



May 2019

### **Queen's Birthday Weekend:**

This weekend is the long weekend for Queen's Birthday. On Sunday 2 June the Christchurch City marathon (and related events) will be run and will involve significant road closures through the centre of town.

We are running all our normal Sunday morning classes. Please allow yourself extra time to get to the Salisbury Street studio on Sunday morning, be prepared to park further from the studio than normal and be patient with the running of the event.

On Monday we will run a reduced schedule of classes:

#### **At Salisbury Street:**

- 9:30 am Power All Levels 90 minutes
- 5:30 pm Power All Levels 60 minutes
- 7:00 pm Power Restore 60 minutes

#### **At Ferrymead:**

- 9:30 am Power All Levels 60 minutes
- 6:00 pm Power All Levels 90 minutes

Enjoy the long weekend and do come in to practice. As ever, we are there for you.

### **Ferrymead – Sunday Morning Classes:**

Having trialled two classes on Sunday morning at Ferrymead we are now reverting to just one Sunday morning class there. From and including this Sunday, 2 June, we will run just the 9:30 am Power All Levels class for 60 minutes at Ferrymead.

### **Car Parks:**

We ask that you remember and respect that the car parks in the lane next to us are leased by Casamassima and by Chere Cherie. Please do not use these car parks. You will see there are signs in the laneway threatening that those infringing may be towed. Thank you.

### **Workshops:**

We had a great turnout for Margo's **Breath of Life** workshop on 26 May. This is perhaps the most important workshop of the year. Breathing underpins vinyasa yoga practice, meditation, and life itself. Having awareness around breathing patterns and access to breathing practices (pranayama) is important for yoga practitioners of all levels of experience. Keep your eyes peeled for the next running of this excellent workshop.

Our next workshop is **Baddhas and Bandhas** on Saturday 22 June from midday to 2:30 pm. The fee is \$50 or \$25 for Apollo Power Yoga annual members.



Bandhas are stabilising muscular engagements and provide foundation for all poses. Learn more about the principal bandhas and how to utilise bandha for power and lightness in your practice.

Baddhas are binds. Learn techniques for taking binds in poses to create the basis for extra expression and possibility in your practice.

Stability from bandha allows the yoga practitioner to explore greater mobility with baddha. The two concepts go hand in glove. Bookings are essential. Book at either of our studios, call Hamish on 0210551884 or email [hamish@apollopoweryoga.com](mailto:hamish@apollopoweryoga.com)

### **Step into your Power:**

Commit NOW, do not wait any longer, and begin your personal development at all levels with **Step into your Power**, Apollo Power Yoga's yoga intensive and teacher training programme.

- If you feel stuck where you are in your practice or your life.
- If yoga is sparking curiosity in you and you seek more in-depth knowledge with respect to the practice as a whole, our practice in particular or yourself.

- If yoga has impressed itself upon you as a lifestyle and you wish to teach yoga.
- If you are ready to be all you can be in your yoga practice and in your life.



This programme has asana practice, meditation, inquiry, anatomy and physiology, and exercises in teaching to draw forth your exceeding self.

Make a commitment now, reserve the leave you may need, save the training fees you may need to put aside and choose to step into your power!

### **Kleshas:**

Do you know what a klesha is? You may not be familiar with the Sanskrit word but you will be familiar with the idea as we flesh it out here.

Yoga is a practice intended to free us from the most limiting, disempowering and distracting influences of our mind. Inherent in this is the idea that inner peace is natural and is available to us all. Also inherent in this is the experience that our thoughts create barriers between our actual experience and the attainment of bliss and inner peace.

The kleshas are categories of obstacle or veil that obscure or impede our access to contentment and bliss ("kleśa" strictly and literally means "poison" but in this context it is used in a metaphorical sense). Patanjali, in the

*Yoga Sutras*, identifies five categories of klesha. They are:

1. Avidya – ignorance.
2. Ahamkara-asmita – egoism.
3. Ragas – attachment.
4. Dvesha – aversion.
5. Abhinivesa – fear (especially/ultimately of death).

Immediately you may have some sense of recognition with respect to these principles. You may also see that they are not isolated or without overlap with one another.

Each of the second to fifth kleshas has its roots in the first. Each of the first to fourth of the kleshas can give rise to and manifest as a type of fear.

The discussion in the *Yoga Sutras* on the kleshas appears at the start of the second book in the *Sutras*, the Portion on Practice. Book 2, Sutras 2-4 state:

*Thus we may cultivate the power of concentration and remove the obstacles to enlightenment which cause all our suffering.*

*These obstacles – the causes of suffering – are ignorance, egoism, attachment, aversion and the desire to cling to life.*

*Ignorance creates all the other obstacles...*

In this month's magazine and in succeeding issues we will look at each of the kleshas in turn and explore them in some detail.

**Avidya:** the first klesha is avidya which essentially translates as ignorance. In the *Yoga Sutras* Patanjali asserts there are four types of ignorance:

1. Mistaking the Self for the non-Self.
2. Mistaking the impermanent for the permanent.
3. Mistaking the painful for the pleasurable.

4. Mistaking the impure for pure.

In each case I have deliberately used the word "mistaking" as in each case the ignorance concerned involves some element of error on the part of one's mind as to how to perceive something or how to conceive of something.

In each case, the ignorance may arise as a result of either not knowing or not possessing the necessary knowledge or information, or from having information or knowledge but misinterpreting or misconstruing that information or knowledge.

The first form of avidya lands with me. I have been in the experience of watching myself live, speak and behave in a certain way and all the while be unhappy and discontented with what I was hearing and seeing myself saying and doing. In the search through my teenage and young adult years for my identity I had come to play out a role that became an habitual way but that was not who I really was. My awkwardness in social situations either caused me to hide on the periphery or to act out loudly and insufferably, heedless of the impact upon others of my behaviour.

Ultimately, the patterns of assumed behaviour, my non-Self, became my way of being even though my true Self watched with horror from within. Being discontented with my way of being led me to believe that I was unlikeable and I did not like myself.

It was not until I undertook a training course with Baron Baptiste that I got some perspective around this and began to make to a change in my way of being. Returning from that course Margo observed that I was happier than she had ever seen me – and we had been living together for twenty years by that time.

The relief at being shown a glimmer of light and hope away from the ignorance of the first limb

of avidya had changed my whole perspective on myself and my relationship with the world.

If you are stuck in a state of discontent about who you are, about your way of being, consider that you may be lost in misperception between your true Self and an identity that you have assumed, for one reason or another, that is, at least at some level, false or untrue to you.

The second form of ignorance appears regularly in yoga practice. In a long hold of a challenging pose I find my mind racing to complaint about the length of the pose. I see the same thought passing through the minds of students when I am teaching and I leave the class in thunderbolt, in warrior 2, in standing leg raise, in wheel...

In these situations I, and my students, get stuck fighting with the challenge of the pose and not appreciating that it is fleeting and will be at an end any second. Rather than calm endurance and patience the yoga practitioner shows up with resistance and suffering. The lesson is to sit with challenge, relax and be calm in the great flux of circumstances that constitute our lives.

This applies to all the challenges of life: enduring grief, recovering from an injury, acquiring experience in a career and so on. Young law graduates are of limited value to any firm that employs them but the graduates do not always appreciate their limitations. By the time I had two years' experience as a lawyer I had become useful as a lawyer but also I had become conscious of how little I knew and I chafed at the slow process of acquiring practical knowledge and experience. Next thing I knew I was a partner in my firm acting as a mentor to young solicitors in the office.

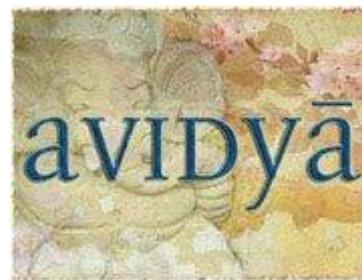
The third type of ignorance, mistaking that which is painful for that which is pleasurable, can play out in many ways. Food cravings are a way this shows up in my life. In the middle of

the afternoon when I feel the need for a spike or lift in my energy and I seek that lift from sweet treats I am caught in ignorance.

It may be that in a short-lived way I will enjoy the sweetness of some chocolate or a cannoli from Casamassima and these edible food-like substances may lift my energy. But they also mess with my blood-sugar levels, they pad fat around my organs and their effect is short-lived and creates a cycle of craving that does not serve me well.

It is so much better when I plan ahead and prepare a meal of nourishing food to take with me to work. When I need energy I can eat something with less instant appeal but longer term benefits to keep me strong, vigorous and able to serve in my role as a teacher with presence, engagement and vitality.

Be present to your tendencies, cravings and desires and be clear as to whether they are offering a short-term lift that is ultimately toxic or a longer-term physical, emotional and spiritual nourishment even if that means acquiring a taste for a behavioural pattern that is genuinely healing.



The final type of ignorance is fear, ultimately the fear of death. It is strange to fear the inevitable. Socrates went to his execution saying he did not know whether wait awaited him was bliss or oblivion but, whatever it was, he was ready for it.

In crowd, so many students fear that they will fall forward onto their faces and injure themselves. Absent the movement into a

point of precarious balance, and the fear that this movement triggers, there is no crow – only frustration, disappointment and a sense of failure.

To fly in crow it is essential to lean forward into the resistance constituted by fear. As in crow, so in life. In order to progress, grow and experience fulfilment in life it is necessary to lean into resistance and to meet fear with courage.

Fear is protective but also limiting. Recognise fear, and rather than recoiling from it, lean in and inquire as to whether fear is serving you or holding you back. Be aware and choose your path rather than reactive and the victim of fear.

Fear also ossifies as a habit. It plays out as a tense feeling of being ill-at-ease with muscular tightness and hormonal agitation and an apprehension that something bad is about to happen. Even when nothing bad happens the person living with fear has suffered through the experience nevertheless.

Deal with what is in the moment with clarity and calm. What eventuates in the future is to be dealt with when it arises – even if it is death itself.

The kleshas and the first klesha, avidya/ignorance are present in my life. They can either rule me and act as barriers to my contentment or I can be aware and alive to their impact and defy them. Be present to their role in your life and make a call to clarity and power in your way of being now.

### **Asana Spotlight:**

Tree pose (*vrksasana*) rounds out the standing balancing phase of the practice and epitomises the essence of that phase, namely, Equanimity.

- Begin in *samasthiti* (stand at attention with your arms by your side). Lift your right foot

and set the sole of your right foot at the inner thigh of your left leg. If you are unable, due to limitations of your right hip, right knee or the strength in your right leg to get your right foot as high as your thigh, then set your right foot to your inner left calf.

- A further modification if you struggle for balance is to set the balls of your right foot at the floor close to your left foot and rest the heel of your right foot at the inside of your left ankle.
- DO NOT set your right foot at the inside of your left knee. The pressure applied to your inner knee can be damaging and it is better to have your right foot below your left knee than at your left knee if you are unable to set your right foot as high as your left thigh.
- Lift and spread the toes of your left foot. Press the mounds and heel of your left foot to the earth.
- Lift the toes of your right foot towards your right shin and spread your right toes apart. Press the mounds and heel of your right foot to your left inner thigh.
- Reciprocate with your left thigh. Contract and tone your left inner thigh muscles (adductors) to create a platform against which your right foot can press.
- Press your right foot in towards the centreline of your body. Squeeze your left thigh in towards the centreline of your body.
- Open your right knee out to the right side as far as you can without creating strain. This requires abduction, the movement of your right thigh away from centreline, and external rotation of your right thigh (turn your inner thigh seam outwards towards the right side of the room).
- If you force these actions it will have consequences in terms of the balance at your hips. It may create “hip hike” and cause your right hip to lift higher than your

left hip which will resonate up through your spine and shoulders and head. It is better to be balanced at your hips, and therefore in your spine and upper torso, than to force the action of your right leg.

- Draw the front of your pelvis up towards your navel to neutral. Firm your lower belly in towards your spine (uddiyana bandha).
- Both side-to-side and front-to-back create a neutral pelvis.



- Reach your tailbone down towards the floor and lengthen the crown of your head towards the sky.
- Place your shoulder-blades flat on your back, expand your chest and upper back. Press your thoracic spine in towards your chest and draw your front ribs in towards centreline.
- There is a tendency in many students to flare out their front ribs in tree, especially if they raise their arms upwards. Be present to this tendency and consciously re-align your front ribs to a neutral position.
- There are many different arm variations in tree pose. You may choose to rest your hands in prayer (Anjali mudra) at your heart centre. In this variation set your gaze (drishti) either straight ahead of you towards the front of the room or lower your eyes down to the tips of your middle fingers. If taking the latter variation, lower

your eyes rather than dropping your head forward.

- Use jalandhara bandha in this case. Stretch the crown of your head up towards the sky. Draw your chin and lower jaw in towards your throat (not down towards your chest). Then roll your eyeballs downward and inward slightly.
- Other arm variations involve raising your arms. You may simply reach your arms up towards the sky. In this case, rotate your arms inwards so that the palms of your hands face one another. Draw your shoulder-blades in towards your spine (some teachers say “together” but I do not accord with this as it implies a more forceful action than I believe is desirable and contributes to the imbalance of the student’s front ribs that I have already addressed. In any event, your shoulder-blades cannot actually come together so the cue seems inaccurate from a simple anatomical perspective).
- Raise your arms but do not lift your shoulder-blades up towards your ears. Relax your upper trapezius and levator scapulae muscles and maintain ease and space around your neck and shoulders.
- In this variation you may either maintain a steady line of drishti straight ahead of you or you may tip your chin upwards and lift your gaze to the sky.
- In another variation, clasp your hands in front of you then raise your arms to the sky. Turn the palms of your hands, with your fingers interlaced, towards the sky. Track your shoulders and arm bones towards the back of the room. Again, your drishti may be straight ahead or to the sky.
- Another variation still involves reverse namaskar. Reach your arms around behind you, set the palms of your hands together and align your fingers upwards between your shoulder-blades. Typically, to get into this hand position the student

will extend their spine (back bend) somewhat with the potential of creating a sway in their low back and blowing out their front ribs. Accordingly, once you have set your hands in reverse namaskar, lift the front of your pelvis to neutral and engage uddiyana bandha. Draw your front ribs in towards centreline.

In tree pose assume a being of utter calm. Be like the eye of the hurricane. About you there may be raging winds and chaos but you are steadfast, composed and unruffled. Stand as a beacon of spiritual clarity and radiate the energy of peace, patience and non-attachment to the world around you.

#### **From Baron Baptiste:**



*A transformed person is someone who can tell the truth.*

#### **Stay at the Sudima Christchurch City – and Practice at Apollo for Free!**

Have you noticed the fabulous gold-toned building going up across the road from our Salisbury Street windows? That is the new 5 star boutique Sudima Hotel, which will be opening on 1 June 2019.

Spread the word: when you stay at the luxe Sudima Christchurch City, your practice at Apollo Power Yoga is included in your room rate.

Many people who've practiced with us were just visiting Christchurch at the time, or have since moved away. Or maybe you're one of our Christchurch yogis who will have friends and family coming to visit. Either way, a stay at Sudima Christchurch City is every visitor's best option for including practice at Apollo as part of their amazing Christchurch experience.

Sudima Christchurch City offers apartment hotel rooms along with King and Twin rooms. Inclusions are not limited to the wonderful Apollo Power Yoga practice, although that on its own would be enough! Guests also receive complimentary evening refreshments and canapés, à la carte breakfast, welcome minibar, streamed movies, unlimited Wi-Fi and private airport transfers or valet parking.

The sumptuous new day spa, Moss, will be located on the ground floor of the building, an oasis of wellness, rejuvenation and relaxation with an extensive menu of treatments and ingredients including golden Mānuka honey, soothing mineral clay, and Kakuda plum.

Vices and Virtues Restaurant & Bar will focus on locally sourced, sustainable produce, with an extensive range of vegan and vegetarian options.

Have a look at the full offering and book your rooms at:

<https://www.sudimahotels.com/en/our-hotels/christchurch-city>

#### **New Service for Your Sweaty Yoga Gear!**

FitFresh is a health and fitness laundry service who will be running a pilot, with limited spaces, at Apollo Power Yoga.

You can have your gear picked up from the studio, laundered, and returned to the studio fresh for your practice the next day. Just think, you'll no longer need to carry your sweaty gear away with you, smelling up your bag or maybe left in your car all day. And it will get laundered for you!



Fitfresh will be offering this service, for up to 10 people, at cost during the trial period from 10 June to 14 July 2019. During this period, the rate will be only \$5/week to have your yoga gear laundered every day.

Extra special: The first Apollo yogi to sign up will get the service FREE for the trial period 10 June to 14 July, and everyone else who signs for the trial period will go into the draw to win a FREE lululemon outfit.

Sign up HERE: [www.fitfresh.co.nz](http://www.fitfresh.co.nz).

Namaste

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