



September 2018

### **Spring into Summer Special:**

From 1 September to 31 October you can purchase a month unlimited pass for just \$130 (normally \$170). The Student/senior discount month pass is reduced from \$140 to \$100. You may buy one anytime in September and one anytime in October.

Previously we have offered this special in October and November but we have decided to bring the special forward by a month to more accurately correspond with the arrival of spring.

Leap in and take advantage of this great special to make yoga part of your daily routine. And be the change you want to see in your life.

### **40 Days to Personal Revolution:**

We begin this course on Sunday 7 October at 6:00 pm and it runs through to 11 November.

The course involves the following:

- Weekly workshops in which we meditate together, practice asana together, discuss nutrition and discuss themes and matters pertaining to our ways of being. The meditation and asana practices start out small and build up week by week. No prior yoga experience is required to participate.

- During the course you are invited to meditate twice daily and practice asana daily at least 6 days per week, either by yourself following the practice we will lead you through at each workshop, or at the studio.
- In each week you will be given a theme and a nutritional focus and you are asked to follow that theme and be aware of the nutritional focus. The course is NOT a diet and you are not told what you may or may not eat.



- In each week you are asked to reflect upon and answer a series of personal inquiry questions and we discuss these when we next meet in our workshops.
- We provide you with a copy of Baron Baptiste's book, 40 Days to Personal Revolution, along with weekly hand-outs at our workshops and daily emails to keep you engaged and committed.
- During the course of the programme Margo and Hamish are available to

discuss any issues or concerns that may be coming up for you.

This course has the potential to powerfully re-align you with your physical and mental well-being and to renew your sense of purpose and direction in life. Choose to enrol now because there is no better time.

Your financial investment is:

- Annual members - \$165
- Non-annual members - \$385

In each case you get a copy of Baron Baptiste's book, *40 Days to Personal Revolution*, attendance at all six weekly workshops, all your practices at Apollo Power Yoga during the course, weekly hand-outs and daily motivational emails plus access to Hamish and Margo to address any concerns or questions you may have or to seek guidance.

### Workshops:

Our next workshop is called **Next Step Up** with Hamish. It is being held on Saturday 13 October 12:00 – 2:30 pm.

In this workshop you will be given the tools to lift your practice to the next level. In this workshop we will:

- develop transitions so that you can move with power and grace around your mat,
- create and then expand on crow pose to give you confidence and ability in hand balancing poses, and
- introduce you to advanced variations of poses (including flip dog, side plank, bound extended side angle and bird or paradise, half-moon and chapasana, wheel pose and pigeon) that feature in our regular group classes so that you can explore your own extension on a daily basis.

Fee is \$70 (annual members \$35).

Book at the studio or email [hamis@apollopoweryoga.co.nz](mailto:hamis@apollopoweryoga.co.nz) or phone Hamish on 0210551884.

### Children's Yoga During School Holidays:

We've been asked to offer, through the studio, yoga lessons for children during the school holidays. If there's sufficient interest, we're happy to do so.

The classes will be suitable for ages 7-12. Parents are welcome to practice along with their children.



We'll schedule 45 minute lessons at **1:30pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays October 2, 4, 9 and 11**. The cost will be \$10/lesson per child. If we have at least 10 children per lesson registered and paid for by 28 September, we'll go ahead with the lessons.

To register your children for the lessons, contact [margo@apollopoweryoga.co.nz](mailto:margo@apollopoweryoga.co.nz)

### Lululemon Athletica 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday Practice:

Thanks to those who came out on Saturday 22 September to practice with us in the open air of Victoria Square to celebrate Lululemon Athletica being twenty years old. The Christchurch store is just 5 years old and started in a container next to Ballantynes in the Re:START mall. Now they have a more

permanent home on Cashel Street between High and Manchester Streets.



We were greatly blessed with a clear, mild morning with little wind and Hamish managed to project his voice unamplified in the open spaces to be heard by more than 60 people who showed up to practice. We were similarly blessed the last time we ran an outdoors class back in March when we were invited to hold a class at Richard Greenlees' Summer section.

We will have another outdoor class over the coming summer because, just for a change, they are great fun.

### **We Are Not Stocking Bottled Water Any More:**

Apollo Power Yoga will not be stocking plastic bottles of water any longer. We are on the last few bottles of our current supply and when they are gone there will be no more.

Instead, we have purchased a Kangen water filter. You are most welcome to help yourself to water from the filter in the room behind the reception desk.

PLEASE run only cold water through the filter. Hot water damages the filter. Many thanks.

We have a limited supply of clean, recycled bottles and cups for you to use if you do not have your own. Once used, please return

these so that we may clean them again and re-use them.

### **The Whole is the Goal:**

On the verge of commencing our latest 40 Days to Personal Revolution course I have the opportunity to reflect on the themes and principles we work with in that course. One of the principles is, The Whole is the Goal.

In commencing or continuing yoga practice we each have a goal or intended outcome from our practice. My goal was to heal me of injuries caused by running so that I could do more running. It was a purely physical outcome that I sought and I imagined that I would achieve that outcome quite quickly and would then have no further use for yoga.

How incredibly naïve I was! I see many other students coming to class with a variety of similarly naïve or unenlightened goals in mind. For some the goal seems to be a degree of physical perfection epitomised by a special pose. For some it seems to be exposure to potential partners.

We have a question on our new client registration form that asks what the student seeks from yoga. The most common three responses, often given as one answer, are strength, flexibility and peace of mind.

The poses in our power vinyasa practices will make you strong. In the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali in the third book, the portion on Accomplishments, the promise is made that yoga practice will confer upon you an adamant hardness of body.

I prefer the word mobility to flexibility. Mere flexibility lacks the connotation of functionality that I seek from the stretching elements of yoga and also lacks the sense of total body integrity – my suppleness coupling with my

strength to allow me to move in a fluid and unrestricted way.

Whether in vinyasa class or the more stretch-focused restore classes you will be exposed to the opportunity for enhanced mobility and daily I see the outcomes of students who have experienced a tremendous arc in their physical mobility from the time they began practicing to the present.

Peace of mind. It is in the realms of this desired outcome that we begin to touch upon the Whole is the Goal. What goes in to creating peace of mind?

The first element, I believe, is being at peace with oneself. The greatest change that has come over me as a result of practicing yoga has been a change in the way I perceive myself. I wrote an item for a local legal newsletter shortly after we opened Apollo Power Yoga in which I shared my experience of not liking who I was as a lawyer. Feedback came to me from several sources including from one lawyer who had been a couple of years junior to me in experience. She said that I had always been pleasant and helpful and that what I wrote about my self-perception had been a surprise to her because it did not match her perception of me.

Therein lies the issue. The way one sees oneself can be very far removed from who we really are. Through yoga practice make the shift in your perception from disliking yourself to seeing yourself as valuable, worthy and deserving of your own self-respect and esteem.

The human conscience is a powerful tool. It can act as a regulator of our conduct *vis-à-vis* the world around us and hold us accountable to our responsibilities as social creatures. When I have a guilty conscience about something (something I have done that I know I ought not to have done, or something I have

neglected to do that I ought to have done) then I find it hard to rest and I become fatigued, irritable and outwardly ill-at-ease with the world when it is the inner domain that troubles me.

Here, again, the Yoga Sutras offer guidance. The eight limbs of yoga begin with the yamas and the niyamas. The five yamas and the first two niyamas are:

1. Non-harming by thought, word or deed – ahimsa.
2. Not taking that which is not freely given – asteya.
3. Being truthful – satya.
4. Being continent in the management of energy, especially sexual energy – brahmacharya.
5. Non-covetousness – aparigraha.
6. Purity – saucha.
7. Contentment or acceptance – santosha.

By following these principles one can see that one's conscience will be free of concern and that will feed peace of mind.

Very few people identify improved breathing as a desired outcome of yoga. However, improved breathing has been a real boon to me from practicing yoga, especially since I began Baptiste-style power vinyasa yoga, learned *ujjayi* breathing and made nose breathing (notwithstanding a deviated septum which makes nose breathing more difficult for me) my usual pattern.

Curiously, the yoga practice I had engaged in before being introduced to power vinyasa yoga offered what it called two breathing exercises, one at the start of the class and one at the end, but during the main body of the class breathing was neglected to a very great extent in my experience of being taught by something like 20 or more teachers of that style.

Watching my breath and practicing ujjayi and other forms of pranayama generates awareness in me of the power of my breath. As a rugby player and a runner I proceeded on the basis that volume of breath was important. Coaches would run us hard at rugby practice and then tell us to suck in big breaths. As a runner I had some inkling of the power of breathing through my nose. I would use this technique when feeling the stitch. I would breathe in slowly through my nose to fill my lungs and then breathe out through my mouth.

As a yoga practitioner I regulate my energy (in Sanskrit called prana) by breathing. If a pose is tough, I breathe. If I want to move, I breathe. Yoga has given me access to a new understanding of the quality of breath.

Breathing awareness creates internal awareness which generates a sense of self and spirit. Ah, the whole. Not just the physical being. Not just thinking as the dominant focus of consciousness. But spirit or the Purusha as the essence of being.

Various meditation teachers state that in breathing consciously one should ask the question "Who am I?" or "Who is watching my breath?" These questions can be applied to watching thoughts too. Are you, your truest essence, your thoughts or an observer, distinct from your thoughts?

Presence to all elements of one's being, body, mind, breath/prana/energy and spirit is the goal of yoga and to bring those elements into harmony such that nothing is out of balance and no element undermines or denies power to any other(s).

Make your whole being the goal of your practice and experience yoga as a way being rather than just as a way of stretching.

### Asana Spotlight:

Continuing our sequence of lunging poses our focus asana this month is crescent lunge (*anjaneyasana*). This is a great pose to build strength, mobility, balance and positive energy. It also has great options for extension and we will address these extension options in next month's edition of this magazine.

- Start in downward facing dog. Have your hands just wider than shoulder width apart and your feet at hip width. Step your right foot forward to the inside of your right hand. Keep your left foot as it was in downward facing dog, with the foot pointing straight forward and the heel of your foot lifted.
- Set your right foot on 12 o'clock. Align your right knee so that it sits directly over your right ankle. Ideally, take a long enough lunge that you can bend your front knee to a 90 degree angle. The following image of Hamish in crescent lunge shows well a 90 degree bend at his front knee. It also shows the length of his base. Notwithstanding his height, it is good that he has used close to the full length of his mat for this pose.



- Having your front knee bent to a lesser degree is quite acceptable. Bending deeper than 90 degrees, however, is not recommended. Principally this is so because a deeper bend results in stability coming from tensile forces and stretch alone and there is a loss of contraction in your thigh muscles as a source of stability. The ideal is eccentric loading where the muscles of your legs are stretching but are carrying a load at the same time.
- Press the heel of your left foot forward so that it stacks over the balls of your left foot. In some older photos of crescent lunge performed by Baptiste practitioners you may see the back heel of the student pushed back behind the line of the balls of their back foot (see the picture).



*This is no longer the recommended back heel position in crescent lunge.*

- Now, however, we recommended pressing your back heel forward and creating a higher balance over the balls of your back foot and less collapse backwards.
- Pull the muscles of your left leg to the bone and press the back of your left thigh towards the ceiling. Again, Hamish is doing this well in the picture of crescent lunge.
- Balance is often difficult in crescent lunge. Activate your adductor muscles at your inner thighs and pull your thigh bones in towards your spine. Tone and lift your pelvic floor (mula bandha). Lift the front of your pelvis slightly upwards towards your navel and draw the pit of your belly inwards towards your spine (uddiyana bandha).
- Square your hips towards the front of the room. Draw your right thigh straight back and in towards your spine. Rotate your left hip forwards towards the front of the room to create a square.
- Lift your torso upright over your hips and extend your arms to the sky.
- Lengthen your waist and stretch up the two side seams of your torso.
- Rotate your arm bones inwards so that the palms of your hands face one another.
- Draw your shoulder blades flat onto your back and take your shoulders and arms towards the back of the room. Lift your thoracic spine up into your chest. If it feels right to do so lift your chin, open your throat and take your head back towards the back of the room too. Track your drishti gaze back across the ceiling to arch back further.
- Another aid to extension is to bend your back knee slightly and then create a shift in your pelvis. Tip your tailbone downwards a little (there is not much movement possible in this lunging position), draw the front of your pelvis upwards a little towards you navel and engage uddiyana bandha. Having made this shift in your pelvis, draw your shoulder blades to your back and arch back.
- Create your back bend from the top down; from your shoulders down your back through the joints of your thoracic spine into your lumbar spine rather than collapsing straight away into excessive compression in your low back without activating any extension in your mid and upper back.
- These actions of spinal extension (back bending) create the crescent for which the pose is named.

- Those suffering from disc prolapse/herniation or other sensitivity in their low back should limit the degree of their back bend and keep their torso upright or even lean forward somewhat. If taking this second option, engage uddiyana bandha powerfully and draw your back muscles from the outer periphery towards your spine to create stability.



- Breathe calmly with ujjayi pranayama for 5-10 breaths before flowing to low plank, upwards facing dog and downward facing dog and repeating the pose with your left foot forward.

Do the work to create a strong, stable foundation in crescent lunge and reap the reward in freedom in your upper body to open and express outwards. This is a majestic pose. Generate it and be in the experience of your majesty.

### From Baron Baptiste:



*Transformation is an endless process to be lived. It cannot be captured or possessed; you can only participate in it.*

### The Blue Rower Fundraising Quiz Night:

Isaac Giesen, aka the Blue Rower, is holding a Pub Quiz Fundraiser with raffle and silent auction at The Elmwood Trading Co.

The date of the event is **11 October at 7:30 pm**. Tickets are \$20 each and participants will need to be in teams of six. Food and two raffle tickets are included in the ticket price.



Isaac is raising funds for mental health awareness and suicide prevention and specifically is connected with the charities Victim Support, BraveHearts and Black Dog Institute. For more information about his causes visit [thebluerower.com](http://thebluerower.com).

Isaac will be rowing solo across the Atlantic Ocean in the Talisker Challenge later this year as part of his fundraising programme.

Namaste

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