



December
2019

GRATITUDE

Thank you all for being part of the Apollo Power Yoga community over the course of this past year. It has been a big year for Apollo Power Yoga as we opened our Ferrymead branch in February, ran our teacher training programme in January and September, conducted 40 Days



to Personal Revolution throughout October and into November and had many workshops including those taught by Dan Fanthorpe, a visiting ashtanga teacher. Next year we will continue in the same vein with great group classes, workshops and programmes to serve your needs as students of yoga.

Margo and Hamish are grateful to our team of teachers who deliver our practices so well. Thank you Alice, James, Rachel, Ceri, Karen, Jim, Elena,

Camila and, most recently, Clare. We also thank Laura, now in Dunedin, Katie, in the Waikato, Ingrid, in Northland, and Lorraine, now in Ireland for their teaching for us earlier in the year.

We are grateful to those who have been part of our cleaning crew. Every day we have good people clean the practice room floors and the bathrooms and vacuum the studio to keep it clean, fresh and welcoming for you. They do a great job and we value their contribution to Apollo Power Yoga.

We are grateful to each of you as students for choosing to practice with us. We value you all and greatly enjoy working with you and bringing our practices with breath, energy, strength, mobility and spiritual insight into your lives.

Thank you all. Best wishes for an enjoyable holiday season and a fulfilling year to come.

END OF YEAR DRINKS – FRIDAY 20 DECEMBER

To mark the end of the year we will be having a few drinks and nibbles after the Power Groove class on Friday 20 December. Class will finish around 6:30 pm and you are more than welcome to stay on or drop in and enjoy one another's company. We will provide all refreshments.



CHRISTMAS GIFT OPTIONS FROM APOLLO POWER YOGA

Mat Bags for Sale – Support Kriza Mandela in Nairobi:

Kriza Mandela, our mentee in Africa through the Africa Yoga Project, has made yoga mat bags and we have them for sale at Salisbury Street.

They are a great colour and design. Each bag has a shoulder strap, a zip and an outer pocket. They are large enough to fit all mats, even the extra-long or extra-thick varieties.

The bags cost \$50 from which we will account for GST and all net proceeds will go to Kriza. Kriza has trained in sewing/tailoring and makes mat bags and tote bags for Africa Yoga Project in Nairobi.

These bags are an attractive and functional item for you or are a great gift for your yoga friends. Kriza would greatly appreciate your support of him in his financial independence.



While we have been mentoring him Kriza has received a monthly stipend from the proceeds of our contribution classes. His four year term with the AYP Academy is coming to an end this year and he will be supporting himself financially with his work as a yoga teacher and his tailoring work. Please help support him.

Savasana 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.

Apollo Power Yoga Gift Vouchers:

We have gift vouchers available at both our studios. If you wish to make someone a gift of yoga, a true gift of love, we can help. We are happy to create a voucher for any sum that you wish to give – it may be for a specific pass (introductory two week pass, casual one-off class, month unlimited pass etc) or we can tailor a pass to meet the needs of the person you are giving the voucher to and the amount that you wish to spend.

We have attractive vouchers that you can present to the person you are giving to.

Christmas/New Year Timetable:

We will be open every day over the holiday season with the exception of Christmas Day itself. From Saturday 21 December we will be on a reduced schedule of classes until Monday 6 December when the full schedule resumes.

The exception to that is at Ferrymead where from 6 to 31 January we will not be running 9:30 am or 1:00 pm classes Monday to Friday. Instead, we will have an 8:30 am vinyasa class every day Monday to Friday.

The timetable for the Ferrymead 8:30 am classes from 6 to 31 January is this: Monday PB60, Tuesday PAL60, Wednesday PB90, Thursday PAL60 and Friday PAL60.

Our website is accurate and up-to-date for all classes throughout the remainder of December and through January so check online for classes:

<https://apollopoweryoga.com/central-city-studio-timetable/>



We also have hard copy of the Christmas/New Year timetable at both studios.

Annual Membership Sale:

Throughout December until the end of January 2020 the up-front price for an annual membership at Apollo Power Yoga is on sale for just \$1250.

For this you receive:

- Unlimited practice at our two locations at Salisbury Street in the city and Humphreys Drive at Ferrymead.
- Mat storage at Salisbury Street.
- Half price on in-house workshops and 40 Days to Personal Revolution programmes.
- The ability to pause your membership should you be away from practice for two weeks or more due to travel for work or holiday, or due to illness or injury.



If you have an existing annual membership that does not expire until after 31 January 2020 you may still purchase a new membership at the special rate by 31 January and we will run the new membership consecutively after the expiration of the existing one.

Our annual memberships are non-transferable and non-refundable.

Do leap in on this tremendous offer and make power vinyasa yoga and restorative yoga at Apollo Power Yoga an integral element of your health and well-being in 2020.

Step into your Power – January 2020:

Now is the time to apply for Apollo Power Yoga's next 8-day intensive, **STEP into your POWER**. On applications received we are already half full. If you have completed one intensive and wish to complete the forthcoming January intensive to conclude your training you must still submit a fresh application for January. Applications are dealt with on an as-received basis.

Our course begins on Monday 27 January 2020 and runs to and including Monday 3 February 2020 at the YMCA Park Camp at Wainui on Banks Peninsula.

This course features:

- meditation,
- asana,
- personal inquiry,
- yoga history and philosophy,
- anatomy related to yoga practice,
- practice teaching.

In the words of our past trainees:

"I found the inward looking sessions hugely transformative. I felt that there was a consistent theme, and was really impressed by Hamish's ability to retain what each person had said throughout the week and then re-state it to the relevant participant at a pivotal moment."



The personal enquiry (sic) sessions were highly useful to learn more about yourself and face some unpleasant themes and it was surprising what revealed itself throughout the 8 days. Margo and Hamish provided wonderful guidance and it felt like a safe and encouraging environment to share personal experiences, thoughts or fears. I was impressed how attentive both Margo and Hamish were to each person who shared something, no matter how late in the evening or how many people had shared before. The attention to each and every one who got up to say something was palpable. I felt that there was an amazing fine-tuning towards how far you can /have to push people and when you got to back off and give them some space. Also I thought it was most helpful that you were not forced to see things a certain way but were only guided by well-aimed questions to find or arrive at your truth for yourself

All the teachers at Apollo Power Yoga have been through our Step into your Power course. Our programme is effective in training teachers to deliver a consistent style of practice with a consistent methodology. It is also effective in empowering our trainees to address those things that block them in their lives and to make progress to a more contented and powerful way of being.

Book now to secure your place for January 2020. Email hamish@apollopoweryoga.com or download and complete the application form from our website (<https://apollopoweryoga.com/step-into-your-power-yoga-teacher-training/>) and forward it to Hamish. We would love to have you join us in 2020.

Apollo Power Yoga on Demand:

If you are travelling or live outside of Christchurch and you want to practice with Apollo Power Yoga you can do so online!

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!

How do they make it look so easy?

Do you ever wonder how someone near you in class can seem to be so at ease while you are struggling? In eagle pose my hips will skew one way and my shoulders will turn another way and I will not be able to balance and yet someone in front of me will be relaxed and at ease, their spine beautifully upright and no sign of strain about them at all. In pigeon pose I will wrestle with myself to get comfortable while the person next to me will be as soft and settled as a cat on a couch.

What is the difference between me and the other student in those cases? What is the difference between the student who screws up their face as if in excruciating agony and who gasps through their mouth compared with the student who, even in the most intense of poses, maintains a serene aspect to their outer form and who breathes through their nose?

How does it come about that some students hold poses evenly for their duration while others fall out of poses repeatedly, and spend the duration of the pose in an arm wrestle with themselves creating a sense of frustration, discontent and disappointment?

I perceive there to be three essential differences: differences of **intention, action** and **energy**. On the one hand there is the student who is struggling. That student's intention is to force outcomes. The struggling student is striving for a depth in the pose that requires strain. As I repeatedly tell people, I love extended side angle pose. What I most appreciate about the pose is the length it gives my body and the stretch and opening it conveys to the front side of my body. In the first two images below you can see both these qualities - length and openness.



It matters not whether I have my arms bound or unbound, my **intention** is length and openness. Often, however, I see students over-reach with the intention of taking a bind. Their intention is not length or openness. Their intention is to bind because of some perception that a bound version is a better version. They lose alignment, clean energy, length and openness. Their pose looks awkward and collapsed with a rounded back, a closed front side to their body and no freedom or space. It looks something like this:



Extensions in a yoga pose for the sake of extension, or for the sake of the idea of being “better” at yoga are of no benefit. Extensions must be built upon proper foundations and must be directed towards greater expression and possibility in the pose. The sort of loss of form I am demonstrating in the third image is not greater expression or possibility. There is no value in struggling to create a bind if all it means is that you end up hog-tied and out of alignment.

When I take a pose I seek right **action**. I seek to align my body to create stability, balance, space and vitality. My actions are to create those qualities in my pose. My actions are not to exceed the person next to me or even to keep up with them. My actions are not to fulfil the expectations of others or to be seen to be doing fancy yoga. Repeatedly I see students whose actions in a pose are geared not to the essential qualities of stability, balance, space and vitality but are to conform with some perception of what the pose should look like.

At the expense of essentials many students over-reach and apply their actions to advancement without the integrity of a good base and a good sense of alignment. If you lose form when trying to take a bind in extended side angle pose, do not take a bind. Your friend may be in a bound variation on the neighbouring mat. A student who is older than you may be in a bound variation on the mat in front of you. A student in their first class of yoga may be in a bound variation just behind you. Nevertheless, all those circumstances do not mean that you need to contort yourself, misalign your pose and create an unpleasant experience for yourself in a pose.

Another example is in standing balancing poses. There may be five steps to create the pose but many students who fall out at stage four, for example, then try to get back in at step four without going through the essential preliminary actions. To get to chapasana from mountain pose the student must first shift their weight into one foot and be stable on that foot and contract the muscles of that leg strongly to be steady. Second, they must take aeroplane with neutral hips, square to the floor. Third, they must turn their lifted foot out to the side and rotate the hip of their lifted leg to the sky and extend one arm to the earth and the other to the sky. Fourth, they must bend the heel of their lifted leg up behind them and bind it with their raised hand. Fifth, and finally, they must apply force through the bind of their hand to their foot to create opening and expansion. If someone falls out at the point they try to take a bid I often see them try to leap back in at that same point without generating the actions of steps one to four.

The actions of the student are directed to advancement or full expression from the word go and not to creating the underpinnings of integrity and truth in the pose.

The **energy** of the struggling student is the energy of over-exertion and fight. When I struggle I generally find I hold my breath or my breath becomes short. When I struggle I become tense and my energy is dense and stuck. When I choose to relax with the pose (not collapse but simply let go unnecessary tension and resistance) I gain a new appreciation of the pose, its possibilities and a new acceptance of myself.

The awareness of the struggling student is not on their breath or their alignment or the balance of their mind but is on competition or performance or blindly following. The energy of the student at ease is clear and peaceful. The awareness of the student at ease is on total being harmony where all their parts are united. As Gandhi says, happiness exists when what you think, what you say and what you do are in harmony.

The struggling student in a pose is not content with where they are and is pressuring themselves to be somewhere else or go somewhere further. When I fight with myself in thunderbolt with prayer and twist or tense up in camel pose I am not comfortable being right where I am and I seek the end of the pose or another pose.

The moment I realise that I am exactly where I need to be the pose becomes a place full of possibility rather than a place to be resisted. Shift your vision from the pose as being hostile. In that moment of surrender and acceptance there is no fear, no concern for looking good, no need to perform or compete and the way you know yourself will change. Stop struggling against what is and relax with what is. Accept the present for all that it holds and all that it does not and appreciate yourself fully.

When you truly understand that being exactly where you are is of the essence then you will step into new state of enlightenment. Your pose may not change but your experience of the pose will be beautifully transformed. There is so much available to you in whatever form of the pose you are in but you will have no access to that or grasp of it if all you do is struggle against the pose, whatever it may be.

Asana Spotlight:

Adho mukha svanasa (downward facing dog) is an essential pose for all yogis to have in their toolbox of asanas. Strengthening, opening and relaxing all at once, downward facing dog is a pose for the festive season of excess and for the holiday season of renewal. Let us look at downward facing dog in detail:

- Start on hands and knees with your hands just wider than shoulder width and your knees and feet at hip width.
- Align your index fingers straight forward towards the front of your mat, spread your fingers wide and press strongly into the inner triad of the thumb and index finger of each hand.
- Tuck your toes under and lift your hips to the sky coming into an inverted “V” position.
- Spread your toes wide and press into your toes and the inner and outer mounds of your feet.
- Contract your quadriceps on the fronts of your thighs to your leg bones and press the backs of your thighs towards the back of the room. Gently turn your inner thigh seams inwards towards the back of the room. Align your heels directly behind your middle toes.
- Bend your knees forward slightly and tilt your tail up to the sky. You do not need to have your heels grounded nor do you need to have your legs straight. For most students both those actions, grounded heels and straight legs, will cause your pelvis to be drawn backwards and your lower back to round and bulge outwards. Instead, lift your heels a

little, bend your knees a little, tip your pelvis forward and flip your tailbone and sitting bones up towards the sky.

- Contract your arm muscles and lift your arm bones upwards. Direct your weight not into your wrists but send your weight forward into your finger joints. Keep the palms of your hands light.
- If you tend to hyper-extend your joints and your elbows buckle inwards towards the centreline of your body in downward facing dog, then bend your elbows slightly and lift your arm bones towards the sky. You will notice this causes your arm muscles to activate and your stability will come from muscular contraction rather than from a collapse into your joints.
- Relax the joints of your spine into your torso. Suspend your spine from your hips.
- Draw your shoulder blades onto your back. Avoid over-extending your shoulders or collapsing towards the floor. Create a power line from the tips of your two index fingers right up through the inner line of your arms, through your shoulders and spine to your tail.
- Relax your neck and jaw. Rest your gaze at the floor
- Breathe deeply through your nose. Expand your ribcage on inhales, and engage your abdominal muscles and draw your front ribs into towards centreline on exhales.



It is very common for students new to yoga to find downward facing dog tiring. If you become fatigued in downward facing dog or if heat builds in your shoulders to a point that is not sustainable, simply take child's pose with no sense of failure or embarrassment. Come back in when you are ready. With patience, persistence and application your form and strength in downward facing dog will develop and grow and one day you will find it restful to be in downward facing dog. Don't wish for that moment, work for it. So much is possible from downward facing dog. You could take one legged dog and then flip dog and wheel. You could spring to the front of your mat or into crow. You could step into a powerful lunging warrior.

You could thrust up into a handstand. All that potential lies within downward facing dog and it lies within you too. Open your mind to that possibility and trust yourself.

A Baby in the Apollo Power Yoga Community:

Many of you have been taught by Elena and are wondering about the baby she's been busy growing this year. He's here! His name is Kaladin Wilder Keir-Stokes, and according to Elena, he's one tough little dude. So we'll be seeing him in at Apollo before you know it, rocking out some baby chaturangas.



From Baron Baptiste:



Realise your greatness.

Apollo Power Yoga Clothing Borrow Bag:

Every once in a while, you get to yoga and discover that you've forgotten to bring your yoga clothes with you. Don't despair! We have clothes you can borrow.

If you do borrow clothes from us, please return them to us at reception straight after the class - don't take them home to wash them before they're returned. We'd rather launder them ourselves and get them back into circulation straight away. Please also do not put them in the towel bin in the changing rooms. The towel bins are emptied by commercial cleaners.

We are missing a few pieces, so if you've accidentally taken some of the borrow bag clothes home, please return them so that they're available for all to use.

And if you have yoga clothes that you don't wear any more, feel free to donate them to the borrow bag. It's good to have a range of sizes and styles.

Namaste

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