

*Iyengar Yoga Ottawa Gatineau Association
Spring Newsletter 2012*



“All of us have a dormant spark of divinity in us which has to be fanned into flames by yoga.”

B. K. S. Iyengar

Iyengar Yoga Ottawa Gatineau

Exists to:

- ॐ Study, teach, disseminate, and promote the art, science and philosophy of yoga according to the tradition of our teacher, Sri B.K.S. Iyengar;
- ॐ Educate the community and health care professionals about the benefits of Iyengar Yoga;
- ॐ Provide teacher training;
- ॐ Co-operate with local, national, and international organizations with similar goals;
- ॐ Establish and maintain suitable quarters and facilities for the corporation to further its objectives.

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Anyone wishing to contact a member of the Board may do so by emailing them directly or by phoning the yoga centre at 613-761-7888 and leaving a message.

IYOGA Class Cancellation Policy: Classes may be cancelled due to insufficient registration. If a class is cancelled students may transfer to another class during the same session, have a course credit for the next session or receive a refund.

Contributing to the IYOGA Newsletter:

Anyone wishing to submit an article (500 - 750 words) for the newsletter may do so by emailing iyoganews@gmail.com. Submissions may be edited for length and clarity. We cannot guarantee inclusion of your submission in the newsletter (but we'll try!) Please send your submission in text format only. Pictures are also welcome.

Articles and photos may not be reprinted without the expressed written permission from the author and/or photographer.

IYOGA Newsletter Committee: Judy Maxwell and Jennifer Fornelli. Anyone wishing to join the Newsletter Committee is most welcome. Please email us at iyoganews@gmail.com.

Our centre is located at 784 Bronson Ave. just south of Carling Ave. and is conveniently located on bus route #4. Parking is available at the rear of the building. For more information please visit our website at www.iyoga.ca or call 613-761-7888.

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President's Message

by Donna Fornelli

2012 is off to a great start with some new and exciting changes. We welcome Roopal Thaker and Marjory Bryce to the IYOGA Board of Directors as members at large. They bring a wealth of experience to our organization and join me, Karin Holtcamp, Len Fornelli and Jason Szabos in keeping our centre in the forefront of yoga in Ottawa.

We have a new look to our brochure that reflects the vibrancy of our centre and the work of Mr. Iyengar. We have also launched a newly designed website that compliments the look and feel of the brochure and conveys the growth and experience of those who attend and work at the centre.

In late 2011 we held a photo shoot at the centre and special thanks goes to Jouni Ranta and Sean Stone who very kindly spent a Saturday and Wednesday evening photographing our students as they participate in their respective classes. It was a fun, community building project and I am grateful to everyone who participated. You will be able to see the fruits of everyone's labour – photographers and students alike, on our new website and other promotional materials as they are created.

In mid-January, our centre hosted an Introductory II assessment where teachers from across Canada came to be tested for this level of certification. As part of the assessment process we required the assistance of students from our local Iyengar yoga community. Thank you to all of the students who participated that weekend your contribution to the assessment was greatly appreciated.

Lastly, we have joined the 21st century by engaging in social media! Iyengar Yoga Ottawa is now on Facebook – www.facebook.com/iyengaryogaottawa. We will be adding links that will join us with all our Iyengar yoga colleagues around the world.

Thank you for your continued support of our centre.

Namaste,
Donna

IYOGA Centre's 12-day Sadhana

Monday, April 16 through Friday, April 27

Finally, spring is on the horizon! With the days getting incrementally longer and the mornings starting earlier, why not take the opportunity to energize yourself after that "long winter's nap"?

Sadhana is a Sanskrit term meaning "practice" or "quest".

Join us for 12 consecutive mornings exploring asana, pranayama and yoga philosophy and see what a difference daily practice can make!

Monday, April 16 through Friday, April 27

6:30am - 7:45 am

\$150 for members, \$160 for non-members (HST included)

Sadhana is open to students of all levels with six months of Iyengar yoga experience or more. Pre-registration is required.

Questions? E-mail us at iyogaottawa@gmail.com

"Persistent practice alone is the key to yoga." ~ B.K.S. Iyengar

Iyengar Yoga: From the Source by Leigh Stevenson

Travelling to Pune, India, enduring extreme temperatures and pollution, leaving one's family and work for a month.... I certainly got my fair share of puzzled looks. But to a *sadhaka* (practitioner) like me, it seemed like a dream on the horizon: learning yoga from the Iyengars themselves.

Here at the IYOGA, we enjoy fairly small classes and individualised attention. Imagine, then, the first day of class at the Ramani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute (RIMYI), sharing your space (and your props, which mysteriously go missing from time to time!), with up to 150 others from all around the globe. Next, imagine the sound and vibration of 150 voices reciting the Invocation to Patanjali, reverberating within the walls of the practice hall and beyond, out into the street and surrounding neighbourhood. Magically uplifting... just what one might need to start a 7:00 am class on a Tuesday!



In front of Guruji's portrait with new friend Lilian from Hong Kong

I admit, I had my compunctions about taking classes from these iconic figures, who had literally written *all* the books on yoga. I had heard stories over the years of Mr. B.K.S. Iyengar, taskmaster; his daughter Dr. Geeta S. Iyengar, blunt matriarch; and his son Prashant S. Iyengar, philosopher at large. The intimidation factor was high, and I expected our classes could be gruff, humourless and a bit of a slog....

Mr. Iyengar, himself, is *technically* retired from teaching. His granddaughter, Abhi, now teaches his Wednesday and Saturday morning classes, under his tutelage and supervision. But he practices in that same hall, at that same time, in a designated corner at the back near a window. And he simply can't help himself! Calling to Abhi from the vantage point of his backbend or inversion, he conveys the miniscule detail that he sees: that we're not turning our hips enough in *Parsvottanasana* or pressing our inner feet down enough in *Adho Mukha Svanasana*! The rest of the class ensues in torturous fashion, driving home the point of the day, and yet, there is always a humorous element, an analogy (for which Mr. Iyengar is so well known) to make us laugh, and Abhi's acknowledgement that "we all learn better when we can have a good laugh... now let's get back to work".

Classes with Geeta were filled with insight, both into individual poses and into new ways to connect them. It's true: on occasion, she would rant at us for not applying enough analytical insight to our own issues in poses, or not demonstrating as much *tapas* (religious fervour) as Guruji(!). But she had her own moments of conviviality, like the time one student, who had been working directly in front of Geeta, had her mat "stolen" when we returned from having gathered elsewhere to watch an example. This student had found another spot and had to hold up her hand when Geeta asked what happened to her. Geeta accused her of being afraid to do the pose directly in front of her! Hilarity ensued....

I had heard that we could expect Prashant to make us repeat one pose, over and over again for two hours, while he "waxed poetic" on his philosophical topic *du jour*.... Imagine my surprise, then, when he turned out to be highly entertaining and funny! Like his father, Prashant has a gift for delivering hilarious analogies (as well as "Prashantisms") that had the whole room laughing: for one, his example of "gymnastification culture" of North Americans, in which he cautioned against the overdevelopment of the body and, as an inverse reaction, the underdevelopment of the mind: witness Mike Tyson.

Along with our classes, six days a week, we were provided practice time for two or three hours. When it was offered in the mornings, we were privileged to share our time and space with Mr. Iyengar. While he practiced, he would teach Abhi and the rest of his amazing "underlings", who are all accomplished up-and-coming teachers in their own rights. This was an amazing opportunity to observe Mr. Iyengar at his most radiant: while teaching them to reach their maximum (on this particular day) in some pretty serious backbends, there were peals of laughter issuing forth. The rest of us couldn't resist laughing along, stealing glances as subtly as we could, and soon there was the "ripple effect" of each individual in the room picking his or her own backbends to practice.

I can't wait for my next opportunity to revisit RIMYI and learn from the undisputed masters, once again!

Why Do We Use Props?

by B. K. S. Iyengar

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 *āsanas*, stay in the *āsanas* 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 read the innermost depth of his own self.

A prop brings physical and mental stability. Guruji has often said, "āsana is not motion but coordinated 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 *āsana*. The props serve as a support to help us stay for a longer duration in an *āsana* and therefore experience the transformation 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! It is common for most of the "Iyengar Yoga" students to be doing *Viparita Dandasana* for 7-10 minutes 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 "stabilize" and balance ourselves physically in an *āsana*. The *citta bhumi* (stages of the mind) constantly wanders and is in the *ksipta* (distracted) or *viksipta* (alternating) state. Under the instruction of a teacher in a class, we may be better focused, but the instructions of a teacher are also a prop. It takes just a split second for the consciousness to wander especially when we are performing the *āsanas* independently. The use of props aids the *chitta bhumi* to be in an *ekagra* (one pointed state) for a longer duration of time.

A prop aids in bringing humility. Whenever we use props for any of the *āsanas*, we automatically become introspective, probably without even realizing it. Thus, there is no space for pride. Sage Patanjali has very clearly said that progress in our practice of *āsana* leads us either toward *apavarga* (liberation) or *bhoga* (experience). Many practitioners' can fall from the grace of yoga because of pride of "achievement". The use of props ensures that there is not room for pride and practitioner retains humility, which should be one of the most important tenets for a practitioner.

A prop to objectify the brain. 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 the 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 quietness and tranquility? Even if we are doing a "relaxing pose" like *Savāsana*, 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 *Sirsāsana* on the ropes, the brain becomes totally quiet. This quietness is not dullness but an active passivity. This also happens when our head is rested on a bolster in *Adho Muka Svanāsana*. We are more stable, quieter and we can stay longer than when we do the pose independently.

We should not always use a prop as a crutch or sofa to flop ourselves on! We should be very clear in our minds as to why we are using a prop for a particular *āsana* on a specific day. We should use the prop to trigger our intelligence and generate life in our practice!

Excerpted from Yoga Rahasya Vol. 11 No. 1 2004 p. 43-44 and is reprinted with their kind permission.

Introduction to an Assessment

by Leigh Stevenson

Training to become an Iyengar Yoga teacher is a long and involved process. On average, candidates for the introductory levels of Iyengar certification study (philosophy, anatomy and the eight limbs of yoga) and train for 3-5 years in anticipation of assessment. They need to pass a written exam and (usually) travel to another Canadian city to be evaluated by a panel of very experienced teachers from across the country. The evaluation takes two parts over three days: on the first, a timed practice of up to two hours; on the second or third, while teaching six poses in forty minutes to a group of volunteer students. For both the practice and the teaching, the poses are not known in advance. On the weekend of January 13-15 of this year, the Iyengar community of Ottawa-Gatineau hosted an Introductory II assessment at the Iyengar Yoga Centre. The following article is written by Debbie Hanisch, one of the successful candidates from that weekend.

The 7.3 Limbs of Assessment

An Iyengar Yoga Assessment is a complete yoga experience in that it brings a student teacher into full circle with their sadhana, not to imply completeness, but the whole process begins to come to light and make sense. Subjectively speaking, over three days of assessment I was able to identify a number of Patanjali's eight limbs in order to keep my own four limbs from shaking.

If I may share some personal history, performance anxiety has been with me since childhood and much later in life I came to yoga due to sudden panic attacks. I believe the anxiety to be a byproduct of peri menopause and the eventual menopause which arrived in all its glory complete with rather severe symptoms. So for assessment, how do I manage this? I knew I would heat during the called practice so how was I going to get through it body and mind intact? Then when it came to teaching, as scheduling is an issue some of us had to sweat Saturday off, to return on Sunday and keep our wits about us while teaching. How do I keep anxiety in check? Luckily three months prior, I followed my senior teacher Marlene's advice, "Strengthen your Pranayama practice".

So I did Pranayama every morning religiously like Mr. Iyengar's recipe; one or two cups of coffee and then Pranayama. The gift I received was a lovely sense of surrender. I realized I was O.K. with what I had learned and was well prepared for the challenge ahead. I had done the work, delved into the philosophy now I just had to apply to my spirit and do it; everything was in place.

For the teaching segment I decided my best strategy was to stay focused on the eight students that I was responsible to teach. I had a job to do and with their safety foremost in mind I couldn't go by script; in order to do this I had to teach to them like no one was watching. The other teachers walking in the room (who happen to be assessors) also have an important job to perform; they have to be at their best in order to do a diligent job marking us. The students who graciously donate their bodies are also anxious to be on their best behavior; everyone in the room had a role to play. I was particularly amazed by how inter connected we really were, especially my colleagues and I. We were very uplifting, bathed in a very unique light that was open and caring.

Another unexpected assessment gift is how I was able to become a witness to the process and not let my emotions and anxiety run away with me. I wouldn't say I was cool as a cucumber but I at least had my thoughts in some sequential order. I knew what was expected of me and why I was at this place. I couldn't help but think of the Bagavad Gita. It kept jumping in and out of my brain all weekend in an exchange of application and finally better understanding. It's not whether you pass or fail it's whether you have done the work – detachment to the outcome. There are no short cuts and assessment will identify where the strengths and weaknesses are in mind, body, and spirit.

Whether breathing through the called practice, working through the teaching or interacting with your colleagues, the Yamas and Niyamas have to be acknowledged, and if grace be willing applied...tapas, tapas, tapas. The other limbs: Asana – we all know where that fits in. Pranayama is a true blessing. Pratyahara – give yourself room to be and think; do not share accommodation if possible. Assessors, what assessors? Dharana – concentration is required; focus on the task of teaching with responsibility. Dhyana – let the called practice find your centre therefore let it become a meditation. Samadhi – we perhaps catch a glimpse. Look at the smiles when all is complete!

I would like to sincerely thank the Ottawa Iyengar yoga community and the assessors for a very satisfying weekend (I promise I will watch the kleshas). It may have been very cold outside that weekend in January but there were very warm hearts inside.

IYOGA Spring Schedule

March 5 – April 28

Monday	
5:45pm – 7:15pm	Level 1
7:30pm – 9:00pm	General
Tuesday	
9:30am – 11:00am	General
5:45pm – 7:15pm	General
7:30pm – 9:00pm	Level 1
Wednesday	
9:30am – 11:00am	Level 1
6:00pm – 7:30pm	General+
7:40pm – 9:10pm	Level 1
Thursday	
9:30am – 11:00am	General
5:45pm – 7:15pm	Level 1
7:30pm – 9:00pm	General
Saturday	
8:00am – 9:30am	General
10:00am – 11:30am	Restorative/Pre-Natal/ Specific Needs

Rates per 8-week session (HST included) Drop-in rate: \$17

1.5hour class: **\$110**

Try a Level 1 class for **\$17**

Discounts:

First time students: **Receive \$10 off** your primary class registration.

Seniors (65+) and students with valid ID: **Get \$10 off** the primary class registration.

Sign up for two classes and **get \$45 off your second class.**

Sign up for 3 classes and **save \$100.**

Registration: We are open for registration 15 minutes before and after classes. Pre-register by sending a cheque payable to the Iyengar Yoga Centre. Classes will be pro-rated after the third week of the session.

The schedule is subject to change. Please check our website www.iyoga.ca for updates.

Is Iyengar Yoga Spiritual?

by Karin Holtkamp

Over time I have occasionally heard comments that Iyengar Yoga is only physical and that it is not spiritual. I find such comments surprising considering that Mr. Iyengar has written several books on yoga philosophy, among them a translation from Sanskrit with commentary of the Yoga Sutras, one of the main works on yoga philosophy which was written around 300 BCE. The Yoga Sutras are mandatory reading for those undergoing teacher training in the Iyengar method as Mr. Iyengar expects his teachers to understand the basic concepts of yoga philosophy. In the preface to his book "Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali", Mr. Iyengar writes "Yoga is an art, a science and a philosophy." This implies to me that yoga can be approached from each one of these angles.

The word spiritual has been used quite often in recent times, so what does it exactly mean? The Canadian Oxford Dictionary is giving the following definition: adj. **1** of or relating to the human spirit or soul; not of physical things. **2** concerned with sacred religious things; holy; divine; inspired (*the spiritual life*) **3** of or relating to the Church. **4** (of the mind etc.) refined, sensitive; not concerned with material. **5** (of a relationship etc.) concerned with the soul or spirit etc., not with external reality (*his spiritual home*).

It would appear that the word spiritual can have a different meaning depending on context and interpretation. To sum it up: It describes matters outside of the physical realm and can be used either in a religious or in a non-religious context. In which way does Iyengar Yoga fit into a spiritual context? While Mr. Iyengar himself is from an orthodox Brahmin family, Hindus of the Vaishnavite tradition (followers of Lord Vishnu and his more recent incarnation Lord Krishna), he by no means expects his students to share the same religious beliefs. He leaves spiritual matters entirely up to his students as he is well aware that we are coming from a variety of religious backgrounds. Yet at the same time Mr. Iyengar is encouraging us to study such works as the Yoga Sutras (which is non-denominational) and the Bhagavad Gita because they contain the essence of yoga philosophy.

In a typical Iyengar Yoga class we are for the most part focusing on asana (postures) and pranayama (yogic breathing exercises in which prana or life force, which is carried through the breath, is accessed and increased). On a superficial level the practice may appear physical. The instructions given tend to be clear and to the point, referring to various parts of the human anatomy and how those parts are meant to line up and coordinate. The instructor is guiding the students into the asana, gives instructions on how to sustain it and how to come out. Each instructor is teaching according to their level of experience and personality. Some instructors may joke while they teach, others may weave yoga philosophy into their teaching or do both.

Let's not forget that asana are just one aspect of yoga. Yoga is a vast subject that also encompasses pranayama, philosophy, mantra, meditation and karma yoga (yoga of action or selfless service), just to name a few. Each aspect of yoga can be a spiritual practice in its own right or can be combined with others, according to the nature and capacity of the practitioner. Practicing asana with inner awareness and paying attention to one's body, breath and mind *is* a spiritual practice. You may think that what you are doing is only a physical exercise whereas the real exercise is on the mind. Emotions can and will come up, the mind likes to play little tricks. What is your reaction if you are performing an asana well and how do you respond to a challenging one? We may even encounter fear on occasion. When asked to drop over into a back bend from Sirsasana (headstand) for the first time, I was a bit apprehensive about the prospect and was imagining a variety of unfortunate possible outcomes before I brought myself to go ahead. Fortunately, I landed safely on my feet rather than on my back or worse, tumbling over sideways. This goes to show what the mind can be up to when practicing yoga.

Many asana are complex. They can look deceptively simple but in order to master them one has to be fully present, be aware of the fluctuations within body, breath and mind and practice in a non-violent way (with ahimsa). When all those elements come together it is possible to practice asana in a meditative state and one may become aware of the internal flow of prana (life force) that is circulating throughout the body like an electric current. According to yoga texts, prana is flowing through nadis, energy channels that pervade the body like a very fine network. Most texts mention a total of 72,000 nadis. Among the most prominent are the three central nadis contained within the spinal column called Ida, Pingala and Susumna. Specific areas along the spinal column where a great number of nadis converge are called chakras (wheels). The texts also mention that practising asana and pranayama helps to keep the nadis open and to remove blockages therein that could otherwise lead to disease. It is thought that prana is divine and that it is the link to our soul, the spark of the divine that, according to yoga philosophy, resides within all of us.

But what about those who have no spiritual pretensions, those who cringe at the mere mention of the word spiritual? As Mr. Iyengar stated, apart from being a philosophy, yoga is also an art and a science and there is no need to buy into anything else. Yoga's physical benefits are well documented.

Recipe Corner

Caramelized Basmati Rice

from Leigh Stevenson

This recipe is from ***Curry, fire and spice: over 150 great curries from India and Asia*** (Mridula Baljekar, 2001, ISBN 0-7548-0822-X), which I believe is now out of print (hopefully it's included in one of her other books!). This rice is delicious, and has a nice texture. It's a great addition to an Indian-themed dinner, but also mild enough to accompany any other entrée. Enjoy!

Serves 4

225g/8oz/generous 1 cup basmati rice, washed and soaked for 20-30 minutes
45ml/3 tbsp vegetable oil
20ml/4 tsp granulated (white) sugar
4-5 green cardamom pods, bruised
2.5 cm/1in piece cinnamon stick
4 cloves
1 bay leaf, crumpled
½ tsp salt
475ml/16fl oz/2 cups hot water

1. Put the basmati rice in a colander and leave to drain.
2. In a large pan, heat the vegetable oil over medium heat. When the oil is hot, add the granulated sugar and wait until it is caramelized.
3. Reduce the heat to low and add the spices and bay leaf. Let sizzle for about 15-20 seconds, then add the rice and salt. Fry gently, stirring, for 2-3 minutes.
4. Pour in the water and bring to the boil. Let it boil steadily for 2 minutes, then reduce the heat to very low. Cover the pan and cook for 8 minutes.
5. Remove the rice from the heat and let it stand for 6-8 minutes. Gently fluff up the rice with a fork and transfer to a warmed dish to serve.

Dwi Pada Viparita Dandasana

by Donna Fornelli

Dwi means both feet, Viparita means upward facing, Danda is staff or rod – a symbol of authority. This pose promotes a healthy, strong spine and the chest is fully expanded. It has a soothing effect on the mind and is beneficial for emotional disturbances and relieves mental fatigue.

Beginners should start on a chair with their heels on blocks, feet at the wall. The tailbone is slightly off the chair. Holding onto the side of the chair, lift the chest, ensuring that the trapezius muscles are descending to the waist. Keep your chin to your chest as you lie back along the seat of the chair, send the tailbone toward the wall. Straighten your legs pushing the chair a little further from the wall. Don't let your feet leave the wall. Once your legs are straight curl your chest over the edge of the chair, activate the legs strongly by pressing the feet into the wall and the shins down. Only then take your head back, lengthening from the base of the skull.

To come out, place one foot on the floor and pull yourself up using your arms. The head should come up last. Sit straight in the chair to recover.

For experienced practitioners it is done by dropping over from Sirsasana or from the floor up. Start at the wall, you might need a blanket or two under the arms. With your hands beside your ears, toward the mat edge, pressing your hands down roll up onto the top of your head, lifting the pelvis, place the hands behind the head as in Sirsasana. Pressing the arms down, lift the sacrum and tailbone up, press the feet into the floor, lift the chest forward.

To come out, slowly lower yourself down as you keep pressing your feet into the floor.



Dwi Pada Viparita Dandasana is an elegant pose. Through Mr. Iyengar's genius for using props it can be practiced by just about anyone.

Did you know? "Guru" means teacher and the suffix "-ji" means "dear". It was never Mr. Iyengar's idea that his students call him "Guruji"; his students dubbed him so. Over time, his daughter, son and granddaughter have each earned the same affectionate honorific. Intimidating? Absolutely. Tough? Given. Direct to a fault? No question. But also endearing: Guruji, Geetaji, Prashantji and Abhiji.

Being a Student in an Assessment

by Glenda Murphy

What's it like being a student in a teaching assessment? Informative, inspiring, sometimes gruelling, sometimes fun and **always** interesting. Many things went through my mind as I participated in my second student teaching assessment of the last six years. (Wow! It's hard to believe so much time has gone by!)

The first time I took part in an assessment was in 2007 when a teacher at the studio was completing (and successfully passed) the Intro I and II teaching certification. At that time there were 20-minute segments designated for teaching various categories of poses. At the time I was only able to participate in one of the morning sessions.

This time things had changed. Some of us participated in all of 7 assessment sessions which spanned the two days for full 40-minute segments. This was in contrast to several 20-minute segments, as in previous years. The list of poses for each presenter included one standing pose and compulsory inversions, and others, such as seated twists and backbends. After 7 kick-ups to sirsasana, 7 sarvangasana, and four rounds of revolved standing poses, interspersed among other asana, it was a rather vigorous weekend!

Coming to this assessment, I had taken three years of teacher training and attended numerous intensives, so my experience was very different from the previous one where I was a student only. In that light, it was particularly interesting to see the technique involved for the various candidates and the various styles of presentation.

Perhaps what really stood out was the dedication of those present...the assessors and assessors in training as they walked around the room taking notes... (Clearly, this is really serious business!) ...**and** the candidates who have prepared for so long and come to realize a dream. Those of us who participated as students were excited for the candidates and even a little nervous for them ourselves!

It was not necessarily the most relaxing or rejuvenating yoga practice – and we were advised of this by the assessors – as the main focus was on having the teacher trainees teach key poses. As a result there was the potential to feel somewhat out of balance at the end of the allotted 40 minutes, depending on the poses and how the candidate might have taught.

In between each segment we had 20 minutes to regroup and do what we needed to balance out our practice. We might choose to use the time to rest, do a restorative pose, grab a quick snack or have a chat with a fellow participant in order to “compare notes”. (I opted for each of the above at one time or another throughout the weekend...).

Overall, the process was rather rigorous. We were instructed to only execute the steps that we had been told (in other words, not to add in corrections or steps that candidates might have overlooked) and not to ask questions of the teachers being assessed. At times, it was a little trying to undergo varied adjustments, but it is all part of the process.

On Saturday evening I was a bit tired and took a hot bath – a bubble bath is bliss at times like this! On Sunday I was back in full swing, and careful to conserve my energy in between three consecutive rounds of assessments. I left feeling chipper after an extended guided savasana, which was given as a special treat from one of the assessors in training.

In the end I was grateful to have participated in the process, for the camaraderie shared with fellow Iyengar practitioners and for the grace and precision of Iyengar yoga. I left the studio filled with admiration and respect for the rigorous and exacting technique and the high standards of certification for Iyengar teachers.

A Day of Yoga with Shirley Daventry French

Sunday, March 25, 2012

Don't miss this rare opportunity to study with one of Canada's foremost Iyengar yoga teachers. Shirley has been studying directly with B.K.S. Iyengar, one of the world's greatest living yoga masters since 1979. She also assisted in editing Mr. Iyengar's book "Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali", a translation with commentary of one of the main works on yoga philosophy, the Yoga Sutras, which dates from around 300 BCE.

During this workshop Shirley will share with us her extensive knowledge of asana, pranayama and yoga philosophy as well as her delightful sense of humour, bringing depth as well as lightness to these ancient teachings.

Schedule:

9:30am - 12:30pm: Asana practice

1:30pm - 3:00pm: Philosophy discussion

3:00pm - 4:30pm: Pranayama

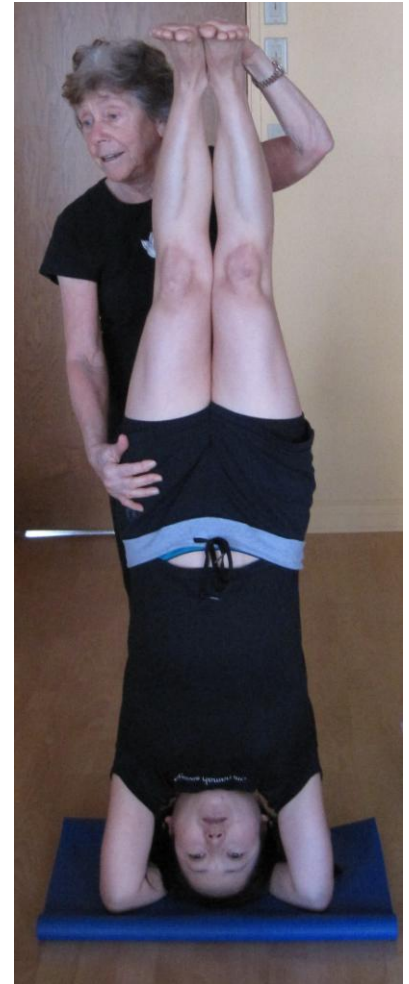
Cost: \$110, IYOGA members: \$100, all taxes included

This workshop is open to students from all yoga traditions with at least 6 months of experience.

To register please mail a cheque, payable to IYOGA and mail to 784 Bronson Ave, Ottawa ON K1S 4G4. Register at the centre using Interac, Visa or Mastercard.

To ensure a space please register by March 15.

Refunds, less \$25, will only be made if your space can be filled.



Props For Sale*

Belts	\$11.30
Blankets	\$34.00
Blocks – Foam	\$11.30
Blocks – Pine	\$20.00
Blocks – Cedar	\$24.00
Bolsters	\$56.50
Head Wraps	\$ 8.50
Mats - Studio	\$28.25
Mats - Travel	\$22.60

* Prices included HST.

Books For Sale*

How to Use Yoga	\$12.60
Illuminations	\$10.50
Light on Yoga	\$38.80
Light on Yoga Sutras	\$31.50
Light on Pranayama	\$23.73
Light on Life	\$36.70
Yoga A Gem for Women	\$31.50
Yoga the Iyengar Way	\$37.75
DVD – Yoga for Beginners	\$28.25

* Prices included HST.