



October 2014

Changeable spring is well underway with its variable wind directions, fluctuating temperatures and burgeoning growth all around. The central city is growing too. There are new developments in most elements of the centre and the centre is the place to be.

Labour Day Weekend at Apollo – Saturday 25 to Monday 27 October:

We are open for on Labour Day weekend. Our normal schedule applies on Saturday and Sunday, and on Labour Day, Monday 27 October, we have three classes:

10am PAL90

5:30pm PAL60

7pm PR60

Just get on in and practice. There are many times when we say work gets in the way of practising. If you have the day off, fit in a practice with no excuses.

Spring into Summer Special:

It is great that so many of you have taken up the chance to buy a 10-class pass or unlimited month at our special price of just \$100. Remember, you can buddy up with a friend, buy them one of these

passes, have them buy one for you and you can end up having the benefit of two passes at this special low price.

The deals are:

10-class passes purchased from 1 October to 30 November 2014 will be \$100 (no student or senior rates for these).

Monthly unlimited passes bought from 1 October to 30 November 2014 will be \$100 (again, no further discounts available).

The conditions attaching to these passes are:

1. The passes must be purchased in the period 1 October 2014 to 30 November 2014.
2. You may purchase one (either 10-class pass or unlimited month) for you and one (either 10-class pass or unlimited month) for a friend.
3. The classes must be used by 28 February 2015. Any un-used classes or any portion of a monthly unlimited pass not used by that time will expire.



Interview with James Anson-Holland from the Canterbury Rams:

James rose through the ranks as a national representative basketball player in NZ, playing for the NZ under 16s, under 18s and the Junior Tall Blacks. He travelled to the United States of America to advance his basketball career and gained a sporting scholarship with an American high school. After high school he remained in the States and attended Impact Basketball Academy in Florida where he developed his game in an incredibly competitive environment. His year with the Academy was successful and saw him achieve his goal of securing a scholarship with a Division 1 college basketball team, the University of South Alabama.



Division 1 college basketball is just one step below the NBA. The standard is extremely high and competition for places is intense with remarkable talent in all positions on the team roster. James never shirked the hard work necessary to

achieve his selection for South Alabama and did all he could to gain a competitive edge.

Unfortunately, the teams he played for did not include yoga as part of their training regimes, and James' main focus for building his strength was weights work. He then suffered a serious injury to the meniscus in his left knee which required surgery, and then rehabilitation. Joint injuries to the ankle and knee are a real danger for basketball players. The severity of James' injury brought his college basketball career to a halt. It left him with continuing pain and limitation of movement and he had no option other than to return to New Zealand.

On his return James focussed his attentions on his legal studies at the University of Canterbury. He wanted to keep his fitness up, but found that even a small amount of running resulted in his knee becoming painful and inflamed. He turned to yoga, knowing that track athletes from his college incorporated yoga into their fitness programmes.

James first tried Bikram yoga. The low impact quality of yoga allowed him to work with his injury, but he felt that the strict Bikram routine left him with no room to expand his practice. There was no bearing of weight on the arms, very little core strengthening, and an aggressive and negatively worded "dialogue". James then turned to the power vinyasa practice being taught by Hamish Kenworthy and others, at Flow Hot Yoga.

James found new challenges in the power vinyasa practice, but also found that his

knee started to strengthen and heal. He especially enjoyed the one class he had with Hamish, before Hamish left to open Apollo Power Yoga with Margo. James felt that Hamish encouraged strength and asked students to challenge themselves. “No other teacher brought that out”, says James.

2014 brought a return to basketball for James. The re-formed Canterbury Rams team approached him and he took a place on their squad. After two years out of the game, James loved the environment, the competition, the camaraderie and being a semi-professional player. He also loved being able to play without too much trouble from his knee. However, the commitment to this level of sport clashed somewhat with James’ university studies. Attending law school and playing national league basketball both demand full commitment so there were compromises made at each end to fit the two roles together.

2014 also saw James bringing his yoga practice to Apollo Power Yoga. Having practiced with Hamish previously, James initially booked in for a private lesson, and is now a regular at Apollo. “There’s something different at Apollo. Not just a stretch. You get to become who you are. I’m excited to be pushed and led. I get to experiment, branch out and see where it goes”.

When James arrived at that first private lesson with Hamish, he had never been introduced to the transition where you drop from halfway lift straight into *chaturanga dandasana*. Hamish immediately saw the potential in James to do this and James, equally quickly, was able to be coached and incorporate this

transition into his practice. James has developed many other additional strings to his yogi bow since joining Apollo including bound side angle and crescent lunge, tripod headstand, *kundinyasana*, *galavasana* and others besides.

Teaching into possibility is one of the core aspects of Apollo Power Yoga’s methodology. We seek to extend our students, helping them grow into their strength, rather than keeping them in their weaknesses and limitations.



James also likes the way that Hamish speaks into the realms of body, mind and spirit. “The other stuff – non-attachment. It transfers to other parts of life, not just in the yoga room”. For each pose in the Baptiste sequence used at Apollo Power Yoga, there is a spiritual focus. The lessons learned on the mat are, as James rightly recognises, principles to guide daily living and to shape each student’s way of being.

James is a great young yogi. He has a strong practice and is willing to try new things. He has a good temperament – encapsulated in his experience in pursuit of a basketball career; drive and determination to improve himself but equanimity to accept the low points in the journey. At Apollo Power Yoga he is

getting the instruction and challenge that meets his potential.

Workshops:

Breath of Life on Sunday 12 October was a brilliant exercise in enquiring into our breath. Margo leads this breath-enhancing workshop beautifully and the participants' feedback has been fantastic.

Our last workshop for 2014 will be a repeat of Marina Locke's **Spinal Alignment workshop**. Marina has a wealth of experience in yoga, massage therapy and cranio-sacral therapy and restorative yoga firmly grounded in anatomical knowledge is her forte.

Date: Sunday 9 November 12:30pm to 3:30pm.

Venue: Apollo Power Yoga 107 Hereford Street.

Cost: \$50 if booked and paid by 1 November. \$65 for late bookings after 1 November.

Bookings are essential. Contact Marina (021 055 1884, mlocke@ihug.co.nz).

Asana Spotlight: Bridge Pose (*Setu Bandha Sarvangasana*)



Like Camel last month, Bridge is an excellent rehabilitation action from sitting. Unlike Camel, it does not induce the profound sensations of nausea or of light-headedness that Camel can do. It is a backbend that can be held for prolonged periods (relative to most other back bends), yet it has tremendous advantageous outcomes in terms of spinal alignment, hip opening and mental relaxation.

- Start lying on your back. Draw your feet towards your buttocks until your feet are flat to the floor and hip width distance apart the width of a yoga block is an excellent spacer for this.
- With an inhale, reach your tailbone forwards to your heels and lift your hips up. Rest on your feet and shoulders.
- Clasp your hands together beneath your body and walk your shoulder blades in towards one another. Your shoulder blades do not need to meet and you should not go to a point where there is any pinching or pain.
- Press down into the floor through your feet and upper arms. The more you press down the more upward lift you will create.
- Keep your knees just hip width distance apart and turn your inner thighs down towards the floor. Avoid letting your knees splay outwards. Again, a block held squeezed between your thighs is ideal here. Use its width rather than its length or depth.
- Stack your knees directly above your ankles. If your feet are too close to your hips or too far away you will either strain your ankles and knees or carry too much tiring effort in your

legs and lose the bone strength of your lower legs.

- Tone your abdominal muscles gently. This may seem counter-intuitive. You are stretching out the front side of your body. But just as you do not want to simply stretch your legs in a warrior pose but must engage your leg muscles as you lengthen, so must you engage your core gently as you stretch here. With no engagement of your abdomen you can lose the desired alignment of your pelvis and can allow an element of collapse into your Bridge.
- Relax your eyes along the line of your nose and enjoy the broadening and lengthening of the front side of your torso and hips. The quadriceps muscles at the front of your thighs carry most of the load here and will likely be the first muscle groups to tire. They are working eccentrically in this pose, stretching but carrying load and working at the same time. Your hip flexors are being stretched which is good for the balance and alignment of your pelvis and therefore for your spine and head. This Bridge helps restore a postural, anatomical “Yes” to your body.
- To add spice to your Bridge you may stabilise across your shoulders and in one foot while bringing the knee of the opposite foot to your chest and pointing that leg straight up the ceiling. Contract through your raised thigh, press skyward through the ball of your raised foot and feel your hips lift even higher. To see this in action check out this image:



The raised legs are those of Margo, to the left, and Hamish at lululemon athletica Christchurch’s first birthday party. Notice the difference between an Apollo Power Yoga bridge and a bridge as taught and practised elsewhere? Notice how the women to the right of Hamish and in front of him in the picture (neither of whom practice at Apollo) have slumped their hips? Their knees are up but their hips are down and their bodies, knees down to shoulders, are slumped like a hammock. There is no downward energy, no upward lift. Their bridges lack earth and fire and air.

- Stay in the pose for as long as you are comfortable. To come down, release your hands and gently lower from your upper back to your lower back. Keep your tail drawing towards your heels as you lower. If you drop your tail to the floor too early you will end with an uncomfortable compression of your lumbar spine.
- Lie flat and breathe deeply before rolling onto your side and slowly pressing yourself back up to a seated position.

As you arch your body away from the floor, let the troubled waters of your mind flow away beneath you. You are not any

one thought nor even the sum of your thoughts. Let them flow away beneath you and realise a deep sense of inner self and self-worth.

The Apollo Power Yoga Difference: A Strong Practice Makes Strong, Slim Yogis

If you've practiced elsewhere before coming to Apollo, you'll notice that our power vinyasa and power restore classes offer you the chance to get **strong**, at the same time as increasing your mobility. This is the main difference between the Apollo Power Yoga practice and many other yoga practices.

The benefits of getting strong as well as mobile are:

- We need our bodies to be strong in order to **function properly** and protect ourselves from injury. A weak body is susceptible to being hurt even when carrying out everyday activities such as gardening, lifting groceries, or reaching to get something out of a high cupboard. Never mind what might happen to it during a run on the beach or a mountain bike ride.
- Strong bodies are **slim** bodies. We see the yogis who practice regularly at Apollo (4 or more power vinyasa practices per week) getting slimmer as they get stronger – we particularly notice their backsides and tummies shrinking, and muscular definition coming into their arms and legs. Muscle takes up much less space than fat, pound for pound, and looks a lot better. A muscular body runs at a

higher metabolic rate than a fatty body, so even when at rest, the muscular body is chewing through calories at a faster rate. Excessive adipose tissue (fat) packed between the organs in the abdominal cavity is very unhealthy and is linked to type-2 diabetes, insulin resistance and other disease in the body.

- Weight-bearing activity such as an Apollo power vinyasa practice also has the benefit of keeping your **bones strong**, avoiding osteoporosis. Although weight-lifting at a gym may achieve the same result for your bones, it comes without the added benefit of increasing your mobility. Besides, many of the weight-lifting activities at a gym, including cross-fit, tend to produce large bulky muscles - especially in the thigh area. A power vinyasa practice stretches muscles at the same time as putting them under load – this is what creates the **slim, sculpted look**.

Studios which are just giving their students weak, easy practices are doing those students no favours at all. Many times this occurs because the teachers themselves do not have a strong practice, and so are not able to teach a class from a position of strength. Other times it occurs because teachers are afraid of scaring students away if they teach a strong practice.

Students at those studios are not receiving good value for money. Although they're putting the time and fees into taking yoga classes, they are being kept in their weaknesses. Be wary of teachers telling

you that you're too weak for a strong practice, or that a weak practice is doing you as much good as a strong practice would. Be wary also of a weak practice being concealed behind an excessively hot environment over body temperature. At Apollo Power Yoga, we defy the lies, and lead our students to find and develop their **strength**.

Bhagavad Gita:

Chapter One in the *Gita* is called *The Despondency of Arjuna*. In it Arjuna asks Lord Krishna to drive his chariot out between the Kaurava and Pandava armies so that Arjuna may see with whom he will do battle. He sees on the Kaurava side men who are his uncles, relatives, teachers and so on and he quails.

His mouth goes dry, his hands shake, he becomes unsteady on his feet, his hair stands on end and his mind reels. He believes no good can come from engaging in war with his own relatives and people to whom he once looked up. He tells Krishna he would rather stand still and unarmed and be killed by the Kauravas than rise up to fight them as he fears no good can come from such a fight.

He says that when families are destroyed, communities are also destroyed, respect for social and religious observances are lost and ultimately there is a collapse of society accompanied by great suffering.

Arjuna throws down his bow and quiver and sits in the chariot refusing to fight.

In Chapter Two, *The Yoga of Wisdom*, Lord Krishna responds to these arguments.

First, he tells Arjuna his dejection is shameful and cowardly.



He tells him he is grieving for the lives of the Kauravas when a wise person does not grieve for the living or the dead. The immortality of the *Atman*, the Self, means that the true self does not die nor can it be killed. Krishna says that seers know this about the real and unreal: what is not, never has been: and what is, always is.

Krishna advises Arjuna to endure the objects perceived by the senses as they are impermanent and with patience they will pass without the need for Arjuna to be affected by them in any way. This notion of equanimity in the face of challenge is a principle taught in the Baptiste style of power vinyasa yoga. We call it being able to relax with what is.

Next, Krishna tells Arjuna that for the warrior class, the just war is a noble thing. He reminds Arjuna of the wrongs done by the Kauravas that have brought the factions of the family to war and says the war is just. He tells Arjuna that, by

contrast, if he were to fail in his duty as a warrior he would lose honour and incur sin.

If we put aside the question of war for the moment, we can appreciate that there are times when we feel resistance to doing that which is right (e.g. owning up for having done wrong, or standing up for someone who is being bullied or mistreated). In such circumstances we must recognise our duty, endure the sense of discomfort we may feel and act according to our duty.

Lord Krishna then moves to address the problem of Arjuna's mind being unsteady and wavering and discusses the notion of *samadhi* (superconsciousness/enlightened awareness). He tells Arjuna that when one's mind is wandering and distracted then one's thoughts and choices are endless but when the mind is clear and one-pointed (*ekagrata*), there is only one decision.

People deeply attached to pleasures or power are not able to fix their minds one-pointed in meditation and enjoy *samadhi*. Lord Krishna counsels Arjuna not to look for results or be motivated by the fruits of his actions. Instead, he is advised to renounce all attachments and enjoy an undisturbed mind regardless of success or failure.

Arjuna asks what someone who experiences *samadhi* looks like and how they behave. Krishna lists the attributes of such a person:

- They have let go of all personal desires and are utterly content with their own Self/*Atman*.

- They are undisturbed by difficulties, they do not yearn for happiness, they have no favourites, no fear and no anger.
- They do not experience excitement at good things nor dejection at bad things.

Lord Krishna tells Arjuna that the more one withdraws from indulging the bodies senses in the objects of those senses the more the longing for such things will disappear. We know this to be true. If we crave sugar, the craving will not be dispelled by eating sugary foods. Abstaining from alcohol is not assisted by drinking alcohol. Samuel Johnson expressed the idea in this way; the chains of habit are generally too soft to be felt until they are too strong to be broken

Krishna says that brooding on the objects of the senses engenders a desire for those things and ultimately anger when those things are not easily and abundantly available or when we indulge in such things knowing we ought not to do so. When one's mind is tranquil and disconnected from sense objects, all sorrows fall away. Krishna seeks that Arjuna be calm and centred in his mind (his duty is to fight a just war) and not be tossed by doubts and fears and a multitude of reasons and excuses for not acting in accordance with his duty.

This advocacy for a simple way of being may, to modern Western minds, seem trite. But it has force. We may feel we will be happy with a new car/house/partner *et cetera* but it is often not the case. Buying something may involve borrowing and the need to work long hours or extra jobs to meet the cost

of borrowing. We end up so tired and resentful of the amount of work we do we cannot take the pleasure we thought we would in the item purchased.

Separating from one's partner carries grief, disputes over money, custody and access, negative impacts for one's children, guilt and many other unanticipated consequences. Ultimately, unless we are happy at our centre, unless the *Atman* is content, we will not be happy in any relationship. Our closest relationship, that with ourselves, needs to be in harmony for our relationships with anyone else (lovers, friends, colleagues and so on) to be in harmony.

Next month we will discuss Chapters Three and Four of the Gita; Karma Yoga: the Yoga of Action and the Wisdom Yoga of Action and Renunciation.

Raw Evolution:



Some of you will have noticed we are stocking Raw Evolution Organic Superfood Bars (\$5.00 incl GST). These bars are made in New Zealand by a local business run by a yogi named Kit Hindin.

The bars contain all organic products and are gluten-free, dairy-free and cane sugar-free. In addition to the benefits of what they do not contain, they have almonds, Brazil nuts, goji berries, flax and chia seeds, nutmeg and cinnamon and other good ingredients too.

They have a crunchy rather than chewy mouth-feel and, being infused with orange oil they have a nice orange tang to them.

One of the critical features of the Brazil nut content is that this is a good source of selenium. New Zealand soils are deficient in selenium and it is an important element for everyone but especially for cellular function and the production of enzymes created for cellular health.

Support the organic movement, support a local business and support your everyday day health by enjoying these healthful bars.

More Great Things About the Central City:

Check out the Festival of Transitional Architecture: www.festa.org.nz, which takes place in the central city over Labour Day weekend. Great events include: A glowing city made of jelly, a virtual performance in an ambient architectural space, water calligraphy workshops and a live, large-scale elevated city with a digital dimension. These are just some of diverse range of future scenarios open to people of all ages at FESTA 2014: The Future Will Be Live!

Get along to these amazing events **and combine them with a practice at Apollo Power Yoga.**

**Apollo Power Yoga & lululemon athletica
underwear giveaway competition:
and the winners are.....**

The winners of our great underwear giveaway competition are: **Jessica Mclachan**, who is dancing around in a pair of Light as Air underwear, with no panty lines whatsoever, and **Campbell Johnson**,

who is feeling comfy and looking great in his NoBoxer Boxers. Congratulations to you both!

Namaste

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