



June 2020

### LIFE AT APOLLO POWER YOGA

It is great to see people returning to practice after the removal of lock-down restrictions. We love seeing you all and teaching to you in person.

Some have asked about **our timetable** and when it will be “back to normal”. The answer is that we will gradually add classes as the need and the opportunity arise. At present the numbers attending early morning classes at 6:15 am do not suggest that we need extra classes at that time of the day.

The greatest demand is at lunchtime and after work and we are running classes at the city and at Ferrymead in these time slots. Rest assured, we are monitoring matters and will expand the timetable when we can and as demand indicates is necessary.

**Hands-on assisting** is back as an option for you. We find it helpful when you indicate a preference for or against assists by placing a green disk (yes for assists) or a red disk (no assists thank you) by the front of your mat.



Our International Yoga Day promotion where you could **bring a friend new to Apollo Power Yoga for a free first class** has been a great success and we met a good number of new

people. Thank you to everyone who brought in a friend or friends to practice with us. We greatly appreciate you sharing our practice with your community so that, together, we can all form a greater community. Because it has been such a success we are going to continue with it for the time being. So, if you have not yet please bring in someone who has not previously practiced with us and their first visit will be free.

In the cold of winter you will always find a warm room and a warm welcome at Apollo Power Yoga. Practice often and reap the rewards in connection, strength, mobility and overall health and well-being.

**YOGA INTENSIVE – 11-19 SEPTEMBER**  
**STEP INTO YOUR POWER - BOOK NOW AS PLACES ARE LIMITED**

Our yoga intensive, ***Step into your Power***, is proceeding at Wainui on Banks Peninsula from 11 to 19 September. You may attend this programme as part of a yoga teacher training programme or as an intensive to learn more of yoga, your practice and as a process of personal growth and development.

Those attending for teacher training will need to commit to full days with all sessions compulsory. Those choosing to attend as an intensive will be excused attendance at sessions on teaching methodology, anatomy and physiology sessions and the practice teaching sessions.



For those attending the course as an intensive but not as a teacher training, you will have your afternoons free to walk in the area, visit Akaroa, Duvauchelles or French Farm or enjoy the beautiful bush clad surrounds at the Wainui Park Camp, venue for our course.

This course has produced all the teachers at Apollo Power Yoga, the core of the teaching group for a studio in Auckland and the leaders of the vinyasa teachers at Dunedin's leading yoga studio as well as others plying their craft throughout New Zealand. Our training enables trainees to be effective teachers and leaders in their communities. We promise you a powerful process of growth, learning and empowerment.

By participating in our programme you will develop in your asana practice, in meditation and in your appreciation of yoga as an holistic practice and in yoga philosophy.

Commit now to the most rewarding week not just of your year but of your life and sign up for **Step into your Power** now. Visit our website for more details: <https://apollopoweryoga.com/step-into-your-power-yoga-teacher-training/>

Feel free to speak with Margo or Hamish to discuss your part in the programme. Call Margo on 027 2272026 or Hamish on 021 0551884 or arrange to chat with us at our studios. You will not regret your choice to be part of an amazing group of people engaging in an amazing process of meditation, asana and inquiry.

## **POWER IN PARADISE RAROTONGA RETREAT – STILL PROCEEDING WE HOPE**

We still hope to be in Rarotonga from 7-14 August this year but are dependent upon progress being made in freely opening the border between New Zealand and the Cook Islands. At this point our plans are still in place. The venue for the retreat is being understood and our ability to postpone is good. We will keep you updated as we know more.

If you have any questions, email [margo@apollopoweryoga.com](mailto:margo@apollopoweryoga.com)

## **KALI YUGA**

Krishna Das has an album entitled "Songs of the Kali Yuga". I purchased the album some time ago, around 2012. I did not know what the Kali Yuga was when I bought the album – I just knew I liked KD. However, it sparked some curiosity and I recall chatting with the receptionist at a yoga studio about the meaning of the term. That person helped educate me somewhat about the idea but I did not dig deeper to know more.

Ever since, and more so in the last year or two, I have been reflecting on the idea of the Kali Yuga. The Kali Yuga is a Hindu concept and is said to be one of four great ages that recur

from time to time, in sequence. The four ages are the Satya Yuga, the Treta Yuga, the Dvapara Yuga and the Kali Yuga.

The Satya Yuga means the Age of Truth. In this age, the divine is manifest on Earth, truth and justice prevail and life is good. In this age the goddess Dharma, represented by a cow, stands on all four feet and morality is in the ascendant. In the second age, Treta Yuga, there has been an erosion of the moral virtue of people. The goddess is now depicted as standing upon three legs (Treta means three in Sanskrit. There are other explanations offered for the naming of this age including its supposed duration and the presence of the Lord Vishnu together with two avatars). In this age morality is in the decline, materialism is on the rise and inter-human conflict and war increases.

In the third age, Dvapara Yuga, the sacred cow stands on just two legs. "Dva" in Sanskrit means two so the age could be named after the legs upon which morality stands but dvapara as a whole means two ahead. That is, there are two ages that precede this age. In the Dvapara Yuga there is a further gradual decline in the moral and religious observance of the people who, more and more, are motivated by selfish worldly concerns and less and less by morality and virtue. The great Hindu epic poem, the Mahabharata (incorporating the Bhagavad Gita), is set in this third age. With the death of the mortal incarnation of Lord Krishna the third age came to an end and the Kali Yuga began.

The Kali Yuga sees morality teetering on one foot. The Kali Yuga is the age of discord and conflict.

Hindu astronomy and astrology work to calculate the duration of the ages. Some assert the ages are of equal duration. Others assert they vary greatly in duration. There is scientific foundation for the calculations based upon celestial orbits but the calculations of different sources are wildly at variance. I have seen numerous different assertions made as to the duration of the ages suggesting that the Kali Yuga has finished, during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, that it has around 5000 years left to run and that it has over 400 000 years left to run. It is not my purpose to delve into that debate and I am not in any way equipped with the knowledge to do so.



I am, however, interested in the features of the Kali Yuga. As I have said, the four great ages of Hinduism are described in the Mahabarata which was written between 2000 and 5000 years ago. Characteristics of the Kali Yuga include:

- Increasing natural disasters and climate change.
- Increasing physical violence, violent crime and war.
- Loss of spirituality and religion.
- Increasing materialism.
- Increasing vice and the pursuit of sexual pleasure as the most important thing in life.
- Increasing injustice at all levels of society with governments taxing unfairly and exploiting the population unreasonably.
- Predominance of greed and avarice.
- Replacement of virtue with sin.

As a description of our present world these sorts of characteristics seem remarkably accurate. As these conditions were predicted millennia ago they appear to be rather prescient.

Natural disasters and climate change. Even allowing for greater knowledge of events from around the world and a greater degree of reporting, natural disasters seem to be on the rise. A report in The Press in the course of the last week recorded a temperature in Siberia inside the Arctic Circle of 38°Celsius! In the middle of winter Auckland's water reservoirs are running at just over 50% full, 20% lower than the expected level for this time of year. Glaciers are receding dramatically from Greenland in the northern hemisphere to New Zealand and South America in the south. Earthquakes around the Pacific, hurricanes in Ireland, wild fires in Australia and California, drought in Afghanistan, floods in Houston and locust swarms from the Horn of Africa extending into India are all part of our present world. To the extent that these phenomena have arisen due to the impact of the human race's activities on Earth our lack of awareness, our separation from oneness with the environment and our greed for short-term gains dependent upon a pillage of natural resources are characteristic of the Kali Yuga.

War. War exists right now in Afghanistan, Syria and the Yemen. Civil war in Libya and Somalia, war against drug cartels in Mexico and the Turkish-Kurdish conflict all continue, some after many years of violence. Wars in various parts of Africa (including Nigeria, Mali, Cameroon, South Sudan, Chad, and the Democratic Republic of Congo), in the Middle East (in Palestine and Israel, in Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia), in India and Pakistan and on the border between Pakistan and Iran, and in Central America in Colombia, Venezuela and Ecuador are all ongoing. It seems incredible to me that human civilization has endured for the time that it has and yet recourse to violence is so prevalent.

The Second Amendment to the United States Constitution is said to guarantee the right to bear arms. That amendment was ratified in 1791 and the provision reads: "A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms shall not be infringed." It seems to me that the provision is anachronistic and was a creature of its time and, most-particularly, the manner in which an American army was mustered to fight the British in the American War of Independence. The present need for a Militia - a military force that is raised from the civil population to supplement a regular army in an emergency – is questionable and the use of the need for a militia as the basis for every person in America to be able to carry weapons is, I believe, unreasonable in the modern day. We hear little if anything of someone using a firearm in the successful defence of themselves

or their family from criminals and an awful lot about those who use weapons to perpetrate attacks upon the defenceless.

There is an irony in Charlton "From my cold dead hands" Heston being a spokesperson for the National Rifleman's Association and being the star of *Planet of the Apes*, a movie that envisages a future where the human race has brought itself down by the use of its weaponry (namely nuclear weapons) to be superseded by other ape species.

Democracies throughout the world function economically on the basis of "big business" being encouraged to thrive so that big business will employ, support and give opportunities to the populace. And yet, the disparity in wealth continues to be exceptionally marked, wealth is still concentrated in a small percentage of the population and social inequality based on race, age and gender is entrenched.

In 2011 a bank trading in New Zealand bought its chief executive officer a house for \$7.5 million. Later, in 2017, the CEO's wife bought the house, then valued at \$10.75 million, for \$6.9 million. All the while, thousands of Aucklanders were living in cars, in garages and in over-crowded rental accommodation, unable to meet the usual lending criteria of the bank. This situation cannot exist but for the presence of selfish greed and the absence of compassion and empathy.

Loss of spirituality and religion. I do not consider myself to be religious. I do not attend church. I do not pray to a god. But I perceive there was a time when religious observance was part of a connection with earth and nature. I believe that the origins in religion were an attempt to explain existence by means of a god/creator and that worship of a god/creator was an expression of gratitude for what the earth provided: clean water in lakes, rivers and rain, soil in which to grow crops, sunlight to provide a time to work and a time to sleep as well as warmth, and all the other forms of sustenance and shelter that we need.

When religion experienced corruption, whether by rich men wanting to make themselves richer, or by people in power abusing their power for immoral or illegal purposes, the potential for religion to unite us as people and to unite all of us with our world was undermined.

The parallels between what we can observe in the world and the conditions described in the Kali Yuga go on. Does that mean we should shrug our shoulders and give in to the inevitable? Does that mean that we should regard leaders such as Kim Jong-Un, Assad and Trump as being normal and acceptable? Does that mean that we should allow the light to go out?

In the midst of what is plainly wrong, in the midst of what is not working and in the midst of that which is unsustainable, be the one who defies the degradation of morality and humanity. Be the one who keeps the light of the selfless. Jacinda Ardern gained global recognition for the manner of her response to the Mosque shootings in March 2019. The acclaim she received demonstrated that people across the globe are seeking a way of connection, compassion and understanding.

I believe humans are naturally social creatures. I believe we have grouped together for a variety of mutually beneficial reasons (protection from predators, child rearing, food production and so on) and that our togetherness is our strength. Some have become lost to the mutual benefit of society and have used their position to exploit others. Drug barons seek wealth by distributing their noxious products that do immeasurable harm in those to whom they are

peddled. Criminals traffic women into sexual slavery. Multinationals exploit the lack of regulation in developing countries to avoid labour laws and to ravage the environment in pursuit of corporate profits.

Resist those who would act out the worst characteristics of conflict and discord. Be clear and truthful in your purpose. Use your voice and your actions in your own unique way to contribute to a better age for us all. I was heartened to see demonstrators dressed as bees making their point in the City Council chambers last week. I was heartened to hear from a student at Apollo Power Yoga that part of her day late last week had been to attend a protest against the importation of blood phosphate. I like that another student of Apollo Power Yoga uses an email address “savinganimalsnz”.

In a televised debate between Bill English as then-leader of the National Party and Jacinda Ardern as leader of the Labour Party, the participants were asked what would move them to take to the streets to protest. I like that people across the world took to the streets in support of Black Lives Matter. It is important that we care and that we show we care. Once we stop either caring or showing we care, we doom ourselves to live in the Kali Yuga.

### **ASANA SPOTLIGHT**

The power vinyasa practice peaks with wheel pose (urdhva danurasana). As an expression of strength, mobility, courage and freedom, wheel is a tremendous way to bring your whole practice to a summit of greatness.

There are many limiting factors that can stand between you and wheel pose. It is important not to rush the process and not to look for any quick fixes. A lack of leg and arm and back strength can impede your progress into wheel. Tightness, injury or degenerative conditions in your hips and spine can impede your progress into wheel. Tight shoulders and immobility in your wrists can impede progress into wheel.

If you have any of these limitations be patient with respect to wheel but do the practice as a whole. Poses throughout the class are contributing to strength and mobility throughout your whole body to ultimately set you free in wheel pose.

- Begin lying on your back. Draw your heels up towards your hips and set your two feet at hip width distance and pointing straight forward up the length of your mat. Holding a yoga block with the middle dimension (6 inches) between your feet can help you achieve good spacing between your feet.
- The most common defaults in taking wheel pose are for students to split their feet too wide apart and to turn their feet outwards. This creates the illusion of space but undermines the power of your legs. Think of wheel as downward facing dog turned upside down and inside out. In downward facing dog it is desirable to set your feet at hip width distance. So too in wheel.
- Place your hands just wider than shoulder width distance either side of your head. Point your fingers towards your feet with your palms facing downwards.

- Another common flaw in students' set up for wheel pose is to have their hands too narrow, angled inwards and too far away from their shoulders. Each of those flaws deprives you of power in getting up into and then holding wheel and each places an undue load upon your joints, especially your wrists, elbows and shoulders.
- Once you have set your base, lift your hips from the floor as you would for bridge pose (discussed in our May magazine). In so doing, press the centre of your heels and the inner mound of each of your feet to the floor. Engage your inner thighs and draw your knees in to hip width.
- Rotate your elbows inwards to around the width of your hands or just slightly wider. Point your elbows up towards the ceiling. The form of your arms at this point should resemble the form of your arms in chaturanga dandasana/low plank pose.
- Press down through your feet and hands and lift to the crown of your head. Pause here. We call this the "wheel set up position". In this position carry your weight in your feet and hands. Do not collapse weight onto your head and neck.
- If your elbows have splayed outwards draw them back inward to around the width of your wrists. Hug your shoulder blades and upper arms in towards your spine.
- Now press up all the way into wheel pose. Relax your neck and hang your head down towards the floor.



- Create balanced action (sthira sukham asanam) – between the strength of your legs and the mobility of your shoulders.
- As with bridge pose, it is important in wheel pose to press your thoracic spine up into your chest. Being sharply extended in your low back but very flat in your thoracic spine is not ideal. Draw your shoulder blades and upper arm bones in towards your spine. Press your thoracic spine up into your chest.
- To come down from wheel, lift your head and tuck your chin towards your throat. Bend your elbows and lower your upper body towards the floor carefully. Rest the back of your head to the mat, then the back of your shoulders, then your mid-back, lower-back and hips. Having been in a deep back bend we do not recommend pulling your knees up into your chest after wheel. Instead, relax your legs flat to the mat or set the soles

of your feet together and open your knees out to either side of your body in *supta baddha konasana*.

- There are a number of ways in which to advance wheel pose. The first is to raise a leg to the sky. Get stable in your two hands and your left foot. Draw your right knee towards your chest. In so doing, turn your inner right thigh upwards and rotate your outer right hip downwards towards the floor. Do not take your right leg across the centreline of your body. Do not allow your right leg to drift outside the plane of the right side of your body. Stay centred but not crossed over.
- Once your right knee is as lifted as you can create, contract the quadriceps muscles on the front of your right thigh and relax the hamstrings on the back of your right thigh. Extend your right foot straight up towards the ceiling. Press firmly with the heel and the inner and outer mounds of your right foot upwards towards the ceiling.
- To come down, lower your right foot carefully to the floor. Establish a good grounding in all four corners, your two feet and your two hands, and lower carefully to the mat.
- Another variation is to take a hand from the mat. For this variation it helps to have as short a base to your wheel as possible. Take wheel then lift your heels up off the mat and tip-toe the toes and balls of your feet 5-10 cm closer to your hands. Press your outer ribs up towards the sky. Root your heels back down into your mat.
- Shift your weight into your left hand, pull your left shoulder blade in towards your spine and down your back towards your left hip. Reduce the weight in your right hand and check your balance. Engage your inner thighs and hold your knees hip width apart. Draw your back muscles from the outer periphery of your back in towards your spine. Reach your right arm and hand straight back away from your feet and lift your right arm up to the sky and over to rest on your right thigh.
- To come down, return your right hand to the floor, redistribute your weight evenly in your feet and hands and lower yourself to the mat.
- A third variation is to take *viparita dandasana*. In this variation, come to the wheel set up position with the crown of your head at the floor. Lift your right hand and reach it further beneath you in the direction of your feet and rest your right forearm at the floor. Repeat with your left arm. I like to clasp my hands together at this point for stability but you may be able to proceed with your hands separate and the palms of your hands pressed to the mat.
- Drive your feet firmly into the floor and elevate your hips as high as you can.
- Draw your shoulders in towards your spine and press your thoracic spine into your chest. Lift your head from the floor and relax the muscles of your neck.

For some there is a desire to rush - to rush to get to wheel or to rush up into wheel. Wheel works when you take your time and build on strong foundations. Practice by practice build strength in your legs, arms and back and mobility in your hips, spine and shoulders. Root down with trust in your base. Rise on a wave of energy and power, with all the irresistible force of a geyser, and revel in the full freedom and expression of wheel.

## APOLLO POWER YOGIS UP TO BIG THINGS

### Anthony Leighs, Leighs Construction – Scott Base Rebuild Project

Leighs Construction, a Christchurch company whose managing director, **Anthony Leighs** is an Apollo Power Yogi, has been chosen as preferred main contractor to rebuild Scott Base in Antarctica – one of the most technically challenging building projects in the country. Leighs won the contract over four other companies who submitted proposals for the redevelopment.



The \$250 million project will replace the existing Scott Base with three interconnected buildings. It's expected to generate 450 jobs in New Zealand during the first 2½ years of construction. All of the buildings will be constructed in New Zealand and shipped to Antarctica in large modular sections.

Anthony says that Leighs Construction is well aware of the challenges of working in Antarctica because the company has been building structures on the ice since 2004. Leighs Construction has a passion for remote and challenging building projects, and has a depth of experience with complex construction projects, having built hospitals, embassies, power stations and many other complex commercial and industrial buildings.



“We have a tremendous sense of pride and excitement to be selected by Antarctica New Zealand to join the team to build the new Scott Base,” says Anthony. “The opportunity to continue and enhance our working relationship with Antarctica New Zealand is fantastic, as we strive to be one of the leading constructors of complex vertical infrastructure projects for the New Zealand Government.”

“The Scott Base Redevelopment is one of the most technically challenging building projects seen in New Zealand for some years. Leighs Construction is really looking forward to joining the team, and collectively delivering what we believe will be an extraordinary undertaking and incredible construction project,” he says.

## APOLLO POWER YOGIS IN BUSINESS

**Now that we're out of lockdown, take the opportunity to support your fellow Apollo Power Yogis as their businesses get up and going again.**

You might not know that the yogi on the mat next to you runs a restaurant, a building business, or an interior design company. So we're creating a forum for Apollo Power Yogis to connect with each other's businesses and support them as they rebuild after the lockdown.

Going out for a great meal or a drink? Try one of the Dux restaurants, owned by **Richard and Lisa Sinke**. You can take your pick from [Dux Dine](#), [Dux Central](#) or [The Terrace Tavern](#). Other fantastic options are [Smash Palace](#) owned by **Johnny and Juliet Moore**, and [27 Steps](#) owned by **Emma Mettrick**. For a healthy smoothie and other vegan treats, head to [Pure Pulp](#), owned by **Sara-Fae Foldesi**.

Have a building project in mind? Along with **Anthony Leighs** of [Leighs Construction](#), your fellow Apollo Power Yogis include **Ben Collis** of [Protec Projects](#), specialising in residential builds, commercial fit-outs and design builds, and **Alastair Miles** of [Miles Construction](#).

Thinking of buying, selling or leasing property? Go to **Alison Aitken** of [Harcourts](#) for your residential real estate needs. If you're looking to lease or buy commercial real estate, see **Karen Collis** at [JLL](#).

Need legal assistance? Philip Sewell and his team at [Godfreys Law](#) can help you with a wide range of legal expertise and experience.

Whether you've built, bought or leased residential or commercial property, make it your own with specialist Interior Design. **Susie Paynter** of [The Duchamp Collective](#) or **Lisa Sinke** of [Lisa Sinke Design](#) can give you the benefit of their impeccable taste and wide knowledge.

For gardening advice and assistance, contact [Jenny Jones Gardening](#). She can advise you on which plants will work best in your garden, and help you with planting and maintaining your outdoor space.

If you seek an experienced, knowledgeable and skilful massage therapist and/or naturopath contact Karina Thorpe at [KarinaThorpeNaturopath](#).

And as we know, lockdown deepened our appreciation of the skills of hairdressers. See **Tracette Owers** of [The Lounge Organic Hairdressing](#) for great haircuts and colours using organic hair products.

Do you have a business that you'd like your fellow Apollo Power Yogis to know about? Contact <mailto:margo@apollopoweryoga.com>.

### FROM BARON BAPTISTE



*Realise your greatness.*

Namaste

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