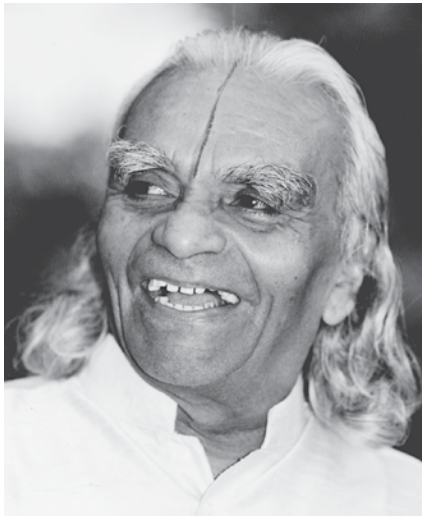


Yoga Vancouver

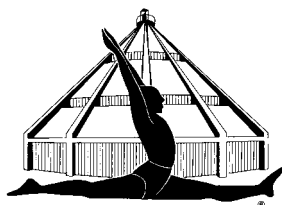
Iyengar Yoga Vancouver Newsletter

FALL 2006



“You do not need to seek freedom in some distant land, for it exists within your own body, heart, mind, and soul. Illuminated emancipation, freedom, unalloyed and untainted bliss await you, but you must choose to embark on the Inward Journey to discover it.”

B.K.S. Iyengar, Light on Life (2005)



B.K.S. Iyengar
Yoga Association

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Looking Forward to Another 30 Glorious Years



Photos clockwise from above: baby Finn and his Mama, Gwynneth. Gerie's Noah "look Mommy, no hands". Arjun and his mom, Deb.

As this newsletter goes to print, we are coming to the end of our 30th anniversary year. This year we looked back and honored the past, a process that culminated in October with Donald Moyer's workshop, a celebratory lunch, and a new tee-shirt that proudly proclaims: "30 glorious years."

With a new year close at hand, this seems a good time to welcome our newcomers, both students and new teachers, and to cast a glance into the future.

Given the current state of the world, it would be foolhardy to predict what life and yoga will be like 30 years from now.

But even a cautious person might confidently see continued growth in the numbers of people who practice yoga in North America and around the world.

The deep satisfaction we find in yoga as taught by the Iyengars makes us certain that

many of those newcomers to yoga will be joining us in our work.

As our connection with the Iyengar Association of Canada deepens, we know we will be bringing in more national and international teachers for workshops, to inspire and instruct us.

And we expect, through our support for teacher education, to build an even stronger group of teachers at home.

In 30 years, Finn and Arjun, the youngest members of our community (see News & Notes on p. 4 for details), may or may not be yogis, but their mothers Gwynneth Powell Sobejko and Deb Peake, we predict, will be the elders in a yoga community somewhere, and we hope it's here.

The future looks exciting. Please join us.

Namaste,

— The B.K.S. Iyengar Association Board

WORKSHOP REVIEW: DONALD MOYER

Weekend Workshop October 27-29 at
The Yoga Space

By Nicola Tiburzi



Donald helping Maureen
in Trikonasana

The last weekend in October, we had the privilege of studying with Donald Moyer, founder and director of The Yoga Room in Berkeley, California and author of the

new book *Yoga: Awakening the Inner Body*. Donald began practicing yoga in 1971 and helped Iyengar Yoga to take root in Vancouver when he began teaching here in 1974. What a blessing to witness the reunion of the practitioners from those days, many of whom attended the workshop. The weekend was filled with many epiphanies; here are some of the illuminating highlights.

Overachievers over-aligned

There is a tendency among informed practitioners to over correct in the action of the hips, making the back of the pelvis too strictly parallel in poses such as Virabhadrasana 1 and Parsvottanasana. When we were in Virabhadrasana 1, Donald suggested that we align from “top of the hip bones” (the two sides of the anterior superior iliac crest). This may make the back leg appear as if it is turning out, but the hips are in fact lined up with each other. This method of measuring encouraged length in the inner groin and leg, and it became possible, finally, to descend the back heel.

Tuckers Anonymous

“There are two types of people in the world: tilters and tuckers.” Tilters have an anterior pelvic tilt (sometimes called “sway -back”) whereas tuckers display a posterior position of the pelvis. Both tendencies need to be brought into check, but when we were doing backbends in the workshop, it seemed that the more com-



Donald in Eka Pada
Rajkapotasana

mon problem in the room was coming from tucking -- that is, over tucking the tailbone. The teaching was clear: too much tucking restricted the spine’s movement, and contracted the abdomen and pelvic diaphragm. Tuckers were exposed! In the end, some of us decided to join “Tuckers Anonymous” (the founder being Donald himself).



Donald helping Wende in
Sirsasana

from the twist while turning the navel into the pose. Keeping the lower abdomen separate from the movement of the sides of the navel created softness and relaxation in the belly and stability in the sacrum and hip joints.

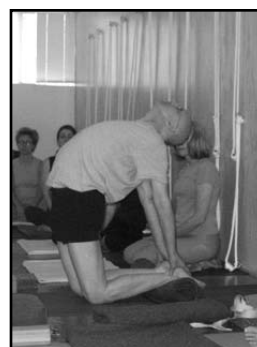
Lead with the heart not the head

We practiced Urdva Mukha Svanasana with the head dropped initially forward (like in seated pranayama) to engage the strength in the torso, as opposed to coming up from the head, which tends to engage only upper arm strength, tightening the trapezoids to lift the body.

“Is the xiphoid process in line with the navel?”

I am sure we all internalized this question to the point that it will be a kind of mantra for our individual practices. The xiphoid process is a part of the lower sternum. It consists of

hyaline cartilage that by middle age is said to ossify. When you are looking at the alignment of the trunk, if the xiphoid is behind the navel, the chest may be collapsing. If it is in front of the navel, the upper body will be leaning too much forward.



Donald in Ustrasana

The usefulness of this question was most obvious in Ustrasana, when, by aligning the xiphoid with the navel, many students demonstrated a greater lift and extension of the back muscles and avoided compression in the lumbar. By using this simple method of alignment in this challenging pose, the breath was freed, and the ability to articulate the bend of the thoracic spine increased --or, as Donald would say, we could move “the spines of the lower thoracic spine away from the lumbar and move of the spines of the upper thoracic spine towards the lumbar.”

The elusive soft abdomen

“Relax the lower abdomen down while lengthening the sides of the navel up.”

In Parivrtta Parsvakonasana we learned to turn the lower abdomen away

from the twist while turning the navel into the pose. Keeping the lower abdomen separate from the movement of the sides of the navel created softness and relaxation in the belly and stability in the sacrum and hip joints.

The Vibration of Gratitude

Delighted at our discovery of new freedoms in our bodies Donald would thank us individually (by name) every time he saw that one of us had understood and was benefiting from his suggestions.

Thank you, Donald!

Nicola Tiburzi is a teacher in training who studies yoga in Vancouver

Photos taken by Gerie Primerano

The Association’s Board of Directors

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Sarah Godfrey – Vice President

Alice Sundberg - Treasurer

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Katherine Morgan – Recording Secretary

Heather Graham – Member-at-Large

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BOOK REVIEW

Yoga: Awakening the Inner Body, by Donald Moyer. Rodmell Press, 2006.

After more than 30 years of teaching, Donald Moyer has gathered roughly half of his accumulated knowledge into his first book.

In *Yoga: Awakening the Inner Body*, he gives detailed instructions, modified for different body types, for headstand and shoulder stand, and for eight themes relating to the work of the upper body in asana.

Why start with Sirsasana and Sarvangasana?

“I have the impression that teachers are less willing to teach headstand and shoulder stand these days, and I wanted to give them encouragement to continue,” he said in an interview following the Saturday afternoon workshop session.

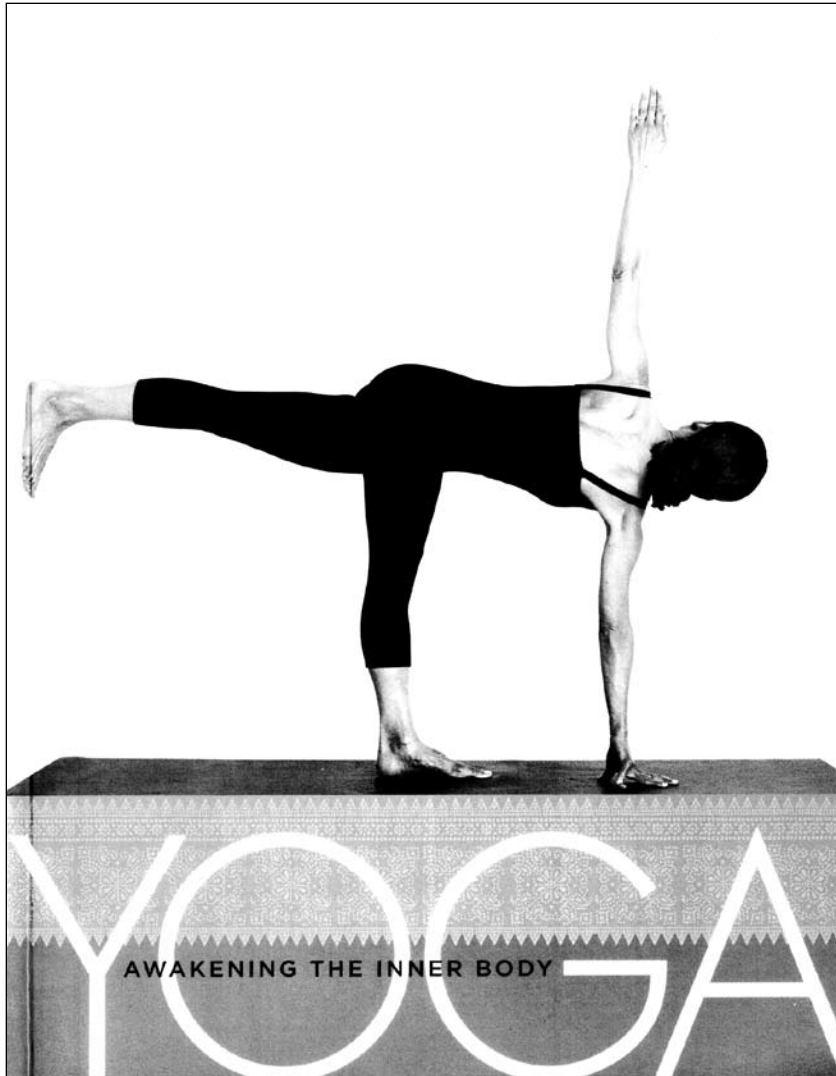
He is pleased with the response he has had to the book so far.

“My concern in writing the book was whether or not I would be able to convey some of the subtler movements in writing. I’ve been quite pleasantly surprised by the number of people who have been able to use it. The feedback from lesser as well as more experienced students is that it’s clear and understandable.”

The book is also dense and detailed. As one workshop participant joked: “this looks like my work for the next three years.”

In fact, to benefit from his sequences, Donald recommends that readers ideally practice a minimum of three times a week, for at least an hour each time in addition to any classes they may be attending.

His own practice is two hours in the mornings on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and



Saturday, the four days he doesn’t teach an early class. Those practices are reserved for the more energetic poses, including standing work and backbends.

His afternoon practice is an hour to an hour and a half, devoted to restorative poses, forward bends and inversions.

Every week he also does one long pranayama practice, between one and two hours.

Despite the fact that this is his first book, Donald has a long association with publishing, through Rodmell Press, which he and his wife, Linda Cogozzo, established in 1988.

Rodmell publishes what he calls “spiritual practice books,” with authors including Judith Hanson Lasater, Bobby Clenell, Donna Farhi and Mira Mehta.

He prefers to write for an hour to

90 minutes, “a little bit each day,” and estimates that it took four years to write *Yoga: Awakening the Inner Body*.

In its introduction, Donald mentions that he hopes to write a second volume on the aspects of the lower body – the feet, the knees and how to balance the legs.

“The chapters are all planned out,” he says. “Now all I need is time to do it.”

Anyone who has struggled to establish a home practice will welcome the sequences and insights in Donald’s book, and the inspiration of his creative approach to asana.

How does he keep his practice fresh?

“The key is asking a question and hoping that the answer will come,” he says. Usually it does if you ask the question and

listen to how your body is responding.”

One recent question he explored is the balance of the buttocks and quads. “I take that theme into my practice,” he says, “and explore how it works in every pose.”

As those who participated in his Vancouver workshop can attest, Donald’s current theme is the balance of the groins and hip rotators.

“In two to three weeks, I may come to the end of that theme, but a new one will be emerging,” he says.

“The body works with incredible logic. One idea leads to the next one, and then you begin seeing the interconnectedness of all the ideas.”

– Eve Johnson

Eve Johnson teaches at Yoga on 7th.

2007 B.K.S. IYENGAR YOGA ASSOCIATION WORKSHOPS

Sunday, December 3, 2006 (2:00 – 5:00 p.m.): Wende Davis: “De-Stress Before the Holidays”

Location: The Yoga Space. Local Teachers Workshop Series. All levels of students welcome. Contact Corrie Vorlauffer at 604-761-0074 for registration and other information.

Gabriella Giubilero has had to cancel this year's visit to Vancouver due to family matters. She hopes to be able to return to Vancouver to teach a five-day intensive in March 2008.

Coming in 2007

We are pleased to announce that **Ingelise Nherlan** will be teaching a workshop from **Friday, March 23 to Sunday, March 25** at The Yoga Space. Ingelise is the director of Room for Yoga in West Vancouver, where she teaches a wide range of classes and trains yoga teachers for Iyengar Yoga Certification. She is one of Canada's senior Iyengar Yoga teachers and an assessor for our national organization's certification exams. Ingelise

has traveled to Pune several times to study with the Iyengar family. Her teaching is a blend of careful asana work, thoughtful yoga philosophy, and a generous dash of humour. Five years Iyengar yoga experience are required for participants in this workshop. For more information: contact Louie Ettlting louie5@telus.net (after January).

Sunday, April 29 (2:00 – 5:00 p.m.): Claudia MacDonald

Local Teachers Workshop Series. All levels of students welcome.

More details to follow in the next issue of our newsletter and, by early spring, on our website: iyengaryogavancouver.com.

Friday, June 1 – Sunday, June 3: Marie-Andree Morin

Location: The Yoga Space. Canadian Senior Teachers Series. One year Iyengar Yoga experience required.

Friday, Sept. 21 – Sunday, Sept 23: Father Joe Perreira.

Location: The Yoga Space. International Senior Teachers Series. One year Iyengar Yoga experience required.

Sunday, Dec. 2 (2:00 – 5:00 p.m.):

Heather Graham

Local Teachers Workshop Series. All levels of students welcome. Location and other details TBA.

WORKSHOPS SPONSORED BY ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

PUERTO VALLARTA, MEXICO Retreat

1- or 2-week retreat with Heather Graham / Yoga Tree Centres

Jan 27– Feb 3, 2007 & Feb 3– 10, 2007

in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico at Casa Dulce Vida Heather Graham with guest instructors Louie Ettlting and Sarah Godfrey and cameo teaching by Maureen Carruthers

Contact: Heather Graham

Email: info@yogatreecentres.com

Tel: 604-515-9201

Website: www.yogatreecentres.com

SUNSHINE COAST: On Sunday April 1, 2007, Louie Ettlting will be teaching a workshop on the Sunshine coast. For information contact louie5@telus.net

NEWS AND NOTES:

Welcome to New Babies in our Community

Congratulations to two of our local teachers, Gwynneth Powell Sobejko and Deborah Peake, who had babies this fall. Arjun Gangu was born on September 9th, at home, to Deb and Eashan. Finn Powell Sobejko was born on October 6th at Lion's Gate Hospital to Gwynneth and Paul. We are happy to report that both mothers and babies are thriving.

The 30th Anniversary Lunch



Claudia MacDonald speaking at the 30th Anniversary Lunch

On October 29th, more than 60 members of the BKS Iyengar Yoga Association gathered at the Shaughnessy Restaurant at Van Dusen Gardens to celebrate our 30th anniversary.



Donald Moyer and Maureen Carruthers at the 30th Anniversary Lunch

Amidst a backdrop of lush greenery, the lunch guests caught up with old friends, met new ones, and listened to a few speeches from founding members of the association. Claudia MacDonald spoke first, touching upon the early history of association, but focusing mainly on an appreciation of the broad network of volunteers that keeps the association going. Maureen Carruthers spoke a little about the past, but reiterated the theme of community and our interconnectedness. She said that the association was created by a group of people sharing what they knew about yoga and that she hoped this spirit of sharing will remain at its core. Donald Moyer

was the last to speak. He began with a very heartfelt tribute to Maureen and concluded with the hope that we will keep up the spirit of inquiry and experimentation that in his opinion, characterizes Iyengar Yoga. Many thanks to Sarah Godfrey for organizing this lovely event.

All photos from the lunch taken by Pandora Yeung

Association Annual General Meeting: All Members Welcome

Sunday, January 14, 2007

1:30 – 3:30

at The Yoga Space

Join us for a group practice, free for all members, from 1:30-2:30. The business meeting, which will begin at 2:30, will include reports on what our association has accomplished over the past year, the state of our finances, and a vote for next year's board of directors. If you would like to nominate someone for the 2007 board or would like any more information about the AGM, please contact Bridget Donald: b_donald@telus.net.