



July 2016

New Friday Power Restore Class:

As of Friday 22 July we are holding Power Restore classes at 4:00pm on Friday afternoons for an hour. Reclaim your body, breath and soul and stretch deep to round out the working week.



Busy Classes:

Those of you attending classes in the evening will have noticed how busy classes are becoming. Thank you all for your support of these classes. It has not happened yet but the day will come when we will be full and are forced to turn away students. In the event that this happens we will be very sorry. For the time being we will operate as we have been on a first-come-first-served basis. When the room is full we will simply close the door.

Students inevitably ask about booking systems. There are a number of issues

surrounding bookings including no-shows and keeping space for walk-ins by people new to the studio. We will look at all the options and keep you informed as developments occur.

Aversion and Attraction:

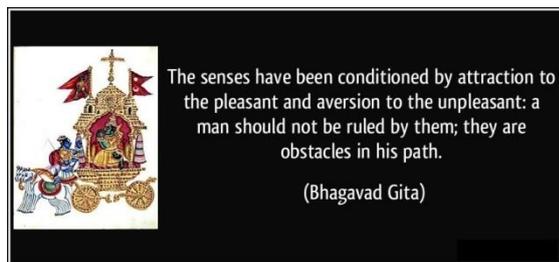
Yoga philosophy tells us that suffering in life comes from our attraction for certain things and our aversion for other things. For instance, we may have an attraction for sweet tasting foods that causes our health to suffer in the form of tooth decay or Type-2 diabetes or obesity. We may have an aversion to pain that causes us to be very insular and cautious and we suffer through missed opportunities for fun, adventure and life experience.

Aversion and attraction are types of attachment. We are attached to the pleasurable sensations to which we are attracted. We are attached to the behaviours or conditions that we perceive protect us from the things to which we have an aversion. The ancient yoga texts, such as the Bhagavad Gita, the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali or the Vedas, assert that we cannot be liberated souls, content and fulfilled in any moment, so long as we carry attachments.

If someone were to sit to meditate they would find it difficult to attain a calm state of clarity in their mind if they wanted the room warmer

or the floor softer or the surroundings quieter or wanted something to eat or drink. The attractions and aversions, their attachments, would be impediments to the meditative process. What should the person do? They might heat the room ahead of time and collect cushions and soft blankets to sit or kneel upon and they might ensure they have eaten and drunken all they desire before they sit to meditate. They might ensure that there is no one else around who will make any noise and that their telephone is turned off or set to silent. And this becomes the condition, the only condition, in which they can meditate.

This is not the way advocated by the ancient texts. This way is the way of fuelling attachments. The person who craves sex and sits in meditation thinking of sex is not meditating. The Gita has a short and direct statement that the person who sits in the attitude of meditation but nonetheless turns their mind to sense objects is deluded and a hypocrite. Instead, the way forward is to experience the attractions and aversions but to refuse to yield to them until the habit of reactively acting out one's attachments is replaced with the habit of just being. Baron Baptiste summarises this principle as "Relax with what is".



When you feel the lure of an attachment, recognise it for what it is, choose not to give in to the attachment and put your mental focus on something tangible and present, such as your breath, which will hold you calm and steady. The craving for that to which you are attached will go away. It takes discipline and

practice. There is a good definition in the Sutras of practice. There, practice is said to be that which is adhered to in all earnestness, for a long time and without relent. There is nothing wishy-washy about that definition. It is a call to commitment. It is a call to making a new way of being for yourself. It is a call to be conscious and intentional in what you do rather than be reactive and habitual in your behaviour. Again as Baron Baptiste says, be a conscious act rather than an unconscious accident.

Be present to the habitual patterns of thinking or behaviour. Notice to what your mind is drawn and make a conscious choice. Does it serve me to think this way or not? If it does not, deliberately turn your mind elsewhere or, as we say, shift your vision. Berating yourself over your weight or the way you appear in the mirror or over any slip-ups you may have made in the day or whatever is ultimately dispiriting. Acknowledge what is, and be for yourself exactly as you are and exactly as you are not. If growth is possible, as it almost inevitably is, then let acceptance be the fertile soil in which to plant the seed of your future growth.

Become present to your habitual and unconscious ways of behaving. Ask yourself whether they do or do not serve you. Make a conscious choice to pursue them or not. Become the author of your future by acting intentionally and in the moment.

You will find that as you become present to your thoughts and behaviours you will be able to watch from the deepest level of your Self and you will notice tendencies of attraction and aversion. You will then notice that you are not a victim of craving or weakness, nor an unwitting puppet tossed and played with by the gods for their sport. You will realise you are the master of the passions within you and a middle path is open to you – one in which you

can relax with whatever you are experiencing and think and act with composure.

From Baron Baptiste:



What Defines Baptiste Power Vinyasa?

A recent trip to Auckland, and a sampling of the “power vinyasa” classes available at the yoga studios there has given us cause to reflect upon the qualities of Baptiste Power Vinyasa.

Baron Baptiste created his expression of Power Vinyasa Yoga several decades ago, and wrote the textbook *Journey Into Power* to help us understand each posture in the sequence, and the intelligence of the sequence itself as well as to introduce students of yoga to meditation and the philosophical underpinnings of the practice.

The Journey Into Power sequence consists of up to 11 series, some of which are optional and can be dropped from a shorter class. Some parts of the sequence must be included in every class which correctly calls itself “Power Vinyasa”. The series in the sequence are:

Integration: Extended Child’s Pose, Down Dog and Ragdoll poses are taken at the start of most of our classes, to integrate body, mind and breath.

Awakening: Several rounds of Sun Salutation A, then Sun Salutation B, awaken our bodies and breath into flow. The Sanskrit term “vinyasa” means to flow without restriction. We introduce our bodies and breath to flow in this early part of the class, and then use that flow throughout the rest of the class to transition from one posture to the next and renew our connection with our breath. The Awakening series is essential to a Baptiste Power Vinyasa class – it’s the “Vinyasa” in “Power Vinyasa”.

Vitality: Twisting postures such as Crescent Lunge with Prayer and Twist, Extended Side Angle, and Thunderbolt with Prayer and Twist vitalise us.

Equanimity: Postures that require us to stand and balance on one foot test and develop our sense of equanimity. Grace under pressure!

Grounding: The triangle and twisting triangle postures, sometimes including straddle leg forward folds and split-leg forward folds, ground and centre us. When we tune into our connection with the earth in these postures, we find extension, space and flow.



Igniting: The back-bending stage is the high-point and an essential part of every Baptiste Power Vinyasa class. In our lives outside of the yoga class room, we spend far too much time rounded forward over our desks, our steering wheels, the kitchen bench, whatever. Rounding forward creates a “postural no”,

closing down our hearts and our throats and withdrawing our essential energy from the people around us. When we open up into back bending our essential energy is released and ignites our power. The “postural yes” we create in back bending enables us to Be a Yes in the other areas of our life that require our positive energy. And physically, back bending strengthens our back muscles, which are part of our core.

Stability: Having strengthened our backs through back bending, we then turn our attention to the front and side of our torso in the Stability series. Newcomers to Baptiste Power Vinyasa are often bewildered to find themselves doing abdominal twists, 30:60 leg lifts, torso crunches and the like. It’s most often at this stage of the practice that people who’ve been brought along by a friend will look at them with an expression which clearly says, “I thought you were my friend! WTF is this?!”



But this part of the practice is essential and we never neglect it. The “Power” in “Power Vinyasa” is the strengthening of our cores. Most of the other postures in a yoga practice cannot be achieved with good alignment unless our cores are strong. And yes, we can make our cores strong simply through practicing those other postures – if we have 3 to 4 hours every day to practice yoga. Most of us don’t. Baron recognised that, and successfully substituted that with 3 to 4 minutes (every day, mind!) of non-negotiable, targeted core strengthening work in the Power

Vinyasa practice. Taking that small amount of time to strengthen our cores enables the rest of our practice to take off: low plank, crow pose, floating forward, aeroplane pose, headstands, handstands, you name it – these all demand core strength. And they come within the envelope of our ability when we strengthen our cores. Not to mention, that outside of the yoga classroom, strong cores keep our waistlines trim and prevent back injury. It’s all good!

Opening: The next phase of the practice is a blissful opening of our hip joints. Pigeon, Dragon, Frog – if these postures are not yet synonymous with “bliss” for you, you’re still holding tension, tightness, and maybe stored negative emotion in your hip joints. So you need these postures, and that’s why they’re an essential part of a Baptiste Power Vinyasa practice. Much of what we cannot avoid doing, such as sitting at our desks or in our cars, or standing at our jobs, and also much of what we do which has other benefits, such as running or cycling, results in the tightening of our hip joints, hamstrings, gluteal muscles and piriformis, and ilio-tibial bands. This part of the practice is our chance to reverse the process and let the tension go. The more intense it feels, the more good it’s doing for us. Breathe and relax with what is.

Release: In this phase of the practice, we continue to release tension and tightness from our bodies, concentrating on the “west-side” (back) in forward folding postures and the “east-side” (front) in postures such as Fish and Table-top.

Rejuvenation: The inversion postures, such a Waterfall, Shoulderstand, Headstand and Handstand literally turn us upside down. And since our normal experience of life, right side up, is that we get older as we go along, turning ourselves upside down must make us younger – right? We do feel younger when we get

upside down regularly, mostly because we're using gravity to help drain away that which we do not need. Inversions move lymph in our body and stimulate our immune systems. And our psyches love to look at the world from a different angle – it is rejuvenating. Watch your cat sometime and notice how s/he spends part of everyday looking at the world upside down.



Deep Rest: Supine Twist gives us a final “wringing out” and then we relax into Savasana. During this phase, our bodies, minds and spirits take on the lessons which the rest of the practice has produced for them. This is where we re-write our own software and let our internal repair mechanisms know what they'd better get busy with. This is an essential part of the Baptiste Power Vinyasa practice, and we give it to you unstintingly, and uncluttered by readings and recordings. If we've been doing our job as Baptiste Methodology teachers during the rest of the practice, you should have heard us speaking into the spiritual aspect of the practice, so we can leave you in silence during Savasana to give your mind a final clearing, and wash away the psychic grime. When we've fully engaged with this phase of the practice, we come out to face the rest of our lives refreshed and invigorated.

In the decades since Baron created his Power Vinyasa practice, many other teachers and practices have sought to take the practice and put their own spin on it. Sometimes this happens in the name of being “more creative”, and sometimes this is the result of uncertainty

over whether students will withstand the full strength of a Baptiste Power Vinyasa practice, or perhaps be turned off by it.

This has resulted in some practices being offered as “power vinyasa” classes, which do not follow the intelligence of the Journey Into Power sequence. Classes which do not include the essential elements of Vinyasa (Sun Salutations) and Power (Core Strengthening and Back bending), are not correctly called Power Vinyasa classes. Particularly if they simply offer up a mish-mash of poses, and sequences which throw together poses that can follow one after the other, in a “physically possible” way, but they make little sense when they do so.

Curiously, the more creative teachers get in sequencing the less authority and power they have. Typically the creativity is pre-planned so the teacher is not in the moment with their class but is in their head remembering what comes next. It is much better to move from the established and proven Journey into Power sequence which has, across the 11 series, lots of opportunity for subtle variations that keep the practice fresh and challenging and engaging but which do not lose the sequencing intelligence of Journey into Power.



Many students who have experienced the Baptiste style of practice we teach at Apollo Power Yoga and who have subsequently travelled or moved away comment to us that they cannot find a good yoga class where they go. As teachers and practitioners of Baptiste Power Vinyasa Yoga, we ensure that Apollo Power Yoga's community of yoga students receive the physical strength and mobility that Journey into Power offers as well as the spiritual awareness that comes from teaching against a back drop not of dogmatic mechanics but of enlightened philosophy.

Savasana:

At the end of class we lie in savasana. This is a wonderful time of physical and mental relaxation. The time allocated in class for



savasana is just the beginning for some practitioners who like to remain in savasana past the end of class. If you are getting up to

leave please be respectful of those who are staying.

There are plenty of communal areas outside the yoga room for you to have conversations. In the yoga room, please preserve the silence after class – and, as much as possible, before class too.

Asana Spotlight: Falling Warrior

Falling Warrior is not so much a pose as a process. In the Budokon® Yoga sequence there are a number of occasions when, from Flying Warrior (the pose from last month's magazine) or Revolved Flying Warrior, the student takes a hop and spin on one leg to face to the opposite end of the room. Having done so, the student then performs the actions of Falling warrior. Let us pick up the action as if we had just performed the hop and spin:

- You are standing at the back of your mat on your right foot with your left leg extended out behind you at hip height. Your hands are at shoulder width in front of you at the level of your chest with the palms open and turned away from you.
- Begin to tilt forward and lower your chest down towards the floor. As you do so, raise your left leg ever higher. Move as if your torso and leg were in one piece like the two ends of a see-saw. Maintain internal rotation of your two inner thighs. Maintain a strong tone of your abdomen, *uddiyana bandha*.
- As you approach a standing splits-like position extend your arms towards the floor. In doing so, turn the backs of your hands to the mat and softly rest the backs of your knuckles on the floor.
- Sweep the backs of your hands away from you towards the far end of your mat. Allow your torso to softly drop forwards towards

your hands. Your hips will move forward away from the point where your right foot is at the floor towards the front of your mat. As your hips flow forward keep your left leg toned, slightly internally rotated and buoyantly lifted.

- As you reach the point where your hands are towards the front of your mat, flip your palms to face the floor and take weight into your hands. Lower your torso, very slowly and with control, through *chaturanga dandasana* all the way to the mat.



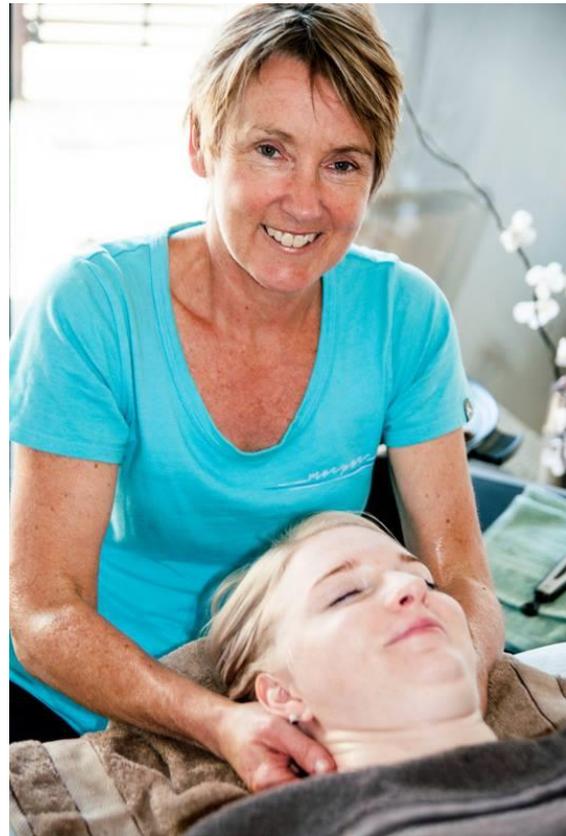
"Falling Warrior" by Henry Moore, the Tate Gallery.

We have a natural fear of falling. We associate falling with pain and injury, with ridicule and embarrassment. Yet falling is part of life. How often do we fall when learning to walk? Hundreds of times we make the attempt to stand and walk only to drop down to our bottoms or our knees. Yet we are indomitable as infants learning to walk. The falls are simply part of the process of growth. We know that innately as toddlers but we lose that wisdom as adults and we develop an aversion to falling. Use the Falling Warrior transition as a means of recovering lost courage to fall and in the process learn, discover and acquire the strength, balance and grace that you do not fall at all but rather flow.

Yogis in Business: RevitaliseMe Massage

Our yogi Jacqui Fisher has now opened central city massage business offering Hot Stone

Massage, Sports Massage, PNF Stretching and Relaxation Massage.



Jax has 30 years experience as a massage therapist including stints at Sportsmed and Wharekauhau Lodge, as well as running her own massage business.

Her clients include famous athletes, movie stars and corporate executives, as well as regular folk like us.

Check out these testimonials:

- Sir Vivian Richards, West Indies cricketing legend: "It was one of the best massages I've ever had".
- Mike Catton, Leadership, Performance and Productivity Specialist: "Awesome! Professional and friendly. Great to be taken care of and truly relax whilst the body gets some much needed looking after. Thanks so much. See you again soon".

- Leanne Curgenvan, Dietician at Village Health: "I went to another planet!"

Jax's qualifications are: Diploma Massage Therapy, RMT member of Massage NZ, PSCYH-K facilitator, BSc Psychology - and she's currently studying to be a yoga teacher through the Apollo Power Yoga Baptiste methodology yoga teacher training programme! For more details, pricing and to book in for a massage, see the website: www.revitalisemenz.com or text/ph Jax on 0274 213 913 or email jacqui@revitalisemenz.com

Namaste

©Hamish Kenworthy and Margo Perpick 2016

