

yoga news & views



Newsletter of SADIYA

(Sheffield and District Iyengar Yoga Association)

Issue 6 - November 2003





EDITORIAL NOVEMBER 2003

Welcome again to Yoga News and Views! We aim to promote a feeling of community between yoga practitioners in the area. Yoga is a vast subject of great breadth and depth so it can be difficult knowing what to cover. We hope we have something of interest to most of you. Along with Yoga Agony Aunt / Uncle we are introducing a new column called "Fix it with Yoga", so please write in with reports of anything in yoga which fixed something for you. This issue reports on how yoga helped one person with sinusitis!

In Yoga News and Views we are progressing through the Eight Limbs of Yoga. If you would like to get back copies, please see the details on the next page! We look at asana, the third limb of yoga, perhaps the most familiar and accessible aspect of yoga, involving as it does various bodily postures. Asana is often the entry point to yoga and forms the core of most people's practice. To go with the skeleton diagram in the last issue we offer you a second diagram of the main muscles, which yoga teachers tend to refer to. We look in more depth at asana, why we do it; how it links to the other aspects of yoga, (Yama, Niyama, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi); what its effects are and how it can be used.

Asana grounds awareness in the present moment and enables us to find a stillness within as is reflected in Tadasana or Mountain pose (portrayed beautifully by Gabby on the front cover of this issue).

We look back to recent activity including the local survey of students and to the first annual convention of the Iyengar Yoga Association (IYA) held in Leeds in August. The IYA formed this year uniting the previously separate student and teacher organisations. The Convention was a great success, a weekend of inspiration, connection and renewed friendship. The main teacher, Shirley Daventry French came from Canada to share her 70 + years

knowledge and wisdom of yoga around the theme of growing old gracefully. Although the Convention was so near sadly very few people from Sheffield attended. In order to encourage attendance at such events SADIYA has decided to offer an amount of financial support to those who would like to attend in future but who may be prevented from doing so because of costs. If this applies to you then please speak to your teacher who will be able to advise you

Yoga is an ancient practical system for accessing, healing and integrating body and mind. Karen Smith offers another glimpse of the "person behind the posture", this time telling the story of the sage Marichi, the figure named in the seated twist of Maricyasana, which will be familiar to most students.

We look forward also to future developments and events in the Sheffield yoga community, including the progress SADIYA is making to acquire a building.

Namaste

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BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE

If anyone would like to order back issues of Yoga News and Views, we have limited numbers of the following issues available.

Issue 2 November 2001

- The first principle of Yama (Ahimsa) - Helen Clay
- Enlightened by 'No muscles' - Roger and Angela Tuck plus Alan Brown
- Yoga on your travels - Roger and Angela Tuck
- Yoga Agony Aunt
 - Releasing the lower back when doing forwardbends
 - Closing the eyes in shoulder stand
 - Yogic way to go to sleep
- Australia to Sheffield
- LOYA 2001 in Falmouth
- My life with yoga
- Health and hypnotism in the community
- Yoga day with Joe Burn

Issue 3 May 2002

- SADIYI AGM
- Feeling at One - the tree of yoga - Helen Clay
- Yoga as touchstone - Bev Fox
- Lilian Biggs yoga morning 8 December 2002 - Wendy Weller-Davies
- Mira Mehta Therapy workshops 16 March 2002 - Dominic Batten
- When you've stretched to your maximum - yoga morning with Gordon Austin 20 April 2002 - Dominic Batten
- Readers views on a yogic way to go to sleep

Issue 4 November 2002

- Yoga - achieving union. The place of Yama in asana practice - Helen Clay
- LOYA 2002 convention at Sheffield - Bev Fox
- Images of LOYA 2002
- LOYA convention, a personal view - Maggy Young
- LOYA convention 2002, Alan Brown's philosophy in yoga - Helen Scarlett
- What you said about LOYA 2002
- The yoga centre and Association - Frances Homewood
- Queenies 50th jubilee - Helen Clay
- Yoga Agony Aunt - Stiff hamstrings
- Imagine yourself on a beach - Mike Parr
- Yoga morning at Bolsterstone Village Hall 15th June 2002 - Paul Barkworth

Issue 5 May 2003

- Chapel project, the final chapter - Frances Homewood
- Teacher Training, a personal view - Karen Smith
- The place of Niyama in asana practice - Helen Clay
- Parts of the skeleton and spine
- The people behind the poses, Virabhadra - Karen Smith
- Back to India - Frances Homewood
- Letter from India - Jude
- An introduction from Padmavasini
- Yoga Agony Uncle - Restless leg syndrome

To order please send £1.50 per issue (including post and packing) to:

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Cheques payable to SADIYA. Don't forget to include your address!



YOGA STUDIO IN SHEFFIELD

By the time you read this, there SHOULD be an Iyengar Yoga studio in Sheffield.

You may detect the hesitation. We have been here before, on the cusp of realising the vision of a fully equipped space for Yoga. So, until the lease is signed, I write with caution....

But what is clear is that the offer has been made for us to take a former office building, in the centre of the Cathedral Quarter in town, and use it on a short term basis, rent free. Eventually the building will be developed by its owners as city centre apartments. But until it meets this trendy fate, it will have a couple of walls taken out and some of its rooms opened up as a yoga studio. Other rooms will be commandeered for changing and equipment (the solicitors' filing shelves making handy racks for yoga blocks and blankets).

The studio will enable us to start some new and interesting classes. These will include a Women's class, early morning and lunchtime classes for office workers (and others), weekend classes and one for children. Because of its great location, we see this as a chance to introduce more people to Yoga in a convenient place and time. All the equipment will be in the studio, so no need to lug those heavy bags. It may be possible for people to go in at certain times to do their own practice and use the equipment. It is amazing how different it feels to learn or practise in a place dedicated to Yoga. There will also be space to stock books, videos and even to make a cup of tea.

Once we know it is going ahead, we will need help. There will be cleaning and painting to do, publicity to distribute and, I'm sure, other tasks that we haven't yet thought of. Anyone who can offer a bit of time will be warmly welcomed; ask a teacher or contact me direct.

One other positive development is that we are to be joined in Sheffield by an Ayurvedic herbalist (Ayurveda being the Indian system of health and

healing) who is said to be one of the leading practitioners in the States. Candis Cantin arrives from California in late October and will be giving talks and cookery demonstrations whilst she is here, as well as offering individual consultations. Because yoga is a part of the ancient system of Ayurveda she wants to work closely with the Yoga studio/centre project which will be a great way of bringing a wider context to the work we do.

Details from Frances Homewood

Tel 0114 2335753



Asana the third limb of yoga

People come to yoga for many reasons, they may have backache, shoulder and neck problems, be generally stiff or perhaps they are just curious. They may wish to improve flexibility, breathing, or balance. Perhaps they want to learn to relax, manage stress or find a sense of peace. A regular practice of asana can bring all these benefits.

Asana is the third limb of yoga and involves performing bodily postures. Walk into any yoga class in the West and you will find asanas or postures being taught.

Students soon see physical changes and with time begin to notice other more subtle benefits. Asanas are a very direct and practical way of developing awareness and knowledge of ourselves: they release energy; loosen muscles and joints; have beneficial effects on the nervous system, breathing, hormonal and endocrine systems and circulation, digestive and excretory systems.

Yoga sees all parts of the body as interconnected so that if we influence one part we influence all the others. Asana requires a state of being in which one can remain physically and mentally steady, calm, quiet and comfortable. Developing control over the body brings the ability to control the mind and energy.

Students soon see physical benefits and with time begin to notice other more subtle benefits. They talk of the physical and emotional benefits they get from asana, how it sustains them and perhaps how their practice has led them to make positive changes in their lives and to find more balance and integration. Asanas integrate and harmonise the entire being.

Writing in "The Tree of Yoga" B. K.S. Iyengar says:

"The body cannot be separated from the

mind, nor the mind from the soul. No one can define the boundaries between them. In India, asana was never considered to be merely a physical practice as it is in the West."

There is no thought or feeling which is not experienced in the body and similarly the condition and posture of the body affects the mind. Another quote from Mr Iyengar illustrates this nicely.

"When the chest is opening the mind is opening, we feel emotionally shiny and stability comes. This is emotional stability"

The gross form of the mind is the body and the subtle form of the body is the mind. Yoga is a systematic approach to harmonising body, breath and mind so that they work together efficiently. Both body and mind hold tensions and knots, with each physical knot having a corresponding mental knot and vice versa. Tension in the body can become chronic, leading to long-standing problems, exhaustion and dis-ease. For instance anxiety tends to lead to tightness in the upper body, the neck and shoulders, lungs and diaphragm which blocks the breathing process and may produce stiffness, chronic tension, pain, headache and fatigue. Tightening of the lower abdomen area may bring digestive problems, back problems and poor breathing.

One aim of asana is to release these knots. Working through the body, asanas release muscular tensions and there is a corresponding mental release as the asana works somatically from the body to the mind.

Although working directly on the body the aim of asana is not to produce the perfect body or perfect posture. The physical well-being gained through regular asana practice is more a by-product than the central aim of yoga. The point of asana is to open and strengthen the body and enable the energy and awareness to flow evenly everywhere like a river. It would be a great mistake to regard asanas as merely physical exercises.



Asana the third limb of yoga Contd.

Patanjali, the father of yoga said that asanas should be "steady and comfortable". B.K.S. Iyengar translates this as requiring "firmness of the body, steadiness of the intelligence and benevolence of the spirit."

Inevitably there are postures that are easy for us and we "like" and those that are difficult for us, that we "don't like" and probably avoid. Asana presents each and every one of us, however flexible, with some sort of challenge. We may meet stored up tensions and limitations in the body that create physical rigidity or it may be rigid mental patterns, or laziness. In this way we confront our own patterns and reality.

Asanas are best approached with a spirit of open enquiry. Sometimes, particularly in the early stages it is easy to work so hard in a pose that we become tense and hard. Conversely there may be insufficient energy or will power. Sometimes it can be difficult to distinguish between the physical and mental barriers. To find the steadiness and comfortableness in asana that Patanjali describes there needs to be an appropriate balance of determination and surrender, a balance of action and inaction. Mr Iyengar calls this the balance of pose and repose, the delicate balance between taking a pose to the maximum and taking it beyond that so that there is too much effort and tension.

Previous issues of Yoga News and Views have looked at the concepts of yama and niyama. Some awareness of these underlying ethical concepts of yoga can guide us in asana and help deepen practice. For instance for years I told myself "I can't do forward bends" and of course, with such an attitude, I couldn't. However when I brought a more open attitude of honest enquiry (the yama of satya), and quiet determination/perseverance (the niyama of tapas) I was able to observe in a more neutral way. Bringing the yama concepts of non-harming (ahimsa) and niyama concept of seeking contentment (santosa) into my forward bends I found I could let go of "negative self

talk", connect with the breath and be in the moment. Observing, breathing and just being there enabled a letting go and progressive release of the holding patterns in mind and body, which had prevented me going forward. Instead of thinking of where I was supposed to be getting I came into the present moment. Coming into stillness I found, somewhat paradoxically that I could release, let go and begin to move forward.

Precision, awareness and good alignment in asana is important at the physical level to prevent injury, create focus, build strength and develop firmness. At a more subtle level it is how consciousness is drawn into the body and how the mind is trained to develop powers of concentration. Here we see how the other limbs of yoga arise within asana, for example the withdrawal of the senses (Pratyahara), concentration (Dharana), and out of this arises the meditative state (of Dhyana).

Mr Iyengar talks of yoga being a journey from the known to the unknown; of how asana creates intelligence in the body. In asana we start from the familiar external layer of the body, the muscles, joints and bones. As we develop more awareness, the skin, eyes, ears, nose and tongue begin to feel what is happening in the flesh. In the third stage the mind consciously observes and analyses the communication between skin and flesh. In the final stage there is total absorption and "total awareness from the self to the skin and from the skin to the self. This is the spiritual practice of yoga". (The Tree of Yoga: B.K. S. Iyengar.)



Asana the third limb of yoga Contd.

In Savasana, or corpse pose, which is practised after asana and pranayama. we let go completely in the body and turn the organs of perception further inwards. As body, breath and mind become quiet we glimpse the stillness at the core of our being. Diving deep inside there is a feeling of being a witness to our own presence, a sense of "nobodiness". There is a sense of inner peace and inner purity as we come in sight of the soul and in touch with that enduring part of ourselves which is constant and not related to our social status, job, possessions, place in society, roles, relationships or achievements. We begin to know ourselves more simply and more deeply and to see our connection with all living things. This is yoga or "union".

Through asana we get to know the body, mind and breath and to see the power of one to affect the other. In asana we work on the body to affect the mind. Regular uninterrupted practice of asana grounds us soundly in reality and provides a gateway to all the other aspects of yoga.

Helen Clay



The different groups of asanas

Yoga is a developing and alive practice. At the same time the core concepts and many of the asanas we practise today can be traced back to 2000 -3000 BC. It is tried and tested! The early yogis were keen observers of life and gave names to the postures. Many of the names were taken from the shapes of animals, gods or things that they saw around them which seemed to have a harmony with their environment e.g. Mountain pose (Tadasana), Tree pose (Vrksasana), Warrior pose (Virabhadrasana), Plough (Halasana), Triangle (Trikonasana), Half Moon (Ardha Chandrasana), Dog pose (Adho Mukha Svanasana).

There are particular groups of asanas, each of which tend to have distinct effects on body and mind.

Standing postures, the main group taught to beginning students, open the body, and bring stability and stamina. They develop flexibility and strength in all the main muscles and joints of the body, teach alignment and form the foundation and grounding of practice.



Trikonasana

Forward Bends stretch the hamstrings, calf muscles and spine. They call for an attitude of surrender and release. Their effect is to quieten the mind and hence they are useful in



Paschimotthasana

relieving headaches, stress and high blood pressure.

Backbends

counteract the tendency of the body to slump forward. They strengthen the spine, loosen the shoulders, open the chest, relieve strain on the lower body, help breathing and have an energising and uplifting effect.



Urdhva Dhanurasana

Twists

create suppleness in the spine and stretch the back and intercostal muscles. Good for low backaches, they tone the digestive, eliminative organs whilst revitalising the endocrine system. The effect on the mind is to bring tranquillity



BHARADVAJASANA ON CHAIR

Inverted postures

reverse the flow of energy in the body and relieve stress on the internal organs and glands. By bringing fresh blood to the heart and brain they are rejuvenating. Regular practice of these postures develops emotional stability and mental balance



Adho Mukha Vrksasana



The different groups of asanas Contd.

Abdominal postures, few in number these postures strengthen the core muscles of the body in the abdomen.



Ardha Navasana

Seated postures are helpful for hips, knees, feet and spine and prepare the body for sitting in meditation or pranayama.



Sukhasana

temperament changes and emotional qualities change. For instance standing postures make you active and awaken you; laziness goes to the background and the mind is activated. After standing asanas you do forward extensions and then the brain becomes quiet and you recover and find balance both mentally and physically. In this way asana can be used therapeutically not just for musco-skeletal problems such as backache but also for respiratory, circulatory, digestive and hormonal problems as well as problems of the nervous system and brain e.g. headaches, migraines, depression, insomnia, irritability, fatigue.

Asana has rich rewards at physical, mental, emotional and spiritual levels. To enjoy its full fruits it should be done in an uninterrupted, regular and sustained manner and be sequenced carefully.

Helen Clay

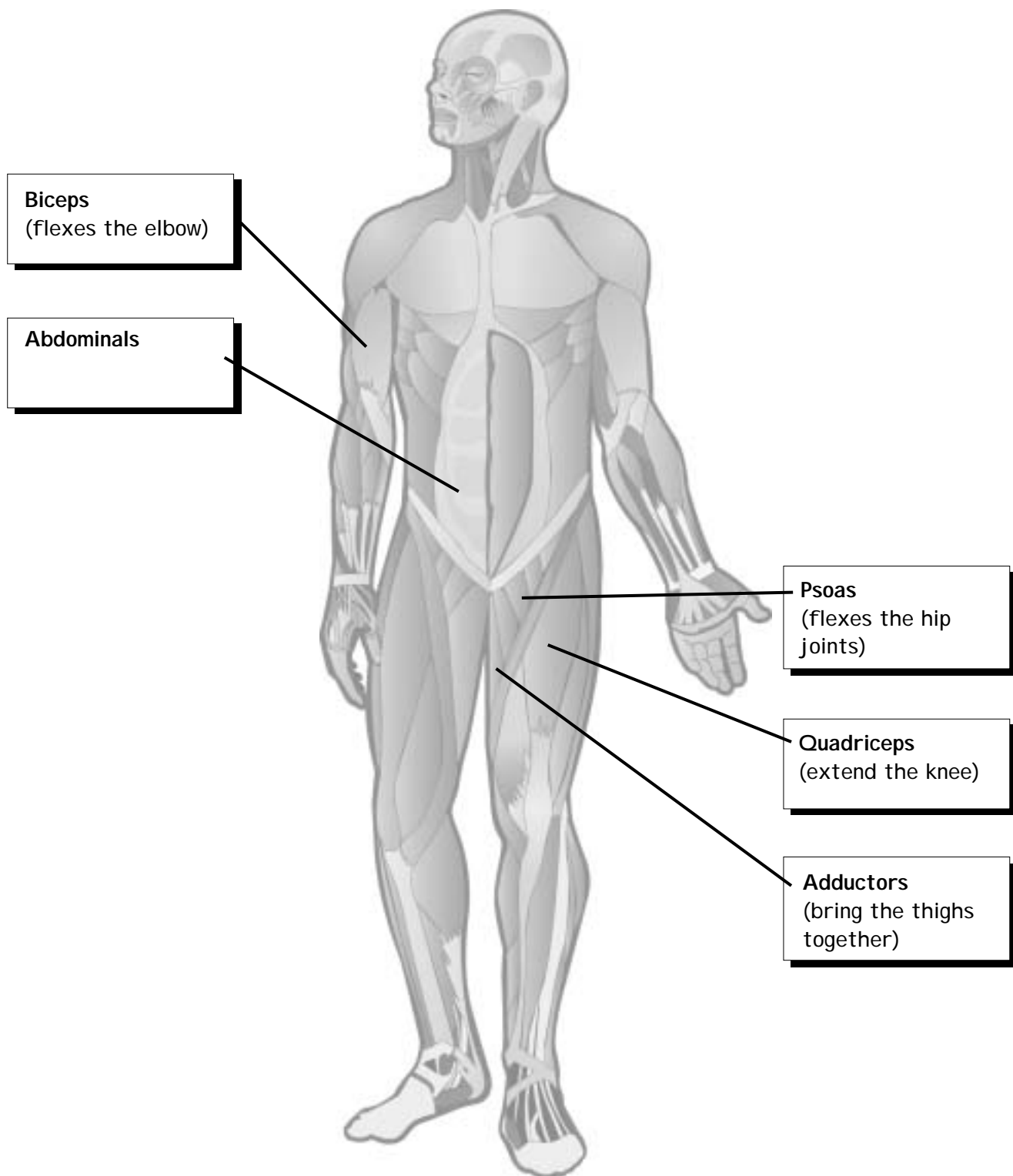
Recuperative and supported postures aim to reduce fatigue and stress. Often given with supports they can be held for 10 to 20 minutes in a passive and supported way. Postures such as these are used for many purposes, for example, releasing the nervous system, reducing stress, improving the respiratory system, reducing heart and pulse rate, regulating blood pressure, boosting the immune system.



In a talk given in August 2003 Geeta Iyengar, the daughter of Mr Iyengar, explained how the sequence of asanas plays a big role to bring about an inner change on the mental, psychological level. Through asanas the

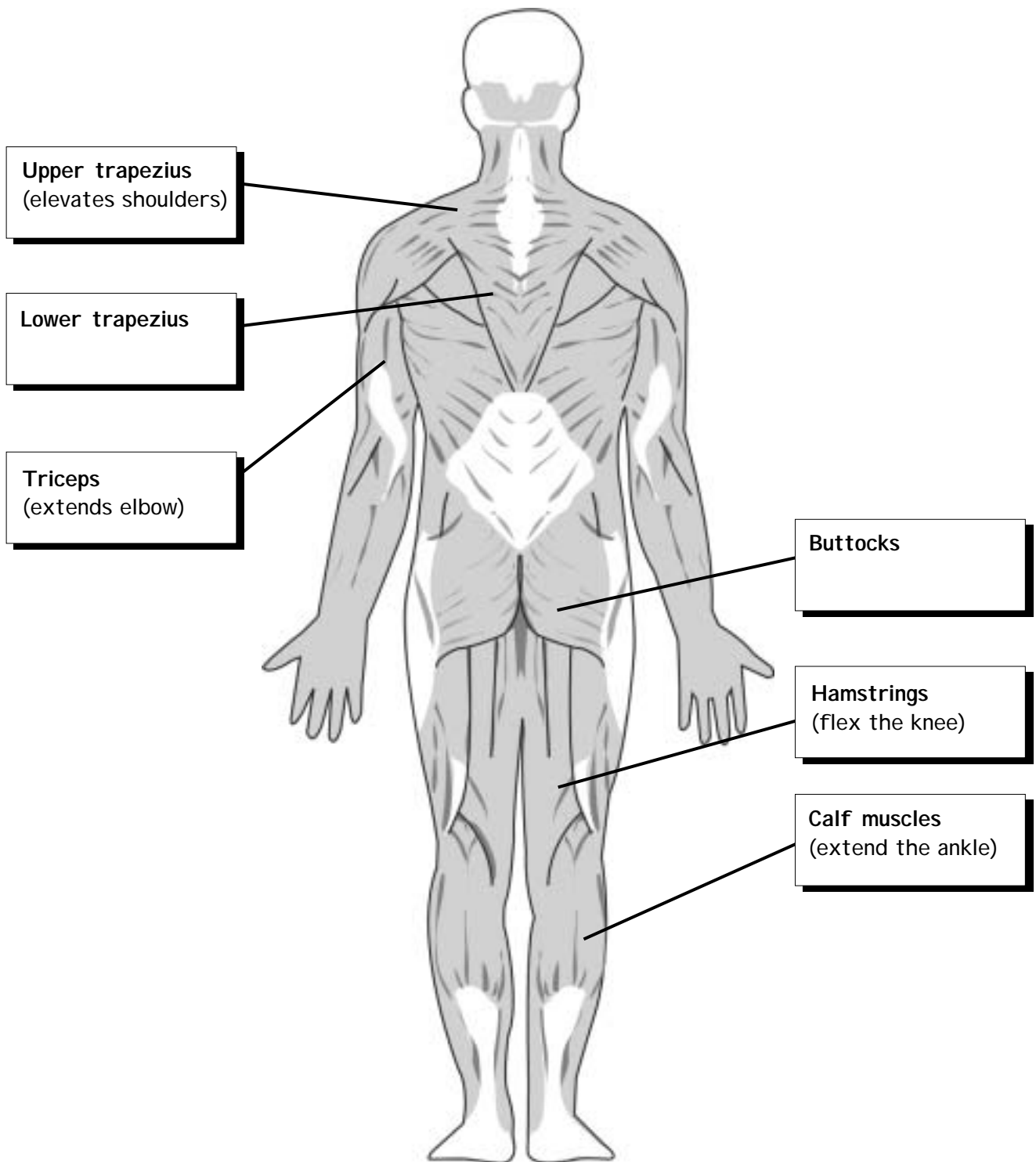


Muscles commonly referred to in yoga





Leeds Yoga Convention





Leeds Yoga Convention

At the end of August I attended the annual Iyengar Yoga Convention which was hosted by the Bradford and District Iyengar Yoga Institute at Boddington Hall, just outside of Leeds. This was the first time that I had attended a weekend yoga conference; I was due back from my holidays on the Friday evening, and I thought two days of yoga would be an excellent end to my break and prepare me for my return to work. Since my flight home was late Friday night, I missed the opening events but managed to make it to Leeds for the Pranayama session which began at 8am (now that's dedication!).

My Saturday sessions were all with Richard Agar-Ward, a senior teacher from Bath. The first session was Pranayama, which I found extremely beneficial after my journey. I often find it very difficult to still my mind when practising Pranayama, and Richard gave one instruction that I found particularly useful, to move the inner eyeballs out. My next session with Richard was devoted to standing poses. What I really enjoyed about this class was that Richard constantly returned to Tadasana, and I felt that this was a great reminder of the importance of a good Tadasana in all standing poses. With each position, we focused on a different part of the leg; so, for example, in Virabhadrasana I lifting the mid inner thigh, and in Parsvakonasana moving back the base of the calf. Richard warned of over-doing in yoga and explained how important it was to know when to stop correcting; he used an excellent analogy, saying that it was like opening a packet of biscuits and being able to recognise when you've had enough (not an easy task in either yoga or biscuit eating I think). Throughout the class, Richard gave us time to look at demonstrations and to try out the poses again to reinforce the points he was making, which I personally found extremely helpful. The third class of the day was an option and I chose to do inversions, which was with Richard once more. Many of my

friends thought that I was a glutton for punishment, but I really enjoy inverted postures and was keen to do a whole class devoted to them. Again it was Richard's attention to detail that impressed me most, and I left the class feeling really uplifted.

I thoroughly enjoyed the weekend. The atmosphere was excellent and I met some lovely people. It was so nice to be able to devote time to my yoga, away from the pressures of daily life and to be surrounded by like-minded people. Each year there are classes that cater for all levels; from beginners to experienced teachers, so there is something for everyone. I will definitely be booking my place for next year, but I'll do it early as the tickets sell out fast!

Karen Smith

Anyone who would like to attend a convention but who would have difficulty in finding the money should contact Frances Homewood (0114 2335753) or talk to their teacher about the possibility of financial support from SADIYA.



Dear Yoga Agony Aunt,

I would like some advice on daily practice please.

The most time I can usually manage is half an hour, and this invariably in the morning. Would you say it is essential to do a combination of standing, seated and twisting postures, or is it OK, for example, to just do standing postures on any one day?

Yours with limited time, Wendy



Dear Wendy

Thank you for your question. It is great to hear that you are practising regularly as this builds up a reserve of energy and resilience to draw on when life gets tough.

I would say that if you are practising in the morning you need something to get you going and open out the body, which has been curled up all night. It is good to have a basic sequence of postures such as:

1. Entrée / Warming up

Begin with something that warms the body and stretches the legs, arms and whole spine. Urdvha Hastasana, Dog down/ AdhoMukha Svanasana and or Uttanasana or Half Uttanasana to the wall are all good for this.

2. Main Dish

The main focus would then be two or three of the standing poses.

3. Afters / Cooling down

Follow with seated twists and or forward bends. Shoulder stand is also important although for many people this is difficult in the mornings.

Always have a few minutes in Savasana to allow the body to absorb the effects of the asanas

As you gain in experience you can certainly vary this sequence so that you focus more on one group e.g. standings one day, seated another, recuperative another, twists one day and forward bends another etc. This can give variety and enrich your practice and understanding. Sequencing is important so remember for instance to follow backbends with gentle twists and gentle forward bends to ease the back out. If you are unsure about anything remember to ask your teacher.

As you do more personal practice start first by sitting and checking in so that you begin to be able to sense what you need on any particular day. In my experience finding regular times for practice is important otherwise it seems to get pushed out by conflicting priorities.

Be careful that over time you cover all the groups of postures, including those you are less keen on, as they are usually the ones you need to do! I hope this helps you develop a practice, which is sustaining, supportive to your sense of well-being and something to look forward to.

Your Yoga Agony Aunt

P.S. This Issue has a list of the different groups of postures and what they are good for which could be useful.



Yoga Agony Aunt Contd.

Books useful to support home practice

BKS Iyengar - Light on Yoga

This is the classic text, very good but not especially easy to follow for home practice. Available from bookshops

Geeta Iyengar - Yoga In Action : The Preliminary Series

Very simple and easy to follow. May be available via your teacher

Mira Mehta - Yoga the Iyengar Way

A very accessible well produced book available from all Bookshops

This author has other books as well

Geeta Iyengar - A Gem for Women

Another classic. May be available via your teacher

Do you have a question for Yoga Agony Aunt/Uncle? Send it to Wendy or Helen and we will get you a response for the next issue.

Fix it with yoga

Yoga brings mainly long-term benefits as we are all aware, but occasionally we experience instant relief from pain or discomfort. We would like to hear people's stories of any occasion when they or someone they know has benefited in this immediate way. Here is an example:

Heather was intending to go to a yoga class at her place of work immediately after work. However, she was suffering from sinusitis and approached the teacher to explain that she didn't feel well enough to do it. The teacher suggested a pose she could try to alleviate the congestion and pain. The pose was Setu Bhandha, a gentle back bend supported on blocks, with the shoulders on the floor and legs raised. Once Heather had held the pose for 2 minutes she found that her symptoms had disappeared and she was able to continue with the class, greatly comforted.

Please tell or send your stories to Wendy or Helen for inclusion in the next issue. (Contact details in the Editorial section.)



The People Behind the Poses

In the last issue I looked at the warrior Virabhadra; here I shall focus on the person behind Maricyasana. Maricyasana is a seated twist which has four variations. The pose begins by bending the leg so that the heel is close to the perineum. In the first variation, the body twists so that the chest faces the outstretched leg and in the third variation it faces away. The second and fourth variations resemble the first and third, except here the straight leg is bent into half Padmasana. The Maricyasana variations increase levels of energy in the body, tone and massage the abdominal organs, and reduce fat around the waistline. Maricyasana is named after the sage Marichi. A sage is a wise man or woman, an expert, an authority, a guru; I like to think of him in a seated position, twisting his body to impart his wisdom to those who came to him for advice.

Marichi was the son of Brahma, the divine creator. Having created heaven and earth, Brahma went on to conceptualise and create seven sons (Mansaputras), of which Marichi was one. Marichi literally means a ray of light from either the moon or the sun, and Marichi was to be the chief of the Maruts, 'the shining ones'.

Marichi went on to have his own children. His son, Kashypapa, was known as the 'Lord of Creatures'; his grandson was the sun god Surya, the giver of life who is the god to whom Surya Namaskara (a salutation including Uttanasana, Adho Mukha Svanasana, Urdhva Mukha Svanasana, and Chaturanga Dandasana) is dedicated; and his great-grandson was Manu, the father of humanity. The first three letters of



Manu are man which is a Sanskrit root meaning 'to think', and it is this same Sanskrit root that gave birth to the English word man.

The following story gives a taste of Marichi's character. One day Marichi went to the forest to collect wood and flowers and returned to his home extremely tired. He called to his wife, Dharmavrata, and told her that she was to wash his feet for him. Just as Dharmavrata began to wash her husband's feet, Brahma arrived. Dharmavrata did not know what she should do, should she continue to wash her husband's feet, or turn her attentions to Brahma, who was Marichi's father. She chose the latter and suffered the wrath of her husband. Marichi became extremely angry and put a curse on his wife, turning her into a stone. Dharmavrata was naturally upset by this, believing that she was being punished unnecessarily. As a reaction to this, Dharmavrata began many years of meditation which were noticed by Lord Visnu who, impressed by her devotion, granted her a wish. All Dharmavrata wanted was to have Marichi's curse lifted. Unfortunately, Marichi was such a powerful sage that this was impossible to do. Instead, Dharmavrata was transformed into a holy stone, which was desired by all gods.

Judging by this story, Marichi was not a particularly savoury character, but his position as a great sage and his status as the Sun God's grandfather and the great-grandfather of the human race's progenitor undeniably make him a key figure in Indian Mythology and may well explain why such a powerful, energy-giving lateral twist bears his name.

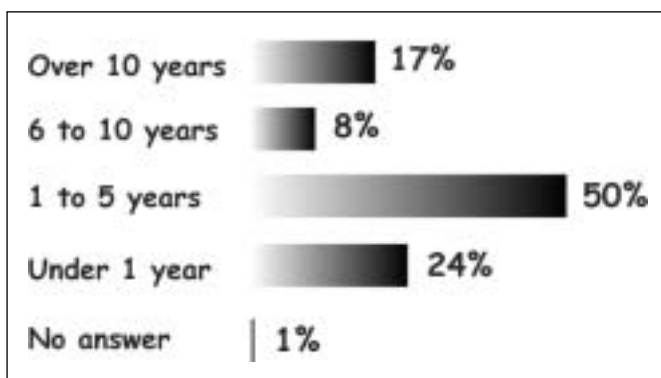
Karen Smith



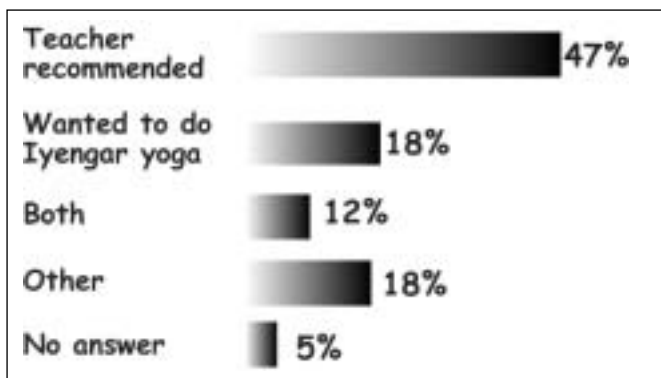
Report from SADIYA questionnaire from students (157 completed questionnaires)

Earlier this year we sent out a questionnaire to try to find out a little more about the SADIYA members. Here we present a summary of some of the results. Many thanks to everyone who completed the questionnaire, and especially to Kate Fryer who kindly designed the questionnaire and analysed the results.

How long have you practised yoga?



Why did you choose to attend this class?

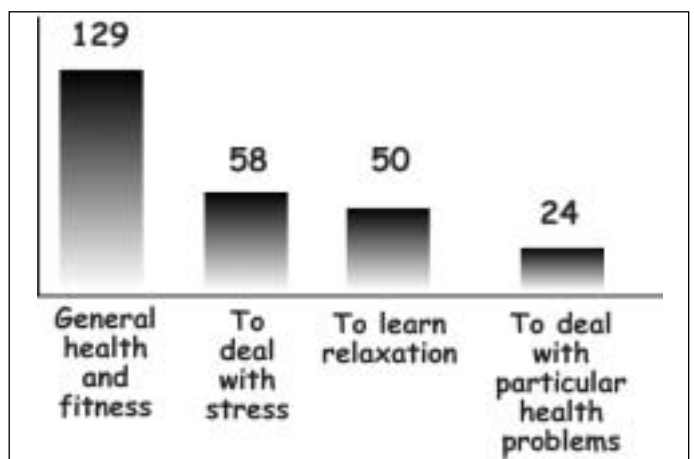


Of those people who stated that they chose their class because they had wanted to do Iyengar yoga, many commented on the attention to detail and physical emphasis, *"enjoy the more active approach"*, and the standard of teaching within Iyengar yoga, *"prefer this type of yoga, better standard of teaching"*.

Other reasons for choosing the class were often practical, e.g. had chosen the class because of the convenience of the time and location, or had wanted to practise at a specific level (e.g. advanced), and had found that in an Iyengar class.

Some had found the class on the Internet, and one person specifically wanted a class that was not in a gym or sports centre. More unusual reasons for attending included one student who was a teacher in another discipline and felt it would be good experience, and someone who was introduced to yoga by a young Indian priest.

What is your main reason for practising yoga?



The majority of people said they practised yoga for general health and fitness, *"to feel healthier, stronger and more 'in' myself"*, *"the best thing I can do to encourage well-being"*. Benefits were hoped for both physically (tone, strength, balance and flexibility), and spiritually, in terms of awareness of mind and body. Some people cited 'prevention' e.g. of ageing and stiffening up, as a reason for doing yoga, or to have an effect on their life as a whole *"to slow down generally"*. Particular health problems that people were hoping would benefit included neck, back and shoulder problems, poor circulation and asthma.



Report from SADIYA questionnaire from students Contd.

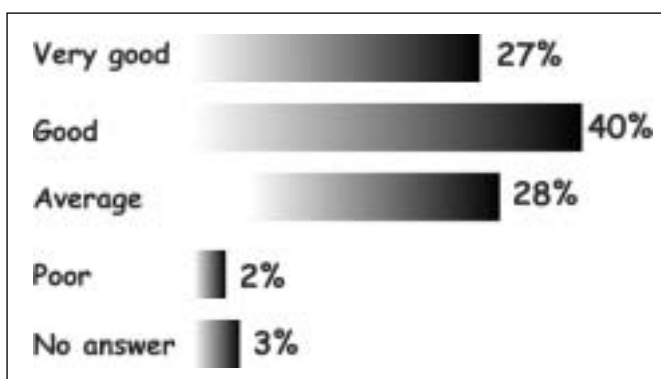
Two people had been recommended to do yoga by an Osteopath, and many used yoga to complement a sport or other aspect of their lives, e.g. dance, climbing, basketball, and one student said it helped her relax her vocal chords which made it easier for her as a primary school teacher. Others did yoga simply, *"for the pleasure of it"*.

In what ways has yoga helped with the above?

Reading answers to this question, you get the general feeling that everyone has got what they wanted out of yoga, and more often than not, more than they expected. Mentioned many times were calmness, relaxation, breathing, posture, stamina, ant-ageing effects and focus of mind. More specifically it had helped people with sciatica, shoulder pain, back problems (*"largely eliminated"*), pain, sleep and mental problems (*"depression went away"*).

People felt they had become more aware of their body, and confident, *"gave me the confidence for a home birth"*. Spiritual benefits were mentioned time and time again, *"it offers a concept of potential balance which the rest of my life does not"*. It was clear that benefits went far beyond the class itself but that yoga had an effect on many peoples whole life, *"it helps me through the day"*, *"I just feel better about myself"*.

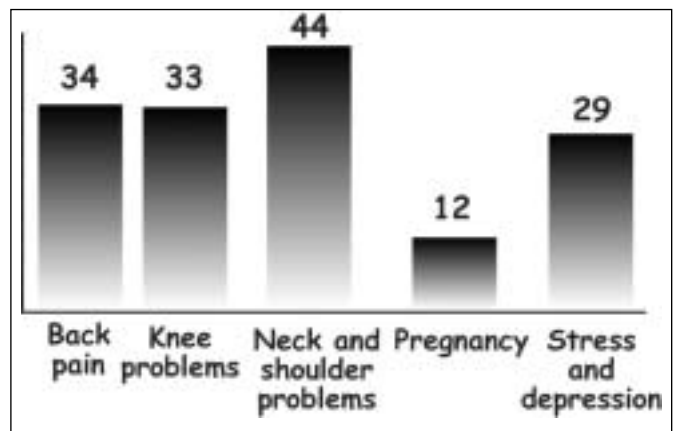
How would you describe your health?



In what way has yoga affected other aspects of your life?

A whole range of answers were found for this question, ranging from that yoga had not affected other parts of life at all, to yoga being part of wider philosophy, e.g., *"I follow a yogic way of life as far as possible"*, *"it's a strand in my life which helps me to centre myself and connect with my body and the universe"*. Often yoga was seen as complimentary to other aspects of life, such as meditation and religion. Some people felt it had affected their diet or way of eating, and other benefits included social and mental health.

Would you attend a specialist therapeutic class for ...?



Suggestions for other classes were: post-natal (pelvic floor), back strength, stomach/digestive tract, breathing, legs, hips, stomach strength and menstrual problems. Many who did not specify a class that they would attend said they would attend a specialist class if the need arose.



Dates for your diary

Yoga days in Sheffield

All these days will be held at St Mary's Community Centre, Bramhall Lane, Sheffield from 10am to 3.30pm with a break for lunch.

- Saturday 24 January 2004 with Liz Tonner
- Saturday 27 March 2004 with Richard Ward
- Saturday 10 July 2004 with Marion Kilburn

Yoga events with Alan Brown

- Saturday 13 December 2003
Day of Yoga 10am to 4.30pm
(Theme: Obstacles to practice)

More challenging asana sessions including some discussion of yoga philosophy. **Some experience required.**

Cost £17.50 inclusive of a light vegetarian lunch.

To book please send payment in full to:
Alan Brown, 23 Middleton, Cowling, W. Yorks.
BD22 0DQ (cheques made to A. Brown)
For further information please ring
01535 637359 or
email: alan@dianalan.plus.com

Yoga events with Sue Lovell

- Sunday morning yoga workshop
9 November 2003 10.30 till 1.00pm
Bath Road Centre, Buxton
Cost £10 or £9 all levels of students

- Yoga weekend, Edale, Peak District
19 to 21 December 2003
Around 9am till 12 noon Saturday and Sunday
Residential cost £90 including yoga, food,
Friday and Saturday accommodation. £45
deposit. Non-residential £15 per 3-hour class

Other Buxton events at Bath Road Centre

- Yoga workshop with Jayne Orton
Saturday 31 January 2.00 till 5.00pm and
Sunday 1 February 2004 10.00 till 1.00pm
Cost £14 or £12 per workshop
- Yoga workshop with Judi Sweeting
Saturday 28 February 2.00 till 5.00pm and
Sunday 29 February 2004 10.00 till 1.00pm
Cost £14 or £12 per workshop

To book or enquire for all Buxton events, call Sue Lovell on 01298 79576. Make cheques payable to Sue Lovell. Post to 40 Bath Road, Buxton, High Peak, SK17 6HJ
E-mail: sueyoga40@aol.com

Yoga holiday in Spain with Sue Lovell

10 to 17 April and 17 to 24 April 2004
Cost £375 per week (yoga, food, single room)
£100 deposit required.

All enquiries to Sue Lovell as above.



Yoga classes in Sheffield

If you wish to join a class please call the teacher first to confirm a place is available.

Frances Homewood at Crookesmoor Community Centre

- Monday 6.30 to 7.30 Beginners
- Monday 7.45 to 9.15 Intermediate/Advanced
- Wednesday 6.30 to 8.00 Intermediate

Call Frances on 0114 2335753 for more information

Helen Clay at St Mary's Church/Community Centre, Bramall Lane.

- Wednesday 6.30 to 7.30 Beginners
- Wednesday 7.45 to 9.15 Class for those with some experience and who wish to move on with their practice

Call Helen on 0114 2661237 for more information

Paul Barkworth at Bolsterstone Village Hall

- Tuesday 7.15 to 8.45 Beginners

Call Paul on 0114 2886666 for more information

Dominic Batten at Hartley St. Institute, Heeley

- Tuesday 6.30 to 7.30pm Beginners
- 7.45 to 9.15 More experienced

Call Dominic on 0114 2649418 for more information

Padmavasini at the Buddhist Centre, Howard Road, Crookes/Walkley

- Tuesday 1 to 2 Beginners (drop-in)
- Thursday 1 to 2 Some experience (drop-in)
- Tuesday 6 to 7 Beginners
- Wednesday 6 to 7 Beginners
- Thursday 6.30 to 8 Some experience

Call Padmavasini on 0114 2730335 for more information or

The Buddhist Centre on 0114 2349994 to book onto a class



Sheffield and District Iyengar Yoga Association