



November 2017

**Last Call Ladies and Gentlemen:**

YOU are READY NOW to ***Step into your Power***, on Apollo Power Yoga's yoga intensive and teacher training.

Our programme runs 13 to 20 January 2018 (both dates inclusive) at Wainui Park Camp, Wainui on the Banks Peninsula. A written application is required from everyone wishing to attend (forms are available on-line: <http://www.apollopoweryoga.co.nz/Yoga-IntensiveTeacher-Training/>)



You DO NOT need to be a flash practitioner of asana. You only need sufficient experience that you know how to manage yourself in asana when the challenge is high.

You DO NOT need to intend to become a yoga teacher. This is a tremendous preparation for teaching yoga but is also a tremendous programme for personal development. If you have completed *40 Days to Personal Revolution* and you are looking for more, then ***Step into your Power*** is for you.

The programme teaches meditation, asana and personal inquiry and has daily sessions in meditation, asana, anatomy and physiology, practice teaching and yoga philosophy.

Do not delay. Take up the opportunity NOW to be the best you can be.

**Yoga Flow for Bros with Mos:**

On **Saturday 25 November at midday** we ran a fundraising class for Movember. The cause was **men's mental health and suicide prevention**. We raised over \$600.



Well done and many thanks to everyone who attended the class or made a donation. An Auckland studio that ran a class as part of the same initiative raised \$200. Superb effort Cantabs. Your generosity in a good cause is appreciated.

It is not too late to make a contribution. Follow [this link](https://mobro.co/13596769?mc=1) (<https://mobro.co/13596769?mc=1>) and make your contribution to Movember.

### Christmas/New Year Timetable:

Apollo Power Yoga will be, as has been our commitment to you since we first started, open throughout the Christmas/New Year period.

Margo is away in Canada from 5 to 30 December so you will notice others filling in for Margo in her regular spots.

We close for just Christmas Day and New Year's Day and we run a reduced schedule of classes from Sunday 24 December through to Sunday 7 January. Most days during this period there will be three classes per day, one in the morning and two in the afternoon/evening.



From 13 to 20 January Margo and Hamish will be away leading Step into your Power and during that period there will be on 9:00 am class on Saturday 13 or 20 January.

The full schedule of 40 classes will resume on Monday 22 January 2018.

The website will be up-to-date with all classes and who is teaching them and we will have hard-copy of the holidays timetable at reception midway through December.

### Change is the Essence of Life:

Reinhold Niebuhr lived from 1892 to 1971. He worked as a theologian, church minister, lecturer, author, political commentator and newspaper editor. He gave us the oft-recited prayer:

*God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.*

He also asserted that **“Change is the essence of life. Be prepared to surrender what you are for what you could become”**.

I have been reflecting on this statement which has been a significant part of my experience of yoga as a practice in my life. On my first yoga teacher training in February 2010 the teacher issued the command, “Give up what you must”.

When I first heard that and read it I did not comprehend what it entailed but, as the week unfolded, the power of surrender and of giving up thoughts and behaviours became clearer. Over the course of that week I began letting go my fixed impression of myself. I began to surrender my perception that I was not likeable to the point that upon my return home Margo commented that she had never seen me so happy before. I started to disavow some of the attitudes and behaviours that had contributed to my perception of myself as alone and unlovable.

Suddenly, there was new possibility. It was possible for me to feel good about myself without running anyone else down. It was possible for me to be happy in myself without having a new possession to give me the

illusion of happiness in things. It was possible to appreciate the goodness in myself and in everyone else rather than looking for the failings, short-comings and weaknesses of others so that I could cynically undermine them.

Without me understanding the process I was participating in, yoga asana, meditation and personal inquiry were causing me to surrender what I was. At the time I was 42 years old and quite certain who I was and that my way of being was set in stone. Yet, in the course of seven days, I learned that none of that was true and, in the intervening eight years, I have gradually been working my way towards who I can become.

I now often see other people whose self-perception is quite rigid and whose sense of potential and possibility is closed off. I feel sad watching them stuck in the rut of their existence, feeling unfulfilled and at the same time regarding themselves as being powerless to effect change. In their eyes I see denial, I see hopelessness and I see despair. For such people there often seems to be an attitude that the die has been cast and there is nothing they can do to alter what they have become. When I was in those shoes that is the way I felt. I regarded myself as having made the bed of my life and I simply had to lie in it.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Simply by giving up what is here and is of no service to you, a world of opportunity will open up. Before that teacher training in 2010 I was playing golf once per week and practising golf on an additional day most weeks. I was also running around 4000 km per year. These were pastimes that were definitive of me.

My last game of golf was in mid-January 2010, about two weeks before the teacher training. I haven't played since. I don't need it. I do

not need to be the person I was on the golf course and I do not need to be in the company of some of those at the golf course whose attitudes I had never felt comfortably aligned with.

I gave up running earlier, in 2009, and committed to yoga practice to fix my body so that I could run better. I used to miss running and I still get a surge of excitement on the day of the Christchurch city marathon, an event in which I had participated many times as a full- or half-marathon runner. But, I do not need running and my body does not need the adverse effects that running was having upon it.

I do not need to denigrate others in order to lift myself up by comparison. I can appreciate myself for who and what I am, accomplishments and flaws alike, and I can appreciate others for their qualities too. It feels so much better to like than to dislike both myself and all the people I encounter.

Along with those who are stuck, I also see people begin yoga practice and their spirit and self-esteem receive new energy and they start to flourish. I have seen people revolutionise their lives. It may show up as a change of career, or a change of partner or a change in the way they exercise and find health in their bodies. But even if none of those things change, the change in the person is palpable as they move from an old way of being to a new.

Students of yoga who discover, in the oceanic sound of their own breath, in the naked reality of savasana or in the triumph of wheel that there is more for them to accomplish and that they can have their heart's desire, have embraced Niebuhr's concept. They have glimpsed what is possible and have committed to making it real.

Like the trapeze artist, however, the yogi cannot get to where they can be without letting go of what is here now and what has been. You may want to make a dramatic statement and ceremony of casting off the old. You may prefer to assert a mantra when you recognise a thought or behaviour pattern from the past, that you are not that person. You will recognise the old ways when they try to re-assert themselves. But when they do, make the higher call. Be committed to what is possible and find fulfilment in achieving what you can become.

My experience is of old patterns periodically reappearing. My experience is of being thoroughly imperfect and prone to error. My experience is of needing help from others (like when I go away to a Baptiste training and take my seat as a pupil rather than a teacher). But overall I grow steadily towards what I can become and not by clinging to what I have been in the past.

What is possible for you? What must you surrender in order to make the possible your reality? The world needs you to be all you can be. Start now!

### **Asana Spotlight:**

Astavakrasana. Quite a mouthful and quite a challenging pose too! Astavakra was a sage who became a spiritual guide to his king. He was so named on account of his crippled body – said to be because of a curse his father placed upon him. *Asta* means eight and *vakra* means crook or bent. Curiously, in order to perform this pose it helps to be strong, straight and supple.



Here's how:

- Begin seated with your legs straight ahead of you. Bend your right knee and open your right leg about 45° off centre to the right.
- Tuck your right elbow beneath your right knee (you may need to lift your right heel or your whole right foot to achieve this) and place your right hand at the floor directly beneath your elbow.
- Set your left hand to the left side of your body, level with your right hand and spaced such that your two hands are just wider than shoulder width.
- Cross your left leg over in front of you and hook the top of your left foot over the front of your right ankle.
- Curl the toes of your right foot back around the front of your left foot and ankle to create a strong connection and bond so that your two feet do not slip apart.
- Pull your leg muscles to the bone and squeeze your legs straight. Generate a side plank-like engagement and tone in your legs to create structure and lift.
- Now engage your pelvic floor (*mula bandha*) and draw the pit of your belly to your spine (*uddiyana bandha*) to make the mid-section of your body light.
- Ease your weight forward, pull in powerfully at your belly and lift your feet and hips from the floor. Keep your shoulders level. The greatest flaw in the image of Hamish in this pose is how uneven his shoulders are. Draw your left

shoulder blades flat onto your back and broaden your chest.

- The more you squeeze your legs straight, the more you pull inwards at your core and the more you lead your chest forward to create a balance of your shoulders and hips over the fulcrum of your hands the greater will be your sense of power, vitality and ease in this hand balance.



- Repeat on the other side.

Astavakra taught that you must transcend circumstance, the physical and mind to attain the truth of spirit. Transcend the limits of your body and the doubts of your mind to experience freedom and power in astavakrasana. Be courageous. Be playful. Have fun.

### **Apollo Power Yogis Up to Big Things:**

Our Apollo yogi **Mike Gray** is up to big things. Earlier this year, his company, **Stripped**, began producing a great range of beef jerky. Selling the products from his stall at the Riccarton Market, and now from the website [www.strippedjerky.co.nz](http://www.strippedjerky.co.nz), the business is going so well that Mike is chucking in his job in construction management to concentrate his full energy on Stripped.

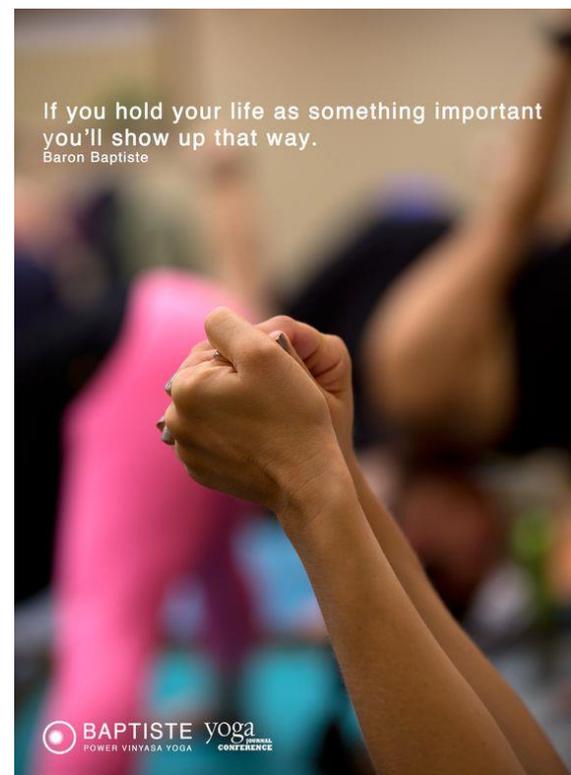
Made here in Christchurch from 100% NZ grass-fed beef, these products are stripped right back to the essentials, with no artificial preservatives, colours or flavourings. Stripped

Jerky is a tasty, healthy snack, high in protein, low in fat and sugar, and handcrafted in small batches to produce unique flavours.

Eat like a cowboy!



### **From Baron Baptiste:**



Namaste

©Hamish Kenworthy and Margo Perpick 2017

