



ORIYI

Oxford and Region Iyengar Yoga Institute

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

www.oriyi.org.uk

Dear Members,

This newsletter focuses on our esteemed guru B.K.S.Iyengar as we move towards his 95th birthday on 14th December. We are planning a yoga event and celebration to mark this auspicious day but can't give you much in the way of details yet (because our plans are still in the very early stages) but suggest you keep this date free.

This edition contains information about Guruji, a short biography and extracts from his excellent book Light on Life published in 2005. For those of us who read Light on Life some years ago I really recommend you pick it up and revisit it – I gained so much more the second time around and for those who have not read it – read it. Here is a taster from the Introduction - page xiv

'Yoga allows you to rediscover a sense of wholeness in your life, where you do not feel like you are constantly trying to fit the broken pieces together. Yoga allows you to find inner peace that is not ruffled or riled by the endless stresses and struggles of life. Yoga allows you to find a new kind of freedom that you may not have known even existed.'

The charity yoga event run by Judith Jones in June was a great success with a total of over £670 being raised for the IY Development Fund – many thanks to all who came and those who gave donations. This event was followed by the AGM –minutes of this meeting with all the officers' reports will be available on the ORIYI website under news.

Finally the recipe this time is for Mediterranean Ring – a delicious vegetarian dish for summer evenings –enjoy with an ice cold elderflower cordial.

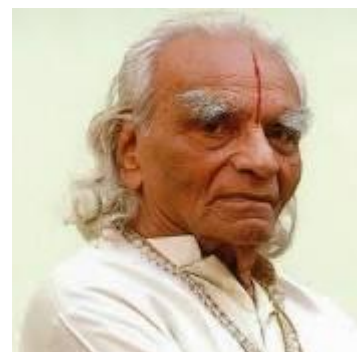
Enjoy the sunny weather

Best wishes

Mary

Chair, Events Secretary and Newsletter Editor.

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BKS Iyengar – a biography.



Mr. Iyengar was born in 1918 into a large poor family in the village of Bellur in the Karnataka state in India, during an influenza epidemic leaving him sickly and weak. His father died when he was only nine years old. As a result, he went to live with his brother in Bangalore. His childhood was further marked by serious illnesses including malaria, tuberculosis and typhoid along with malnutrition.

At the age of 15, Mr. Iyengar moved to Mysore to live with his eldest sister and her husband, the accomplished yogi and Sanskrit scholar, Sri T. Krishnamacharya. Sri Krishnamacharya ran a yoga school in the palace of the Raja of Mysore and introduced Mr. Iyengar to some of the basic yoga postures (asanas) as a method to improve his health. His teacher was an erratic and terrifying personality who drove him hard and explained almost nothing. At the beginning, Mr. Iyengar struggled from day to day. This diligence in practice gradually paid off, as he mastered some of the postures and as a result, his health improved.

Then in 1937, after only two years of study, Sri Krishnamacharya asked Mr. Iyengar to go to Pune to teach yoga. In Pune, he arrived nearly penniless, knowing no one and speaking only a little English. As he had left school before he completed his examinations and had no marketable skills, Mr. Iyengar's only way to make a living was by teaching yoga. With limited experience and almost no theoretical knowledge, he decided to practice with determination and learn directly for himself by trial and error. In the beginning, his few students were better than he was, so he would train himself as many as 12 hours each day, usually surviving on only stale bread and tea. Sometimes, he would suffer great pain through incorrect technique, often having to place heavy weights on his body to relieve the aches. However, refusing to give up, he gradually developed a deep personal understanding of the techniques of each posture and their effects. More yoga students began to seek him out. At that time, even in India, yoga was not widely practiced or understood. In 1943, his brothers arranged his marriage to Ramamani. Mr. Iyengar had avoided marriage for some time as he felt he could not support a family, but on meeting her, consented. Slowly they worked their way out of poverty.

Gradually Mr. Iyengar's fame as a yoga teacher spread. In 1952, the world renowned



violinist Yehudi Menuhin became a student of yoga during a visit to India.. Menuhin then arranged



for Mr. Iyengar to teach in many cities in Europe.

In 1966, Mr. Iyengar's first book, *Light on Yoga*, was published. It gradually became an international best-seller, eventually translated into 17 languages. Often called “the bible of yoga,” it succeeded in making yoga truly universal.

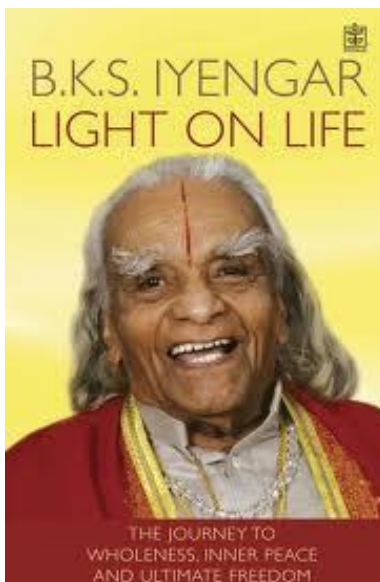
In 1975, Mr. Iyengar established the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute in memory of his recently departed wife, in Pune, India, where he still resides. By that time, Mr. Iyengar's eldest children, Geeta and Prashant, had also started teaching yoga under his guidance. The Institute quickly became an international centre, attracting thousands of people from all over the world.

LIGHT ON LIFE

In **Light on Life** BKS Iyengar addresses the role that yoga postures and breathing techniques play in our search for wholeness, the external and internal obstacles that keep us from progressing along the path, and how yoga can help us live in harmony with the world around us.

The chapter headings below show the structure and comprehensive nature of the book.

Introduction: Freedom Awaits



Chapter 1: The Inward Journey

Chapter 2 : Stability – The Physical Body (Asana)

Chapter 3 : Vitality – The Energy Body (Prana)

Chapter 4: Clarity – The Mental Body (Manas)

Chapter 5: Wisdom – The Intellectual Body (Vijnana)

Chapter 6: Bliss – The Divine Body (Ananda)

Chapter 7: Living in Freedom



**Extract from Light on Life – The Journey to wholeness, inner peace and ultimate freedom by B.K.S.Iyengar with John. J. Evans and Douglas Abrams
Chapter 2 – Stability – The Physical Body (Asana)**

Perfecting: Always be happy with the smallest improvement. Page 55 – 57

Do not say that you are disappointed with yourself. Find time every day to do something to maintain the asana practice. Sometimes both body and mind yield to willpower, and at other times they rebel. Do you have a problem part that makes the practice difficult for you? An injured knee? A stiff back? That is your problem child. Learn how to deal with it and how to nurture it, as you would a child who had problems that needed extra love and attention. Do not bother about failures either. Failures in life lead one towards determination and in having the necessary philosophical approach. Be detached. Look at me, I am not afraid, and I know there is no way to spare my difficulties. For me if it came yesterday, so much the better. If it comes after 20 years, it is also good. All is well.

Do not be afraid. Do not be attached to your body. Even if fear comes, accept it and find the courage to come through it. When you experience fear, you must practice without attachment to the body, thinking of it objectively as an opportunity for creative work. When fear is not there, you can treat the body more subjectively, as part of yourself that nonetheless requires practice and cultivation.

Long uninterrupted practice of asanas and pranayama, done with awareness, makes the foundation firm and brings success. The young, the old, the extremely aged, even the sick and the infirm obtain perfection in yoga by constant practice. Success will come to the person who practices. Success in yoga is not obtained by the mere reading of sacred texts. These are increasingly essential aids but without practice remain simply theoretical. The test of a philosophy is whether it is applicable and even more so applicable now in how you live your life. Even Patanjali, who was born a spiritual genius, said that yoga is mastered only by long persistent practice, with zeal and determination.

When the gardener plants the apple seed, does he expect the apples to appear at once? Of course not. The gardener waters the seed, watches it each day, and feels happy seeing the growth. Treat the body in the same way. We water our asana and pranayama practice with love and joy seeing the small progress. While we know what the goal is, we do not focus on enlightenment. We know that when our practice is ripe, illumination will come. Patience allied with disciplined practices brings the required willpower.

Willpower is concrete, not ethereal. When you do something, you will demonstrate your willpower, and it becomes all the easier to have the same power of will the next time. When you perform your asanas, you are physically demonstrating willpower through the expression of the muscles.

Willpower is not just in the mind, but it is also in the body. I have been known to slap a man's thigh and say, "Willpower is here." With willpower, you elongate the muscles and bring elegance. This willpower allows us to express peace, contentment, and freedom from body attachment as we expand our minds. Willpower is nothing but the willingness to do.

You have to ask yourself, using your intelligence and your willpower, can I do a little better than I am doing? Light comes to a person who extends his awareness a little more than seems possible. We limit ourselves by settling. We say, "Oh, I do not want to go beyond this, because I know this is good." This is living in one's old mind. Question whether you can do a little more. Then immediately you experience that the movement is coming. If you are conscientious, your conscience whispers, "Try to go a little further." If one keeps one's aim to the maximum, Self-knowing will come. I say this because your mind and intelligence move toward the inner body, bringing the mind closer to the Self- the core of being. The moment one goes a little more than the body wants to take, one is near the Self. The minute one says, "I am satisfied," the light of awareness and attention is fading.

Gurujī ends this wonderful book with the following:

Let me conclude by quoting the words of the Spanish artist Goya who, in the seventy-eighth year of life, when he was already deaf and debilitated, said, *Aun aprendo- "I am still learning."* It is true for me too. I will never stop learning, and I have tried to share some of these lessons with you. I do pray that my ending will be your beginning. The great rewards and the countless blessings of a life spent following the Inward Journey await you.



Another quote from Gurujī

"Change is not something that we should fear. Rather, it is something that we should welcome. For without change, nothing in this world would ever grow or blossom, and no one in this world would ever move forward to become the person they're meant to be."

BKS Iyengar

Yoga Events

The Charity Yoga Event on June 22nd with Judith Jones was well attended – many thanks to Julia Hardy for providing the venue at no cost and to Judith for an excellent morning of yoga.

A few photos from the day.



Membership Information

The IYA(UK) Website just gets better and better – there is so much to view so do try to find time to take a look. I would also urge you to keep your contact details up to date. To do this you need to:

Go to www.iyengaryoga.org.uk

Go to the yellow box to the right of the screen and enter your email address

At this point I got stuck had forgotten my password (actually don't remember ever having a password – and couldn't remember ever having sign-in details) – so I clicked the third statement '**Already a member, don't know your sign-in details? Click here to proceed.**'

I then went to – Join Membership Verification page and put in all the details requested

- Membership number (sent to me earlier by Deborah the ORIYI membership Secretary)
- New password
- Answer to a memorable question

Press – send request.

I got an email telling me that my new sign-in details had been verified a bit later and that I should now be able to use them to sign-in to access my personal file.

Now I am able to access my details by entering the site filling email address and password and then going to 'account' on the black bar at the top of the page.

Mediterranean Vegetable Ring by Diana Pattenden

Ingredients

1 jar/tin (340g) artichoke hearts – tins are better as not in oil as jars tend to be, so not so messy.

½ small red pepper, seeded and chopped

2 spring onions, thinly sliced

40g sundried tomatoes in oil, drained and snipped

40g pitted black olives, sliced

60g feta cheese, crumbled



125g grated mozzarella

2 tsp dried Italian herb seasoning (mixed herbs are fine)

1 clove garlic

1 egg white, beaten

20g freshly grated parmesan

Method

1. Preheat oven to 190/375/Gas 5. Chop artichokes using a Pampered Chef Food Chopper. Chop red pepper and thinly slice spring onions. Drain tomatoes on kitchen paper; snip with kitchen shears. Slice or chop olives.

2. In Classic Batter Bowl, combine artichokes, red pepper, spring onions, tomatoes, olives, feta, mozzarella, herb seasoning and garlic; mix well.

3. Make pastry shape. The pastry is either 2 packets of ready rolled puff pastry or 2 packets of croissant dough – you need twelve triangles. The triangles are laid on a Pampered Chef Round Stone in the form of a clock, overlapping each triangle – pointed shape outwards. The triangles are joined using the Pampered Chef Baker's Roller. The filling is placed on the pastry and the triangle points are folded over and tucked in.

4. Brush with egg white. Grate parmesan over the top. Bake 30 mins or until deep golden brown.

More info about Diana at <http://pamperedchef.biz/newbury> and on her facebook page - Diana and Pampered Chef Delights