

A month in Pune



I was fortunate to be able to spend February of 2019 studying at RIMYI, in Pune.

A month is a long time to be away from family and home.

However, considering the time it takes to adjust to a new environment (and jet lag) it felt like the right amount of time to spend there.

A British Airways overnight flight to Mumbai was an easy start to the journey. I took advice to have a driver collect me at the airport; the journey to Pune took about 4 hours (due to midday traffic around Mumbai)

There was so much to see en route -the vibrant energy of India hit as soon as I was out of the airport, and gave some preparation for what was to come!

My driver was on time, very friendly and helpful. We had interesting conversation, due to his excellent English.

The pollution around Mumbai was immense, and seen from inside the car, looked like a cloudy haze. The driver stopped halfway at a sort of food mall, where there was food to buy and clean facilities, even, strangely a Starbucks.

I had met a few yoga students at Heathrow and we coincidentally met again at this mall. Obviously the taxi drivers take a well earned break here, before winding through the hills towards Pune. We enjoyed a great cup of real Chai tea, before the last part of the journey.

Because it was my first trip to India, I was shocked by the manic traffic. When we left the airport, my driver automatically (and I later realised skilfully) joined in with what seemed like a chaotically dangerous mass of interweaving cars. However, after a few hours, it all began to make more sense. I realised that nobody was driving very fast. The hooting was not aggressive, but served as a helpful warning. Drivers were quite relaxed and creative, nothing was predictable and as a result people seemed really alert.

Sadly, scenes around Mumbai revealed immense poverty, pollution, and overcrowding. All of which are likely come to mind when thinking about India. Tower blocks of massive proportions, unimaginable..

The shanty towns, street people, and so many stray dogs, reminded me of the drive from Cape Town's airport.

In contrast, outside Mumbai University, the banks of colourful plants for sale, were so pretty and orderly.

There were also carts of delicious looking pineapples, neatly piled. A vivid image of sari clad women elegantly floating between herds of goats, stays with me.

Colourful traffic of government buses, decorated with the prime minister's portrait, old transport trucks adorned with pom poms, scooters sneaking in between, beep- beeping; tuck- tucks heading against the traffic flow,

-out of which I noticed huge, dusty trees with shiny new, lime green leaves and purple flowers, like butterflies,... I was not sure if it was real....

I saw a woman washing her young children in a bucket on a section of the the expressway, (motorway) currently under construction, where there was abundant available water.

The driver told me this is called, " New Mumbai", where new hotels and better roads are being built. There is a feeling of energy, development and hope, despite the poverty....

I arrived at my apartment in Model Colony, Ramsar Lane, a tree lined street near RIMYI.

I shared a 3 bedroom apartment, which was spacious and clean. My 2 yogi flatmates were from London and Ontario, we got on well and shared wonderful lunchtimes, class discussions and dinners out.

Arriving on 31 January was useful as I had a day to recover, before attending class, as well as having time to explore the Institute beforehand and familiarise myself with the area.

I will never forget arriving at RIMYI, just as the sun was setting; smaller than I imagined, it was like a little gem, set back off the busy Hare Krishna Mandir Road. Greeted by a statue of Guruji and his wife, Ramamani, under a brass umbrella and decorated with garlands of fresh flowers made it all the more enchanting. The courtyard grotto was full of flowering plants and statues of Patanjali, like a quiet and peaceful oasis. If you looked up high, you could just make out an orange statue of Hanuman with a canopy of cobra heads above him.

On registration, you needed to show your passport, Indian Visa and photocopies of each, as well as 2 passport photos and a note from where you were staying.

There were other forms to fill out, with details of your teaching levels.

This is when your daily class times were given out, with daily personal practice sessions.

Pandu sorted all this out for us, but he would not take payment on the day you arrived, because he correctly believed that when you're jet lagged you wouldn't remember very well.

I paid my fees the next day by Visa, as well as an extra £70 for the month, to observe classes. This had to be paid in cash. The money changer came most mornings with good rates (much better than airport and local banks) so changing pounds into rupees was easy and convenient. The staff at RIMYI were so helpful and kind, they tried to accommodate you in the best way possible.

The props/ bookshop was wonderful, so many interesting, well priced books and CD's of classes are available. All Prashant's book at much lower prices than Amazon!

There was a timetable on the noticeboard, with all class times that you could observe.

These included Beginners Classes, Senior Citizens Beginners/Advanced, Remedial - Minor Ailments, Remedial, Intermediate 1, 2,

Beginners Womens, Pranayama Beginners/ Advanced, Children's Classes

My first evening in Pune I **observed an Intermediate 2 class**, 6 - 7.30 pm, **taught by Raya**, a young male teacher with immense energy. The group were on their final week of their month course. The last week at RIMYI was Pranayama week, so despite being an energetic class, this had a pranayama theme with the focus on the back ribs and lifting back chest. ([appendix 1](#))

An excellent class, taught with a dynamic spirit. Raya was taught as a young boy, by Mr Iyengar and collaborates with Abhijata Iyengar. They form a wonderful team, a good balance.

A fellow student expressed this so well, when I asked her what stayed with her after the month at RIMYI,

“ as we flounder in the loss of Guruji and Geetaji, with the anxiety of what the future of our practice will be, it was reassuring to witness this wholesome union between Raya and Abhi. I

think our future is more than safe with them at the helm. This positive yogic union between man and woman, for me is a powerful symbol of union - Yog!"

February is end of winter in Pune, so it got dark by 6.30 pm. Often, after observing an evening class, we would end up going out somewhere for dinner, usually with somebody who had visited Pune before suggesting a restaurant, often Lalit Mahal, a delightful place that made the best ever Masala Dosa.

Abhijata suggested that after dark we walk in groups of 2 or 3. I never felt at all threatened in Pune, but tended to keep to this idea, more because it was easy to get lost in the beginning especially as the street names were mainly in Hindu script, and Google maps are not accurate.

Friday 1 February, 9 - 12 noon, was **personal practice** time.

It felt really special to be able to use this space where Gurujji practiced and taught. It was just wonderful, to have use of the wall ropes and props, with the time to experiment and practice.

The photos of Gurujji all around us, were an inspiration.

I went straight to the wall ropes and practiced some poses I knew. It was helpful being surrounded by experienced practitioners; this gave me clues, as some of the props were new to me.

I had to learn Sirsasana using the centre room ropes, something I'd not done before. Sheila , my teacher explained we would do this during class, so I needed to practice beforehand. I found someone to help me. It became my favourite pose, we did it a lot in Prashant's classes, with very long holds. The ropes all varied in length, but you quickly learnt to either add blankets, or go after someone of similar height, to make it quicker, during class rotations.

Later in the month these daily sessions got really full. I noticed people from Russia and Israel seemed practice in groups, sequences they had prepared beforehand. Some students had planned sequences on their mobile phones.

I mainly practiced a sequence from a previous class, from memory, as it was useful to understand the class better and assimilate the knowledge. But this did not always work, as sometimes the body was tired and it was better to do more restorative work, in my opinion. I did try to stay strong and not overdo, as there was just so much to learn, I did not want to miss any classes.

It was interesting to watch the experienced, senior teachers practice. This is where Abhijata and Raya seemed to work well together with huge enthusiasm and commitment. During the first few days they practised Prasarita Padasana with a very heavy weight on their feet.

There were lots of other experienced RIMYI teachers practicing with us, to keep an eye on our safety and incorrect use of props. Wooden bricks are never allowed on sticky mats !

My first class , **Navaz teaching**, Friday 6pm, which is always **Pranayama**.

Navaz had been taught for many years by Guruji, her knowledge is so natural and she has a kind and heartfelt approach, joyful too ([appendix 2](#)).

Children's Class (Observing) Sunday 3 February, 8-9 am,

This was an action packed hour , with about 35 children (10 year olds & young teens)
2 young male teachers, with about 5 helper teachers took the class.

There was a real sense of collaborative teaching in the class and the students were well looked after.

Invocation and long Guru chant, sung so beautifully.

Excellent teachers, wonderful children, who speak Marathi and English and know all the Sanskrit names, impressive!! ([Appendix 3](#))

Prashant , Lecture 3 Feb Sunday 9.30 am

Lectures are held every Sunday morning at RIMYI.

Prashant spoke about Sutras, 1.17 and 1.18, assisted by a young student, Srineet.

Srineet gave the sanskrit meanings and Prashant discussed the philosophy.

Prashant spoke about the super consciousness, using the ocean as an analogy.

There are waves, bubbles, but the consciousness settles like the ocean, becoming infinite, like Samadhi. He spoke in detail about the cognitive trance, -so interesting, but I found it difficult to put into words afterwards.

There is a Facebook page, created by Srineet

Prashant S. Iyengar: Yog

Yoga Sutra Sessions at RIMYI, where you can listen to a podcast of this lecture and subsequent lectures from 3 March , 2019.

At the beginning it was also not easy to understand Prashant's accent, but over the weeks I got used it.

One of Prashant's books, "Pranayama, A Classical and Traditional Approach", explains some of his philosophical ideas. Now that I'm reading the book, his ideas are clearer.

Class with Prashant, Monday 4 February, 7 - 9 am

This was my first class with Prashant, actually experiencing his teaching is something totally new!

He was always punctual and very serious, telling us to, “settle down, sit up well” starting with a silent Om on exhalation, then chant the Invocation.

He usually started class with Sirsasana, and wove into each class, a philosophical theme. There were few asana in his classes, but he gave us time to hold the poses and reflect on the ideas he was speaking about.

Something that has stayed with me , was a class where he spoke about exhalation and elimination.

We were holding Utthita Hasta Padangusthasana 2 , at the back ledge with belt for feet. He kept us here for a long time, focus was on the breath, exhalation. Finally he asked us to see where / if the body was holding tension.

I realised I was holding tension in my jaw, something I had not realised before. Holding the poses while he spoke , gave a whole new experience to the asana and time to reflect on what he was saying as well as finding out what was going on in your body.

This is how he worked with us, he did not spoon feed us, but rather gave us ideas and time to explore and , “use” the body to find out. Prashant spoke to us , while we held the poses, about how as teachers we need to learn not to just , “ do” poses, but rather to, “use” asana.

I asked a fellow student who was also at RIMYI for the first time, what stayed with her from all the many classes. One thing stood out, it was Prashant’s teaching, “ you can’t deal with a distracted mind, but only with distractions.”

Prashant explained that he was not going to give us, “ new points” in asana, because we have them already.

His analogy was of a house, everything you need is inside, but it needs to be organised to function well, organisation for efficiency.

For example in one class, he held us in Trikonasana at wall ropes, with a brick for hand, breathing from the dorsal area.

He gave us different ideas in every class, ideas to explore and experiment with. ([appendix 4](#))

After Prashant’s class, was personal practice time, 9 - 12 noon.

Many of us would have a short break at this time and take a walk through the park for our Chai tea treat. This was a well frequented spot with the most delicious chai, brewed by a friendly and

welcoming stall owner. His piping hot, sugary masala chai was typically served in small glasses, which were constantly washed by a few young assistants, and sun dried.

Their friendliness made us feel part of the community's morning ritual. So many locals and us yogi's would crowd around his small, dusty stand surrounded by parked scooters and dogs. It reminded me of Italy, stopping off for a quick espresso.

Lunch times were quite special.

I opted, as did the other people staying with me (and the group staying in the the downstairs apartment), for lunch provided by a young cook, organised by the woman we rented the apartment from. He prepared the food in our apartment, ready for our return round 12.30 each day.

Lunch was most welcome after an early start and strong morning practice.

Ayurvedic, vegetarian food, gently spiced; he always prepared 2 dahls, rice and hand rolled chapatis, as well as a fresh veg, often mheti (fenugreek), okra or cauliflower. Absolutely delicious!

We would often go to market to buy veggies, early Sunday mornings and during the week, to help choose and carry the veggies home.

About 7 of us came together for lunch, we had great discussions, especially as 4 people had visited RIMYI a number of times before.

Beginners classes, Observing

I spent most Monday afternoons observing these classes, because they were so well taught and useful for my teaching.

Apparently, as a rule at RIMYI, local students enroll for the year starting June. This commitment is evident in the level of class ability.

We all commented on the fact that hardly any props are used and the teachers don't demonstrate each pose, unless relevant; instead the teacher would do poses with the class. Here is an example, from many excellent classes. About 40 people attended, on average. ([appendix 5](#))

My first class with Abhijata teaching, 9 - 11 am, Wednesday 6th Feb

Abhi has a skillful way of teaching a large group, but getting her points across in a personal way.

She conveyed so much, in few words and often told us stories of how Guruji made her try out new things in asana, that pushed her well beyond her comfort zone, but made her stronger.

One thing she taught us, about Sirsasana, that has stayed with me

- When in full pose, focus on the floor, about 2 feet away from you, to help maintain stability.

Focus of this class was on how the shoulders behave, what's going right and what's going wrong?

I watched a Beginners class earlier that week, focusing on shoulder/ chest opening, using a brick for very strong arm awareness.

"Shoulders" seemed to be the theme for the week.

Very full class, so we folded mats in half, lengthways ([appendix 6](#))

Vardhaman Hall

During our second week, a delegation arrived from Asia. They were involved in a 10 day course, as part of Mr Iyengar's centenary celebration. We were invited to join their classes, which were held at Vardhaman Hall, a large venue, about a 20 minute walk from RIMYI.

Raya and Abhijata took a number of classes here. Not everyone in the delegation were teachers, so it was a lovely mix of abilities and sharing of knowledge. Abhijata and Raya's teaching skills really shone in this situation. The classes were vibrant and fun, we all learnt so much.

8 Feb, **Vardhaman Hall, Abhi teaching**, 9 - 12 noon

She spoke about "communication" with the body- this is asana, as opposed to a "pose" ([appendix 7](#))

Wed 13 Feb, 9 - 12 noon, **Abhijata and Raya teaching**

Vibrant class, - finding out about where our eyes go, when we balance, active class!

([appendix 8](#))

Many teacher assistants were watching us, came up to support or help students. I was given a pleated blanket, for under the head, to help soften my ribs and get legs further back, really helpful adjustment.

We had a short break to discuss various students' memories of Guruji. Navaz lead the talks about her youth and practice with Guruji.

There were senior teachers from the US, Philippines, Japan and the UK, who told us their stories, but every one said although Mr Iyengar was a strong and sometimes tough teacher, he was always kind and sympathetic.

Raya and Abhijata then discussed Sirsasana , how important it is that beginners have a go and enjoy going up, without getting too embroiled in every detail.

Don't initially give all the wrist/ ulna details, it's too much for a beginner.

This is not an assessment situation.([appendix 9](#))

Friday 16 Feb, **Class with Navaz teaching @ Vardhaman Hall**

Dedicated to Geetaji, as it was 2 months since her passing.

To me, Navaz teaches from the heart and her sense of humour adds a liveliness to the class atmosphere.

This was a **back bending themed class**, taught with such care. She also clarified points discussed about Sirsasana in previous classes that week, taught by Abhi and Raya. ([appendix 10](#))

Backbending class, ending in Mandalasana 20 Feb , taught by **Raya** (at RIMYI)

Raya taught us an excellent preparation to this class, at Vardhaman Hall the previous week. He focussed on Urdhva Dhanurasana. His message was to take shins up (vertical lift) , taking weight to the leg side (if the thighs burn, you're working well)

We started class with UMS standing at the wall, curving the spine.

Then went to U Dhanurasana, in the centre, with 3 stepped bolsters and a rolled blanket , - as there were beginners in the class, who had never lifted up from the floor.

This way, they had support under hips, shoulders and head, and could get the lift more easily.

We also went outside and used the steps. Firstly lifting up with hands higher than feet, then turning around and using feet on higher steps, shoulders on lower step, so pushing up with legs higher than head. This was worked well to get more lift.

We went inside, repeating on mat, no props and it felt so different.

Chair Sarvangasana to end class

Now for class plan, **Raya's backbending class at RIMYI** ([appendix 11](#))

Final week at Pune is **Pranayama week**

Rajlaxmi classes were some of my favourite.

I observed some of her early morning Intermediate classes, which were very popular. She is a doctor of Ayurvedic medicine, which shows in her caring and precise approach.

She kindly helped me with my Sirsasana during one of the personal practice sessions, showing me how to soften the ribcage, by taking support, using one of the blanket storage, corner pillars.

- I clasped around the pillar/ base, using a bandage between metal and hands
- Go up, bend legs onto shelf above , calves supported on shelf
- Lift shoulders
- lift middle buttocks up and away from pillar
- Draw ribcage down and soften
- Use your legs to lift up
- “ work like this - the body will learn”, she told me that is what Guruji would say.

I practised this daily, and a few weeks later she asked me if it was helping. It was! Another student told me she went to Rajlaxmi to ask her about tightness in the throat during asana and Pranayama. Interestingly the next day she gave us the following class-

23 Feb 9.30 - 11.30, **Rajlaxmi , Pranayama**

She taught us to sit up well, I remember this vividly when I do my own practice. ([appendix 12](#))

Abhijata's final class, Pranayama , Wed 23 Feb

Her theme was, “Irrigation of the body, through asana” ([appendix 13](#))

I have written down just a few of the classes attended and observed , but there was so much more.

Something I noticed at RIMYI and in day to day life in Pune, was the sense of community. Teachers share their skills and draw in other teachers to help during class, with a focus on the

wider perspective. Everyone shared equipment and mats during class, the mat you started on was never the mat you ended up using.

Both teachers and students at RIMYI showed huge dedication and serious commitment, but there was always a spark of humour.

During my daily walk through the park, I noticed people sitting on benches, practising Pranayama. Young and some quite elderly people met up to share a brisk walk and exercise together, using the park equipment. There was a lovely atmosphere of togetherness, which was what we experienced at RIMYI. We all came together from all corners of the world, to learn and practice.

Prashant expressed that we are all , “ students of yoga”, not “ teachers of yoga”. He told us that in the past students came to learn yoga, but now often people come due to exam requirements , which seems a pity.

To me, learning is something individual, but being at RIMYI and Pune has deepened my awareness of Iyengar Yoga, even more than I expected.

I am really grateful to have had this wonderful opportunity and would like to thank The Oxford Regional Iyengar Yoga Association for their generosity in making this possible.



Appendix 1

They started in Padmasana, invocation was call and response, - long, quiet preparation.
Changing cross of legs, Urdhva Hastasana, gripping in of hips. Feel lifting of back ribs, by using arm variations.

Adho Mukha Svanasana, suck up kneecaps, squeeze and hold the mat with hands.

Adho Mukha Virasana, knees on floor, hips up, crown of head to floor, toes in, dig in back ribs, then straighten legs to AMS again.

Urdhva Prasarita Padasana, arms overhead, legs apart, @ 90 degrees, - very long hold!

Keep abdomen quiet, - long, slow, gentle exhalations

Legs down to 45 degrees, long hold, back to 90 degrees,

“ find out how you can keep your knees straight”

AMS, very long hold, 2 minutes...

“don’t push on the back ribs”,

“ grip the legs, but don’t harden the abdomen”

Dandasana, hands @ side hips; -

“exhale, thighs down, inhale chest up”

Purvottanasana, “ breathe in the chest, feel the ribcage, abdominals soft.”

Paschimottanasana, “abdomen gets tight, so learn to soften, exhale”

“ front ribs spread like a high flying bird”

Janu Sirsasana, each side

Parivrtta Janu Sirsasana, “hands grip, pull yourself towards the head side”

Lie prone, then roll onto your side, take legs a little bit back, arm straight -

Anantasana, take arm under your head, ribs down

Top arm perpendicular to body, (holding foot) , “like the feel in Ardha Chandrasana”

Urdhva Dhanurasana, long hold

- Take head down, hold head with hands, bend one leg at a time

- Eka Pada Viparita Dandasana, “ lift higher at back and shoulder blades”

Adho Mukha Svanasana, “ find out about back ribs, how do they behave?”

Sirsasana and variations

Parsva Sirsasana

Baddha Konasana or Urdhva Padmasana in Sirsasana and Parsva

Pindasana in Sirsasana

Sarvangasana

Set up with thick black mats, (in lines, shared by all)

X2 rolled blankets, placed one under shoulders and one under elbows, with folded sticky mat - under and over both rolls

Straight up to Sarvangasana

Urdhva Padmasana, change leg cross

Halasana, arms - interlock change

Parsva Halasana, to RHS, then Parsva Pindasana

Repeat to LHS

Savasana on tri fold blanket

Folded blanket u head

Arms out, find width of back

Below thigh, behind knee, top calf - release

Back of tricep, sleeps on floor, quietly.

In Savasana (lights out, room is dark)

Lose your face

Let the entire body breathe

Surrender of identity into the form

Then let the form go.....

-

Appendix 2

She carefully showed us Jalandara Bandha, various ways

- take head to chest,using both hands
- take bridge of nose down, carefully using hands
- index fingers in ears, turn head down
- rolled bandage btw collarbones, chin to chest
- Sanmukhi Mudra, carefully demonstrated too.

She explained how the Jalandhara Bandha brings together the Nadi's.

The solar plexus nadi at the abdomen area - pingala,

joins with the chandra (lunar) nadi, with the head bending down.

We did Supine pranayama, bolster and blanket support.

Find 2 bumps at the base of the skull, place them evenly.

We practised Ujjayi 1-4

“Feel the difference after Ujjayi 4”

Viloma 1

Seated Pranayama on bolster
Ujjayi 5

Digital Pranayama (she noticed too many long nails, cut nails short! This helps find the sensitivity of nostrils and their shape)

Bring in index and middle fingers of R hand

Ring finger and pinkie towards thumb, tips must touch, so cut nails shorter.

Sensitivity, touch nose from bridge down to top of nose where cartilage softens, explore nose tip. Be aware of your outer, middle and inner finger tips.

We did Anuloma pranayama, with good explanation of how to partially close each nostril, repeating cycles with L and R nostril exhalations.

Repeated x5 either side, cycles on our own.

Savasana, lie totally flat, bolster and blankets on thighs.

Sunita teaching, Saturday morning class, 2 February 9.30 - 11.30 am

Guruji said, “ strong legs make a strong mind”

The theme was standing poses, using the feet to feel the legs

Invocation and Guru chant, call and response

Starting in AMS-

- Lift toes up
- How do we feel our feet? Look at them, touch them

Tadasana

- literally spread and move base of feet

Trikonasana

- use the feet , inner ankle , side of foot
- Look at R foot, keep R shoulder over hip, pelvis in , all from feet
- Long hold , thinking from feet, wide base, lifting outer ankle press big toe mound

Uttanasana

Utkatasana

- bending legs, find acute and obtuse angles
- Feel skin on the thighs, slightly lift outer thighs
- Take feet apart, arms in Baddha hastasana, lifts chest

Trikonasana -

- can practice this at home, take toes up , onto wall.

Sunita used her niece Parivrtta, to demo this pose, so we could practice at home.

Now we focused on heel work

Utthita Parsvakonasana,-

- pelvis works from power of foot/ heel work
- To RHS, lift toes, press heel down and turn R leg from HEEL, this made you feel the inner thigh action of turning inner to outer!
- Take arm in front, lengthen groin to knee, then take hand to back ankle, hand flat if can.

Vira 1

- turning , use heel action.
- Body should feel more vertical after leg actions.

Uttanasana

Padottanasana, head down

Sirsasana

- eka pada, baddha konasana

Paschimottanasana

Janu Sirsasana

- take L side over to R side, repeat to L

Upavista Konasana

- fwd bend

Janu again, with bolster at side, bend to side using bolster , parivrtta action, practice at home, try it out.

Sarvangasana, go to Halasana, use belt to lift sh blades, go up

Karnapidasana, come down bent legs,

Slide down, leave head, neck and shoulders on support

Savasana

Appendix 3

Fast sequencing , started @ wall,

Adho Mukha Vrksasana, jumping up, encouraged to hop legs to get up

Those waiting, arms in Gomukhasana, P Namaskarasana

Everyone together in centre, jumping to -

Tadasana- Uttanasana-Chaturanga D- UMS- AMS- Uttanasana- Tadasana

Tadasana, hands on waist, feet apart, well grounded feet.

Look back, arch back, look at back wall

Repeat, hands at buttocks, knees bending, lift chest, look back

Inhale , come up.

Repeat, "chest up like a hot air balloon", "arch, arch"

Repeat, Surya Namaste, many variations thrown in, - such fun , active atmosphere!

Sit in Dandasana, arms U Hastasana

Purvottanasana, bent legs, lift up buttocks, look back, repeats
“ Now can you do, straight legs?” fingers face twds feet.

Lie down (no mats!) lift up to Urdhva Dhanurasana, “buttocks up”, “elbows straight”

Straight into more Surya Namaste, changing direction , facing back room this time, repeats

- Adding in- sitting in Dandasana , jump up to Tadasana and so on.
- Ending in UMS, Salabasana, Makarasana, U Dhanurasana, roll to either side
- Lie flat

Now for , “ The One Minute Challenge” shouts of delight and a few groans !

Push up to U Dhanurasana, hold for a minute,(not many could, but a few older boys managed)

The thick black mats were carried out.

Sit in Dandasana, arms up.

Turn around, face back, interlock hands, do from bent knees

Sirsasana

- Most important action, lift shoulders up
- Walk in, more, buttocks lifting
- Crown of head down, lift shoulders
- Lift R leg, lift L leg
- Then go up
-

Teachers were relaxed about exact details, let them just go up, a few fell flat on backs

So , “ this is how to fall safely”

Roll rather than arch to fall.

Hands interlock loosely , walk in , head down, release hands to roll over.

Then demonstration to arch back - young boy demonstrated on stage

Sirsasana

- bent legs, lift buttocks up, arch and curve, then drop back
- Come up through U Dhanurasana
-

The students all had a go, everyone was helped and supported by a teacher.

Teachers watched and waited, only supported if needed.

Back to centre, do Sirsasana and hold

Some went to wall, all did full pose.

Virasana, parvatasana, - arms behind, look up

Dandasana, Upavista K , B Konasana, - quick repeats

Prep for Bharadvajasana, swinging legs side to side

Bharadvajasana 2

Malasana into Utkatasana

Virasana, slowly arching into Supta Virasana

Malasana, rolling onto back, Halasana repeats up to Tadasana

Halasana, rolling into Swastikasana/Janu, fwd bending

Ending in Sarvangasana, hold for 30 secs.

Repeats, Halasana/ Paschimottanasana x8 times.

Ending in Savasana

“ absolutely quiet, dead body, Savasana, dead body” a couple of minutes, they were all dead quiet !

Appendix 4

Our first class sequence went like this

Sirsasana

- We could choose - either at wall ropes, center room ropes, or in centre on mat,
- If no space, Adho Mukha Svanasana @ back room using belts @ hips
- all very long holds

Then we did rope work at the wall, shoulder work

We arranged ourselves in groups , rotating all the above during the first 40 minutes of class.

Trikonasana

- in centre, thinking about the back of your ears and the corners of your eyes.
- How does the usage of the body affect the asana?

Janu Sirsasana or Sarvangasana to end class, you can choose

No Savasana, you can do in your personal practice time.

Appendix 5

4.30 - 5.30 pm, **Women's Beginners class**, 11 Feb, Angeli teaching.

Tadasana

Uttanasana

- feet apart, walk arms fwd
- Come up, half way, torso parallel to floor, arms ext fwd, palms facing

Up to U Hastasana, repeat x2

- Clasp hands, arms up behind, shoulders down, ascend arms, bring body forward, chin up, look fwd

Repeat, other clasp

Tadasana

- UH arms,

Uttanasana-

- hands to ankles, feet together, descend head down.
- Inhale coming up with arms straight up to U Hastasana, then to Urdhva Namaste.

Step to Parsvottanasana

- flat back, chest up, shoulders back through strong leg work.

Padangustasana

- legs apart, press toes down to get straight arms, then wide elbows, head down

Parsvottanasana again-

- working on back heel, thigh and knee, extend arms fwd, parallel to floor, hold here.
- Fingertips to floor, flat back, take knees back, widen elbows take head to knee.

Tadasana

Uttanasana

- From UH arms, hands at side ankles, widen elbows, push knees back,
- Join feet, knees, thighs keep back

Turning to face side, Trikonasana

Facing Front

- Tadasana, UH arms, step back to

AMS straight arms

- Raise heels up, now push wrist of palm down,
- Take heels down and press foot into mat
- Walk hands to feet, -
- Uttanasana, inhale and come up, (arms go straight up into U Hastasana)

Vira 2

- back knee straight, stamp back outer foot

Tadasana

- UH arms, take hands behind knees, hug knees, take knees back more
- Interlock hands behind calf, twds ankle (variation of Uttanasana)

Utthita Parsvakonasana

- descend root of thigh down, focus on back knee open, ext b leg (no props, some used a brick)

Uttanasana, wide legs, flat back

Trikonasana - Ardha Chandrasana

Tadasana, UH, exhale to Uttanasana, feet tog, inhale come up

Utkatasana- Uttanasana- Utkatasana - down to Malasana, holding round knees

Dandasana, sit on folded blanket

Feet apart, Padangustasana, concave spine, focus on back knee and calf to floor

Elbows wide, then take head down

Janu Sirsasana x2

- take a brick or 2, for head on fwd bend.
- Arms up in UH, then forward, long hold

Dandasana, legs apart, Padangusthasana flat back, fwd bend to Pascimott, stay there

Triang mukhaikapada, sitting on folded blankets

Swastikasana , fwd bend, straight elbows

Dandasana

- to half Padmasana,
- L leg straight , R leg to Padmasana, repeat each side
- then full Padmasana or the above
- Arms to UH, forward bend to head on brick

Almost everyone did the Padmasana legs!

Dandasana to Paripurna Navasana

Then variations of Dandasana- Savasana - U Prasarita Padasana (arms overhead), up to

Dandasana - Navasana- Dandasana U Hastasana- Savasana - Prasarita Padasana legs at 90 degrees - Halasana- U P Padasana , arms above , legs at 90,

Dandasana - Paschimottanasana, repeats, can have feet slightly apart

Ending in Supta Baddha Konasana, hold ankles

Stay here, ascend chest, descend shoulders

Savasana

Appendix 6

In Tadasana - identify back & front armpit, armpit chest

- outermost point of shoulder bone
 - lengthen F, S, B deltoids
 - Shoulder blades, outer sh blade goes inwards, inner sh blade spreads outwards
 - Rib cage is the, " container" of the body, shoulder blades slide down the inside of this container
 - Coiling action, of back armpit to front, trapezius goes down the spine
- Arms - don't over rotate elbows, but reach arms down, from front, top arm
- Upper arm goes down, back ribs go up
 - Armpits deepen

Do all the above arm actions, taking arms away from body a little, to get the actions

Then take arms back to side, keeping fingers together to keep the length.

Take arms up , parallel to floor, deepen armpit to soften it, don't let armpit puff up.
Maintaining all these actions, Urdhva Hastasana, keep shoulders down

Utthita Hasta Padasana

- shoulders down and triceps up
- R side sternum goes with R arm
- L side sternum goes with L arm
- wrists and palms parallel to floor in one, long line
- think of arm pits, shoulder pits and groin pits

Guruji said , “ The joint is there to provide different movements above and below the joint”

Parsva Hasta Padasana to R

- maintaining L side , without disturbing, - R leg turns out from the heel

Trikonasana -

- extension of L and R radius of arms, don't disturb shoulder joint

Using a brick , Urdhva Namaskarasana arms

- Palms to brick, brick right to wrists
- Feel broadness in F and B shoulders
- Feel shoulder blades move from outside in, and inner sh blade to outer

Urdhva Hastasana, x2, bending elbows a little, even pressure on brick

Paschima Namaskar-

- brick in back, between palms, even pressure

Trikonasana

- pada hasta
- take hand over foot, fingers under toes (pada hasta)
- then press toes down to floor, to find length of arm
- lift arm, lift thigh

Repeat Trikonasana

- with brick, held in top arm
- Look at brick, reach into arm
- Up arm connects to shoulder joint and shoulder blade of lower arm

Repeat Trikonasana

- brick behind back, arms / palms to brick
- even pressure of hands, difficult!
- keep Tadasana shoulders and side ribs
- turn up to ceiling, with arms behind, straight arms , palms pressing brick

Uttanasana

- feet apart, palms to floor, take heel of hand to floor
- take brick btw palms, arms overhead/ to floor, pump x 10

Utthita Parsvakonasana

- Top arm, elbow bent and back
- Repeat, holding brick in top arm
-

Padahastasana, - we looked at photo of Guruji

- Inner deltoids are softened and not puffed
- Inner and outer shoulders are wide at joints

AMS- we did on our folded mats

- Heel of hand down, inner wrists down, so arms ascend
- Inner wrists even

Parivrtta Trikonasana

- Post palm under outer sole , if not able, palm to floor

Parivrtta Parsvakonasana

- Foot action and pressure of foot, helps shoulder actions of Trikonasana
- Bottom sh blade goes in , top sh blade spreads

Vira 1, arms down, no brick

- Repeat, brick overhead

AMS

Prasarita Padott

- head down

Sirsasana

Palms at brick (good for stiff shoulders)

Find symmetry

- Which hand is clenching the brick more? Is that the weaker or stronger side?

Sarvangasana

Halasana, put belt at wrists

- Press palms to floor
- Take elbows closer
- Fingers low in back, go up, short stay
- Back to Halasana, no belt,
- bend elbows, palms face body
- Take thumbs away, down to floor, press b arm down, shoulder twd elbow
- Bend elbows, take palms to neighbour(windscreen wipers)
- Take hands to low back
- Come down , lie flat
- Savasana

Appendix 7

Invocation

AM Virasana

AMS, raise root of thighs up, take F thighs to B thighs

Raise your shoulders

Tadasana

- Look at your feet, 4 corners of feet , f - b
- Lift inner ankle to outer
- Lift both sides of knees, inner and outer
- Step leg to

Utthita Hasta Padasana

- Now it's not so easy to find knee lift, so
- don't turn feet in before Trikonasana, ie don't keep outer feet parallel
- Keep centre toes pointing forwards

Trikonasana

- grinding the heel firmly down and lifting toes, turns leg from root of the groins
- this makes for different feet alignment for a reason
- for beginners this is good, because it encourages the hip to go in and forward
- without knowing it, they get their legs to go further apart

Trikonasana with bricks and partner

- Find spreading action of back thigh
- Partner crouches behind, places brick at sit bone and upper thigh of right leg, when going to RHS
- Press thigh wide and long, flatten thigh on bricks

After discussion, we did Surya Namaste, to change/ lift energy

AMS, jump to Uttanasana, U Hastasana, AMS

Chaturanga dandasana- UMS, AMS, Tadasana

Ardha Chandrasana

- Up leg, fill up the muscle like a balloon
 - Strong leg helps balance
- Repeat
- Now focus on supporting leg
 - Spread the back, top thigh as if on the brick

Parsvottanasana

- Against a pillar
- Front leg, back of thigh on pillar, spread it
- Take back leg , back more
- Lengthen sides of body

Uttanasana

- Spread , width of b thigh

AMS

- Lift up, alternate, L and R legs, high!
- Jump to Uttanasana

Full Arm Balance at wall,(teacher helpers brought bolsters , if needed)

Padottanasana

- Look at ankles, which is higher?
- Lift inner ankle to outer

Vira 1

- Back leg, don't turn it in completely
- Find length in side, back hip
- Extension into ankle

Utthita Parsvakonasana (to RHS) with BRICK

- Partner goes behind, crouching, brick on knee, like a table top, supporting brick under thigh of "doer"
- Broaden and soften R sit bone and thigh of bent leg
- Weight goes on outer foot toes, knee back
- Inner R buttock forward
- Deflate R hinge, ie root of thigh
- This prevents too much weight in R knee

Vira 3

- We did hands to floor, to get leg actions
- Do full pose chest up, look forward

Sirsasana

- Eka pada, remembering the brick action
- Take one leg up at a time, full pose

Upavistha Konasana

- Spreading buttocks, feet up
- Hold feet, look up
- Turn to R and L

Virasana, fwd bend

- Take root of thigh down

Halasana

- Take folded blanket, roll it, thick roll
- Take hands low in back,
- This support really gets you on tops of shoulder
- Hold toe of down leg, raise one leg up

Savasana

- Release legs, let them go outwards
- Let go of face

- Release face skin to back of head.

Appendix 8

Invocation

Baddha Konasana

- Get thigh bone into hip socket

AMS

- Walk hands towards feet, to get heels totally down

Utthita Hasta Padasana

- Lift under upper arms
- Where are you looking? eyes should never be lower than eye level
- To lift energy, esp for depression, look up a little higher than eye level

Jumpings to Hasta Padasana

- To get lift @ side, upper rib cage, bend arms in, elbows up and - jump,
- - arms overhead

Trikonasana

- Turn R leg at top, take inner , back buttock forward, not pelvis
- reach into arms, take higher than parallel to floor

Vira 2

- Reach into arms
- Side ribs, open and lift

Utthita Parsvakonasana

Ardha Chandrasana

- Open the sides of the eyes and be aware of that area
-

Vira 1

- We did lots of repeats, just bending the leg , moving into the pose

Vira 3

- Extending the body over the thigh, do full pose looking forwards
-

Ardha Chandrasana Repeats, x7/ x8 in centre

We alternated in groups, spacing out well, using the whole hall!

- Make space around you, take up space
- Keep facing forward in pose, don't look down
- Be aware of outer corners of eyes,
- Keep moving through pose, R side to L side, continual...
- Find a rhythm and balance
- Take leg up high and front arm far away
- See where your eyes go....

Vira 3

- Repeat same idea, moving into pose , R to L
- Lets you feel the pose and a state of balance, through motion

AMS

- Put one foot on top of the other, roll into

Anantasana

Full Arm Balance @ wall

- Kick one leg up at a time
- Don't worry if you cannot get both legs up
- Walk in further and lift up
- Keep moving and trying

Uttanasana

- Inhale, arms up, palms face fwd
- Throw arms/ body forward, strong and fast
- Exhale, arms go down
- Relax arms, let go, palms face up
- Repeats, 6 - 10, fast!!

Padottanasana

- Repeat as above
-

Prepare for Ardha Sirsasana in centre

Abhi looked at our hands

- Keep a gentleness in hand clasp
- Let fingers touch metatarsals gently
- Thumbs cross at nails (but does depend on hand/ thumb size)
- Put your head in the palms, like a teacup and saucer
- Let it fit well
- Press ulna to floor
- Wrists to elbows
- Wrists can be parallel, but not all the time , because the head should be in the hands

We did lots of preparation

For beginners:

- Kneeling, set arms
- Dangle head
- Keeping head up, walk far in
- Be on toe tips, lift shoulders well
- Raise R leg
- Lift top thigh of leg at floor
- Long hold here, each side
- Then, take one leg up at a time

Appendix 9

As a guideline, for raw beginners, Sirsasana steps:

- Week 1-5
- Center of room
- Do preparation, as described above

After Week 5

- Go to wall
- Prepare head, walk in, far in
- raise one leg
- Often it will bang at wall, let them do it!
- Often buttocks will hit the wall, let it!
- Let them have a go
- BUT, legs must be straight
- Shoulders must lift
- Let them do this first

Very important, - watch your students.

Stand to the side, see which leg goes up first.

If they can't achieve it, support the leg.

Then , if they can stay up, only then get buttocks away from wall.

Let them balance like this, then come down.

In a previous class that week they demonstrated on various people, how to improve their poses.

Student with short arms

- had been told to use a folded blanket setup
- This did not help , as it further shortened her arms
- It also prevented armpit to elbow extension.
- After a few experiments
- All blankets were removed, this helped get C7 in and get her arms working better
- They advised for her to occasionally going to corner wall, to keep alignment awareness

A strong, tall man, experiencing lumbar pain in Sirsasana.

- Too much curve in lumbar and hard abdominals
- Advised to go back to wall, to learn to spread diaphragm and soften in his pose

A student with hard upper abdominals in Sirsasana

- Lie in Dwi Pada, on the stage
- Head over edge
- Arms out to side, on the stage
- Wait for upper body to soften

Use corner of a pillar, or corner of room

- This brings back alignment to the pose

We ended class with Setu Bandha, using brick, long hold.

Appendix 10

Sukhasana, “ settle down for prayers”

Invocation and Guru chant

Baddha Konasana, sit up high, use 3 or 4 blankets

Strong arm work

- Clasp hands, U Hastasana, make palms flat
- Chin up look up to ceiling , look back
- Dorsal in
- Open your eyes wide

Change clasp

- Look down, chin down
- Take elbows behind ears
- Lift palms up, trapezius goes down the spine

Virasana

- Clasp hands, level back, lift spine
- Gomukhasana arms x2

Bend forward, take hands to Paschima Namaste

- Sit up,
- Dorsal in
- Take tip of shoulder blade inwards
- Broaden sternum

AMS

- In AMS, F thigh moves from outer to inner
B thigh moves from inner to outer
- In a circular motion

UMS

- B thigh moves from inner to outer
- Tailbone twds buttocks, buttocks skin twds thigh
- Take hands wider, open chest
- Look up and sternum lifts

Feet, - first UMS with toes flexed

Repeats, moving, roll on top of feet for UMS

Prep for Bhujangasana (repeats x 4)

- Blanket under pelvis

- Lie flat, forehead on floor, hands to side chest
- Palms behind, clasp hands
- Lift arms high, shoulders away from floor

Bhujangasana(repeat 4 / 5 times)

- Hands to floor @ side chest
- lift chest , roll shoulders back
- Take top buttock twds tailbone, tailbone twds feet

Makarasana , repeat 3 / 4 times

Tadasana

- Start to curve @ cervical neck, look up and back
- Take hands to upper, back thigh,- slowly curve back
- Hands to behind and below knees, curving back, look behind you
- Look to the floor, can bend knees now
- Inhale and come up
- Try to exhale as you come up, keep breath going, to avoid headache

Ustrasana

- kneel on blanket
- To get f ankles and shins to go down, bang each lower leg, one at a time
- This opens and spreads the area
- Can put a folded blanket under ankles, press ankles down well
- Curve at cervical neck, look up to ceiling
- Roll shoulders back
- Take hands to lower buttock, then to inner top thigh
- Keep curving back
- Exhale, come up

Repeat, as above

- Then, take hands down, dangle them.
- Curve back more, take hold of ankles, or hands on feet
- Take thighs to perpendicular
- Exhale, come up
- Repeat x 10, in own time, slowly!

Virasana

- adho mukha

Sirsasana

- Stay, few minutes
- If palms fall open, roll them towards your head, then press forearms down firmly

Try like this

- Use a belt @ elbows
- Tri fold blanket @ crown of head
- Go up near a wall
- Inner groins lift up to inner ankles

- Outer hip joint lifts up to outer ankles
- Then grip hips towards each other
- This makes the pose lighter

Also try

- Push elbows , towards the belt
- This lifts the back shoulders up
- And takes heaviness off the neck

Sarvangasana

- Use x 4 folded blankets, and mat
- Go up and hold
- Lift middle buttock
- Take legs 1 foot apart
- Lift up, inner groins to inner ankle
- Lift up, outer hip to outer ankles
- Take pelvis and middle buttock forward

Variations

- Halasana
- Supta konasana
- Parsva halasana
- From floor, Eka pada, alt legs
- Then take both legs up together to Sarvangasana
- Setu bandha, alt legs, (repeats)
- Repeat , dropping both legs to Setu Bandha, long hold!
- (If cannot do, go to Chatushpadasana)
- slide down
- Only head, neck and shoulders on supports
- Hips must be on the floor
- Swastikasana legs
- Let go - (this was our Sarvangasana)

Appendix 11

This class was a step up!

Starting with full arm balance at the wall

- Prepare with fingers touching wall, go up
- Only heel at wall, lift up
- Take hands 15 cm away from wall,
- Open at hips and lift up

AMS to UMS on mat

Purvottanasana

- Lift under buttocks

- Lengthen , but soften abdomen
- Lift shins

Bhujangasana

- Keep top thigh well down
- Try not to curve, rather go straight up upwards
- Open f thigh, press root of back thigh down

Pincha Mayurasana

- At wall, no props, just do, quick repeats

Urdhva Dhanurasana

- In centre, repeats
- Be mindful of shins, lift shins vertically
- Take calf to shins

We looked at picture of Guruji, at the angle of his arms in this pose.

Eka Pada Urdhva Dhanurasana

- Go to UD, be on toes
Lift dorsal by straightening up shins more
- To lift R foot, (you can choose whichever side feels more stable)
- Lift root of thigh @ back L buttock - Open groins
- Then lighten the R foot by putting all weight on L leg
- Lift up R foot, lighten it ,put toe to floor
- Repeat with left foot.

Repeat as above,

- Then bend shin to thigh, keeping the lift

Then repeat, straightening leg up, BUT keep shin lifting

- Don't push into the arms
- Supporting leg:lift under root of back thigh, where it meets buttocks
- Press fingers!
- If wrists ache, lift at inner wrists, use fingers better, press more

Alternative, if this is too much

- Take 2 brick to wall, be on edge of brick with wrist/ hand palm

Dwi Pada Viparita Dandasana, (from U Dhanurasana)

- On mat, in centre
- Legs bent
- Be on elbow side of the head
- Take shin to thigh into
- Eka pada

Alternative, go to wall

- Take high stool
- Sticky mat , folded on top

- Take feet to wall, parallel to floor
- Take elbows to floor, supported on blankets/ mats or bolster for height
- Can take legs lower, to floor
- Bend leg, shin to thigh
- Eka pada

There were many teacher assistants watching and helping us with the props- adjusting the poses, especially during these very full classes . I was helped by an elderly teacher who I'd seen teaching remedial classes. This was an example of the communal way of teaching. If needed , there was always an experienced teacher to keep you safe, when new to props.

Mandalasana

Prepare - go to Ardha Sirsasana

- Walk to RHS, walk to maximum, until legs go past the head
- Transfer weight to right side more
- Lift left leg only a little and flip over, into Dwi Pada Viparita Dandasana
- Transfer to other side of mat, repeat, moving to LHS

We all did as much or little as we could. Many of us just did the walking to the side, but some teacher helpers came up and helped us flip over, with the rope.

More experienced students were taught how to support, by watching the teachers using a rope under the hips, to keep the lift, when walking round in Dwi Pada.

The rope was changed over to front the hips, to help flip back to Ardha Sirsasana .

Raya was keen we just had a go, without focussing too much on technical detail.

Chatushpadasana

- This was a pose we practised in many classes
- This time we took both hands to R ankle, then to L
- Dwi Pada, straighten alternate legs, above

Setu Bandha

- Eka Pada

Prone Savasana

- Feet wide, toes in, spread

Appendix 12

Sukhasana

- Use hands to move buttocks flesh out
- Find the top of the femur bones, be on the front, sit here
- Broaden the clavicle area
- Don't just lift from the sternum as this can tighten the diaphragm

- So, be aware of the evenness in the throat
- Keep both sides parallel, not just on the outside, but feel from the inside too
- LINK, from the top throat- under chin- dorsal are
- Dorsal , curves through the body, lifting under the chin, towards the neck area
- There's a connection from dorsal to neck area
- Soften the ribs

Invocation and Guru chant

Swastikasana, fwd bend

- Soften abdomen to go forward
- Sternum fwd
- Broaden shoulder blades, taking lower shoulder blades in

Virasana

- Fwd bend, take arms to side

AMS

- Bolster support
- but take forehead lightly to support
- Tip of nose down
- Lift top thighs to make head lighter
- Long hold!

Padottanasana

Sirsasana

- Bottom shoulder blades are now on top, lift them up
- Take feet a little apart, inner thighs to inner ankles, lift up
- Long hold, time to use body well

Dandasana to Janu to Paschimottanasana , bolster support, sit on blanket, if needed

- Rest diaphragm on bolster to soften
- Soften intercostal muscles

Sarvangasana

- Centre room, using big black mats, x 3 piled up, f blankets and mats
- Halasana, taking legs well back to be on top shoulders
- Find Jalandhara Bandha
- Go up, full pose

Swap - go to wall/ stage, bolster and blanket

- To get Jalandhara Bandha better, do
- Niralamba, facing wall
- Go to Karna Pidasana, feel Jalandhara B
- Back to Niralamba, toes at wall, lift onto tops of shoulders more

In centre, bolster and whatever extra support needed

Seated Pranayama

- Few cycles of Ujjayi 1
- Digital fingers, prepare for
- Surya Bhedana and Chandra Bhedana
- She spoke us through x5 cycles Surya Bhedana
- can do cycles of Ujjayi between each cycle if needed
- Then x 5 cycles of Chandra Bhedana
- Ending with hands down, Ujjayi 1

Nadi Sodhana Pranayama x 10 cycles

She spoke us through the cycles, making it seem really simply and clear
We could go to Ujjayi 1 , or repeat Ujjayi 1 between cycles if needed.

Savasana, 5 minutes

- Lie totally flat
- Put all supports on thighs

Appendix 13

Sukhasana

- Think of lift of the sacrum, sternum, dorsal
- Sides of body long
- Keep lifting during

Invocation and Guru chant

After chanting, did you maintain the lift?

She spoke about how we tend to be lazy, we let things slip.

Our body tends to slip, but the state of mind is what keeps us from slipping.

AMS

- Repeat, hands turn out

Adho Mukha Vrksasana

- At wall
-

AMS and UMS in centre

- Experiment with hands turning out
- This gives more width at side ribs

AMS -

- Hands facing towards you, wrist action!

-

Go to wall, bolster @ wall , place at angle

AM Vrksasana

- wrists on bolster, wrists face wall
- Hands at an angle
- See what this does to side ribs
- Put full palm on bolster, then part palm
- If not going up, do in AMS and walk in well

We experimented at the wall, full arm balance(without bolster)

- Hands facing forwards, sideways and towards you
- Feel side body

Pincha Mayurasana-

- Folded blanket and belt
- Repeat with hands facing upwards
- Press thumb side of wrist down

Abhi told us that Guruji said

“ think about action, sensation and deliberation/ perception, when in asana”

Assistant teachers pressed our wrists down, when we were in the pose.

Virasana

- Variations, with focus on upper arm
- Parvatasana arms (bend elbows to side, palms face ceiling, clasped hands)
- The skin on inner, upper arm goes towards skin on outer arm
- This makes the upper arm positive, as you extend arm upwards

Take arms up “normally” , notice the difference in the “ contents ” of upper thorax.

Prasarita Padottanasana x 2

- Lift inner thighs and separate buttocks
- Broaden and widen sternum along its length

Sirsasana

Ardha Sirsasana (choice to do at wall)

- Place elbows well
- Side body awareness

In Sirsasana

- Watch elbows, keep them in
- Outer arms in, deltoids lifting
- Lift shoulders

Separate legs a little

- Lift inner thighs twds inner ankles
- Keeping lift , close legs again and feel the lightness in the body

Coming down-

- Keep lift of shoulders, deltoids and upper arms
- Bring both legs down together, lightly

Adho Mukha Vrksasana at wall

- This felt SO light and easy to stay
-

Chair, Dwi Pada with rolled mat (centre room)

- Fold mat in half
- Roll tightly from folded end
- Place rolled mat on chair seat centre, top of mat folds over seat edge, (for dorsal support)
- Straight legs
- Take hands to chair back
- "Wrap" pelvis like a corset, from outer to inner
- Abdomen wide

In the pose

- Press down pubic bone and sacrum, towards the chair
- Keep Front body long, don't let it go twd pubis
- If you lose action, best to come up and start again

Repeat, chair at wall

- Legs horizontal , feet at wall
- Take feet to floor
- Press palms at chair, pubis and sacrum press to chair
- Feel length of sacrum and side body, due to strong leg work and hands pressing.

Chair Sarvangasana

- Mat on floor, bolster on top
- When legs are up on chair back, take arms through lower bar of chair
Upper arms press down, lift dorsal
Skin on back moves as if to meet front body
- Bend arms, pull chair a little more into your back
 - This gave more dosall lift
 - Inner legs lift to inner ankle
 - Bend elbows, face palms to front, chest lifts, shoulders go down
 - This lifts back body

Long hold and focus on skin of back body

In the pose, don't let the brain, "puff", soften at the temples, let go of tension.
Remember this in Sirsasana too.

Come out of pose swiftly- to keep the imprint of lifting the back body to front body

- Sit on bolster in Swastikasana
- Be on top of femur bone, front of sit bones

If Prana is the lover, the back is the beloved, bring them towards each other

- Don't take chin to chest too strongly, don't let 7th cervical bulge
- Inhale, exhale few cycles

Ujjayi 6 (longer exhalation)

- Long, slow inhalations
- Move inhalations vertebrae by vertebrae
- Like a ladder, inhale from the base of the spine, moving up the spine
- Inhale, and "hook" the breath onto the 7th cervical vertebrae
- Keep that extension as you exhale,
- Exhale slowly down again

-

Normal breathing in between

- Keep jaw, teeth, tongue soft

Repeat a few cycles of Ujjayi 6 like this

Savasana - lying flat