



APOLLO

power yoga | massage

February 2023

BADDHAS AND BANDHAS WORKSHOP NEW TIME – 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM SATURDAY, 4 MARCH

Sign up now for **Baddhas and Bandhas**, our workshop this coming Saturday to level up your practice.

This workshop is not just for those who can do all the binding poses but for those who wish to develop techniques and explore what might be possible for them in practice. You are all welcome.

The workshop will give you skills in establishing stability and foundations in your poses.

The workshop will give you techniques and pathways to take binds in poses and create extra expression.

You will learn! You will have fun! You will take your practice ahead!



Please note the **new time for the workshop: 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm on Saturday, 4 March 2023**. The usual 3:00 pm vinyasa class is cancelled that day. If you are not coming to the workshop but want a vinyasa class to attend, try the 8:30 am class at Ferrymead or the 9:30 am class in the city studio.

The fee for Baddhas and Bandhas is \$40 or \$20 for Apollo power Yoga annual members. Register online now or ask your teacher to sign you up when you are in the studio.

CLASS CANCELLATION – SATURDAY, 4 MARCH

Please note that the power vinyasa class at 3:00 pm this coming Saturday, 4 March is cancelled due to the Baddhas and Bandhas workshop.

If you seek a vinyasa class that day, the 8:30 am class at Ferrymead and the 9:30 am class in the city are both still running.

The 3:00 pm class will run as usual from 11 March.

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO AT APOLLO POWER YOGA

For those who have tried practice at Apollo Power Yoga some things will have been apparent. One is that, Relax and Restore classes aside, **our practices are not easy**. Even in Relax and Restore classes, the length of time in some of the poses has an intensity that creates physical and mental challenges. Another is that some of **our students** at Apollo Power Yoga **are very strong and very capable** at the poses and the practice. Further, people notice from our timetable that we offer only three styles of class (Power Vinyasa, Power Pilates, and Relax and Restore) and **we do not have classes for “beginners”**.

The result is that some people are deterred because they feel they are not capable of practicing at the level at which we operate. They may perceive that they are not good enough to participate in our classes. They may want the classes to be simpler, easier and more accessible for the first-timer or the person just getting started with yoga.

And yet, we do not structure our timetable to offer a lot of really simple classes aimed at the person who has never done yoga before and who wants to have their hand held while they are guided through infancy and toddling in terms of their yoga practice. Why do we not do that?

Why do we not run “beginners” classes?

For a studio that offers the style of practice we do, trying to incorporate beginners' classes in our timetable is problematic. If we do them on weekday mornings we get people saying they cannot come because that conflicts with work. If we offer them on Saturdays we get feedback that these classes conflict with school sporting commitments or other activities that people are engaged in. If we offer them in the evenings then the regular students, who have some command of the practice or who are very experienced, are inconvenienced because they want a free flowing vinyasa class not a simplified beginners' practice.

What we do offer are workshops, run periodically, to give instruction in the fundamentals of power vinyasa yoga and we make these cheap to attend. If people need extra tuition in the basics of our style of practice, these workshops are available to them as are private lessons. We are happy to arrange private tuition to give students new to practice, or students who feel like they are stuck with respect to certain poses, extra guidance on a one-to-one or one-to-two basis.

We teach to the majority in the room with an eye for the more experienced who seek extension and an eye for less experienced who may need guidance as to the fundamentals. It is something of a conceit that a brand new person to practice should expect the whole class to be slowed down and simplified to their level. We do not teach to the lowest common denominator but teach in a way to include all – if they are willing to learn.

A student who began her yoga experience with us showed up very much in a beginner's state. She was not physically exceptionally strong but she had determination. Her balance was untrustworthy but she was good natured when she lost balance. She was unfamiliar with the practice but she stuck at it. She had to modify a number of poses but did so effectively. Across time she improved in all areas. Then, her work moved to a different location, close to another yoga studio. For convenience she started going to their classes. When she came in to Apollo Power Yoga for a class about ten weeks later she said it would take five classes at the other studio to get what she got from one practice with us. Even in the relatively short time that she had been going elsewhere to practice, her practice had gone backwards and she recognised that.

This is a reason why we don't teach simple, beginners' classes – they just keep students weak and deny them growth. We consider they do students a disservice.

Be prepared to put the work in to get familiar with the practice

A major obstacle for many people coming to our style of practice is that they expect to be able to do everything in their first class and expect to be able to do the practice well. Coupled with that is an unwillingness on the part of some new students to do the work to gain experience and acquire the skills of the practice. Recently, we received feedback that a student who had been to just two classes, more than two years apart, was disinclined to return because they did not know the practice and it was too much to follow.

We want such people at Apollo Power Yoga but, if they are unwilling to apply themselves to learn, if they expect to be able to do everything without going through a learning process, they may just not be Apollo Power Yoga material. There will be other pursuits that they can try where they will be perfect on their first try – or they will just never do anything because their mindset denies them access to new lessons, to new skills and to growth.

The message that I ask each of you to receive, and all new students to Apollo Power Yoga to receive, is that *there is scope for you to practice according to your level of experience*. I encourage new students to get ten classes done quickly – not two classes more than two years apart. Really, what would you expect to learn from two sessions done more than two years apart? A new language? How to play chess? How to swim? If a student starts classes I suggest they do so with a determination to get ten classes done quickly – in the first couple of weeks or maybe a month. By the time they have those classes done, the student will have a familiarity for the practice, its structure, the names of many of the poses and they will be more familiar with and comfortable in the studio environment.

After my very first yoga class one of the regular students asked me if it was what I expected. I recall saying I had no idea what to expect so it neither conformed with nor was out of alignment with expectation. It was surprising and challenging but expectation did not come into it. The key is to drop your expectations – especially the expectation that yoga will be easy.

Be willing to be a learner. Drop the competitiveness.

A shift in mindset is required on the part of the beginning yoga student. The beginner must have sufficient humility and must drop their competitiveness so that they can appreciate the practice of yoga without the need to look good in doing the poses. Some people who show up rather clumsy or awkward in their poses are turned off from the practice because they perceive themselves to be clumsy and awkward. They interpret that as not being good at yoga. Yet, their clumsiness and awkwardness point to deficiencies in proprioception, body awareness and control, coordination, balance and core stability – these are all deficits that yoga will help such people remedy. The inexpertness they perceive in their practice, rather than disqualifying them from practice, is the very reason why they need yoga in their lives!

As teachers we understand this fragile, overly self-conscious and judgmental state of mind that some new students experience. We offer guidance in class, and address essential points of alignment for safety and stability, as well as methods to modify poses and simplify while the students are developing strength and mobility. We reinforce what the new students are doing that is good and we encourage them in class and in conversation in reception before and after class so as to empower them to try and try again. We do so well and train so as to give guidance to new students. Are they listening?

In fact, a student who had practiced a few times elsewhere came in with a friend for a class with us recently. After class she observed we were better than the other studio where she had practiced because we gave her individual guidance during the class. That is part of our methodology – not to hover over you being dogmatic nor to leave you ignored as if you were part of the wallpaper, but to see you in class and give guidance, encouragement, alignment and motivation where necessary.

A factor at play in Apollo Power Yoga not running beginners classes daily or even several times a week is that students rapidly grow beyond the need for such classes. One of two results follow if there are a lot of beginners' classes. First, people get stuck in those classes and stay at a beginner's level instead of progressing and levelling up. If the classes are dumbed down and if the teachers chew the students' food for them, there is no growth. Second, students, properly instructed, encouraged and inspired, quickly progress and then the beginners' classes just act as a block on the timetable when students would rather participate in a more challenging practice.

You will learn quickly and the practice will reward you

Philosophically, we at Apollo Power Yoga teach up to our students and we treat you like you are intelligent and capable. That means we trust you to find your way through the first few practices when the practice can seem a lot to take in. But take it in you can!

I began yoga in a style called Bikram in 2008. That practice had 26 poses, no sun salutations, no crow or side plank, no crescent lunge, no ujjayi breathing, different versions of some poses in the standing balancing sequence, different back bending poses with no bridge and no wheel, no core stability bar a couple of sit ups performed one at a time separated by other stretching poses, no pigeon, dragon or frog, no inversions... It was a radically different practice from the style we teach at Apollo Power Yoga.

In early 2010 with about 18 months' experience of Bikram, I went to train in Baptiste-style power vinyasa yoga. The learning curve for me was super-steep. The practice was, as I have said, radically different, the strength required was dramatically greater for power vinyasa yoga and I had to adapt. Looking back, the Bikram practice had not really prepared me for power yoga at all. I may as well have come to power yoga from having been a swimmer, a runner, a cyclist or whatever. They were dramatically different disciplines.

But I learned and did so quickly. By completing that week of training in February 2010 I have been dedicated to power vinyasa yoga ever since. If you apply yourself at the outset, you too, can have an enduring, rewarding experience of power yoga. The years that follow the initial learning experience are worth it to get through the opening days when some things are mystifying and when your perception of your performance is low.

Our studio and our practices are about growth. Growth is not possible without challenge. Some people lose the desire to take on challenge and adopt the idea that they must be successful in what they do, they must be adept at what they do from the outset, and what they do must come to them easily. If that negative and limited outlook holds them back from practicing with us that is a shame because there is so much for them to gain with us.

Over the years I have made many advancements in my physical practice. I have grown in strength, especially core strength, and I have grown in mobility, particularly the mobility of my shoulders. More importantly, I have learned more of myself and I have a better appreciation of my resistance, the factors that take me out and what it looks like when I am being reactive. With that insight, I know how to manage my responses and show up better for others and, therefore, for myself. The practices we teach at Apollo Power Yoga exist for you to grow in the same ways.

We teach classes to a pattern

It is true that the Power Vinyasa and Power Pilates practices we teach have repetitive elements to them. Our sequences are not identical but have a familiar structure while allowing scope for variations. This is beneficial for new people to yoga. Imagine going to a studio as a new person to yoga and finding each teacher taught their practices differently from every other teacher – different as to sequence, different as to the language used to convey cues, different as to intensity. With a bewildering array of different practices and different styles and methodologies of teaching, learning would be incredibly difficult. *At Apollo Power Yoga we offer a consistency of practice and a consistency of methodology that empowers new students in learning and growing.*

The consistency of the practice is not just an aid to learning the practice in the first instance but gives the chance for our students to gauge their progress. By reflecting upon the incremental improvements that they make across time, students can observe how they have become stronger, more mobile and more focused and present in their minds. That capacity to chart one's progress is a useful aspect of practicing a style that is consistent in its sequence.

While teaching a consistent practice there is scope within each practice for each student to practice to their level. Newer students need not do more advanced variations and extensions of poses. In any moment there is the option and the freedom to practice as each student can, whether that be more or less expressive. Consider extended side angle. At any moment in that pose there may be a new person with their forearm resting on their front thigh and their

upper arm resting along the side of their body as well as an advanced student working through the variations of bird of paradise and bound half-moon pose.

The practice we teach has the capacity to accommodate all levels of practitioner so there is, really, no need to run simplified classes confined to beginners.

Be inspired by the example of the capable students around you

The presence in Apollo Power Yoga's practices of strong, mobile and able practitioners is testament to the effectiveness of the practices we teach. I say to the new people who may feel intimidated by what they see others doing, "Do not be intimidated. Be inspired!" The example provided by the more experienced and able students demonstrates what is possible at some level for everyone who walks into our classes.

If you tell yourself that you are not good enough or that you do not belong because you do not have the same level of ability as someone else, that is your story. Drop your story. Be present to and appreciate the practice of which you are capable. Use the example of others as guidance and encouragement to be all you can be. Ultimately, the difference between the able practitioner and the person who feels they do not belong because their practice is more humble, is not the way their body performs but the way the students think. Be a yes for yourself as you are and as you are not. In that state of affirmation, see your potential and live into it.

We teach philosophical principle

It is not yoga unless there is philosophical principle attached to it. The postures alone have their own benefits and in some styles of yoga, all that is taught is the mechanics of the poses. We teach to the alignment of your mind as well as your body. We teach you to have clarity rather than cloudiness of mind. We teach you to value yourself and embrace "power" as the ability to be and to let be. We provide you with reminders to dispel compulsive thought and disempowering perspectives upon yourself and your circumstances.

The philosophy taught in our classes helps break the habitual patterns of thought and outlook that dog and bedevil you. Transform your perceptions and your experience guided by the principles we teach. Our practices are not just an escape or a break from routine thought and stress. Our practices and the principles taught in them, present the opportunity to completely rewire so as to be relieved of stress, self-loathing, feelings of not being enough and so forth so as to be whole, content in yourself and up to something big in your community.

We do what we do at Apollo Power Yoga because:

1. A world without challenge is a world without growth and greatness. Embrace the challenge of our practices and, with a humble heart, learn and expand into all you can be.
2. Beginners are welcome in all our classes and beginners will be given guidance, encouragement and direction. You do not need special classes for those who have never been on a yoga mat before. You need an open mind, an open heart and a commitment to learning and growth.
3. Consistency is a means to building a powerful experience. Our classes have a consistency of practice and a consistency of teaching methodology. If you practice consistently then your knowledge of your practice and yourself will grow and you will flourish in the Apollo Power Yoga environment. There is no two ways about it!

4. Power vinyasa yoga is a vehicle for physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing and each practice teaches in to each of these elements. If you seek wellness in these holistic elements of your being, Apollo Power Yoga is the place for you.

Start where you are with whatever level of ability you have, and from there, the sky is the limit. Strength and suppleness come with time as long as the spirit of willingness is there.

DOES NON-ATTACHMENT MEAN I CAN'T ENJOY ANYTHING?

Non-attachment is an important concept and practice for yoga practitioners. In a world where transience is the one constant and even life itself is ephemeral, attachment to things, to people, to oneself is fraught with the potential for suffering.

Some people in parts of the North Island have had their homes, farmlands, orchards, personal effects and so on obliterated in the flood waters, mud, slips and mayhem of Cyclone Gabrielle. These things were there and now, they are not. But the people go on. Even those who have tragically lost family members or friends in the floods and slips go on. The discontinuity of the people and things around us sits in stark contrast to our continuity – until we, too, are discontinued.

Given the fickleness, the transience and the uncertainty of the things about us, it is not healthy to form too strong an attachment to what is around you. When I started yoga in 2008 I got a yoga mat – more accurately, Margo probably bought me a mat – and that was my mat. I did not think when I first came into possession of it that it would only serve me for a relatively short time. It was kind of a squashy mat that suited me alright in the style of yoga in which I began.

I cannot remember discarding that mat but I know I no longer have it. It was replaced by a mat that I used to call “the road” – it was extra-long, extra wide, and was grey in colour. I liked that mat for power vinyasa yoga because of its dimensions and because it was stable and had decent grip. I assumed it would last an age. I was mistaken. The mat had coconut fibres in it. With use, the surface of the mat became worn and the fibres started to show through. The road developed potholes! Eventually, I needed a new mat and had to let the road go.

Since then, I have been through so many mats. My daily power yoga practice coupled with standing on and demonstrating on my mats at times as I teach, means that I wear mats out roughly on a six- to nine-monthly basis. I may have had an affectionate attachment to some of my early mats. I certainly recall being disappointed by the potholes in the road. But, I now have an aloofness with respect to mats. They come, they are of use for a while, then they lose some of their usefulness and I abandon them.

Non-attachment

I believe and yoga philosophy would tell us, that we need to have sufficient non-attachment that we can let the things in our lives and the people in our lives go. Some people who have taught for Apollo Power Yoga, for instance, have moved on and no longer teach for us. I valued their teaching while they were here, I understand that they have their own pathways to

follow, and I have let them go. I do not feel pain and I do not suffer from their absence. They were here. They have gone. It is as simple as that.

In contrast to that, I know someone who has great issues of suffering through attachment. I have some sympathy for them because their mother died when they were at primary school. That event caused them a strong sense of loss and a strong sense of dependency upon their surviving parent. When their father died, this person was very upset. At the time they were in their mid- to late-thirties. They were a grown adult and ideally capable of reconciling themselves to their loss. However, such was not the case. The person transferred some of their attachment to things their father had done including to a room their father had done building work on. When she was no longer able to access these things there were histrionics and recriminations that betrayed the great extent to which she was attached and the suffering that came from that.

Where does non-attachment appear in yoga philosophy? It is part of the idea of aparigraha which is one of the five yamas, or ethical underpinnings, of yoga described in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. The yamas constitute limb number one in the classical rendering of the eight limbs of yoga. Aparigraha is one element of the yamas.



Aparigraha is generally translated as non-hoarding and abstaining from greed. It may also mean not accepting gifts where there is a condition attached – where by accepting the gift you place yourself under an obligation to the donor to return the favour. It is clear, however, that where one hoards belongings and is selfish and greedy there is attachment at play. As yoga is a state of freedom and as attachment is a state of bondage, it stands to reason that that attachment is an obstacle to one experiencing the freedom of yoga.

The Sanskrit word “vairagya” means non-attachment. This notion is also directly addressed in the Yoga Sutras. As “yoga” is defined in the Sutras as the cessation of mind or as the stilling of the disturbances or distractions of mind, the author of the Sutras asserts that cravings for things and people are to be avoided as they constitute disturbances and distractions. For someone who has freed themselves from these cravings, their consciousness is in a state of non-attachment, or vairagya.

The Sutras state that distractions and disturbances of mind are restrained by practice and by non-attachment. Vairagya means having a detachment from and a dispassion for everything in the material world but also from attachment to thoughts, ideas and perceptions. We have all seen people become wedded to a particular belief or perspective and hold so rigidly to that notion that they become lost in the idea and separated from reality and from connection with others. Detachment from desire and craving clarifies one’s mind and creates conditions for inner peace.

Must we avoid pleasure in life?

Does this all mean that we cannot enjoy the pleasures of life? Does this mean we must deny ourselves all enjoyable experiences? Does this mean we must avoid even the love of our partners, children and wider family?

In short, no, it does not. There are those who have interpreted non-attachment as necessitating a complete asceticism in which one denies oneself all earthly pleasures and even subjects oneself to austere rituals of deprivation or harsh environments to ensure one is not getting too comfortable and in danger of forming a dependency.



It is not the experience of something but the attachment to it that is the issue. Vairagya does not tell you not to enjoy a cherry blossom but rather not to be in despair when

that fleeting phenomenon comes to an end. Vairagya does not forbid falling in love with someone but warns against creating such a state of dependency that you cannot function and collapse in despair and grief should you lose your loved one.

There is a trial running in the High Court right now where the accused is alleged to have murdered a former friend in circumstances where the motive is said to be the jealousy and resent felt by the accused towards the victim because the victim had started a relationship with the accused's former partner. The accused is said to have been very upset by his separation from his partner with weight-loss and feelings of dejection apparent in the aftermath. The issue, as alleged by the Crown, is, ultimately, the degree to which the accused was attached to his former partner and unwilling to relinquish their relationship and, most particularly, unwilling to relinquish her to another man.

Enjoy a meal and a glass of wine at a restaurant. Enjoy an ice cream on a trip to the beach. But do not allow consuming alcohol to become a necessity in your life. Craving alcohol during the day or being unable to resist the craving for alcohol is a path to suffering. Bingeing on ice cream and eating it with compulsion paves the way to ill-health and excessive weight. The fact of enjoying a pleasant sensation is not the issue. The issue is when getting, having and keeping the objects of one's craving becomes a driving force and you become preoccupied by the object.

The issue is not enjoyment. The issue is becoming attached to that which you enjoy. More than that, the issue is becoming attached, whether you enjoy or dislike something, whether you get a benefit from something or not. You may find you are attached to certain thoughts or beliefs. In that state, you are driven by those thoughts or beliefs just as a drug addict is driven by their need to replenish a drug in their system.

If you are attached to a belief that you are not enough, that belief will drive your day. It may drive your day by killing joy out of anything you do because you believe you are not good enough and whatever you do, no matter how good, it is not enough. It may drive your day by compelling you to fret over every detail in pursuit of perfection in order to disprove the idea that you are not enough. It may drive your day by causing you to perceive that everyone you come into contact with shares your belief – that they are looking at you through the same lens with which you look at yourself.

In one way or another, being attached may end in suffering. Avoid that degree of bondage. Be willing to let go. Be willing to let go of the pleasure you take in things or in people. Enjoy

the sun but do not mourn over it when the clouds roll in. Enjoy the spring with its new growth and flowers and vitality, but do not collapse in gloom when autumn eventually comes and the trees drop their leaves, the days shorten and cool winds blow from the southwest. Value and love the people in your life while they are here but when they leave by moving out of home or to a new city or a new part of the world or to a new existence on the other side, let them go and be grounded in the moment and things and the people that are here.

Yoga philosophy does not tell you to take no pleasure in life. Some interpretations may have asserted that extreme austerity will bring you closer to the divine. But that is fringe philosophy. Yoga philosophy in more general understanding admits that there are pleasures in life and there is pain in life. Yoga philosophy counsels you to experience life as it is, laughing at jokes, feeling sad at misfortune and embracing the whole gamut of human experience. Beyond that, yoga philosophy warns you against becoming attached to any state or experience. Circumstances will shift. People will change. If you are not in flow with the changes of life but are attached to a particular state, a snapshot in time, you will be torn by the resistance such a state of attachment creates.

COMMITMENT

Margo and I have both been trained by Baron Baptiste. Baptiste is concerned with helping you be all you can be. We take our inspiration from his example. One of the things Baptiste says is that there are two types of commitment: maybe/try/some day and GAME ON!

One of our students who has recently moved from practicing occasionally to an annual membership says they experienced something different when practicing having made that commitment. They felt like they were getting up to something big and that they were making something happen. They felt enthused about their year ahead and all that was possible.

This commitment is important. You may feel you can only practice occasionally due to other obligations or you may be constrained by finances as to how often you can practice. The latter issue, finance, is a real one for many. We seek to assist with inclusion by having a koha class on Sunday mornings, by having exceptionally low rates for full-time students and by having discounted rates for seniors and for people with community services cards.

Often, the "I'm too busy" justification for a wishy-washy commitment to yoga is just an excuse. I think of Margo over the last twenty years. She was a mother to two boys, a partner in a law firm working full-time in a demanding role, and still she carved out time for daily exercise. Prior to yoga she would swim in the mornings five times a week and add in lunch time sessions with a personal trainer once a week. Once introduced to yoga, she would include yoga classes several times a week. Having realized she was getting all she sought in terms of strength, mobility and mental relaxation from yoga alone she would practice yoga daily at varying times of the day depending upon her schedule. And it was all possible.

Margo's commitment was admirable and you can make the same commitment. Practice often and regularly. The Yoga Sutras define practice as that which is adhered to in all earnestness

over a long period of time. That definition has always impressed, inspired and motivated me and it can do so for you too. You will benefit from the comprehensive effects on yoga at all levels of your being. You will feel an enthusiasm for what you are getting up to, like our student already mentioned who enjoyed the sense of having embarked upon a process that would give her growth.

You will create an enduring and sustainable practice that feeds back positively into the rest of your life. You will not feel resentful for the sacrifices you make for others in your life. You will be tending to your needs as well as theirs. You will not break down through overuse or tightening from some other forms of physical endeavour. You will not feel lacking in any aspect of your being as power yoga at Apollo Power Yoga attends to strength, mobility and your state of mind.

You will not diminish in your effectiveness in other roles but will be more effective – a more effective worker by re-energising and becoming more composed and present with power yoga; a more effective parent by letting go stress and becoming more present; a more contented person by constructively using your time rather than squandering it on comfort eating and drinking and mindless time spent in front of screens.

Some have a conditional commitment in the form of “I’ll do yoga if it is cool enough” or, in the winter months, “I’ll do yoga if it is warm enough”. The class is there for you in all circumstances. We do not add heat to the studios when it is warm outside. We have thermostats on our heaters and the temperature is raised when it is cool and is not added to when it is warm. The yoga in times when it is hot weather is to not try to control your circumstances but, rather, to manage your reactions to your circumstances. Practice always.

Yoga, the more so the greater the degree of your commitment, will enhance your life in meaningful ways. If not yet, make today the day when you drop the excuses and justifications, when you stop saying maybe and some day and you will try, and when you fully commit – GAME ON!

HANDS-ON ASSISTS

We’re getting a great response from students who have been choosing to receive hands-on assists as part of our teaching. There are assisting discs in each of the studios. Please place a green disc at the front of your mat if you wish to receive hands-on assists. Use a red disc if you do not, on any day, want hands-on assists. If there is no disc, we will ask before giving you a hands-on assist.



In some classes recently, the only people who put out green discs to receive assists are people who have been on our teacher training course where hands-on assists are part and parcel of the training, both giving and receiving. Hands-on assists help you **generate the form of the pose**, help you **create good alignment** in the pose, help you **generate the ideal action principles** in the pose and help **guide you into what is possible** in the pose. Who wouldn't want all that?

Assists are of great benefit to all students and especially those who are more kinaesthetic in their learning. They can help visual learners too as the touch may supplement the verbal cues to create an understanding when there is no visual example available.

We encourage you to be open to hands-on assists which are a great tool at the disposal of your teachers to help deliver the practice to you in a meaningful way.

YOUR VITAL LIFE – MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR LIFE NOW

Hamish is currently working with several people in YOUR VITAL LIFE, assisting with mentoring, guidance and life coaching.

Hamish can help you take stock of what is going on in your life, put your awareness on areas where growth and transformation is required and is possible and make qualitative changes.

- You will gain new, empowering perspectives.
- You will re-frame and breathe new life into stuck relationships.
- You will gain clarity and an enhanced sense of direction in your life and contentment in yourself.

Hamish will listen and help identify the issues at play and offer techniques to address those issues. ***We will work together to spring clean your way of being.***

We can address everything from your **nutrition** to your **activities**, your **work** and your **relationships**, your **finances** and your **goals and aspirations**.

Contact Hamish to arrange a consultation either by phone, 021 0551884, or by email, hamish@apollopoweryoga.com

CORPORATE YOGA OPTIONS FROM APOLLO POWER YOGA

If you are an employer, a manager, a social committee representative or a squeaky wheel asking for better service from the organisation that employs you, Apollo Power Yoga can assist in providing services to your workplace to enhance well-being at all levels for you and your people.

We provide corporate yoga offerings including:

- In-house meditation and mindfulness sessions
- Breathing practices
- Relaxing yoga practices
- Dynamic yoga practices
- Team building sessions
- Motivational talks (along the lines of a TED talk)



We can provide these services at our studios or at your workplace. We can provide them at the time of your convenience. We can supply mats for the sessions as required.

"I thoroughly enjoyed the session so thank you very much for coming and presenting at our event. I have heard only positive feedback... It was such a great start to the day. Your 3 tools were great as well, they definitely were relatable!"

Let us know what your needs are and we will cater something to suit your purposes.

ENDERMOLOGIE® FOR FACE AND BODY!

The Endermologie® room is busy right now. Call or txt Margo on 027 2272026 to reserve a booking for your next treatment – or your first treatment. Our Endermologie® treatments are giving great benefits to a growing number of women and men. Here is one person's story following their Endermologie® treatment:

I have been trying for many a year to improve the appearance of my legs. Everything I tried previously seemed to have a superficial improvement but nothing fundamentally solved the problem, until I tried Endermologie.

Quite frankly it is AMAZING. It has reduced my cellulite, tightened my loose skin, eliminated pockets of stubborn fat, slimmed my legs noticeably and due to the increased circulation, it enables, has made my legs appear a much healthier colour.

My legs are now considerably shapelier with clear muscle definition which was previously hidden by loose puffy fat. Seriously the results are more than I could have dreamed of.

Unlike a regular massage where pressure is applied downwards into your tissues, Endermologie® uses rollers and suction to draw skin, fascia, adipose and muscle upward and

roll it to invigorate your body, to mobilise stuck areas of fat and stimulate metabolic processing of waste. These treatments are both therapeutically and cosmetically beneficial and will leave you feeling relaxed and renewed, slimmed and toned.



We offer Endermologie® Power Massage treatments and wonderfully relaxing **Endermologie® Face Massage**, too.

Using much smaller vacuum heads than we use for Power Massage body treatments, Endermologie® for face is like an instant face-lift with no scalpels, scars, needles or down-time. It's Endermolift!

Just as with your Endermologie® Power Massage body treatments, Endermolift brings blood flow to your skin's surface and encourages drainage of excess fluid and toxins away, for healthier skin using your body's own processes.

You can have an Endermolift facial massage treatment along with your Endermologie® body treatment (allow for a 90 minute appointment) or separately. Book with Margo via email, margo@apollopoweryoga.com or via phone/txt, 027 227 2026.

MEMBERS' SPECIAL RATES FOR ENDERMOLOGIE®

Our Endermologie® treatments are in great demand but we will still look out for the interests of our most regular yoga practitioners.

Apollo Power Yoga Annual Members (whether you're on time payment annual membership, or have purchased an upfront annual membership) currently receive a 30% discount on all Endermologie and Endermolift treatments.

Check out these special prices for Apollo annual members:

	Regular	Annual
1 treatment (face or body)	\$165	\$115
5 treatment pack (face or body)	\$750	\$525
10 treatment pack (face or body)	\$1350	\$950

ASANA SPOTLIGHT

Having completed a series on back bends in last month's magazine, this month we begin a focus on inversions with a look at shoulder stand (salumbha sarvangasana). This posture is one of intermediate difficulty. It has some contraindications and, in the event that you experience these, this pose is not for you and you should take an alternative pose. Here is how to do the pose:

- Begin lying on your back. Stretch the back of your neck long and draw your lower jaw straight down towards the floor to engage stability in your neck. This is called *jalandhara bandha*. Do not turn your head or neck while in shoulder stand. To do so, with the degree of weight and force being channeled through this part of your body in shoulder stand, can be dangerous. Keep your neck straight and your gaze straight up at the sky.
- Brace your arms at the floor alongside you. Draw your knees up to your chest.



Figure 1

- Press through your arms into the floor and raise your knees up above your head.



Figure 2

- Bend your elbows and place the palms of your hands on your back. Draw your elbows in towards shoulder width. If your elbows are too wide your pose will tend to collapse downwards somewhat.
- Extend your legs up towards the ceiling.



Figure 3

- This is shoulder stand. Seek to carry the weight of your pose across the breadth of your shoulders.
- An alternative means of entry is to take plough pose/halāsana first and then extend up into shoulder stand. To get into plough, follow the steps already given but instead of pausing with your knees bent and your knees above your head, reach your legs straight back over your head towards the floor. You can see this in Figure 4.



Figure 4

- It is not essential that your feet touch the floor in plough but that is the fuller expression. I do get my feet to the floor in plough. I then press my heels towards the back of the room, away from my body. This not only creates a good stretch for the back of my body but it also causes my hips to lift high over my shoulders. This is a good position to set up for shoulder stand. Compare the relationship of Hamish's hips to his shoulders in Figure 2 with Figure 4. By taking plough, in Figure 4, Hamish has created more lift in his hips and has set his hips relative to his shoulders for a more ideal alignment in shoulder stand.
- From plough, hug your belly inward, and work the muscles of your low back, buttocks and hamstrings to raise your legs straight up over your hips to the sky.
- Shoulder stand creates a sharp angle of flexion between your thoracic spine and your cervical spine. Although the primary foundation for this pose is in your shoulders there may be pressure on the back of your neck and there is pressure on the back of your head. In the event that any of this pressure feels too much or causes you to feel at a point of strain, please desist with the pose and lower your back to the floor. There are other inversions that may be more suitable for you.
- When students first start practicing shoulder stand, they typically have a bend at their hips such that, while their feet may be aligned over their shoulders, their hips most certainly are not. This is not ideal alignment but I do not dogmatically insist on the ideal. Do what you can in the early days but intend to bring your body as much as you can into a vertical alignment. In Figure 5 Hamish is exaggerating the kink at his hips for the purpose of effect:



Figure 5

- To bring your body more into a neutral, vertical alignment, brace your elbows and upper arms firmly into your mat. Press your feet straight up towards the ceiling. Shift your hands carefully away from your hips closer towards your shoulders. As your hips go up you will naturally begin to straighten out into a more vertical alignment.
- If you boost your hips higher and shift your hands closer towards your shoulders but you can still see that your legs angle over your head towards the back of your mat you need to engage the extensors of your hips. Engage your hamstrings and your buttocks. Relax the front of your hips. Lengthen out in a vertical direction.
- A default we see in some students is a tendency to disengage their legs. This shows up as the students' feet flopping limply and their legs drifting apart. The result is a pose that lacks stability. In this situation the students' legs can drift in an unruly way. This is unsafe

as every sway and shift in the orientation of your legs gets channeled through your body and into your neck!

- Firm your feet either in dorsi-flexion (with your feet drawn towards the front of your shins) or in a floint/demi-point where your feet are midway between dorsi-flexion and plantar flexion (in which you stretch the front of your ankle and point your toes away from you). You can see this demi-point in Figure 3. The important thing is to firm and engage from your feet through your ankles.
- As well, engage your inner thighs and draw your legs together. Stability comes from pulling your limbs in towards your centerline. Make this a priority in shoulder stand. Gently rotate your inner thighs towards the front end of your mat.
- The deep flexion of your head and neck relative to your torso may make breathing more difficult for you. Breathe calmly through your nose. Observe any feelings of claustrophobia or panic that may arise in you, and consciously relax and breathe into a state of inner peace. If you are unsuccessful in that and you do feel panicked, gently lower your back, hips and legs to the floor and take a rest. There is no need to go beyond what is sustainable for yourself.
- Contraindications. One is that the pressure on the upper thoracic spine and the back of your neck and head can result in headaches afterwards. The headache does not necessarily manifest straight away. Its advent is not a warning sign to come out. However, if you have done a practice including shoulder stand and you experienced a strong pressure in your upper back, neck and head, and later that day or overnight you developed a headache, there may be a correlation and it may be preferable for you to take some other type of inversion. This sort of outcome is more common for people with what used to be called a dowager's hump or an excessive rounding of the upper back and neck.
- Another contraindication is for women with large breasts. In the inverted position women may experience their breasts dropping down towards their faces creating a stifling, claustrophobic experience. Again, if this applies to you, you may find it preferable to avoid shoulder stand.
- There is a variation of shoulder stand in which you do not use your hands at your back but, either, brace your arms at the floor or reach your arms up towards the sky. Take the same set up as for the previous shoulder stand, whether going through plough pose or not, but keep your arms at the floor.



Figure 6

- This is still shoulder stand. In Figure 6, notice how stacked Hamish's joints are – shoulders, hips, knees and ankles all close to a vertical line. This is good. We have a student who is very rounded in their thoracic spine. This student favours this variation but the greatest weight is borne, not across their shoulders, but in their upper back in the thoracic region. The following image seeks to demonstrate this:



Figure 7

- You will observe from Figure 7 that the primary contact with the floor is the thoracic spine rather than Hamish's shoulders. This is not desirable. Instead of trying to do this variation of the pose and just getting to the point that Hamish has demonstrated, spend more time with your hands supporting your back and work towards the form Hamish shows in Figure 3. Once you have that alignment, then you might consider trying to remove your hands from your back while still maintaining good form. Walk before you try to run. Do not get hung up on performing what you may perceive to be a more advanced variation where your alignment is less than ideal.

In shoulder stand, emulate from your shoulders to your feet, the alignment of *tadasana*/mountain pose. Create a neutral column through your body and turn your world upside down. Disrupt the drift of every day perceptions and see and experience your world from a new, enlightened vantage point.

ARE YOU RE-STARTING WITH YOGA?

A number of people have fallen by the wayside over the last few years and have allowed their yoga practice to lapse. Some have started to return to classes. Most discover that they are not picking up where they left off. What should you do in that position where the classes seem to have become harder in your absence and the early practices upon your return are difficult?

First, do not hesitate to return to class. Any day and every day is a good day to recommit to the healthy practices of yoga under the guidance of well-trained teachers, in a space dedicated to the practice, and in the company of great people from all walks of life who share in an enthusiasm for the timeless practice of yoga.

Second, acknowledge for yourself the heights that you reached when you were in regular practice. Where you were at when practicing with Apollo Power Yoga regularly was something to be proud of – and you can be there again.

Third, be patient with yourself. To rebuild strength, mobility and energy is a gradual process and you must be willing to take your time. Support and encourage yourself and do not despise the days of small beginnings. You may need to modify poses, rest at times and restrain yourself from a means of practice that formerly you were capable of in order to make your return to practice a successful one. The stakes are high! If you went backwards in a few months or a couple of years, what awaits you if you do not re-engage with the practice now?

Fourth, enjoy your practice. Every pose presents an opportunity to delight in the strength and mobility of your body, the energetic sensations created by the expressive forms, and the truth of your own being as you breathe, relax and adapt to the unique challenges at each point.

See you all in class soon – there is nothing quite like the communal experience of a group power vinyasa yoga class at Apollo Power Yoga.

BRING A FRIEND FOR FREE

We welcome you to bring in someone, or a whole group of people, that you know who have not practiced with us before, and their first class will be free. The first step of beginning yoga is often the hardest. It can be a tremendous challenge for someone to step into a new place and try something new. Be a good friend to your friends, family and colleagues and help them by making a date to have a class of yoga with us.

Thank you to everyone who has already introduced a friend to our studios. We greatly appreciate you sharing our practice with your community so that, together, we can all form a greater community.

This offer is continuing indefinitely. If you have not done so yet, please bring in someone who has not previously practiced with us and their first visit will be free. They can then still do a two week starter pass and really get going with their practice at Apollo Power Yoga.

You know you always feel better for having practiced yoga, so come in to the still, welcoming environment of Apollo's studios to practice together and share an energising, grounding, soul awakening experience. Practice often and reap the rewards in connection, strength, mobility and overall health and well-being.

FROM BARON BAPTISTE



“Your work in the world is meant to be about expressing the power and spirit that is within you.”

APOLLO POWER YOGIS IN BUSINESS

As our community recovers from 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 Sinke**. You can take your pick from [Dux Dine](#) or [Dux Central](#). For a healthy smoothie and other vegan treats, head to **Sara-Fae Foldesi's** [Pure Pulp](#), in the Riverfront Market.

For authentic French viennoiserie (croissants, Danish, etc.), sourdough bread, ciabattas and baguettes, there's no better place than [Bellbird Bakery](#) in the Tannery, where you'll find **Alice Terrien**. Bellbird's bread is made with organic or spray-free flour, all sourced within Canterbury, using traditional techniques and long fermentation.

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? Try **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.

For hairdressing try **Tracette Owers** of [The Lounge Organic Hairdressing](#) for great haircuts and colours using organic hair products.

Experience healing Massage Therapy, Naturopathy, Aromatherapy, Reflexology and Reiki with [Karina Thorpe](#). Her career in these healing therapies stretches back to 1987, and includes teaching at the College of Natural Medicine in Christchurch. Karina believes in supporting each person to achieve their best health, including working alongside of standard medical treatments. Hamish has used Karina's services and found her to be very knowledgeable, she had excellent technique and the results were very good.

Michelle Hall offers physiotherapy and acupuncture and dry needling treatments through her business, [AcuPhysio](#). Michelle is located in Redcliffs and can assist with the treatment of chronic and acute injuries.

Are you having sleep problems? Disordered sleep can be associated with many common health problems, including high blood pressure, diabetes, daytime sleepiness, obesity, lowered immune system, decreased libido, increased irritability, and increased pain sensitivity. Poor sleep may be a consequence or symptom of many health problems, but it can also be the underlying cause for some of them. Sleep has an impact on so many of the body's metabolic processes because they all need sleep to restore, repair damage, and recalibrate ready for the next day. If you are having problems, including snoring, sleep apnoea, or insomnia, see **Bryn, Christine, or Grace Sparks** and the rest of the team at [Sleep Well Clinic](#).

Drop by for lunch from Samson at **The Rolling Om** or order a meal from **Three Donkeys** (<https://threedonkeys.co.nz/order-now>). You will receive a great meal prepared with skill and love. You will also receive the biggest smile this side of the Equator. Samson is the chef on our yoga intensive/teacher training programme and **everyone** loves the tremendous meals he provides us with.

** All items in this magazine are written by Hamish or Margo and are not created by ChatGPT or any other AI program, nor are they articles extracted from the internet and used without attribution. Hamish and Margo generate their own material from their own reading, experience and study and you can be assured that the knowledge and ideas expressed in this magazine are backed with the years of study and practice that Hamish and Margo have made to yoga.

Namaste

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