



January 2015

### **Waitangi Day – 6 February 2015**

On Friday 6 February 2015, Waitangi Day, we will be open for two classes only:

- 10:00am Power All Levels 90 minutes
- 5:30pm Power Groove 60 minutes

### **December 2014 – Apollo Yogis Go Wild:**

Rather unexpectedly, December 2014 saw more vibrant yogis than ever practicing at Apollo. We know that everyone gets busy near the end of the year, and the warm weather beckons people into the great outdoors. So yoga studios expect a bit of a downturn in numbers of people practicing in December/January – and most studios shut up shop for a few weeks as a consequence. At Apollo, we've made the conscious decision to be open and available for our yogis whenever they want to practice. And true to form, our yogis stormed through our doors in greater numbers than ever before during December – our biggest month ever! Well done to all of you dedicated yogis who kept up your yoga practice at a time of many tempting but less healthy alternatives.

### **Gratitude – Christmas Wishes:**

We were blown away by the generosity shown by our yoga students during the holiday season. We were showered with gifts, including Christmas cakes, truffles, chocolate mousse cakes, banana cakes, amazing photographs, and lovely plants. And these are some of the heart-warming things that people told us in their Christmas cards:

“Finding Apollo was one of the highlights of 2014. At Apollo I find peace, strength and happiness. Thank you from all of my heart. I wish you a wonderful new year, and I look forward to practicing and growing with you in 2015. Namaste.”

“Thank you so much for your energy and guidance over the past year. The culture you have cultivated in this space is truly special and I feel very privileged to be in the position to suck it all up! Best wishes for the holiday season and seasons to come.”

“From the bottom of my heart, THANK YOU, for helping me to revolutionise my life.”

“Thanks for all you do... it has made a tremendous difference to me; and I will always be extremely grateful.”

“Thank you for creating a welcoming, calming, warm and powerful environment for me to practice in. It's been a pleasure to be in your classes this year.”

“Thanks for these wonderful months of yoga – I've never enjoyed yoga like I do before now. I feel the changes impacting all parts of my life. Apollo is one of my 2014 highlights. You've really created something special with the studio, it's such a welcoming and safe feeling environment, with a lovely positive culture among all the students – that's down to you two. I hope you have a wonderful Christmas and thank you for everything you both do. You are both an inspiration.”

We are truly grateful for each and every student who has come to Apollo to build this powerful practice. Creating a yoga studio in the heart of this rebuilding city has demanded a certain amount of sacrifice on our part, with Hamish taking on a commercial tenancy while the trading conditions are still far from ideal, and Margo letting go of her legal practice so that she could take on full time teaching at Apollo. As is the case with almost every fledgling business, there is a time while you're in free fall, and you just have to trust that what you're doing is the right thing, and that it will all come right, eventually. The expressions of gratitude from our students during this holiday season, and their continued strong practice, reinforces our certainty that Apollo Power Yoga is the right way to go.

### **Language During Yoga Class and other Exercise – Up Beat is the Right Beat:**

One of the tenets of teaching Baptiste Power Vinyasa is to leave students in their own greatness. And one of the major methods of achieving that goal is to use positive, up beat language while teaching. You will have noticed that our teaching at Apollo focuses on your strength, power, and increasing ability, to leave you in your own greatness.

Our use of positive language during yoga class is very important in helping our students achieve their goals both within and outside of the classroom. While you're practicing yoga, you are "in the zone", where your subconscious mind is very receptive to suggestion and is programmed to achieve what is suggested. Just as during meditation, you move out of the normal state of consciousness (beta state) into heightened consciousness (alpha and theta states) where you are a super-learning machine. If your teacher is telling you that you are strong, powerful, and mobile, you will be. And you will take your strength, power and mobility into all aspects of your life, be it other physical activity, your workplace, or your family life.

Conversely, negative language and imagery used during yoga class depresses students and keeps

them in their weaknesses. Yogis who have only ever practiced at Apollo will be surprised to hear it, but there are yoga studios where the teachers say things like, "Your back should hurt like hell when you backbend!", "You must kill yourself for 90 minutes!", and "If you're doing the pose 95% right, you're doing it 100% wrong!" At Bikram studios, and those studios where the teachers have a background in teaching Bikram, these and other negative phrases are a standard part of the teachers' monologue.

And there are gym classes where the instructor and even other students will yell at and berate students for not meeting arbitrary standards of lifts, chin-ups or whatever. This can push students into the danger zone, where they are attempting actions which are beyond their current strength to practice safely. The peer pressure placed on students in cross-fit classes, for example, can leave them feeling that they've disappointed the teacher and other students if they don't achieve certain goals set by the teacher.



This negative language feeds into the negative self-image and beliefs which, unfortunately, quite a few people hold. If they're used to putting themselves down with negative self-talk, then a teacher telling them during yoga class that they're not good enough and need to be punished, seems right to them. It reinforces their negative self-beliefs and, like many things that are harmful to us, can be quite addictive. People who are putting time and effort into their yoga practice but aren't improving their strength or mobility are usually being undermined by the teacher and/or their selves telling them that they are not good enough and probably never will be. And people who are being stressed and

depressed by the talk that goes on during yoga class will very likely be producing cortisol as a response, which tends to make them develop and hold onto fat, particularly around their middles.

A good example of the power of positive talk during yoga and other exercise is the Seattle Seahawks American Football (gridiron) team. A few years ago, their coaching staff took a different approach than the traditional hard-ass style of coaching. Whereas other football teams continued abusing their players by screaming and yelling at them, berating them for not achieving goals, banning water drinks as punishment, and even throwing basketballs at their heads (!), the Seahawks coaching staff gave their players lots of positive, encouraging messages, and included yoga and meditation as part of the team's fitness regime. It was no coincidence that the Seahawks went on to win the Superbowl.

The talk you're hearing while you're practicing yoga is very important to your outcomes, both within and outside of the yoga studio. And that includes the talk you hear from yourself. Criticising yourself for not "achieving" a pose will not help you achieve it or any other pose – quite the opposite. When you find the positives in your practice and praise yourself for them, you will see positive change occurring. Believe the Apollo Power Yoga's teachers' messages to you that you are strong, powerful and mobile, and you will be.

### **Workshops:**

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

We will be running this Baron Baptiste-inspired programme of personal growth and development from 22 February through to 29 March. We will meet each Sunday at midday to meditate, practice, discuss matters of nutrition and delve into matters pertaining to our way of being.

The cost for the programme is \$300.00 and includes a copy of Baron Baptiste's book, *40 Days*

*to Personal Revolution*. The cost for annual members is \$170.00 including the book.

If everything in your life is fine or you do not want to change any aspect of your existence then do nothing. If you are committed to your growth, development and the achievement of your greatest potential and happiness then sign up for this programme now. Places are limited so the sooner you commit to yourself by enrolling for 40 Days the better.

#### **Budokon® Weekend**



Thank you Cameron and thank you everyone who showed up big for our workshops over the weekend of 24 and 25 January. New takes on familiar actions, new use of our bodies and new adventures in bringing ourselves face to face with our doubts and uncertainties in order to find greatness in ourselves. We hope to see you in 2016 Cameron and have you turn our worlds upside down again then!



#### **Asana Spotlight:**

This month we continue our series on inversions. Our focus asana this month is *salamba sarvangasana* (shoulder stand). *Salamba* means

supported and *sarvangasana* means whole body pose. It is described by B.K.S. Iyengar as the mother of all poses in his book *Light on Yoga*.

There are cautions with inversions. While shoulder stand sees you bearing weight across the breadth of your shoulders there is pressure on the lower cervical spine (C6 and C7). Do not try to push through pain in your neck. Take care and feel free to use folded blankets under your shoulders. The use of blankets will both cushion your shoulders and reduce the degree of forward flexion of your neck. Iyengar recommends using your yoga mat over the top of the blankets so you still have the gripping qualities of your mat at play.

- Begin by lying on your back (if using blankets they should be beneath your back and neck with your head at the floor). Tone your inner thighs towards the floor. Flatten your shoulder blades to the floor by relaxing your chest and turning your upper arms outwards and downwards a little. Lengthen your low back, your tailbone reaching towards your heels, and tone *uddiyana bandha*.
- Turn your palms to the sky and press the backs of your hands to the floor.
- Keep your upper body still as you draw your knees in towards your chest. Keep your arms at the floor and keep your knees together.
- Keep pressing the earth with the backs of your arms and keep drawing your knees inwards towards your chest as your bottom and hips lift from the floor.
- As your knees come towards your face and your low back is lifted from the floor bring your hands to your low back either side of your spine.
- Check in here – are your legs still together? If not, re-integrate by engaging your inner thighs. It is important to enter this pose from a position of stability rather than having your legs flailing and pulling you off centre as you try to lift them to the sky.
- Having lifted your tail as high towards the sky as you can and adjusted your hands as high

on your back and as low towards the floor as you can, bring your knees over your hips. Engage your buttocks.

- Finally straighten your legs to the sky. Press the soles of your feet as if you were going to stand on the ceiling. Your buttocks remain engaged and your inner thighs remain engaged with your legs together.
- Look to come up with control. Move slowly rather than trying to fling your legs up in hope of finding a balance point
- If you lose balance, tilt to the side or your legs begin to lean over your head it is easiest to correct by bending your legs at the knees and re-centring from that position.



- Lengthen your waist and your tail towards the sky and reach up strongly with your legs.
- Keep your elbows as close towards one another as you can, keeping your chest broad and full of breath.

There is so much to take from this pose. It aids digestion, relieves strain upon your heart and has a soothing, relaxing effect upon your nervous

system. The lymph in your body responds to gravity and by inverting your body you stir the lymph and let it flow against the usual current. This enlivens your immune system. All these beneficial elements to the pose come simply from you taking the pose and allowing it to work upon you.

### **Bhagavad Gita:**

This month we pick up our traversal of the *Bhagavad Gita* at Chapter Seven, The Yoga of Knowledge and Renunciation.

This chapter begins with Krishna telling Arjuna that there are eight aspects to God's nature: earth, water, air, fire, *akasha* (ether, space), mind, intellect and ego. These are base forms of nature (*prakriti*). Sitting above them is a higher order of God's *prakriti* which gives life to the whole universe. Krishna says that all things originate from either the base or higher nature of God and that apart from God there is nothing at all.

When people lose their sense of the divine they fall into their lower selves and suffer. The good people worship the divine. They may do so for one of four reasons: from wisdom; to be raised from poverty to wealth; to be relieved of suffering; to understand life. Those who worship from wisdom excel.

Over many lifetimes a soul acquires wisdom and takes refuge in God. Before then, the baser nature of people holds sway and keeps drawing them into the pursuit of personal desires.

Such people remain deluded by the forces of attraction and aversion – the forces which spawn all opposites. These dualities subject people to illusion from birth but the soul's wisdom can free them. By doing good people come to see the divine in all things – like Mother Teresa working with the poor in the slums. She did not just see the dirt nor smell the stench nor recoil from the

disease. She simply saw the humanity, and in the humanity the divinity, of all people.

Krishna concludes the chapter by telling Arjuna that those conscious of God's presence in all things are likewise present to God at the time of their mortal death and become of God.

Chapter Eight, the Yoga of the Absolute Truth, begins with Arjuna full of questions. What is Brahman, the Absolute? What is the supreme Self? What is karma? What is this earthly realm? What is the kingdom of Light? What is the essence of self-sacrifice? How does one make such an offering? How does one control the mind at the time of death so as to stay conscious of God?

Krishna begins his reply by asserting that his highest nature is the imperishable Brahman that gives life to all beings and dwells in individuals as the supreme Self.

This ties in with the meaning of the word "Namaste" with which we acknowledge each other at the conclusion of practice:

*That which is eternal and divine within me acknowledges that which is eternal and divine within you. When I am in that place in me and you are in that place in you, then we are one.*

Krishna continues his response to Arjuna saying that Krishna's offering that causes all beings to come forth is karma. The perishable earthly realm is the physical body and the *Purusha* (the seer inside us all) is the realm of light and the object of all worship. Krishna alone is the essence of all sacrifice.

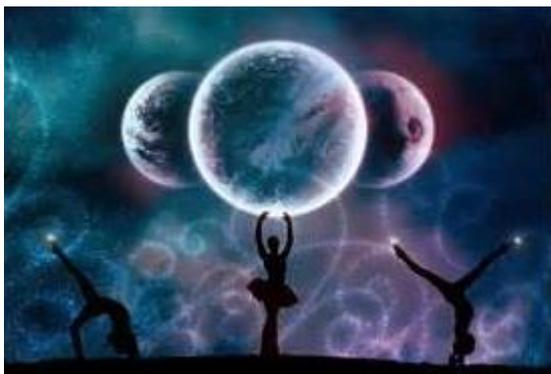
Krishna tells Arjuna that it is an effort to keep God at the forefront of one's mind at any time let alone at the time of one's death but through persistent effort and constant practice it is possible. Practising Yoga entrenches a person in the state of divine awareness that lets them join God at the time of their death.

There are two *slokas* (verses) that contain the essence of the whole chapter:

*The eternal truth can be experienced by those who learn to control their minds, renounce all personal attachments and thirst only for Brahman.*

*At the time of leaving the body, mentally withdraw attention from the gates of the body (eight openings in the physical body) in to the heart area, and from there direct the prana (life force) into the head (specifically to the ajna or brow chakra which we have discussed in a previous magazine).*

Krishna then says one should say aloud or think the sacred word Om and you will leave the mortal body and attain the supreme goal. Every creature returns to nothing but only those who realise God transcend life and death. Krishna then gives advice about the patience in the contemplation of God required to be freed from the cycle of incarnation and reincarnation. He speaks of the ages of earth (the *Yugas*) which are millennia-long and tells Arjuna he must have a sense of these ages passing as if they were the day and night. In the cosmic dawn of the ages all things begin to be created and eventually become fully manifest and then as the evening of the ages draws down all things begin to merge back into oneness and an unmanifested state.



This is somewhat like the theory of a Big Bang in which the universe came into being and then a Big Crunch in which the universe implodes as the density of its objects exceeds the rate of its expansion with the result that the universe simply becomes a grouping of black holes that eventually collapse into one dense nothingness.

Krishna says that in addition to the ceaseless cycle of creation and merging there is another eternal reality that is God's nature. Upon death one may either fall into the cycle of re-creation or, through the practice of Yoga and unwavering devotion, one may be freed from that cycle and merge with God in the supreme abode.

### **Do You Store Your Mat at Apollo?**

If you store your mat at Apollo we ask that you periodically take your mat home with you to clean it. Using the spray bottles provided in the practice room goes some way to ensuring there is mat hygiene but it is of limited benefit in the long run for mats that are absorbent.

The Lululemon Athletica mats (especially the absorbent ones called The Mat and The Big Mat) suck in all your sweat and, as they dry, the water content of the sweat evaporates but the toxins excreted in your sweat accumulate in your mat. It is these toxins that stink.

Take your mat home, hose it down (the shiny side needs to be hosed but it will seem like the water is being repelled) with emphasis on the soft side until the mat is thoroughly saturated with fresh water and then let it air dry.

Thank you.

### **Nutrition – Chia Seed Magic:**

Chia seeds are great. They deliver protein, omega-three fatty acids, and fiber—and they taste heavenly when paired with fruit and coconut milk, as in this super-simple parfait. It's gluten-free, dairy-free, grain-free, and really delicious. Thanks to South City New World for sharing this wonderful recipe with us.

#### **Ingredients (for each serving)**

- 3 tablespoons white or black chia seeds
- 3/4 cup unsweetened coconut milk or almond milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 sprinkle ground cinnamon

- 2 teaspoons honey or maple syrup (optional)
- 3/4 cup low-sugar colourful fruit, such as raspberries, blueberries, kiwifruit

#### Preparation

1. In a cereal bowl, stir together chia seeds, milk, vanilla, cinnamon, and honey.
2. Let sit for 15 minutes or refrigerate overnight and chia seeds will expand, soften, and absorb liquid, to form a tapioca-like creamy pudding.
3. Layer chia tapioca in a tall glass with fruit.



#### Team Korudouble7 Drives For Kidscan:

Two of Apollo's students, Peter and Janene, are Team KoruDouble7 and are driving a Mini from Kaitaia to Bluff in the **Pork Pie Charity Run 2015** at Easter.

You can help them raise money for the KidsCan Charitable Trust which helps meet the physical and nutritional needs of disadvantaged Kiwi kids. There are two fundraising nights. One being a Quiz Night on Sunday 22nd Feb and the other a 'Goodbye Pork Pie' Movie night on Thurs 12th March. For details please see the posters at the Apollo Power Yoga studio. You can also donate independently to their cause at <https://givealittle.co.nz/cause/KoruDouble7> and follow Team KoruDouble7 on facebook.

Namaste

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