



Oxford and Region Iyengar Yoga Institute

Welcome to the Easter 2013 edition of our e-newsletter.

www.oriyi.org.uk

Dear Members,

I hope you are all well and have managed to avoid the various bugs going around this winter. Flu hit our household this year and really 'knocked us for six' - I actually had to miss a few classes which is unheard of!

Just recently my teacher has been extolling the importance of home practice – so I have asked her to write a piece about this. I also thought it would be interesting to hear what helps and hinders those of us who practise at home – so many thanks to the students and teacher who filled in the questionnaire.

The yoga day with Judi and Tig was well attended and enjoyed by all - a short account of the day and some photos can be found later on.

The recipe this time is for elderflower cordial – a refreshingly fragrant drink on long hot summer days - we can but hope! Unless the weather remains really dreadful be ready to pick the elderflowers during the summer half term.

Finally don't forget that your ORIYI subs are due by the end of March - still very good value for money (reduced rates at events- except charity events, 3 ORIYI e-newsletters and 2 glossy mags from IY(UK) per annum as well as affiliated membership.

Two ways of paying

1. **Bank Transfer** - Nat West Account Name: ORIYI (Oxford & Region Iyengar Yoga Institute). Account Number: 13688928. Sort Code: 60-15-07. Ref: Your Surname then email

deborah.phillips@btinternet.com telling her you have done the bank transfer copying Jennie Wood j@ennie.co.uk and myself in.

2. **Cheque** – payable to ORIYI sent to The Well House, Eastbury, Hungerford, Berks. RG17

I've included some lovely Indian batiks to add colour – hope you like them.

Best wishes

Mary

Chair, Events Secretary and Newsletter Editor.

maryfitzpatrick@ntlworld.com



Yoga Events

Charity Yoga Event with Judith Jones to support the Iyengar Yoga Development Fund (IYDF)

To be held on Saturday 22nd June at 10.00am until 12.30pm.

Open to all (not just ORIYI members)

Cost: £20

Venue: St Nicholas School. Link Road, Newbury RG14 7L

Parking available.

For further information about this or future ORIYI events email Maryfitzpatrick@ntlworld.com

To book send your details with your cheque (payable to ORIYI) to ORIYI, 9 Gorselands, Newbury, Berks, RG14 6PU

This event will be followed by the ORIYI AGM and committee meeting – all members welcome.

Yoga Workshop with Judi Sweeting and Tig Whattler 23rd February 2013

ORIYI members (and few keen students who aren't members) enjoyed a great day of yoga with Judi and Tig at the St George's Centre hall in Newbury at the end of February. The beauty of this venue was the superb wooden floor (recently refurbished) with under floor heating – a real treat on such a bitterly cold day.



Many people have remarked on how valuable it was to be taught by two senior teachers – while one was talking us through the stages needed to achieve the pose the other was going round adjusting

people. As always these days provide the perfect opportunity to really explore a pose in some depth and learn from listening as well as watching others at different stages along their personal paths.



With Judi and Tig you have the perfect combination – detailed, precise and very clear instruction from them both as well as the strength from Tig used to lift some of us up on to the very tops of our shoulders in sarvangasana. Judi and Tig worked together to deliver an interesting programme of asanas and catered for the needs of a very mixed ability class - delivering the day in their inimitable style. **Many thanks from us all.**

Hints for Home Practice by Judith Jones

Sometimes at the end of a class a student will ask about practising at home, what they should do etc. There is no concise answer – everyone is different. One person might want a few stretches to help a shoulder problem (or something their husband can do for his sore back, which of course cannot be answered at all!!) Others would like to start a regular practice but everything else in their life seems to get in the way. They might actually get their mat out and then not know what to do and of course it's much easier to answer the phone or do that all important other little thing first! Removing the obstacles to home practice is the first thing to deal with and there are many.

First you have to find the time.

It's no good waiting for the right time to come – you have to make it happen, prioritise it. This often means not doing something else – don't make that phone call or answer the emails or have another cuppa. Just roll out the yoga mat and take your socks off. At first give yourself 15 mins. – It's no longer than watching the News and Weather on the TV. You might well find that it's not long enough and you want to do more. If you want to spend half an hour or longer then it's helpful to make a regular time for your practice. Switch off the phone and get on with it!

What to do? That's the next obstacle.

The obvious thing is to buy a book with clear photos, some instructions and if there are practice programmes in it that can be useful too. But make sure it is an Iyengar yoga book or there will be confusion and lack of continuity with what you do in class as the postures will be presented differently by other methods of yoga. There are also some Practice Programmes which can be downloaded from the ORIYI website www.oriyi.org.uk for different levels of experience but they have no instructions so you might still need a book.

There are problems practising from a book. For one thing it's far too easy to sit down and start reading it instead of doing the asanas – much less effort and then the window of opportunity for practice has passed! It can also be tricky to follow if you have to keep flipping from the practice sequence to find the relevant photo and instructions. It's nothing like the directness of being instructed what to do or feel by your teacher in class. You can start by just making the shape of the pose – look at a picture if it helps – and see what comes.

You might prefer to do something with more spontaneity – but what? There are so many postures; forward bends, backbends, twisting, inversions, standing poses, sitting poses, lying down things! So start with something you are familiar with, maybe 2 or 3 standing poses, and keep things simple. It's also good to have some idea of what you want to do. That's where a programme is helpful. Or try to remember what your teacher taught you at the last class. Start to practise and things will come back to mind and body. You may also remember other instructions, to notice things for yourself, something you need to do to improve your pose. Look at your alignment, your arms and legs, your torso, your head. If your legs are supposed to be straight are they? Are you extending your arms evenly or is one bent? Are you wobbly – what can you do to become more stable. Are you heavy on one side and light on the other? How can you make the pose more balanced? Do you feel stuck somewhere? Do you feel tense somewhere? Do you feel some freedom and space? The key is to observe what you are doing and feeling. Try the same pose 2 or 3 times and see if it improves. Do another pose which is similar and observe the links and the differences.

Be creative and enjoy doing it! It really is worth the effort. Hopefully you'll soon find that your practice becomes interesting and you want more time or to make another slot in you busy life for yoga. Going to an extra class is the easier option. Finding time at home is a bigger discipline but well worth it as you begin your own voyage of self discovery.

A couple of useful books;

Iyengar Yoga for Beginners – BKS Iyengar, Pub; Dorling Kindersley
Yoga the Iyengar Way – Mehta, Pub ; Dorling Kindersley



Home practice Interviews

Many thanks to Jenny, Jane, Sarah and Victoria for telling us about their home practice.

Jenny Furby - Teacher

How long have you been practising Iyengar yoga? *Yoga for 21 years and Iyengar Yoga for Seventeen years, although there was a break of about 2 years, from when I found out I was expecting twins (Number 4 and 5 in our family) until we had moved and they were about 18 months old.*

Please give a brief summary of your yoga teaching? *I have been teaching Iyengar Yoga since 2005. I now teach 7 classes a week.*

How many yoga classes do you attend each week? *I attend at least one class a week, sometimes two and also I go to regular training sessions and workshops.*

How much yoga practice do you do at home or outside your regular classes/teaching? *I normally practise for 2 hours a day, although there are days when I practise for more, and days when there are other family commitments and I do not practise at all. Normally I practise for 6 days of the week.*

When did you begin practising on your own? *When I resumed Iyengar Yoga classes again, once we had moved to near Congleton. I felt very inspired by my teacher at the time.*

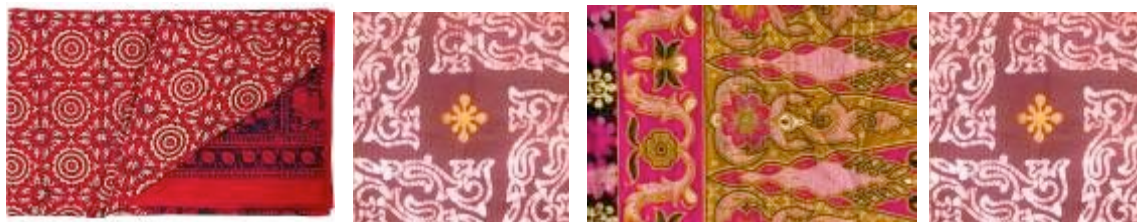
Why do you practise on your own? *Because it is enjoyable and it is only then that you truly do or do not understand what you are doing.*

What motivates you to practice alone? *I personally feel I have to as it has become part for my routine and that I feel better for it, physically, mentally and at times spiritually.*

Does anything interfere with your own practice – and how to you overcome it? *All sorts of things, from phone calls, children needing attention, the dog needing a walk, house work (there's always lots of that in our house), the lure of the garden and seeing friends. I decide what I think needs practising and stick to it.*

What are the benefits of additional yoga practice at home or on your own? *There are many benefits, from a physical level of being more fit, to being in a better mood and therefore being able to tackle all the problems at home. Also understanding the yoga better and being able to explore it more. It would not be right to teach a class without having practised it first.*

Any other comments. *I would suggest that if anyone wants to start practising at home that they find one of the many programmes at the end of Iyengar books and begin to practise those. Not to overload themselves to begin with and start with what they have been taught in class. Then go from there, there is nothing to lose.*



Jane Gwillim- David

How long have you been practising Iyengar yoga? *I started the day after I'd run the London Marathon in 1993 – I thought it would be easy as I was mega fit – but walked into an Iyengar class in London – was I surprised!*

How many yoga classes do you attend each week? *It varies from one or two classes locally.*

How much yoga practice do you do at home or outside your regular classes? *I get the mat out at home at least once a week – more if I am on holiday. I also go to a bi-monthly Saturday session with my London teacher and I try to go to workshops with my first Iyengar teacher and her husband whenever they are in London. Some years I also managed to attend a week's intensive yoga practice with them in Italy or France. As I am now back to health I have booked myself on several Iyengar workshops in Bath, Bristol and London this year as well as a week's retreat in France.*

When did you begin practising on your own? *In the Summer of 2000 – as I was recovering from a major gynaecological operation and couldn't do any strenuous exercise – My teacher had left for France by that time so I had started attending classes with a new teacher. She gave me a few one on one remedial sessions to show me what I could do to recover from my operation until I was strong enough to attend classes again. Then I went back to classes and when we moved to Lambourn I was delighted to discover a senior teacher teaching locally. However, I have had 3 knees operations, another gynaecological operation and part of my bowel removed due to a cancerous growth in the last 5 years – so my teacher advised me not to attend her general class as it was not suitable after surgery and recommended that I practise recovery poses. This meant I had to get the mat out at home to practise these postures so I could slowly build up my strength ready to come back to classes.*

Why do you practise on your own? *To try to improve my practice and to stretch my overworked aging muscles. I also find it really helpful to have time to experiment at home with what I can and cannot do post-op – when there is not time in class.*

Does anything interfere with your own practice – and how do you overcome it? *Life! I am sure I am not alone in having every intention of getting the mat out at home more often but something crops up to prevent me getting to my mat. I have found that I either have to practise as soon as I get up or get a pal around in the evening to practise with – so no one will interrupt us!*

What are the benefits of additional yoga practice at home or on your own? *Time to stay in a posture and think about how I am feeling in the posture.*



Sarah De Souza

How long have you been practising Iyengar yoga? *27 years*

How many yoga classes do you attend each week? *2 every week plus one every fortnight*

How much yoga practice do you do at home or outside your regular classes? *For the last few years I was practising yoga for about an hour on the days I wasn't going to a class. However now as I have taken up other things as well, I only practise at home 2 or 3 days a week.*

When did you begin practising on your own? *I found it liberating once the children left home, to be free to organise my own time, and yoga was part of that feeling of liberation, so I must have been practising at home for about 7 years. Before that when I was still working in an office, I used to find time in the lunch hour to practise on the days when I had the place to myself, which was quite often. It reconciled me a little for no longer being able to walk to and from work up over the Lambourn Downs, which I did over a period of 10 years.*

Why do you practise on your own? *Because I love it.*

What motivates you to practise alone? *Radio 3 and lots of lovely music, you can really **listen** when you are doing yoga! And if I have the day to myself, practising yoga becomes part of my getting up in the morning, and the day doesn't go right without that hour.*

Does anything interfere with your own practice – and how do you overcome it? *Sometimes the phone rings when I am in the middle of a headstand, but I have learned to resist answering it!*

What are the benefits of additional yoga practice at home or on your own? *Infinite – a whole variety of things, from feeling good, and ready to face the world, to hopefully being in a better place to accept things when they go wrong, and enjoy more intensely the things that go right. And one obvious benefit is perhaps being better equipped to make the most of some of our demanding classes!*

Any other comments. *Thank God for yoga !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!*



Victoria Palmer

How long have you been practising Iyengar yoga? *About 20 years.*

How many yoga classes do you attend each week? *Two*

How much yoga practice do you do at home or outside your regular classes? *Intermittent! I usually do about 10 mins. before bathing or showering, but more serious practice occurs only during the holiday weeks when I do about 30 mins a week.*

When did you begin practising on your own? *A few years ago when I was doing teacher training, although I did not go on to teach. For several years I practised several days a week and it was good for the body and soul.*

Why do you practise on your own? *Because it allows me to explore my own body, and to follow through anything that Judith has commented on during class.*

What motivates you to practise alone? *It helps your understanding of how to achieve the finer points. I have also been trying to strengthen a weakness in my left leg.*

Does anything interfere with your own practice – and how do you overcome it? *Yes, everything – time, temperature, impetus! This is why 10 mins. at a regular time in a warm place like the bathroom is possible to achieve, also a towel rail to put your leg on, to help with balance.*

What are the benefits of additional yoga practice at home or on your own? *A greater understanding of what triggers things in your body, such as how the way you stand on your feet affects different muscles. Also, it makes you feel good. It is something totally different to a class*

Any other comments - *As you see, I do very little practice. I find that if you practise, then your body is able to remember and this enables you to take it through to your next class.*

I found practising from a book or notes difficult, and therefore it is easier to take things from the previous class and to work on those postures. I only do headstand or shoulder stand occasionally, as I feel that I was not improving without a teacher to instruct, and possibly actually doing it the wrong way.

Elderflower cordial recipe

Ingredients

20 (but 30 is better) heads of elderflower

4 lbs sugar

75 grams (3 oz) citric acid

2 lemons

2 pints of water

Dissolve the sugar in the water

Stir in the citric acid – put the zest of the lemon in then chop the remains of the lemon up and put that in too. Add the elderflowers and squash them into the mixture. Cover and leave for 24 hours (I go back and give the mixture a squash from time to time)

Strain through double muslin and store in sterilized bottles. I sterilize by putting clean bottles in a moderately hot oven (140c) for 10 minutes. Store in a cool dark place. Serve with sparkling water – on special occasions in a champagne glass.



And finally

"Yoga teaches us to cure what need not be endured and endure what cannot be cured."



BKS Iyengar