



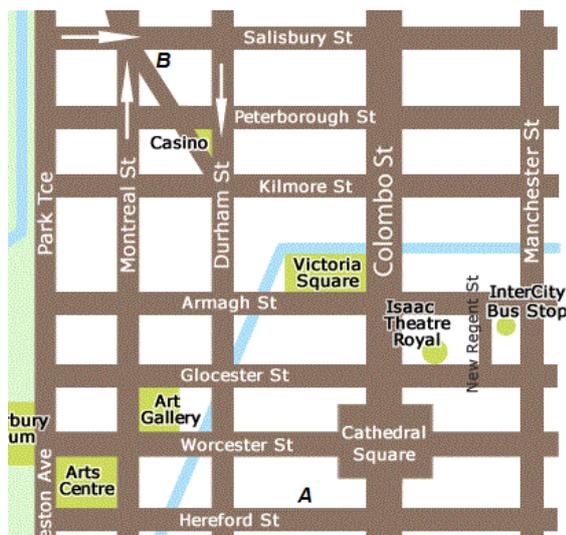
June 2017

We're on the Move:

We're excited to formally announce that we're moving premises in mid-July (exact date will be announced closer to the time). Our lease at Hereford Street is coming to an end and we are re-locating. It has been a long and difficult process searching for premises that will effectively meet your needs as our students.

As those of you who practice in the evening know, we've outgrown our current premises. We're looking forward to having a much bigger practice room and more space in the change rooms.

Our new building is at **46 Salisbury Street**, near the corner of Victoria Street. Street parking for those of you who drive to us is much easier at that location, so that's good too.



We're moving from A to B.

There will be bicycle parking on racks on the walls of the building and its neighbour, Casamassima Italian Fare. It will not be possible for cyclists to bring their bicycles into the studio reception at our new premises. Bring your bike lock and secure your bike outside please.

In anticipation of moving, if you store your mat at our studio please take home your mat in the week before we move. The mat boxes will then be transported to the new studio where you can bring your mat back. We recommend you ensure that your mat is clearly marked with your name.

Our new premises have improved changing room facilities with additional showers, more bench and mirror space and everything you need to clean up after practising.

The one thing unchanged will be the dynamic, energetic power vinyasa and restorative practices we offer at Apollo Power Yoga.

International Yoga Day Celebration

This year our International Yoga Day Celebration is bigger and better. In collaboration with lululemon athletica and some of the other yoga studios in Christchurch, we're holding a day-long celebration at the Arts Centre on Saturday 8 July.

In the beautifully refurbished and now toasty warm Great Hall, there will be 4 yoga practices:

9 - 11: Hamish Kenworthy – Meditation and Journey Into Power
11.30 - 12.30: Jess Smith from Flow Hot Yoga - Hip and Heart Openers
1.30 - 3: James Anson-Holland - Turn Your World Upside Down
3.30 - 5: Veronika King from Grassroots - Yoga to Nourish and Wind Down

In “The Gym” (the building that used to have the Academy Cinema in it) there will be a series of yoga-related talks, including:

9 - 10: Berin Turner from Grassroots – Yoga and Surfing
10 - 11: Kotte Aguilar - Yoga and Creativity
11 - 12: Hollie Smith - Immersion In The Outdoors
2 - 3: Margo Perpick - Personal Revolution Through Yoga: The Power of Transformation



There will also be live music in between classes, including by our talented musical yogi Bryce Carter.

The event will be a fundraiser for the City Mission. 100% of your ticket price (less the costs of venue hire) will be donated to help the City Mission help others get through the winter.

You will also have the option of pre-ordering a lunch from Fill Your Lunchbox. When you do so, a school lunch is donated to a hungry child. For that option, you need to buy your ticket by 30 June.

See you there!

40 Days to Personal Revolution

40 Days to Personal Revolution concluded on Tuesday 13 June. We congratulate the participants for their work and the developments that they initiated by committing to meditation, asana, nutritional awareness and personal inquiry with a view to transformation.

Here is what some participants have had to say about their experience on **40 Days to Personal Revolution**:

- *I am not the person I was when I first started yoga with Apollo. I feel as though I'm appreciating me for the first time in ages, and I'm definitely appreciating the 2 of you. I see proof of the change in myself when I notice my 17 and 21 year olds wanting to do things with me more, even if it's just a walk with the dog or a cup of tea in the garden. I think they feel they are getting a more authentic mum. I am noticing that I'm not as reactive or resistant to the 'stuff' that arises in the day which makes me happier and probably a better person to work with.*
- *Thank you Margo and Hamish for the support, energy and care you put into us and the program... I learnt a lot from the experience and valued the opportunity to look inward and focus on self.*
- *I have really enjoyed the past 35 days. The main effect for me has been to make yoga a bigger part of my life. I have made some big improvements in the mental aspect of my practise (learning how to keep going despite pain), finding my breath and of course become physically stronger as well. That is most noticeable to me in side plank which used to be my nemesis and now is empowering.*
- *Outside of yoga I am trying hard to "be present". I sorted some stuff out with mum last week which is still an ongoing process but has allowed me to let some stuff go.*

- *I wanted to thank you very much for a very enjoyable & challenging 40 days to Personal Revolution course recently. Participating in the course has given me a lot to think about & I have already been implementing some positive change in my work & home life due to this. I will keep referring back to the personal inquiry & my practice to continue to be as grounded & present as I can in life.*

Why Ujjayi?:

During our vinyasa classes you will be familiar with our encouragement for you to breathe using a technique called *ujjayi* (pron. Oo-jie-ee).

Ujjayi is a Sanskrit word that means to be victorious or one who is victorious. When practised with awareness this form of pranayama (breath control) aids in creating a sense of inner strength and vitality.

The Anatomy and Technique of Ujjayi

The technique for ujjayi is to draw inwards at your abdomen to initiate an exhalation. Keep that abdominal firmness throughout class. If you suck your belly in hard you will find the action tiring and unsustainable. You will also restrict the capacity for your diaphragm to relax and your breathing will become stuck. The abdominal engagement is necessary but must be managed without excess.

Your diaphragm is a dome shaped muscle that is suspended from a central tendon in your chest cavity. It essentially forms a horizontal layer of muscle separating the thoracic and abdominal cavities in your torso. The contraction of your diaphragm causes it to dome upwards and compress into your thoracic cavity. This action presses into your lungs from below and squeezes air out of your

lungs, through your trachea and out of your nose.



Contracting the intercostal muscles of your ribcage assists in the compression of your lungs on exhalation.

The muscle groups referred to (the abdominals but especially the transverse abdominals that run around your mid-section like a cummerbund, your diaphragm and your intercostals) are your primary respiratory muscles. It is important not to labour your breathing using smaller, auxiliary breathing muscles around your neck and upper chest.

It is also important to realise an exhale is an upward movement, unlike many other excretory functions which are downward. Sometimes people without awareness about the effective functioning of their breath try to force an exhale by compressing their chest downwards. Understand that your breath requires contraction from the base of your torso upwards to create an effective exhale.

Once you have exhaled there is an area of low pressure in your lungs. We are taught from early in our lives that nature abhors a vacuum. Air from a higher pressure zone outside your body will naturally flood back in to your lungs as you relax the contractions associated with your exhale. Inhalations are, contrary to the concept of “sucking in big ones”, relatively passive actions compared with exhalations.

Regardless of the relaxation necessary in the muscles of your ribcage and diaphragm,

maintain abdominal toning throughout both exhalation and inhalation during ujjayi breathing.

There is another aspect to ujjayi breath that causes many students some difficulty but it is an essential element of the practice. In your throat there are two passages: one called the oesophagus and the other called the trachea. The former is designed for the passage of food and drink to your stomach. The latter is reserved for air to your lungs.

There is a small valve called the epiglottis that closes off the trachea when you are eating to prevent aspiration (the drawing of food or liquid into your lungs) and opens during breathing. Below the epiglottis in the trachea is the glottis which comprises your vocal cords and the slit between them. Small muscles in your throat allow you to narrow the passage of the glottis. This causes air passing through the glottis to activate your vocal cords creating a sighing, oceanic-type sound.

During ujjayi breathing, maintain a slight engagement of the muscles of the glottis so that your breath, both on inhalation and exhalation, creates this sound. You may have heard Hamish speak of breathing as if breathing through a small aperture or puncture at the front of your throat. This is a cue to activate the muscles of your glottis and create the sound of ujjayi.

During ujjayi breathing, keep your mouth closed and allow air to pass in and out of your nostrils. There is no need to use your nasal muscles to sniff air in or snort air out. Keep your nose and its muscles relaxed.

There are two Sanskrit words to describe ujjayi breathing: dirga, which means long, and suksma, which means smooth.

The Reasons for Ujjayi Breathing

Ujjayi is a very effective means of respiration. It directs breath into your lungs rather than allowing air to be diverted through your oesophagus into your stomach. As soon as you open your mouth to breathe your body senses that it may be going to receive food or drink and the epiglottis starts to close the passage to your trachea. Air sucked in through your mouth will get to your lungs but some will get to your stomach as well. This can leave your stomach feeling bloated – like the bag of a set of bagpipes that has been inflated ready to play. No oxygen or energetic uptake takes place from air in your stomach. It is only in your lungs that oxygen and the mystical energy of prana/xi/life force is taken into your body.

During a strong, flowing power yoga practice you need oxygen and vital energy to fuel your body and focus your mind. Use ujjayi to efficiently and effectively convert oxygen into your blood stream and infuse every cell in your body with life force.

The tempo of ujjayi breathing is naturally quite slow. This gives you time to be complete and effective in vinyasa practice in taking a pose in the course of an inhalation, the next pose in the course of an exhalation and the next in the course of an inhalation and so on. Students who feel rushed or who struggle to coordinate movement to their breathing will benefit from developing ujjayi breathing as it will create space and time for the transitions from one pose to another.

Ujjayi does not occur by accident. Breathing will take place without conscious awareness – it is an essential life support function that is regulated in the first instance by your reptilian brain – but you can lift your breathing to the conscious level of mind and direct it. By directing your breathing with your conscious

mind you eliminate the distractions of thinking and create a meditative state of mind.

Mouth breathing is a pattern of breathing that your body associates with stress and danger. It is a pattern of breathing that triggers the sympathetic side of your autonomic nervous system. The sympathetic nervous system is associated with the generation of hormones and neuro-transmitters that create stress conditions in your body such as cortisol and adrenaline. It also tends to create acidic conditions in your body which are often associated with illness and disease.

Breathing through your nose triggers the parasympathetic side of your nervous system and hormones such as serotonin are generated which create conditions of relaxation and calm in your body.



Ujjayi breathing, therefore, has the capacity to give you energy and power throughout a strong vinyasa practice while at the same time offering you clarity and calmness in your state of mind and relaxation and ease in your state of body. My question is, why would you not use ujjayi breathing?!

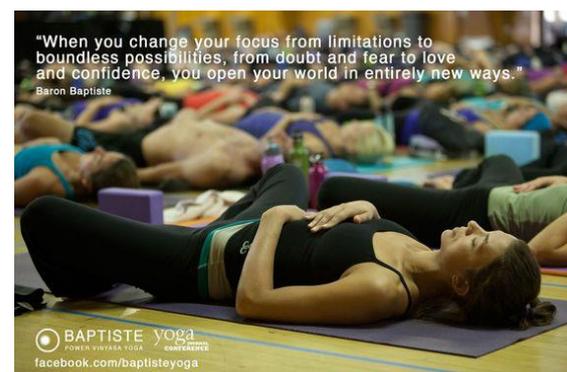
Ujjayi breathing cultivates a state of mind based on inner awareness rather than external focus. With inner awareness you will realise your own strength and will access a sense of

esteem and power that will leave you feeling victorious. The victory is not over anyone else – we can all share in this victory. The triumph is over the doubt, anxiety and careworn state that comes from too much external focus.

We get lots of feedback from those who have embraced ujjayi breathing about how beneficial they find it to be, not just during vinyasa practice but when hiking up river beds in search of salmon, climbing mountains or running long races. Here is an example from an Apollo Power Yoga student who ran the Kepler Challenge, a 60 km plus mountain run:

I had a blast doing the Kepler - it was the most challenging thing I have ever done, but I did it, I lived the dream. And the yoga ended up having a bigger impact that I expected. The flexibility & recovery were obviously vital - but the breathing also turned out to be part of what got me around. I lost control of my asthma 3/4 of the way through, and the only way I could control my coughing was by breathing through my nose, which is not normal for my running. But I've had hours and hours of practice and I did it for an hour on Saturday, getting my lungs to calm down again. I'm sure I would not have made it around without ujjayi breathing. So your training had unexpected benefits. Yoga is a wonderful complement to distance running, it shortens the recovery time allowing more intense training. And now it's helping the post-race recovery so I can get back out soon.

From Baron Baptiste:

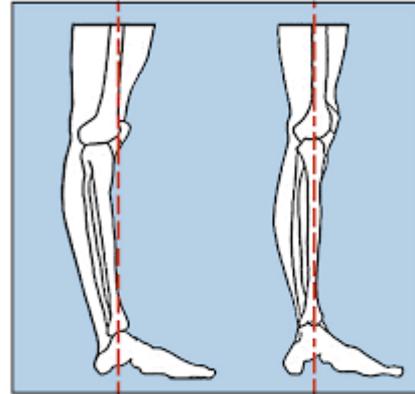


Asana Spotlight:

This month we get absolutely foundational with *tadasana* (mountain pose). This is the root, not of all evil but of all asana. The alignment we will provide for you here is the alignment for side plank, for aeroplane, for wheel, for seated forward fold and so on. *Tadasana* resonates throughout your whole practice.

- Stand upright with your feet together. If you have hip problems you may need to stand with your feet slightly wider but no wider than hip width.
- Align your feet such that a line through the centre of each foot from the centre of your heel to your middle toe points straight forward up the length of your mat. Many people feel this to be pigeon-toed. If so, stay with it and let it be an acquired taste.
- If working with your feet touching have the inner edge of your big toes touching with a small space, a centimetre or two, between your inner ankle bones and the inner edges of your heels.
- Gently fan out your toes and consciously press the inner and outer mounds of each foot and the centres of each heel to the floor.
- Presence yourself to your inner ankle bones (medial malleoli) and turn them slightly inwards towards the back of the room. At the same time reach your outer ankle bones (lateral malleoli) down towards the floor. The internal rotations connected to the inner ankle bones will register right up the inner seams of your legs, igniting a centring muscular engagement of your inner thigh muscles (adductors).
- Work your awareness up your legs to your knees. Avoid hyper-extension of your knee joints. This occurs when you squeeze your legs very straight and/or press the backs of

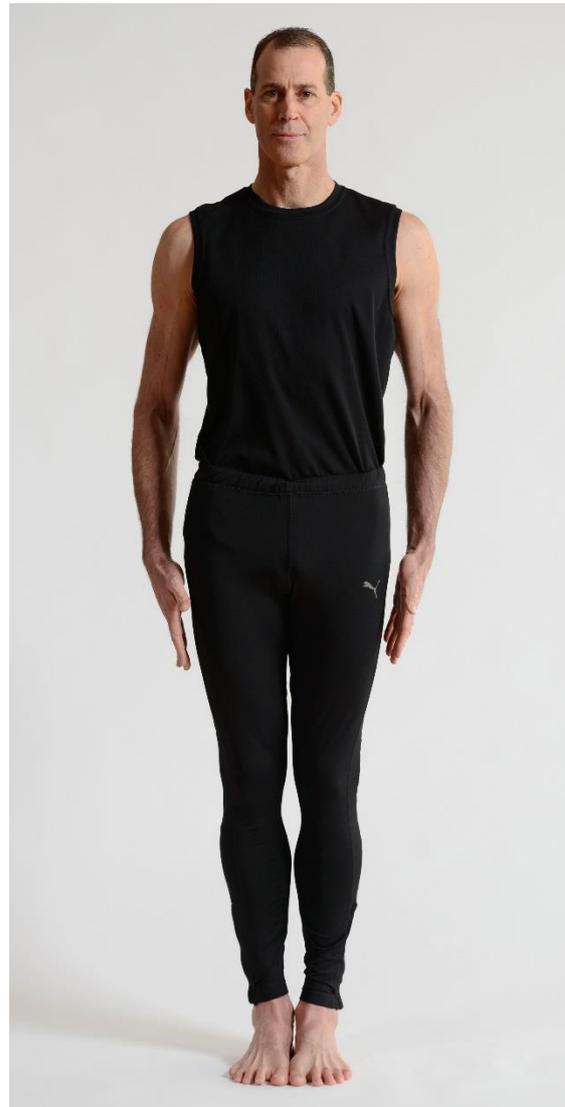
your knees towards the back of the room behind you such that your knee joints almost click backwards. Instead, maintain the slightest of bends in your knees and allow your knee joints to be soft and mobile rather than rigid and stuck.



- Gently contract the muscles of your inner thighs to create a slight internal rotation. For students who have been brought up in a tradition of dance this will feel quite unfamiliar as external rotations are *de rigueur* in dance. There is a different strength and approach being used in this yoga practice to what is taught in dance. Again, sit with the unfamiliar and accustom yourself to a new way.
- At your pelvis, lightly contract the muscles of your pelvic floor to engage *mula bandha*. From your urethra to your anus gently tone and lift your pelvic floor.
- Create a neutral pelvis. Most often this requires you to engage *uddiyana bandha* by firming and flattening your transverse abdominal muscles. These run in horizontal bands around your abdomen. It will feel like you are flattening the area between your navel and your groin. As you do this your tailbone will naturally reach down towards the floor and your pelvic bowl will be neither tilted forwards nor backwards.

- More rarely, some students have a posterior tilt to their pelvis whereby the front of their pelvis is lifted and their tailbone is scooped under and forwards. If this is the case it is typically accompanied by a backward shift of your pelvis too. The first step is, therefore, to press your hips further forward then contract the rectus femoris muscles that run down the front of your thighs. In this standing position the contraction of your rectus femoris muscles will have a slight tendency to draw the front of your pelvis down towards the floor. Presence yourself to your lower back and contract the quadratus lumborum muscles that connect your lowest rib on each side, your lumbar spine and the rim of your pelvis at the back. By contracting the quadratus lumborum you will draw your rib cage towards your hips and initiate a slight inward curvature rather than outward bubbling of your low back.
- The next point of awareness for everyone is at your shoulder-blades. Draw your shoulder-blades towards one another such that they sit flat on your back. Keep the muscles of your upper shoulders and neck relaxed, especially the upper trapezius and levator scapulae as both these muscle groups tend to lift your shoulder-blades up towards your ears when contracted.
- At your chest, relax the muscles of your chest and allow them to stretch slightly in response to the contractions between your shoulder-blades. If your rib cage has lifted and your lower ribs have blown outwards, tone your abdominal muscles to gently draw your lower ribs inwards and downwards towards your navel.
- Become conscious of the orientation of your head. Do you tilt your head forward, or press your whole head forward, or backward, or is there a tilt to one side or the other? Stack your head over your

shoulders and set your gaze straight forward to the horizon.



- Reach your arms down alongside your body with a slight internal rotation such that the palms of your hands face one another. Bring energy and vitality to your hands and fingers such that they are alive rather than simply hanging.

Who knew there was so much to standing? As a relatively tall person I have spent my adult life in a state of collapse to one degree or another in order to bring my eyes and hearing onto the same level as the majority of people with whom I am communicating. I met at the weekend a man much taller than myself and I immediately noticed the tremendous postural

shift it took for me to reach up through my body and lift up my gaze to meet his. Become conscious and aware of the way you carry yourself and let your foundational posture of tadasana bring vital energy and an uplift of spirit to your whole day.

Namaste

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