

WELKIN WORDS

Namaste,

I hope that you are enjoying the summer weather. From snow in May to sweat in June...what a great opportunity Canada affords us to practice equanimity.

Beginning July 20, The Fitness Centre on Paris Road is introducing **yoga classes for children!** Yoga for girls and boys aged four to seven runs Wednesdays from 2pm until 3pm and Mom and Child yoga runs Wednesdays from 11am until noon. Please note that space is limited for both of these sessions. Please register today to reserve your spot (nonmembers welcome).

As those who practiced Partner Yoga on the retreat learned, a physical practice such as yoga is an excellent opportunity to attune oneself to another person. Not only do we get a better stretch when working with another, the practice can also be highly beneficial in deepening the bond between mother and child. Please see the article Yoga for Children on page two to learn more about the benefits yoga has on young people.

The **yoga retreat** run the last weekend in June was a remarkable success. A wonderful group attended and provided each other with the opportunity to explore many different aspects of themselves, their lives, and their yoga practice. Please feel free to email me if you would like information on upcoming retreats or workshops.

Last week we concluded our study of Astanga Yoga, the eight-limbed path. We learned that the *Yoga Sutras* (Guidelines to Unity) teach that mental focus is key in obtaining Peace or Oneness.

Peace,
Erin

Mokshabheksho bandhaha "Even the desire for liberation is a bondage" ~ Vedantic scriptures 1, 15

It's That Simple

One of the simplest things you will ever learn to do is meditate. The theme of Simplicity occurs time and again in our yoga practice (think of the yamas and niyamas). The reality of these yoga simplicities is that they are very challenging to maintain. We veer from the Path and are drawn back again. Likewise in meditation, the mind wanders off, the Higher Self draws it back. Do not let this challenge sway you from the realization that the practice itself is simple: sit still and focus. When the mind wanders, refocus. Holding a *goal* of achieving meditation is the surest way to prevent it from happening.

The following are some suggestions for simple meditation practices:

Taratak—Gaze at a candle or sacred object. Allow your eyes to relax and do your best not to blink.

Inner Light—Close your eyes and watch the light dance on the back of your eyelids.

Breath—Follow your breath into and out of your body.

Scripture—Silently repeat a brief passage to yourself. Allow the meaning to resonate.

Mantra—Aloud or silently, repeat an uplifting word or phrase. Allow its significance to permeate your consciousness and way of being.

Concern—Focus openly on an issue you are facing. Allow solutions and options to come to you with-

Recipe - Deodorant

There is reason to believe that over-the-counter antiperspirants suppress the immune system and are carcinogenic. The following tip can help keep you fresh during these summer months—with no white residue! The aroma is also known to decrease anger and anxiety, heighten relaxation, deepen sleep, and alleviate headaches. Simply spread one drop of lavender essential oil* under each arm. Reapply later in the day if necessary.

*Lavender essential oil is one of only three essential oils that are safe to apply directly to the skin. Please consult an aromatherapist if you are uncertain about how to safely use essential oils.

“If we can pull together, we can change the world forever...” Bryan Adams and Jim Vallance

Last Saturday I was fortunate enough to attend the Live 8 concert in Barrie. This event was organized to raise awareness about the role the G8 plays in perpetuating extreme poverty and to empower us, the world’s citizens, to speak out against it. “We don’t want your money, we just want your voice” was the campaign for www.live8live.com. Over the course of the day tens of millions of people logged onto the site and registered their protest against the practices and policies of the G8 nations. An estimated three *billion* people tuned into the concerts. That is half of the world’s population! The hope and expectation is that each of the people who enjoyed the music will take at least as much time to act on behalf of those who don’t have a voice in this situation.

Every three seconds a life is lost due to effects of the G8 policies. This adds up to about fifty thousand people per day. The pain felt by these survivors is just as real as the pain you felt when you lost a loved one. We are One. This concept is not new to you yogi[ni]s; we often acknowledge our oneness by saying “Namaste”.

“Yoga” is defined as “union”. As a unit, we have the power to create a vibration of health and peace around the world. It begins in each of your hearts. Act wisely on it.

“Sometimes it falls upon a generation to be great. You can be that great generation. Let your greatness blossom” - Nelson Mandela

Yoga for Children

As each of you have felt, yoga does wonders for one’s wellbeing. This is true for people of all ages. The International Association of Yoga Therapists (www.iayt.org) has compiled a 109-page bibliography listing studies outlining the benefits of yoga for children. These include improved self-esteem, creativity, and focus. For parents dealing with hyperactive or withdrawn children alike, yoga can be a wonderful tool in facilitating balance in a children’s lives. Not only can this improve familial relations and academics, it also instills confidence, pride, and self-efficacy in these young people. Yoga will lay the foundation of healthy stress management, which is becoming increasingly important to even our youngest members of society. Many of my students were first introduced to yoga by their parents when they were children and have expressed gratitude for that exposure. Although the decision to practice the techniques rest with the children, the lessons that they learn about body awareness, acceptance, and peace will be a part of them for the rest of their lives.

Recommended Reading

Diet for a Small Planet, Frances Moore Lappe
Like a Fish in Water: Yoga for Children,
 Isabelle Koch
The Yoga Sutras, Sri Swami Satchidananda (trans.)

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Live 8 Links
www.live8live.com
www.data.org
www.kairoscanada.org