



BWY

AT
THE
HEART
OF YOGA
IN THE NORTH WEST

WITH THE FLOW

Spring Newsletter 2024

<http://www.bwy.org.uk/northwest/>

CONTACTS

Regional Officer

Janet Long
07809 886 485
northwest.ro@bwyregions.org.uk

Regional Treasurer

Sarah Peter
07962 038269
northwest.treasurer@bwyregions.org.uk

Regional Training Officer

POSITION VACANT

Regional Secretary

Lorraine Coxon
07513 156168
northwest.secretary@bwyregions.org.uk

Newsletter Editor & Website

Administrator
POSITION VACANT

Cheshire Area Representative

Jackie Hudson
07702 711 021
northwest.cheshrep@bwyregions.org.uk

Greater Manchester & Isle of Man Area Representative

Hannah Gough
northwest.qmrep@bwyregions.org.uk

Merseyside Area Representative

Michelle France
northwest.merseyrep@bwyregions.org.uk

North Wales Area Representative

Kate Knowles
07708 496645
northwest.nwrep@bwyregions.org.uk

Lancashire Area Representative

Mel Guffogg
northwest.lancsrep@bwyregions.org.uk

Safeguarding, Diversity and Child Protection Officer

safeguarding@bwy.org.uk

Central Office

01529 306851
office@bwy.org.uk
www.bwy.org.uk

PUBLISHING POLICY

Please send adverts to the Newsletter Editor, with all payments made via bank transfer. To take advantage of members' rates, please provide your BWY membership number. All adverts should be supplied as high-resolution jpegs.

Advertising Rates (inc VAT)

Half Page
Full Page
Back Page (Colour)

BWY / Accredited Price

£15.00
£25.00
£40.00

Full Price

£30.00
£35.00
£75.00

Issue

Edition 2 - 2024
Edition 3 - 2024

Date Sent Out

10 June 2024
14 October 2024

Copy Deadline

(Adverts and Editorial)
06 May 2024
09 September 2024

Please note: goods or services advertised are not necessarily BWY accredited. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the editor or the committee. Advertisements are accepted at the discretion of the committee, and are included on a first-come, first-served basis as space allows. Advertising of courses that offer 'yoga teacher training' will only be accepted if the course is BWY or accredited to the BWY.

The British Wheel of Yoga is the Sports England recognised National Governing Body for Yoga. Disclaimer: Please note that the views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the editor nor the British Wheel of Yoga. Any advertisements are accepted in good faith and no responsibility can be accepted for the contents.

WELCOME

Hello from Yorkshire!

Please don't be alarmed, Yorkshire hasn't annexed the North West or vice versa. Sadly, your regional editor, Will, has stepped down. Please join me in thanking him for his contribution to the BWY North West committee; he will be missed.

I'm Lucy, the Yorkshire editor and I'm just helping out on this issue to make sure you, the members, receive your newsletter. If you are interested in volunteering with the BWY and think that any of the vacancies listed on the inside front cover might be right for you please do get in contact with one of the North West committee members (their contact details can be found on the inside front cover). If you are interested in the editor role and would like to know about what it entails, you are most welcome to contact me (yorks.editor@bwyregions.org.uk).

Enjoy!

CONTENTS

CONTACTS	02
NOTICEBOARD	04
COMMITTEE REPORTS	05
CONGRATULATIONS	09
HAIKU	10
EVENTS PLANNER / FIRST AID TRAINING	11
WORKSHOPS & EVENTS	14
KARMA YOGA	20
COMMUNITY OUTREACH YOGA	21
ARTICLES	22

Front Cover: John Ruskin's tomb, Coniston
Back Cover: Silver birch trees, Coniston

REGIONAL OFFICERS REPORT

Janet Long



At the moment Winter is definitely making itself known with some frosty mornings and yet signs that Spring is not too far away can also be felt in the lengthening of the days.

Mother nature is a natural at balance but often for us, modern life seems to take us away from this state. Over the years I have been so grateful to my yoga practice for helping to remind me of the importance of being balanced in all things (I even have a yin/yang tattoo to symbolise this).

I enjoy balance postures because they “do what it says on the tin”, not just physically but mentally. Have you ever noticed that you lose your balance in one of these postures as soon as the mind starts to wonder? Even as a teacher this sometimes catches me out as I begin to ponder the next posture rather than being in the moment. Inevitably I feel the body begin to wobble (even if the movement isn’t visible) and it quickly brings me back to the present.

I have mentioned before that one of my favourite breaths is sama vritti as that simple process of creating an even regular breath can be the starting point for so many other options. I may start with a 4 beat count and gradually increase it, or I may just lengthen the exhalation or add kumbhaka (retentions).

I’d love to know what your favourite methods of achieving balance are, why not submit a short article which we can include in our next newsletter?

Wishing you all a healthy, happy and peaceful 2024 and hope to see you at one of our events this year. Our area reps are working hard to source some great CPD & 1st aid training days plus other sessions highlighting all things yoga. If you have a speciality that you think would be of interest to our members at our IYD or Autumn Yoga events please do get in touch.

Namaste,
Janet x

AREA REPRESENTATIVE REPORT – MERSEYSIDE

Michelle France



Happy New Year to everyone!

As the days grow longer and nights shorten, it is good to think of the Spring Equinox and the balance that this might bring into our lives. I always feel a tremendous anticipation for lighter days, the renewal of life and the warmth and beauty of Summer, feelings that start as soon as the Winter Solstice is over. The Winter can be an exceedingly challenging time for people and the lack of light and loss of routine due to Winter festivities can lead to a loss of purpose in our emotional and physical needs. It is at this time of year when we are tired, that keeping to regular yoga activities can be the most difficult, but it is at this time of year that we will have the most benefit from getting back to our balanced routines and daily practices, no matter how small.

‘Live a well-balanced life, it will bring peace.’ Bhagavad Gita

Michelle

AREA REPRESENTATIVE REPORT – LANCASHIRE

Mel Guffogg



We are often told that balance is the key to a fulfilling and satisfying life. If we equally distribute our attention to all aspects in life, we can move much closer to achieving optimal health. However, it is easy to get so caught up in work and family responsibilities that we forget to make time for ourselves. Therefore, finding balance often requires setting boundaries, prioritizing activities, and seeking support from friends, family, and employers. Yoga can support balance in our lives as it encourages self-care practices, such as relaxation techniques and healthy lifestyle choices, contributing to our overall well-being.

Consistent yoga practice of asana, pranayama, mindfulness and meditation cultivates physical, mental, and emotional equilibrium. Physical postures build strength, flexibility, and stability, translating into balance both on and off the mat. Learning to control the breath enhances focus, reduces stress, and promotes inner balance. Meditation practices in yoga help calm the mind, improving clarity and emotional balance. And following the ethical guidelines of yoga (like non-violence, truthfulness and contentment) help to guide our behaviours and attitudes, promoting harmony both in our relationships and within ourselves.

The yoga philosophy of balance gives emphasis to achieving equilibrium in all aspects of life, harmonising opposing forces, such as effort and relaxation, strength and flexibility, and introspection and engagement. Yoga serves as a holistic tool that extends beyond physical poses, supporting the attainment of balance across various aspects of life. Through yoga philosophy and teachings, we can learn to find balance within ourselves despite whatever might be going on around us.

I am in the process of booking some really interesting events for 2024, so do keep an eye on the event listings on the website, and if you're a local teacher, come and join the Fylde and District Yoga Teachers Network for a cuppa and a chat. Our next date is Friday 1st March from 2pm at The Clifton Arms Hotel, Lytham.

See you soon! Mel x

AREA REPRESENTATIVE REPORT – NORTH WALES

Kate Knowles



Our yoga practice is a great way of maintaining and improving our balance. Having experienced my own issues with dizziness and poor balance, I'm really keen to share tips in my classes on supporting balance, and I have also developed a CPD on Better Balance.

Physical balance is controlled by an intricate collaboration between our physical body (our proprioception), our vision and our vestibular system (the network including our inner ear). One in three people over 65 will have a fall during the year, and many falls lead to death, injury, anxiety, loss of confidence and have a huge impact on quality of life.

Prevention is better than cure, so practicing a variety of techniques in class is a great way to support our balance mechanisms, hopefully preventing falls, or aiding recovery following a fall. A simple way to improve balance is to stand on one leg for a minute every day, in different places, maybe while waiting for the kettle, brushing your teeth or queuing in a shop. Research has proved that better balance is connected to a longer, healthier life !

Sadly, this is my last newsletter report. I've taken the difficult decision to resign for personal reasons, after four years as the North Wales rep. It's been a pleasure to meet people at different events during this time. If you'd like to take over, please get in touch to find out more about what the role entails. It's a really rewarding role, and a great opportunity to share yoga with wonderful people from the region.

Remember that we have two CPD's planned - 3rd March 2024 on "What yoga can do for the hands and feet" with Audrey Blow in North Wales, and 18th May for Merseyside's CPD on Yoga for Grief with Judy Sampath. Both are available to book on the website now.

With love
Namaste Kate

AREA REPRESENTATIVE REPORT – CHESHIRE

Jackie Hudson



When I think about balance in a yoga class I often come back to the sutra : Sthiram Sukham Asanam - achieving the balance of both ease and effort via mindful practise. As with many aspects of yoga, it can help us to increase our awareness so that we can re-dress the balance in how we live our lives.

I remember reading the book 'Feel the fear and do it anyway' years ago. To achieve our 'higher self', the author, Susan Jeffers, recommends a grid section for each of our 'life sections': contribution, hobby, leisure, personal growth, friends, relationship, work, family... In recent years, I have often found myself circling back to these 'life sections' and the relative importance of each. Food for thought...

Finally I found this lovely quote from the Dalai Lama:

'There should be a balance between material and spiritual progress, a balance achieved through the principles based on love and compassion'.

Hari OM Tat Sat
Jackie

CONGRATULATIONS

Philippa Wade's Ganesh Diploma Level 4 500 hours



Katie Prickett, Sarah Medinger, Karen Pritchard, Anoushka Cogan-Williams, Karen Kyle and Gudrun Rieck with Philippa Wade.

Sarah Beck's Progression Diploma Course



Mel Guffogg, Sandra Bayliss, Hannah West, Kirsten Flynn, Hazel Bainbridge (back row left to right) Stacey Hughes, Jayne Castree, Paula Barrett (front row left to right)

CONGRATULATIONS

And also to

- ☪ Angela Dobric, Judith Halton & Hanna Lambert: Diploma Level 4 Teacher Training with Janet Long
- ☪ Emma Katie Lauretani: Diploma Level 4 Teacher Training with Pamela Barton
- ☪ Georgia Boys, Kadie- Jade Cooper, Jessica Dawson, Leena Farhat, Eden Granata, Rebecca Mansfield, Viviana Santiago, Saba Marina Spencer and Jenny Thomas Teacher Training with Yoga Campus
- ☪ Jo Spragg: Menopause Yoga Module with Petra Coveney

HAIKU

By Peter Spencer

Blue sky white clouds
-a photograph of Summer
Now no more



This photograph was taken at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. The installation is by the sculpture James Turrell. It is entitled Deer Shelter Skyspace. It comprises a chamber containing only seating, lighting and an aperture in the ceiling through which to view the sky.

It gives a focus for meditation, contemplation and revelation. It allows us to stop, sit, meditate and contemplate and to access the peacefulness of the changing sky. I sat there for two hours and then took this snapshot on 13 July 2019.

Since then I take the opportunity to stop and look at the sky whenever I can to connect with nature and peacefully observe change or simply focus on this photograph.

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	TYPE	CONTACT
03 rd March	What yoga can do for the hands and feet with Audrey Blow	Northop Village Hall, High Street, Northop, CH7 6BQ	CPD Day	BWY North West
18 th May	Yoga therapy for grief and loss with Judy Sampath	Westbourne Hall, West Kirby, Wirral	CPD Day	BWY North West

There are bimonthly social meetings at The Clifton Arms Hotel, West Beach, Lytham, FY8 5QJ. These are for yoga teachers in Blackpool, Fylde, Preston and surrounding areas to come together for a cuppa and a chat. We recognise that teaching yoga can sometimes be a fairly solitary profession and have found that these regular meetups provide an opportunity for teachers in the area to get to know one another and offer each other informal support and advice. All yoga teachers welcome. Contact Mel Guffogg (Lancashire Rep) at northwest.lancsrep@bwyregions.org.uk for more details.

FIRST AID TRAINING

Emergency First Aid at Work

08 September 2024 9.00am-4.30pm

Lytham Assembly Rooms, Dicconson Terrace, Lytham, Lancs FY8 5JY

Please see the BWY website for more details and to book your place.

EVENT REFUND POLICY

If you have booked your place on a CPD Day and can no longer attend, please contact the event organiser as soon as possible. The organiser will either arrange to move your booking to another event (subject to availability) or offer you a refund based on:

Cancellation prior to 60 days of event date – full refund.

Cancellation within 15 to 59 days of event date – 50% refund.

Cancellation within 14 to 0 days of event date – no refund.

If the event is cancelled, you will be refunded in full.

NORTH WEST COURSE TUTORS

FOUNDATION COURSE TUTORS

CHESHIRE

Rick Calligaro
Rickcalligaro@hotmail.com

Philippa Wade
plwade@virginmedia.com

GREATER MANCHESTER AND ISLE OF MAN

Janet Long
Janetlong_mbs@yahoo.co.uk

Sue Wooley – Isle of Man
suew@manx.net

LANCASHIRE

Brenda Ward
brendayoga@mail.com

Beverley Anne Wheale
BevWyoga@gmail.com

Rebecca Ellis
hello@rebeccayoga.org.uk

MERSEYSIDE

Rosemary (Bennett) Ring (Sw.
Premananda)
rosemarypremanabbennett@gmail.com

Pam Barton
namastefrompam@yahoo.co.uk

Paul and Steve Smith
(Yogasmiths)
enquiries@yogasmiths.org

Anna Kewn
annakewn@hotmail.com

Susan Watson
Suewatson_uk@icloud.com

Paul Wooding
p.wooding@blueyonder.co.uk

DIPLOMA COURSE TUTORS CHESHIRE

Rick Calligaro
Rickcalligaro@hotmail.com

Philippa Wade
plwade@virginmedia.com

GREATER MANCHESTER AND ISLE OF MAN

Janet Long
Janetlong_mbs@yahoo.co.uk

MERSEYSIDE

Pam Barton
namastefrompam@yahoo.co.uk

Sarah Beck
Sarah.deva@yahoo.co.uk

Rosemary (Bennett) Ring (Sw.
Premananda)
rosemarypremanabbennett@gmail.com

Susan Watson
suewatson_uk@icloud.com

NORTH WEST PREGNANCY YOGA TEACHERS

CHESHIRE

Mandy Church
enquiries@effortlessbreath.co.uk

Alison Colyer
alison@blissfulliving.org

Katya Greer
katyabwy@icloud.com

Maryline Higham
yogaspirits@hotmail.co.uk

Jackie Hudson
jhyogawellness@gmail.com

Adele Offland
adele@inhaleyoga.co.uk

Alison Tumilty
alisontumilty@hotmail.com

GREATER MANCHESTER AND ISLE OF MAN

Sarah Hague
sarah@yogainchorton.co.uk

LANCASHIRE

Kim Atkinson
babyogis.kim@gmail.com

Susanne Page
pregnancyyogabolton@gmail.com

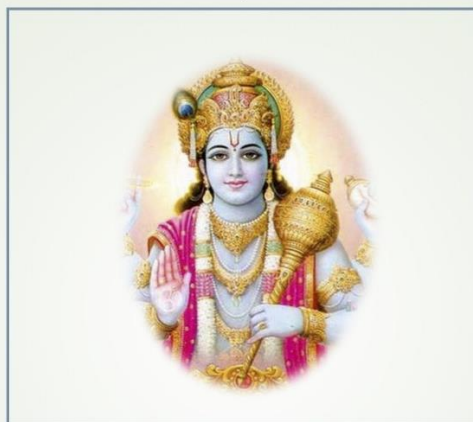
MERSEYSIDE

Rosemary (Bennett) Ring (Sw. Premananda):
rosemarypremabennett@gmail.com

Ann Simmonett
ann_simmonett@btinternet.com

INTRODUCTION TO AYURVEDA INTENSIVE

TWO DAY WORKSHOP 8TH SEPT & 13TH OCT 2024



WITH SARAH BECK, TO BE HELD AT
WILLASTON MEMORIAL HALL, (CH64 2UG)

This will be a 2 day workshop aimed at giving you a sound knowledge of the principles of Ayurveda and how to apply these personally, whether for the purpose of healing a specific condition or for maintaining wellness. We shall explore diet & lifestyle, plus the use of simple therapies and herbal preparations. It will also help you to see the potential benefits of yoga in a deeper therapeutic context. You will receive a comprehensive course booklet containing a summary of ayurvedic theory & protocols, all of which can be used for future reference.

The two days cost a total of £140, with a deposit of £40 to be paid upon booking. For more information see www.yoga-ayurveda.co.uk and you are very welcome to contact Sarah at sarahbeck042@gmail.com

Journey through the Chakras



with Helena Turner

7 sessions March – September 2024
Sheffield Yoga School, S6 3TA
£175 / 145

Central to this course is developing an understanding of the connection between energy, sound, vibration & form.

Sessions include drawing a Yantra for each chakra, meditation, harmonium, Hatha Yoga & Mantra.

There will be a Chakra specific Crystal Bowl sound bath in every session.

www.sheffieldyogaschool.co.uk



Yoga Therapy

TRAINING COURSE

ABOUT

Yoga Focus, established in 1998, runs 550hr professional training in yoga therapy, accredited by BCYT. Also CPD events and modular courses through the BWY. Founder Nikki Jackson has worked as an NHS occupational therapist and yoga therapist in physical and mental health and the private sector. Courses are based on self compassion and relate closely to Nature.

Starting 23rd March 2024

STAGE ONE: 50 hr Foundations in Yoga Therapy (BWY Module)

STAGE TWO: 500 hrs leading to Diploma as qualified professional Yoga Therapist

VENUE: West Oxfordshire, on line and Mandala Ashram, South Wales

Yoga Therapy sessions available



email: admin@yogafocus.co.uk
www.yogafocus.co.uk/professional-training/



Preparing for Urdhva Mukha Svanasana



**20 April, 9.30am – 12.30pm via Zoom
with Zoe Knott £25**

An asana-based practice building towards Upward Facing Dog, with a safe, accessible approach, while exploring the varied elements of asana to deepen both experience and understanding of the pose.

Dovedale – Peak District, Just be Yoga Weekend

16 – 19 August

A long weekend, Friday – Monday at Peveril of the Peak, 3* hotel in the stunning location of Thorpe. Set in 11 acres of gardens with the towering backdrop of Thorpe Cloud hill, footpaths lead directly from the house. Ensuite rooms, full board with fabulous food using local produce. Traditional hatha yoga, Yin, fascial yoga, pranayama, Yoga Nidra and guided meditation. High quality for an inexpensive price, from £370pp.

Cober Hill - Just be Yoga Weekend

4 - 6 October

Relax, refresh, restore, take time for yourself in the beautiful surroundings of the North Yorkshire coast, just a short walk to the sea. Combine exploring a wide variety yoga practices, pranayama, mudras, Yin Yoga, guided meditation and Yoga Nidra with just being in the moment. All ensuite rooms. From £370pp.

moonriseyoga.co.uk

janecluley@gmail.com

07906 652669

**50-HOURS
YIN YOGA TEACHER
TRAINING**

**LEVEL 1 –
FUNCTIONAL
ANATOMY
LOWER BODY**

**A HIGHLY
EXPERIENCED YIN
YOGA TEACHER WITH
OVER 1,500 HOURS
TRAINING WITH PAUL
& SUZEE GRILLEY AND
SARAH & TY POWERS**

INTAKE 9



gilliancawte@hotmail.com
07968 154525
www.gilliancawteyoga.co.uk

**BONES, MUSCLES,
POSES, MERIDIANS
AND MINDFULNESS
MEDITATION**

**Comprehensive
Colour Manual,
Meridian Doll,
British Wheel
of Yoga and
Yoga Alliance
Certification**

**Total cost: £695
Early Bird Discount
Available**

**2024
6 Saturdays
14th and 21st
September, 5th, 12
and 26th October
2nd November**

ONLINE VIA ZOOM



BWYT RESTORATIVE YOGA MODULE

TEACHER TRAINING SEP-NOV 2024



30-Hour Online CPD
Open to all qualified yoga teachers

An invitation to explore this practice for our time, nourish yourself and enhance your teaching skills in a supportive group

BWY Certification and Yoga Alliance CEUs

With Carol Trevor
Experienced teacher training and CPD tutor
BWY Dip., E-RYT500, YACEP, MA

For details and to apply:

carol@yogacarol.co.uk

07949 743 942

www.yogacarol.co.uk

KARMA YOGA

*Those who act without thought of personal
Profit and lead a well-disciplined life
Discover in course of time the divine
Principle that all forms of life are one.
Shvetashvatatara Upanishad 4:3*

Are you really passionate about something (apart from yoga on the mat)? Like tree planting or litter collection or organising a book swapping library or a creative crafting club.

Something you would like to share with others
Something which could bring together like-minded people.

Something which might inspire others to join in
Something which could create a community.

Why not organise a Karma Yoga event?
It can be something you organise yourself or something you do in collaboration with a charity or other organisation.

If you would like help promoting your event, please contact your BWY Regional Officer.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH YOGA

Help us develop BWY's
community outreach work

Whether you're involved locally or want to discover more
contact E: communications@bwy.org.uk

bwy.org.uk

COMMUNITY OUTREACH YOGA

SELF-ACCEPTANCE AND LOVING KINDNESS

By Swami Krishnapremananda, Mandala Yoga Ashram

The more you nurture a feeling of loving kindness, the happier and calmer you will be.

Sounds simple, and indeed the above quotation from the Dalai Lama is spot on. Yet why is it such a challenge for many of us?

We are born, ‘trailing clouds of glory’ in the words of William Wordsworth, yet as we grow through childhood, we often enter the territory of self-doubt and self-judgement despite the best efforts of caregivers. Pervasive narratives of being unworthy, or unloved, or broken, gather credence, further conditioned by religious, family, and educational influences. Such narratives, alongside other experiences of suffering, undermine our sense of ease and well-being.

Hence, as mature adults, there is such value in cultivating a consistent sense of self-acceptance; one that allows us to mitigate the inner demons or conflicts that try to keep us in old habitual ways of being. None of us are perfect in these manifest human forms. We all have our idiosyncrasies but nevertheless we can open to the recognition that we too, like all other beings, deserve the healing gifts of acceptance and loving kindness. No doubt, this recognition can feel tenuous and fragile at times, and hence needs ongoing sustenance and patience.

Sustained yoga practice is invaluable in this regard. Again and again, coming back to the yoga mat or cushion, finding a sense of refuge there, and offering ourselves into our practice.

Engaging in asana, pranayama, yoga nidra or meditation practice with a kindness and respect to self, even when the old narratives seek to undermine our self-esteem once again. Such ongoing practice can give us a little space from these habitual narratives and help to foster the inner springs of kindness and appreciation for self.

The Buddhist practice of metta, or loving kindness, is one such practice – *May I/you be filled with loving kindness, may I/you be well, may I/you be peaceful and at ease.* There are other versions of the metta lines that can be just as valid, conveying the spirit of loving kindness both for ourselves and for others equally.

Self-acceptance however does not mean giving up on our aspirations to grow into a fuller version of who we can be. Self-acceptance pertains to the present, being more at peace rather

than in conflict with our present moment experience. Aspirations may start in the present but extend into the future. We can keep cultivating these aspirations while at the same time, guard against the self-undermining narratives in the present.

It is also important to state that self-acceptance is not about fighting or trying to 'fix' these narratives, but about patiently turning towards them with kindness, and trying to understand them more clearly. The journey towards loving kindness for self is one that willingly turns towards our suffering, endeavouring to learn from it, and open to ways of accepting, healing, or resolving it. In the words of Naomi Shihab Nye, from her poem *Kindness*:

Before you know kindness as the deepest thing inside,

You must know sorrow as the other deepest thing.

You must wake up with sorrow.

You must speak it till your voice,

Catches the thread of all sorrows,

And you see the size of the cloth.

All of us, as humans, are bound to experience sorrow, loss, grief, and suffering in our lives. Often the tendency is to turn away from these aspects of our humanity, to find distractions or to close down in self-pity. Yet there is always a more compassionate option patiently awaiting us. With appropriate levels of support, we can learn to meet and even welcome our suffering, in the recognition that all living beings also experience suffering. We are not alone, and the more we can accept the whole of our personal story, the more a fertile soil is cultivated in which our self-kindness can grow.

The more we can enrich this inner soil of loving kindness through sustained practice, the more the following words of the Buddha can resonate within us:

You can search throughout the entire universe for someone who is more deserving of your love and affection than you are yourself, and that person is not to be found anywhere. You, yourself, as much as anybody in the entire universe, deserve your love and affection.



DEVELOPING STRENGTH WITH SINGLE LEG POSES

by Zoe Knott, BWY DCT



I have taught yoga for a long while now. During this time I have learnt that in order to protect the joints, we should bring strength to our practice. This has been the underpinning nature of my teaching throughout my career. Many of you have joined me at the 'Strength in Asana' CPD Workshop.

Through breaking my leg at the age of 65, (I include 'age 65', as I was shocked at the views of so many as to this being the end of the road for me at this age; downhill from now on), I became aware of how practicing single leg yoga poses develop strength even more powerfully. And this is what I would like to share with you at this CPD Day.

My aim is for yoga teaching to be accessible to all who come to

class and work with a staged approach. So this session does not look at intricate, gymnastic, anatomically complex poses, but moves that are possible for all, that are very much a part of our yoga practice.

It will be obvious to yoga teachers and experienced practitioners that working with single leg poses will improve muscle strength through the standing leg and beyond. We can deepen the muscle loading in many ways, such as bending the standing leg in single leg poses. So simple yet so effective. Yoga is often a resistance practice, using different parts of our body as weights as we move into and out of gravity with control. Again the strength work intensifies in single leg poses.

What becomes really interesting is that we develop strength in many areas in addition to the standing leg as it necessary to recalibrate our balance. To do so, the brain has to engage to adjust to the unfamiliar setting of standing on one leg. The eyes, ears, muscles and joints send messages to the brain; the brain then responds. Thus strengthening the neural connections; keeping the brain on its toes.

Falls are a serious health issue and I was surprised to learn they are the second most common cause of accidental deaths. Every time we work in single leg positions, we develop the tools to prevent falling.

As with all strength work, if we keep at it, balance will improve surprisingly quickly.

So as we work through familiar sequences we will experience how we can intensify the strength work at various stages by taking the body weight through just one leg.

Even though we are working with single leg poses, you may think we will simply strengthen the legs, but actually I will sneak in a few of the other key areas that need strengthening too.

POSTURAL ALIGNMENT & FALLS PREVENTION

By Anna Semlyen

As people age, risks of falling rise. Yoga can hugely contribute to helping to be stable, steady and keep upright. This is key for menopausal women especially with brittle bones from osteoporosis / osteopenia.

Possibly the best investment in later years' health is learning falls prevention. Falls are the most common cause of injury to 65+ year olds and have serious consequences - trauma, pain, impaired function, loss of confidence, loss of independence and autonomy and even death.

Anna has a Falls Prevention Awareness Cert. She focuses on the Otago Falls prevention physio programme - proven to lower incidence and severity of falls. Learn the deep tips for general classes and private lessons in postural stability. Handouts and hatha yoga postures, breathing and meditation and advice on reducing fear are included. Learn it for yourselves or your elderly loved ones!

Most people have sedentary lifestyles. 37% of British people never exercise. Yet, unless we engage in regular physical activity, we are vulnerable to fall. One in 9 ambulance call outs are to falls. Older women especially, with dipping oestrogen levels are at greater risk of falling and of complicated fractures with lengthy recovery and rehabilitation.

Falls are hugely costly, especially if they trigger care needs. On average UK residential care costs were £34,944 a year or £48,720 a year for nursing care homes in 2020 and rising as fuel costs escalate.

Anna is a Yoga teacher-trainer, author of Yoga for Healthy Lower Backs, who has trained in Falls Prevention and stability, flexibility, and strength. Learn how prevalent and disabling falls are, the proven Otago falls prevention system, how it aligns with asana and breathing techniques; practice and evaluate the Otago method for yourselves. It will revolutionise your ability to stay stable and to help others to as well. Stability is core to yoga! Asana or posture are sthira (stable) and sukha (relaxed).

About Anna

Est 1996. Gentle, effective, evidence based yoga classes & private lessons to help you feel healthy & whole. Beginners are welcome. I offer posture yoga classes, breathing, meditation, relaxation, back care, laughter yoga, workplace & private

lessons. Will come to you. BWY Specialist Advisor on Back Care and Therapeutic Research. www.yogainyork.co.uk, Yoga for Healthy Lower Backs book and relaxations CD author based on an RCT with the University of York - www.yogaforbacks.co.uk. Teacher training tutor on private yoga lessons, back care, improving concentration, mental health gunas, Ayurvedic Doshas (constitution), falls awareness.

THE PRISON PHOENIX TRUST

By Jane Beaufoy



The work of an award-winning charity brings the freedom of yoga and meditation to the thousands of people who are confined in Britain's prisons.

The Prison Phoenix Trust (The PPT) is a small, Oxford-based charity that is reaching out to offer

support and rehabilitation to the 'hidden' community of 107,000 people behind bars in the UK and Northern Ireland.

With a consistent, non-judgemental approach to introducing yoga and meditation to this marginalised group, The PPT has brought about real change to people's lives. This was recently recognised at the 2023 Om Yoga Show at Alexandra Palace when it was voted the winner of the Favourite Yoga Charity award.

The PPT's director Selina Sasse expressed her delight as she received the award at Europe's biggest yoga event. She said: "This is for the those in the yoga community who are hidden away, all those people who are practising day in, day out, with a book or a CD, getting out their mats in times of difficulty.

'Lots of people who practise or teach yoga know from their own experiences how it helps them cope with life's challenges. Yoga and meditation allow what's within each and every one of us to shine.'

Practising yoga and meditation can bring about remarkable change in a person's mental and physical health. In a prison environment, where a huge majority of people have experienced violence, childhood abuse and trauma, this could not be more relevant, with greater physical awareness and control leading to

a calmer, more balanced state of mind.

The charity's work has a strong rehabilitative emphasis. The evidence for transformation is in the hundreds of letters from prisoners they receive, telling stories of how yoga and meditation has changed their lives. Like Richard's story:

Richard grew up in care and at aged 18 found himself on the streets, left alone to survive. "I had one aim," he recalls, "to get to the top of the criminal justice system because I didn't like society and I wanted to pay it back for what it had done to me."

Over the following decades a criminal career led to a number of sentences served in prisons in England and Wales. Richard first saw a sign for yoga classes while he was serving a sentence in HMP Belmarsh. "I thought, anything to get out of my cell," he recalls. "But when I went along I found it was quite difficult. I thought I was fit but it wasn't about fitness."

As well as group yoga classes, Richard also got support one-to-one from a mentor from The PPT. They wrote to him in prison, supporting and advising on his yoga and meditation practice. He wrote back and they listened, without judgement, as he put his experiences down on paper.

"I started passing on what I was learning to other inmates and seeing them change. Not only could I see the change in myself, but I was seeing change in other people too," he said. "The PPT was a beacon of light that got me through some very difficult inner battles with myself. But it stayed with me wherever I went and still does to this very day."

As well as providing books, newsletters, CDs and DVDs specifically designed for use in a prison cell, The PPT runs a training programme for yoga teachers to equip them for teaching inside. The module focuses on trauma-responsive, mindful yoga and meditation and is accredited by The British Wheel of Yoga. Established back in 2001, the course has given more than 120 yoga teachers the unique set of skills required to teach in secure settings.

Jason is a PE Officer at a prison in the south of England who has been through the training. When their regular yoga teacher in the prison left he decided to take up the challenge. He was in his 50s when he qualified, and he then deepened his studies by taking The PPT's module. Now he teaches once a week and has a dedicated group of students.

Jason works with older prisoners with co-morbidity – people with

combined lifestyle and age-related conditions such as diabetes and heart disease – and he witnesses how it supports their health and well-being. When teaching a drug and alcohol rehabilitation group, he saw at first-hand how yoga can help access deeply held emotions and act like a release valve.

‘We were doing crane pose and having fun with the balance, when one of the prisoners became completely overwhelmed,’ said Jason. ‘He had to lie down and recover. He said it was the first time he had breathed without holding tension in his body.’

Pete was formerly a gym instructor at a young offenders’ institution where he worked with some of the most difficult and dangerous young prisoners in the region. There was a high degree of violence and self-harm. He witnessed first-hand the effect yoga can have when some prisoners who were kept in segregation attended a yoga class regularly.

‘After being introduced to yoga they wanted to come to class and we gradually saw a change in mentality. It is a cliché to say some found inner peace, but it is as if we could actually see them removing the burden on their shoulders. It was very fragile, but it was definitely there in those moments.

‘It was a change that went outside the yoga class, too. Others commented that they were calmer, more reflective and more at one with themselves.’



Now that Pete works at Grendon he supports the teaching of yoga at the prison. He added: ‘It is not a clearly defined outcome for everybody. But what we see is that people find their own individual improvement.’

If you are interested in The PPT’s training module, please go to <https://www.theppt.org.uk/for-yoga-teachers/yoga-teacher-training>

YOGA PRACTICE: GETTING YOUR MIND IN THE RIGHT PLACE

By Perry Lewis

“By lessening the natural tendency for restlessness and by meditating on the infinite, posture is mastered.” – Yoga Sutras, Chapter 2, Sutra 47

Where is your mind during your yoga practice? Are you missing out on the wonderful feeling you can enjoy by becoming totally absorbed in your practice? Where your practice becomes a moving meditation...integrating asana, movement and mindfulness into a truly harmonious experience.

One of the defining principles of yoga practice is the union of our breath, body and mind. However, many of us tend to compartmentalise our yoga practice into separate elements devoted to asana, breath and meditation. Certainly, in our breath and meditation practices, our mind has a clear point of focus.

But given much of our yoga practice is devoted to asana, focussing your mind whilst transitioning from Adho Mukha Svanasana (Downward-Facing Dog) to Virabhadrasana 1 (Warrior 1), is not so easy. Indeed, I observe so often when teaching a class, students watching other students with the mindset “Am I doing this right?” or “Why can’t I do that?” or “I’m going to get there at all costs” written on their face. When I first started attending classes it was not uncommon for me to be thinking about “What’s next” or even “What’s for dinner when I get home”.

Of course in class we can be forgiven for having such a thoughts. In my view, classes are about learning, making learning interesting and enjoyable, and providing us with the tools for developing a personal yoga practice. And it is at home where our practice can provide us with the truly harmonious experience many of us crave. It is my personal home practice that provides me with my own ‘yoga nourishment’.

Here, through my asana practice I seek to absorb my mind in the sensation of an integrated sequence of asana, breath and the transitions that link the asana together. Put simply, the practice becomes a moving meditation.

So how do we go about developing our moving meditation?

Some suggestions:

1. Decide how much time you wish to devote to the practice and plan a sequence of asana that you feel are within your capabilities.

Keep it short – no more than 15-20 minutes. Keep it simple with easy transitions, Surya Namaskar (Sun Salutation) is a good start.
2. Choose a place in your home that is quiet (if possible) and warm, with little chance of disturbance. It is good to have mantra playing in the background.
3. Start from a comfortable posture e.g. Tadasana (Mountain Pose) or Balasana (Child's Pose) and take a few moments to deepen the breath and settle the mind, before you begin the sequence.
4. The first few times you commence your practice, pause at each asana and be mindful of the sensations it brings to you. Make the transitions as smooth and as simple as possible.
5. I find it also help to anchor the mind by incorporating ujjayi breathing into the practice.
6. You will be aiming for the sequence to become so familiar that you give little thought to the upcoming asanas and transitions and you will be able to always keep you mind in the present. This will enable you to absorb you mind on the performance of the practice and the 'feel-good' it brings to you.
7. At the conclusion of the practice, you can meditate on the breath for say 10-15 minutes.

In effect the practice will become a mindfulness meditation. Over a period of time you can develop further sequences. I have put together a series of 18 sequences – three for each day taking some 45 minutes, having one-day's rest.

You will of course, develop a practice to suit your own needs. The performance of asana can be so much more than bringing strength, mobility and flexibility to our body. Can you get your mind in the right place?

<https://www.yoganectar.co.uk/teacher-training/>

