



September 2019

40 Days to Personal Revolution:

40 Days to Personal Revolution begins this Sunday, 6 October.

This tremendous course of meditation, asana, nutritional awareness and personal inquiry will spring-clean your way of being and give you pathways to new possibilities in your life.

Participation in this programme has been the inspiration for many great initiatives in the lives of those participating. It can be the catalyst for you to embark upon something amazing in your life too!



The fee is \$165 for Apollo Power Yoga annual members or \$385 otherwise. For this, you receive:

- Attendance at all six weekly workshops on Sunday evenings at 6:00 pm.
- All your practices at Apollo Power Yoga during the 40 days of the course.
- A copy of Baron Baptiste's book, *40 Days to Personal Revolution*.
- Hand-outs at the weekly workshops.

- Daily motivational emails.

Book at Salisbury Street or email hamish@apollopoweryoga.com or call Hamish on 021 0551884.

Apollo Power Yoga on Demand:

For those of you who cannot make it in to our studios for classes or who are travelling and want to maintain your power yoga practice, we offer an online service where you can either rent access to a collection of video-recorded classes or you may purchase and download to use indefinitely at your leisure a class or classes from the collection.



Now you can have access to some of our classes through an online service. Check out our website: <https://apollopoweryoga.com/apollo-power-yoga-on-demand/> or go direct to the on

demand page:
<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/apollopoweryoga>

Practice with all the joy, power, strength, mobility and inspiration that you know and love from classes at Apollo Power Yoga anytime!

Step into your Power – What a Week:

Our yoga intensive/teacher training course, **STEP into your POWER** ran from 21 to 28 September at Wainui on Banks Peninsula. Fourteen students trained with us and we had a fantastic, challenging week of learning and growing together.

We enjoyed bright sun shine, strong wind, rain, thunder and lightning, hail, snow and sunshine again. As much as the weather offered extremes, the participants experienced the extremes of habitual doubt and negativity on the one hand and the joy of being their true selves with all the promise and possibility that that holds on the other.

We train good teachers on our course and we help students grow as people and be in the experience of their exceeding selves.



Space is the essence of wheel – space beneath you and space right along the front side of your body.

Our next intensive runs from 26 January to 3 February 2020 at the same location, YMCA

Park Camp, Wainui. Check our website for details and submit your application to secure your place on this highly sought after programme.

[\(https://apollopoweryoga.com/step-into-your-power-yoga-teacher-training/\)](https://apollopoweryoga.com/step-into-your-power-yoga-teacher-training/)



Everybody up in crow – no fear!

Some feedback from our most recent trainees:

“This aspect of the program presented itself to me as a cruciality to be able to effect personal growth and refinement into my own life and way of being, the philosophical frameworks employed by the teachers to engage dialogue in relation to these precepts were in my view robustly understood and applied with care. Themes of truthfulness were the most resonant in my case.”

“Transformational!”

“I just wanted to say thank you for all the work you put in over the last week, it truly made for a life changing experience and I wanted you to know how grateful I am for how wonderful you have both been in helping me along my journey to be my true self.”

“Thank you so very much for yours and Margo's guidance over the last few days. I am in awe of both of your energy and your commitment to our growth.”

Africa Yoga Project – Eye Pillows:

Two of our students, Eunju Nam and Junghee Kim, have been working with Margo and they have made lavender scented eye pillows. These are on sale for \$20 with the proceeds to

go to Africa Yoga Project. You may purchase these from either of our studios.



They are a great accompaniment to savasana and a great way to settle your mind, calm your nervous system and create a relaxed state of being before you go to bed in the evening.

These are good for yourself as a treat and make a great present too.

The Kleshas - Abhinivesha:

In this item we shall discuss the fifth and final of the obstacles to inner peace, or kleshas – *abhinivesa* or fear (most essentially the fear of death).

The preceding kleshas, *avidya* (ignorance), *asmita* (egoism), *ragas* (attachment) and *dvesha* (aversion) ultimately all manifest as some type of fear.

The ignorance makes us fearful of what we do not know. Attachment makes us fearful of not getting that which we desire or fearful of losing what we have. Aversion makes us fearful that the worst will occur and that which we most dread will eventuate.

Fear is a primal, and necessary, response to certain external stimuli. Fear registers in the amygdala, a primitive structure in the brain that regulates emotions. The amygdala connects with the hippocampus. The

hippocampus records memories of the outcomes and sequelae when certain emotions are experienced.

Based upon the pairing of an emotion with an outcome a new stimulus that triggers the same or a similar emotion will create the same response in the body – a signal to the hypothalamus/pituitary/adrenal axis that causes a reactive burst of hormones and neuro-transmitters that provoke non-rational behavior.

The absence of awareness and conscious decision in this loop means we are not our true self, best self or most awake self. In a state of reactivity we are more prone to other kleshas. For example, if fearful we may seek comfort in food or alcohol or other substances and exacerbate the influence of attachment upon us.

As a child I feared flying foxes in camp grounds and playgrounds. One at my intermediate school was rigged over a gully. It seemed at the time to be very long and very high and no matter how many times I saw other kids use it safely I was convinced that if I were to go on it I was fall and die.



As an adult with my own children I have gone on flying foxes and roller coasters to model that it is safe and to open up the possibility of the thrill of the experience for my sons. I have had my sons sit on my lap on the flying fox at Orana Park to give them the experience and help them overcome the fear that the height

and length and speed of the contraption will cause them harm.

Power resides in bringing conscious thought into play to interrupt reactivity to fearful experiences. When you experience fear, notice the presence of the sensation in you and take a moment to reflect whether the fear is a reasonable one, whether it is an imminent one and what the scale of the threat is. If the thing you fear is pure imagination then assert the power of your conscious mind to return you to a state of present calm.

As Franklin Delano Roosevelt so simple said, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself". Use awareness to ground you in the present moment. Let go the thought stream that creates an imagined scenario of disaster, misfortune or suffering. Put your awareness in the reality of the present moment rather than the fanciful imagination of some future moment which you suppose will be worse than what is right now.

Yogic theory asserts that the Purusha, one's essential self, is distinct from one's body and is immortal. To that extent, fear of any harm to our body is unjustified. The *Bhagavad Gita* speaks of the soul being incapable of being cut by blades, wet by water, burnt by fire or dried by the wind. Fearing the occurrence of any of these events or the extinguishing of the soul itself is, for the yogi, quite pointless.

My own personal views do not extend to the immortality of the soul. I do not believe in a state of existence beyond the expiration of my mortal body. I fear pain and violence and death. Not that I am asserting great wisdom on my part, but even Patanjali in the *Yoga Sutras* concedes that the wisest of people cannot escape a fear of their own mortality.

Socrates is reputed to have been very wise and the discussion of his execution asserts that he went willingly to his death saying that he either

went to oblivion or to something better than his life on Earth and whichever awaited him, he was ready.

The message of the *Sutras* is that fear is in many respects counter-productive. As said, earlier, fear is a perfectly natural, primal experience. Fear can allow us to take appropriate safeguards against the hazards of life and, therefore, avoid unnecessary suffering. This may manifest as not climbing over a guard rail at a waterfall, putting on a seat belt in a car or whatever.

But fearing that which may never be and being consumed by it is a cause of suffering and an impediment to inner peace. Fearing that which is inevitable and being consumed by it is a cause of suffering. Yes, observe appropriate cautions against the hazards of life but let go your obsession with the fears that do not serve you and only cause mental strain.

Ultimately, inner peace and freedom from the *citta vritti*, disturbances and distractions of the mind, resides not in festering over fears but in letting them go and being calm and peaceful in the now moment. Preparing for a safe future is part of the process of relieving oneself of the strain of fear. Being unable to relax without imagining all that can go wrong in the near or later future is simply a cause of unnecessary discontent in your life.

Asana Spotlight:

Classical headstand (*Sirsasana*) is the focus pose this month. This is not a pose to be fooled around with. If you are inexperienced, are uncertain or have neck or back issues, consider only doing this pose with supervision from a teacher or experienced practitioner.

- The foundation for headstand is a triangular base formed by your forearms. Kneel on your mat and rest your elbows at the floor,

shoulder width apart, and cup your hands to the opposite arm biceps. This is a general guide for good spacing. Too wide with your elbows and the triangular base you form becomes very shallow and it is easy to overbalance one way or another.

- Once your elbows are appropriately spaced loosely cup your fingers together and rest the pinkie finger side of your hands at the floor. Some people find the pressure on the pinkie finger that rests directly on the mat uncomfortable. If this is the case in your pose, simply tuck the lower of your two pinkie fingers to the inside of your opposite hand.
- Bring the crown of your head to the mat and cup your hands firmly but without tension to the back of your skull. The crown of your head approximates to the point of your fontanelle. One way to locate this point is to set the tip of one thumb at the bridge of your nose and then reach the index finger of that same hand as high towards the top of your skull as you can. The point where your index finger touches your skull is approximately the point of your head which you should rest to the floor in headstand.
- The tendency for many students is to bring a point closer to their forehead to the floor. This misalignment resonates through the length of the pose and either results in a strain at your neck to try to assume a vertical alignment of your joints or inhibits your ability to stack your joints and means the pose is a struggle rather than a balance.
- Lift your knees from the floor and slowly tip-toe your feet closer to your head. Feel for a shift in balance away from your feet into your forearms and head. Move to a point where, to as great an extent as possible, your hips are close to being stacked over your head.

- At this point there are different options as to how to get up.
- Option 1: (in the image called curl-up version) Hug your knees in towards your chest and tuck your heels towards your buttocks. In so doing lift your two feet from the floor and rock your hips even more to an upright position straight over your head. Pull the pit of your belly in strongly towards your spine.
- Activate your low back muscles and hip muscles and extend your bent legs over your hips towards the ceiling. Stack your knees upright towards the ceiling.
- Finally, contract your quadriceps at the front of your thighs and extend your lower legs upwards to the ceiling.
- Option 2: (in the image called split legged version) Extend one leg strongly as high to the sky as you can. Squeeze your thigh muscles of your extended leg strongly to the bone and press the mounds of your extended leg purposefully straight up.
- Draw the knee of your grounded leg into towards your chest. In so doing lift your grounded foot from the floor. Pause to establish and assert balance, then with no rush, extend that leg to the sky alongside your already raised leg.
- In both Options 1 and 2, beware any sway in your back or collapse of strength at your core and abdomen. Draw your lower belly in towards your spine. Reach your tailbone upwards towards the sky.
- Contract your inner thighs and draw your two legs in towards one another to create lift, balance and stability.
- Be awake to the balance of your weight in your forearms and head. This pose is a headstand. Use your forearms to steady yourself like training wheels on a bicycle and rest as much weight as you can manage on the crown of your head.



Shake up business as usual and change your perspective and experience of the world by turning your whole body upside down. Renew, refresh and rejuvenate your energy and your outlook.

From Baron Baptiste:

- To come down try option 1: bend your knees and tuck your heels towards your buttocks then draw your knees towards your chest and touch your feet down to the floor.
- Or, try option 2, gently lower one of your extended legs towards the floor (not over your back behind you but to the front side of your body in the direction you are looking). This will shift your balance away from your head and you will drop, more or less gracefully, back to your feet.
- There are other options to get into classical handstand that are more advanced. One of these (in the image called pike up version) starts with the same set-up as Option 1 given earlier. However, at the point where you go to lift your feet from the floor, do not bend your legs. Instead, extend your legs very strong and straight. From the strength of your hip extensors, in your low back especially and your back more generally and in your hip, raise your legs slowly, with control, from the floor and to the sky. Move smoothly and gradually from a pike position to full extension. To come down, reverse the process.
- In both going up and coming down in this variation I find I need to shift my hips further to the front of my mat, slightly beyond the back of my head, to maintain balance. On the way up, I correct my hips to stack straight over my head once in full extension.



Love every breath.

Namaste

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