsletter submissions

Written: Digital format is preferred – Word file or other files compatible with Microsoft Word, plain text files or emails. Hand written or printed submissions will be accepted; however, they require transposing (typing or scanning) to digital format by the newsletter committee before publication.

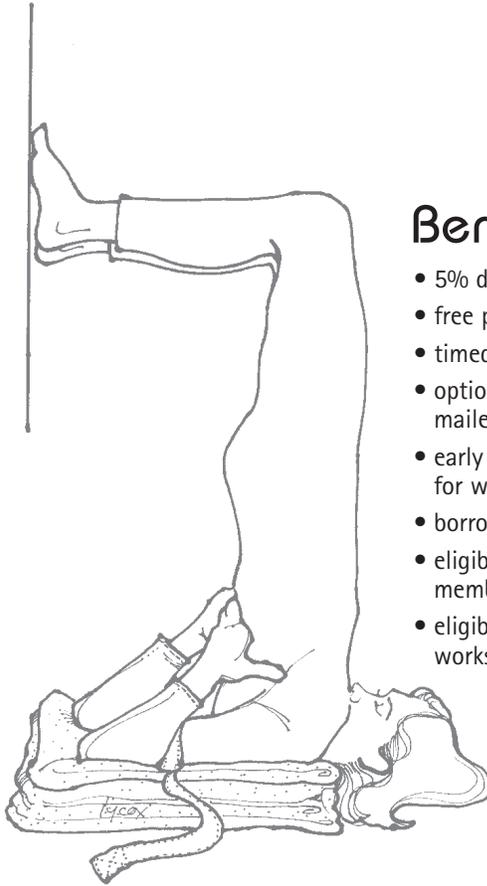
Photos: Prints or digital images. Digital files must be high resolution (minimum 600 dpi) for adequate reproduction. Acceptable formats are JPG (choose no compression, high quality, large file), TIFF or EPS. Preferred: save as black and white EPS files, with no adjustments, sizing or cropping.

Renew

Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria membership expires on December 31, each year.

Don't forget to renew your membership subscription.

To renew, please fill in the form below, and send to the Iyengar Yoga Centre of Victoria.



Benefits:

- 5% discount on all classes
- free practice times at the IYCV
- timed practices
- option of having 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



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 + 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.