



June 2014

TIMETABLE CHANGES:

Margo and Hamish will be away for 11 days during the school holidays in July, from and including Monday 7 July to and including Friday 18 July. In that time the studio will be open but on a slightly reduced schedule. We have Hannah, Marina, John, Perla and April covering 20 classes in total per week. We are sorry not to be able to provide the full complement of classes in this period.

From 19 July an altered timetable will be put in place on a long-term basis. The changes will affect Monday evenings, Tuesday afternoon and evening, Thursday afternoon and evening, and Saturday morning. On Monday the 6pm PAL90 becomes a 5:30pm PAL60 and the 8pm PR60 becomes a 7pm PR60.

We are introducing 4:30pm PAL60 classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays, to help alleviate the pressure on the 6pm vinyasa classes. These will replace the PR60 classes that were at 8pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Finally, the Saturday morning PAL90 class is being brought forward by an hour, to 9am, opening up a little more space in your day.

Copies of the timetables in place for 7-18 July and from 19 July are to be found at the end of this magazine.

APOLLO POWER YOGA'S FIRST BIRTHDAY

PARTY! It is not too late to secure your place at our first birthday party. We'll be having a **MID-WINTER BEACH PARTY** in the studio on **SUNDAY 27 JULY** from **1PM**. **SAM HUNT** will join us to perform some of his wonderful poems, and refreshments will be provided. Bring a blanket or a deck chair and celebrate with us.



This great event is free for everyone who practices at Apollo Power Yoga. Additional tickets can be purchased for \$25, for those who haven't yet found their way to us. But numbers are limited, so book in as soon as you can, by emailing margo@apollopoweryoga.co.nz, or let us know when you're next in the studio.

Yoga for Services: If you are interested in exchanging cleaning services for yoga practices please contact us.

Workshops:

40 Days to Personal Revolution: Great work, 40 days team! You worked the programme. You made it your own. You found new strengths in mind and body and it shows. You all are fantastic and radiate with life force. Thank you for all you brought to this programme. Now keep on bringing it through your way of being.

Walk the Path of Yoga in Your Life: This will be a day-long event, **9am to 5pm on Sunday 10 August**. This day will be about yoga as a way of being – not just what occurs on a mat. When you step off your mat you continue to live your yoga. Learn to live powerfully and authentically as we meditate together, practice asana together, and engage in discussion and fun activities together.

Venue: Apollo Power Yoga Studio, 107 Hereford Street.

Cost: \$120.00 incl. GST (half price for annual members).

Booking is essential and places are limited so contact Hamish by email, hamish@apollopoweryoga.co.nz, by telephone, 021 0551884, or drop in at the studio to book. Your place will be confirmed upon payment.

Yoga and Spinal Alignment: Apollo is hosting Marina Locke who will lead this gentle-paced three hour workshop on **Sunday 13 July from 12:30 to 3:30 pm**. Please book with Marina (mlocke@ihug.co.nz or phone 021871818). The cost is \$50 if booked before 1 July or \$65 after that date.

Apollo Power Yoga Teacher Mentoring

Programme: Hamish runs a mentoring scheme for teachers offering:

- A year's unlimited practice at Apollo Power Yoga.
- Regular paid teaching opportunities at Apollo Power Yoga.
- Twelve months of tuition from Hamish, including:
 - Monthly meetings to receive detailed feedback on classes taught at Apollo Power Yoga;
 - Quarterly private practice sessions to discuss aspects of the student's private practice.
- The feedback sessions give direction to students in Baptiste methodology so that the teacher can find their greatest power and connection with their students.

Contact Hamish on 0210551884 or email him, hamish@apollopoweryoga.co.nz. Conditions apply.

Ease Your Partner Into Yoga With Private Lessons:

If you are new to yoga or want to introduce someone you care about to the practice, private lessons are a great way to establish the foundations of a practice and get past the resistance to being the inexperienced one in a group class. We offer private lessons (\$60/hour for 1 person, \$90/hour for 2-4 people) which can be a good stepping stone for the newbie. If you want to book a private lesson, just give Hamish a call on 021 055 1884, or email him: hamish@apollopoweryoga.co.nz

Asana Spotlight: We have spent some time now running through poses in the Awakening and Vitality sections of the practice, highlighting the deep lunging poses including the warrior poses and extended side angle. Now we turn our focus to back bends.

To appreciate back bending it is helpful to understand some basic anatomy. There are essentially four sections to the spine:

1: Cervical spine (neck). This uppermost portion of the spine has seven vertebrae in it. It is very mobile, allowing us to tilt our heads forwards, backwards and to the side and to roll our head in circular motions. The spine here curves inward.

2: Thoracic spine. This portion of the spine is very stable and is less mobile than the portions either immediately above or below it. There are twelve vertebrae in the thoracic spine, each with a pair of ribs radiating from it. Overlapping spinal processes restrict the range of movement in each joint in this portion of the spine. The natural curvature of the thoracic spine is outwards.

3: Lumbar spine. The seven vertebrae in the lumbar spine naturally curve inwards (though aging and poor posture will tend to cause the lumbar spine to flatten and even become convex rather than concave). This portion of the spine is very mobile allowing forward flexion, backward extension and lateral flexion as well.

4. Sacrum and Coccyx. The sacrum consists of fused vertebrae forming a downward pointing triangular wedge, beneath the lumbar spine and between the ilia (which are the large flanges of bone in the hips.) The coccyx is a vestigial organ – the last remnants of a real tail. Between them, the sacrum and the coccyx turn the inward curvature of the lumbar spine in the opposite direction as they curve outwards and under between our buttocks.

Between each of the vertebrae is a spongy disc (pale blue in the picture). These discs act as shock absorbers and prevent friction between the bones of the spine. Serious and painful back ailments can result when the

discs, through injury, wear and tear or chronic poor alignment of the spine, slip out of place.



As the spinal cord, the long line of nerves transmitting messages to and from the brain from throughout the body, runs through the centre of the vertebrae, injury to the spine can have drastic consequences for bodily function.

Muscles along the back contract or relax to allow the spine to articulate itself in the various directions available to it. The spinal erectors (there are lots of muscle falling into this group including the interspinalis, rotatores, intertransversarii, multifidi, spinalis, semispinalis, longissimus, and many others) run the length of the back, alongside the spine on both left and right, and these muscles in contraction, shorten the back side of the body, causing it to tend to extend backwards. In relaxation, and especially coupled with contraction of muscles in the front side of the body, the spine flexes forward.

The pelvis is intimately connected with spinal alignment. If we stand upright but our pelvis is tilted forward, we must either lean our spine forward or, to remain in stable upright position, curve our spine backwards to a greater degree to allow our head and shoulders to be in balance over our hips. This curvature is typically borne in the lumbar

spine, creating a hyper-lordotic or sway back. Conversely, if the pelvis is tilted backwards, the spine will tend to flex forwards causing a flattening out or even convex curvature of the lumbar spine as well as the thoracic and cervical spine. This is called kyphosis.

In the same way that the pelvis can affect spinal alignment, so can the position of the shoulders. A forward shoulder position (common in people who are seated for long periods of time) causes a general forward flexion of the spine.

The asana we spotlight this month is **Bhujanghasana** (Cobra pose). Cobra is aptly named as it sees us lifting the front portion of our bodies while the lower portion lies flat to the floor, very much in the manner of the cobra when it is angered or startled.

- Begin lying flat on your front side. Bring your palms flat to the floor beneath your shoulders with your fingers pointing forward and your elbows pointing to the sky.
- Press to the tops of your feet flat to the floor. If your ankles do not allow plantar flexion of your feet easily this may be a little uncomfortable. Do what you can and if it is too awkward then tuck your toes under.
- Engage your quadriceps at the front of your thighs. You will feel your kneecaps lifting from the floor.
- Engage your hamstrings, your gluteus maximus (buttock muscles) and the full range of spinal erectors. Peel the front side of your body up away from the floor.
- As the front side of your body lifts, roll the tops of your shoulders towards the wall behind you and draw your shoulder-blades down your back towards your hips.

- Feel the inner edges of your shoulder blades turn inwards and press your thoracic spine home towards the centre of your torso. In the picture, notice how the practitioner's elbows are wrapped towards one another and point straight back. This helps position her shoulder blades to promote her thoracic spine inwards and forwards.
- Some variations of cobra call for downward pressure through the hands and a straightening of the arms. In our practice we ask for no pressure through the hands. In this way you require your back muscles to provide the lift rather than your arms muscles.
- To stabilise your low back, muscles in your abdomen need to engage even as they are stretching.
- You do not need to throw your head back and extend your cervical spine. This pose is not about depth or full expression of back bend. It is about strengthening your back.



Breathe freely and enjoy the sensation of the front side of your torso, from pubic bone to throat, lengthening as your back strengthens. There are no contra-indications for this pose. If you have a weaker back, back bends will align your spine and strengthen your back. If you are newer to practice you may only be able to hold cobra for a couple of breaths. Do

come down from your pose before you collapse out of it.

Chakra Theory: If the fifth chakra, *Visuddha*, was associated with hearing and sound, the sixth chakra, *Ajna*, is concerned with sight and light. In this context sight is not just what we perceive externally through our physical eyes but also those aspects of sight that involve intuition and inner awareness.

Sight has the power to transport us through time. A sportsperson will see a ball in motion, assess its speed and trajectory and know where the ball will be in the future and position themselves accordingly. In a greater sense, if we can visualise a situation then we can create the potential for that situation to materialise – to become manifest.

Ajna means “to perceive” but also “to command”. These two meanings encapsulate the sixth chakra and the notion of creative visualisation. To see, not necessarily through the physical eye but through the mind’s eye, couples with an order that what is seen will become reality. Paul Gauguin, the French post-impressionist painter said, “I close my eyes in order to see.”

The ability to see with the mind relates to the notion of the third eye. The third eye is most closely associated with the pineal gland (located behind and above the physical eyes and roughly at the centre of the skull).

The pineal gland is considered to be light sensitive and melatonin, a hormone that aids in sleep, strengthens the immune system and reduces stress, has been isolated from the pineal gland. Melatonin is said to have some similar chemical properties and effects to some plants that alter the consciousness and in sleep we dream which is a form of non-visual sight.

Colour is an integral aspect of light. Just as sound consists of waves, not all of which are within human perception (e.g. dogs can hear some high pitches that humans cannot and elephants communicate with some very low sound waves that are more felt than heard) so also is the case with light. Beyond the spectrum of light that we can perceive with our eyes are wave lengths of light that still have an effect upon us. For example, ultra violet light is invisible to us but we know that exposure to this light will burn our skin.

The subtle energies of light and colour play their part in the sixth chakra. Hospitals, schools and prisons, among other institutions, sometimes use colour as a means of creating a calming environment. Colour affects us constantly and often unconsciously. From the choices of colour of clothing, to the decoration of our houses to the natural environments we prefer colour both influences and reflects our sense of self and our way of being.

We perceive light and colour with our eyes but we interpret these with our brain and mind. This can play out in us acting from stereotypes and expectations rather than impartial observation. Some people are visual learners – they find it hard to process spoken instruction but can readily follow physical demonstrations. As yoga teachers we learn that for visual learners, when we speak they hear nothing.

Clairvoyance (literally seeing clearly) is a sixth chakra function. Whatever one believes about clairvoyance (and there have been more than enough charlatans to give the practice a bad name) at one level it can simply be understood as the practice of noticing what one sees. If we are simply coming from predetermination and expectation then we will not notice much of what we see. If we look with curiosity and observe without prejudice, we may notice subtleties that have previously eluded us.

Just as Conan Doyle's character Sherlock Holmes used observation as a basis for deduction, so can we seem at times to have powers beyond the traditional five senses if we take time to really see what we are seeing.

The sixth chakra is represented by a two-petalled lotus in the colour indigo. As we came up through the chakras the number of petals on the lotus symbol has increased. However, here we have just two. There are several possible explanations. One is that, like the third chakra, the sixth is a meeting point of the ida and pingala nadis. Another is that the petals represent the physical eyes with the third eye between them.



Shakti Hakini and Krishna are deities associated with *Ajna*.

Drishti, the calm unwavering gaze, is a good sixth chakra yoga exercise. Practice seeing what you see with your eyes stilled to a point, rather than having restless, wandering eyes that keep feeding you with distracting visual stimuli.

Yogic eye exercises can be practised, beginning with eyes closed until you come to darkness. Then open your eyes and look straight ahead before slowly lifting your eyes (not your head) upwards to the fullest extent,

downwards to fullest extent, upwards again, downwards again and finally to centre where you close your eyes again and wait until you sense darkness.

Repeat, but this time move your eyes to the upper right then the lower left (twice each) then the upper left to the lower right (twice each) then come to centre.

Repeat the pattern again but work directly across from right to left. Finally complete a round in which you trace a semi-circle with your eyes covering the upper half of your field of vision, then a semi-circle of the lower half, and finally a complete circle clockwise and one anti-clockwise.

To finish, rub your hands together until they are warm and place your palms over your closed eyes and enjoy the warmth and the darkness.

A meditation you may wish to try enhances light and chakra awareness. Seat yourself for meditation, then visualise white light above your head from which you will draw its constituent colours. First draw out red light and visualise that red light coming down through your head and spine to your root chakra. Then take orange light for the second chakra, yellow for the third, green for the heart chakra, blue for the throat, indigo for the third eye and vibrant violet for the crown chakra.

At each stage sense the strength of each colour in each portion of your body. Allow the colour visualisation to manifest heat if you need it (third chakra), love (heart chakra), relaxation at your throat (fifth chakra). Finally, when you have completed all the colours, sense the whole rainbow within your body. Which colours have intensity? Which are weaker? Where do you sense you need to enhance energy and vitality?

Great Things in the Central City

Apollo Power Yoga is one of the great things about central Christchurch, but there are many more. This month, check out the following:

- A beautiful exhibition by quilter **Sue Spigel** and artist **Galina Kim**, in the **Heritage Hotel**. These works of art are amazing and inspirational. And, visiting the exhibition provides an opportunity to have a look around the lovely Heritage Hotel building – one of our few remaining intact heritage buildings. There is so much to be treasured in this building and the exhibition. The exhibition is free, and runs daily, from 10am to 8pm, until mid-July.
- **Cathedral Junction** – running from Worcester Street to Gloucester Street,

where the tramline passes through, there are lots of lovely shops and eateries in here, including the **Swiss Café**, **Sakimoto Japanese Bistro** (where our lovely Apollo yogi, Sawako, is a chef), **Season Espresso & Lunch Bar**, **do barbershop**, **NUZTRI Nutrition**, **While You Wait Portraits**, **Anissa Victoria Vintage Clothing**, **Fantail Gifts**, and **VERBOOM** (which has some hilarious T-shirts and badges).

Namaste

Hamish and Margo

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TEMPORARY TIMETABLE MONDAY 7 JULY TO FRIDAY 18 JULY 2014

	MONDAY 7 July	TUESDAY 8 July	WEDNESDAY 9 July	THURSDAY 10 July	FRIDAY 11 July	SATURDAY 12 July	SUNDAY 13 July
6:15am	PB60 Hannah	PAL60 Hannah		PAL60 Hannah	PAL60 Hannah		
10:00am	PAL90 John		PAL90 John		PAL60 Hannah		
12:30pm	PB50 Perla	PAL50 Perla		PAL50 Perla	PB50 Perla		Marina's Spinal Workshop
4:30pm						PAL90 Perla	PR60 Marina
5:30pm			PAL60 Hannah		PAL60 John		
6:00pm	PAL90 Marina	PAL90 April		PAL90 April			
7:00 pm			PR60 Hannah				
8:00pm	PR60 Marina						

	MONDAY 14 July	TUESDAY 15 July	WEDNESDAY 16 July	THURSDAY 17 July	FRIDAY 18 July
6:15am	PB60 Hannah	PAL60 Hannah		PAL60 Hannah	PAL60 Hannah
10:00am	PAL90 John		PAL90 John		PAL60 Hannah
12:30pm	PB50 Perla	PAL50 Perla		PAL50 Perla	PB50 Perla
5:30pm			PAL60 Hannah		PAL60 John
6:00pm	PAL90 Marina	PAL90 April		PAL90 April	
7:00 pm			PR60 Hannah		
8:00pm	PR60 Marina				

TIMETABLE IN OPERATION FROM AND INCLUDING SATURDAY 19 JULY 2014

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
6:15am	PB60	PAL60	PB60	PAL60	PAL60		
9:00am						PAL90	
10:00am	PAL90	PB60	PAL90	PB90	PAL60		
12:30pm	PB50	PAL50	PB50	PAL50	PB50		
4:30pm		PAL60		PAL60		PAL90	PR60
5:30pm	PAL60		PAL60		PG60		
6:00pm		PAL90		PAL90			
7:00 pm	PR60		PR60				