

# Welkin Words

## September 2005

**Namaste,**

How are you? I hope that the transitional time of September is carrying away all that does not serve you and providing you with more of what you need. May your choices create a beautiful reality.

I have chosen to produce this newsletter in Word format so that everyone can access it more easily. I hope that this is helpful for you.

My time has been spent settling into the new condo. It has been an interesting process for me. A round of classes for the home studio and weekend workshops have been planned and are outlined on page three. Remember that there is a yoga retreat on Mind-Body Healing coming up in November and that space is extremely limited for this wonderful event.

This week at the fitness centres we are finishing up our eight-week session discussing Hatha Yoga. The next round of classes is about mind-body connection.

Thanks for keeping in touch with me. I will continue to do the same for you.

Peace,  
Erin

Knowledge is gained by learning; trust by doubt; skill by practice; and love by love. ~ Thomas Szasz

### **The Aim of Hatha Yoga**

The theme of our class discussions over the last two months has been hatha yoga. There are many different branches of this path of yoga but no matter the method, the aim is the same: Unity. One of the translations of the word *yoga* is *unity*. Postures, breathing exercises, purification techniques, philosophical direction, and energetic procedures work together to create an internal sense of wholeness. When we are aligned in body, mind, and spirit we are able to direct our lives with peace and purpose. This is the aim of our practice.

**"The environment is stronger than the will."**  
*Paramhansa Yogananda, author, Autobiography of a Yogi*

**Gunās**

During our *hatha yoga* session, there was mention of the three *gunas*. Due to time constraints, there was not much time to discuss them. In some classes I did not mention the *gunas* at all but think that it is important to tell you about them. *Gunas* are the constituents of nature. In the traditional texts of yoga (e.g. *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*), these *gunas* are identified as *sattva* (purity), *rajas* (activity), and *tamas* (inertia). The discussion in class described the *gunas* in terms of food choices; however, this concept actually applies to all of nature. These distinct yet interdependent qualities exist in balance in a healthy person; that is to say, a healthy person is of pure mind and body, able to complete activities and also relax.

When thinking of a yogic diet, it is most important to consume *sattvic* foods. These pure forms of nourishment come from fresh, natural sources and are rich in nutrients. They are easily digestible. Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and nuts are all considered pure.

*Rajasic* foods carry the quality of “activity”; this kind of activity is often disruptive and unbalanced. Foods included in this group have strong flavours and are heavy. Examples of this are caffeine, sugar, and garlic.

It is highly unlikely that one would benefit from eating *tamasic* foods. This group contains the least amount of usable energy and ingestion of such foods creates a lethargic flow of energy. These “inert” foods are highly processed, stale, or of the body of another animal.

Remember that each of us has our own balance. Those more prone to inert states of being (depression, laziness) might benefit from limiting or eliminating *tamasic* foods, while those who are highly stressed and overactive might avoid *rajasic* foods. It is challenging for many householders to make time for regular practice of *yoga asana*, *pranayama*, *kriyas*, and meditation. Because of this most people experience bouts of fatigue, stress, sadness, and disease. Selecting appropriate foods and always intending to ingest that which is pure can carry us through these challenging times.

## **Classes and Workshops**

### **Chakra Yoga**

Explore the psychology and energy of yoga by focussing the practice on an understanding of the chakra system. Discover the underlying systems that effect emotional, behavioural, and physical patterns and use that knowledge to create holistic health.

**Mondays 9:45am-11:00am**

**October 3-December 12** (No class October 10)

### **A Level Up**

This is an ideal class for energetic students. In this session we will systematically deepen the experience of poses by challenging flexibility, focus, and endurance (modified poses will be suggested, if necessary).

**Friday mornings 9:45am-11:00am**  
**October 7-December 9**

**Meditation**

Here it is! The long-requested meditation class...Explore your own personal meditation style while learning to relax, focus, and reap the *true* benefits of yoga.

**Wednesdays 5:45pm-7:00pm**  
**October 9-December 11**

Cost for classes is \$120 per 10-week session  
Get a 10% discount for each additional class!

**Individual Practice - October 23 and November 20, 10:30-11:45**

Come practice yoga in the company of like-minded others.

**Free!**

**De-stress - October 23, 12:00-3:00**

Learn specific techniques to alleviate stress, anxiety, and panic. These practices are useful during times of acute stress and act as preventative techniques.

**Cold and Flu Treatment – November 20, 12:00-3:00**

Explore and practice methods to prevent pesky winter illness. We will also learn poses to alleviate symptoms, should illness arrive.

\$35 per workshop or both for \$60

Light refreshments included

Health is a large word. It embraces not the body only, but the mind and spirit as well;... and not today's pain or pleasure alone, but the whole being and outlook of a man. ~James H. West

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