



Welcome to the Easter 2019 edition of our e-newsletter.

www.oriy.org.uk

Dear Members,

As promised in the last newsletter shortly after Geetaji's death this edition will include some reflections on her contribution to yoga. So, as I began to consider how to put this newsletter together, I decided to spend some time watching YouTube videos of her teaching hoping it would give me some inspiration. What I found that was so encouraging and reassuring was that her knowledge and wisdom are still with us in the voices of all who had the privilege of being taught by her. I hear her turn of phrase in my teachers and now know from where it comes. Our Senior Iyengar Yoga Teachers who travelled to Pune on many occasions, over many years have gained such knowledge which they can now bestow on us. We will endeavour to provide events over the next few years with these teachers who were blessed to receive a great deal of instruction under her tutorage.

I also wanted to share some of Geetaji's actual thoughts and words and so, although the material in her book



Yoga - a gem for women is now almost 30 years old it still has great resonance and value. It clearly illustrates her humility, intelligence, wisdom and total commitment to yoga and especially to her Guru and father – BKS Iyengar.

Also included is a piece on whether yoga can be therapy by Guruji where he shares his insights into the physical and spiritual rewards that can be gained from the practice of Yoga.

As you know we awarded a bursary to Georgina Roberts, one of our teacher members last year to enable her to visit RIMIYI for the first time. She has provided a really interesting report of this visit which will be available for you all to enjoy on our website in the near future. The following quotes give a flavour of her experiences.

“ I guess in many ways, the message from most of the teachers, was to have a go at the more advanced poses and not get too taken up with all the details. Raya often told us, it was not a bad thing to fall/ over balance, but try again and learn from that - there was lots of freedom to experiment. To me, learning is something individual, but being at RIMIYI and Pune has deepened my awareness of Iyengar Yoga, even more than I expected. “

As usual this newsletter contains snippets of information and updates on events as well as a short report from Julia Hardy about her visit to Balewadi last December for the Centenary celebrations.

You should all have received an email from IY(UK) reminding you that your £15 ORIY subs were due at the end of March – with information on how to pay directly to IY(UK) using their website. If you have not already done this go to <https://iyengaryoga.org.uk/> The process is pretty straight forward but you may need to change your password to get access to the members page if you need any help with this contact Julia at jhardy2406@gmail.com

Best wishes

Mary
ORIY Chair and Newsletter Editor
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Events

The workshop with Julie Brown in February provided considerable challenge and was well received. These events provide the ideal opportunity for students to practice some of the more demanding ananas under the tutorage of skilled senior teachers. Many thanks to all who supported this event.

The Beacon in Wantage was a new venue for us – let us know if you liked it. It would also be very helpful to know if there are any other venues that would be good for us to use in any part of our large region or, if you have any particular teachers you would like us to approach to run a workshop.

Some photos of the event.



Future Events

Saturday 29th June - Senior Teacher and sanskrit scholar, Sallie Sullivan teaching a very special workshop in Newbury. The full details are on the website

Saturday 2nd November - Senior Teacher, Cathy Rodgers Evans providing a Professional Development Day for our **Teacher members** to be held at St Nicolas School, Newbury, RG14 7UL. The subject to be covered is Pregnancy.

18 – 21 July - World Yoga Festival in Reading – Garth McLean a Senior Iyengar Yoga Teacher of international acclaim based in Los Angeles will be teaching the Iyengar Yoga classes over the weekend. ORIY will have a stand at this event – do drop by to see us.

And finally, Uday Bhosale will be returning to our region to teach a 2 day event on **4th and 5th April 2020** - the venue will be Steventon Village Hall - more details soon but for now, save the date!



ORIY Committee - IY Rep needed.

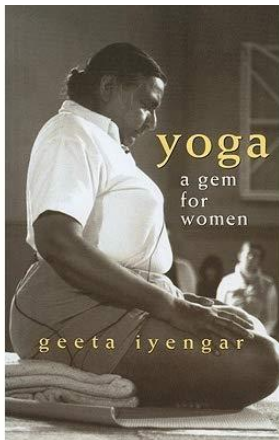
As stated in the last newsletter the position of ORIY Representative on the IY Executive Committee is now vacant so we are looking for someone to take on this role. So, if any of you are keen to get more involved please contact me.

Yoga a gem for women – by Geeta Iyengar

Some words from Geetaji taken from the Preface

When urged to write a book on yoga for women she said ...

“For a long time I hesitated. I felt I had neither the intellectual ability nor the moral courage to write a book, particularly on yoga with special reference to the needs of women; but here a pat of encouragement came from my mother – Amma as I used to call her: ‘You must write the book,’ she said, ‘but not to parade your intellectual attainments. God has given Yoga as a priceless gift for women, and this you must reveal to the world.’



Her remarks, born out of her experiences in life, were of more value to me than my knowledge obtained from books.

My mother was a saintly woman and led a life of high moral ideas. She did not lecture us on what we should do, but Jnana (Knowledge), Bhakti (Devotion), Karma (Sense of Duty) and Yoga

were expressed in her everyday life and actions. She was an example to us all, the embodiment of pure womanhood.....”

“Before venturing to write this book, I pondered over the present-day economic and social conditions of women contrasted with those of centuries ago. The social and political environment, status, and economic conditions of women years ago led them to a simple life; they were not subjected to the same pressures that burden the women in all walks of life today. Now every item of need has become an indispensable factor of life which is often beyond one’s capacity of acquisition. The economic situation has compelled women to contribute an equal share in order to stabilise living conditions and to avoid present as well as future anxieties. She now has to do the double work of having to meet financial pressures and maintaining harmony in the family. It is necessary for her to keep perfect health and harmony to withstand the stresses and strains of life. Yoga is capable of giving this needed relief if she devotes a little of her time daily to its practice.

Rarely does a pupil find the Guru and the Father in one person. I consider myself doubly fortunate in this respect. Anna – my father – is my Guru. Never did he inflict his opinions or thoughts on me, nor did he try to impose the Yoga Sadhana on me. There was no compulsion or duress. Yoga was my free choice. Verily, I learnt Yoga from him. While teaching me Yoga he treated me not like his daughter, but as a pupil. I know that he is very exacting as a teacher. He is a stickler for discipline and a taskmaster; but his ways are gentle persuasion and not stern reprimand. He expects discipline and keen attention from his pupils. Is not Yoga Sadhana the greatest of disciplines?

The fact that life is an admixture of happiness and sorrow cannot become untrue. It should be so, as otherwise life has no meaning and becomes a dead matter. Yoga makes one face both happiness and sorrow with equanimity. So, I am overjoyed in presenting my book Yoga – A Gem for Women before my readers, yet my joy is tinged with an imprint of sorrow as my mother is no longer in this world to share in my joy, for it was she who ferried me to a higher shore by example and precept. It is impossible for me to repay the debt of gratitude of my father and mother who became my Gurus, except to follow forever and sincerely the path of Yoga taught by them.

This book is written with my many years of experience and observation but with one objective – to meet the specific needs of women. It does not however, preclude men, as Yoga is useful for both women and men. The book describes simple techniques of Yoga for women and I am happy to be able to share my experiences with my sisters through this presentation.



Recollections of Geetaji at the Centenary Celebrations, Balewadi Stadium, Pune. By Julia Hardy



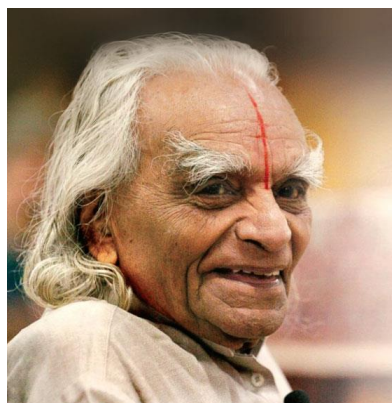
I had the privilege of experiencing Geeta's teaching at Balewadi in December 2018.

I had attended only one UK convention (Birmingham 2017) and had been lucky enough to have had a couple of weeks in India in early 2018 so had 'a taste' of Indian culture – the Balewadi Convention was for me something like a turbo charged combination of these two experiences!

Physically ailing – Geeta was wheeled onto the platform, visibly pained as she manoeuvred from wheelchair to chair helped by her niece Abhijata; short of breath, struggling to speak. In spite of this her teaching was strong, clear and concise. There was no evidence of her frailty as she issued instructions. Her eyes were everywhere! Although fierce in her teaching Geeta showed a warm sense of humour through her anecdotes. Several people mentioned that they felt as if Guruji was with us, perhaps he was – perhaps she felt his presence guiding her and giving her the strength and determination to complete this mammoth teaching task.

During these classes I became increasingly aware of the likeness of my teacher to Geeta; in the way a child is like it's mother (or father). This feeling remains with me and is a testament to the 'lack of dilution' which is for me the essence of the Iyengar method of Yoga teaching. Geeta was clearly exhausted by the end of five days teaching to 1200 people of over 50 different nationalities. (As this was the centenary celebrations there were also many press interviews and dignitaries to manage too so I am sure that her day did not end after teaching.) She gave her all, literally, to celebrate the life and work of her father and Guru, BKS Iyengar.

Can Yoga be a Therapy ? – Taken from Yoga Wisdom and Practice – For health, happiness, and a better world.



By BKS Iyengar

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“ Therapy is a healing art, used not only to combat disease but also to rehabilitate those who are afflicted with physical, organic, mental and social problems. Yoga can help therapeutically to relieve and cure their sufferings so that they live with a healthy body and a happy disposition of mind.

The ancient healing art of yoga has stood and will stand as an unrivalled form of therapy for centuries. Basically, yoga is not therapy though healing is its sideline; it is mainly a spiritual healing science and an art of uniting body, mind and soul as a single entity to merge finally in the Universal Soul.

According to Hatha yoga, diseases are man-made, man-invited, as well as environmental and affected by natural imbalances. According to Samkhya, ayurveda and yoga, imbalances take place and diseases set in when the soul conjuncts with nature. These imbalances are in the form of diseases, weakness, sloth, indecision, carelessness, idleness, incontinence, illusion, disappointments, instability, distress, despair, body-infirmity, and laboured breathing. Due to present day stress, strain and speed, these obstacles get aggravated in one's physio-mental health. Hence, Patanjali puts forward astanga yoga in order to live in the joy of health and tranquillity.

As science has advanced, and is still advancing, diseases multiply too. As modern comforts have facilitated life, the result has been that our body has become lazy; joints and muscles have lost movement, power and growth; and various systems like the respiratory, circulatory, digestive, glandular, urinary, and eliminatory systems are rendered inefficient, these being the vehicles of health of mind and harmony of the self.

Asana plough the inner body and stimulate the necessary supply of bio-energy and blood to irrigate each area of the body for efficient functioning. They also stimulate the diseased and affected parts by making each cell fulfil its function before it dies. Pranayama helps to store much vital energy as a reserve force to act when necessary. Dharana and Dhyana keep the mind calm and serene.

Thus, yoga not only acts as curative therapy but also as a preventive art in keeping the body healthy and firm, mind clear and clean with emotional stability so that the sadhaka is healthy both inside and outside. Patanjali has not forgotten social health too. He says that friendliness, compassion, delight, indifference towards happiness and sorrow, virtue and vice are the ingredients of social health.

Hence, yoga covers the inner field as well as the outer for a better, healthy happy, long life though

”
its aim is freedom and beatitude (moksa).

Shakshuka – eggs sweet peppers and tomato

Just the thing for a healthier brunch – a one pan dish – serves four.

Ingredients

2 red onions



4 garlic cloves

Olive oil

1 teaspoon of ground cumin

4 mixed coloured peppers

2x 400g tins of tomatoes

4 free range eggs

Half a bunch of fresh flat leaf parsley (15 g)

4 tablespoons of natural yogurt

Method

Peel and finely slice the onions and garlic, then place in a large non-stick frying pan on a medium heat with 1 teaspoon of oil. Sprinkle over the cumin and cook for 5 minutes, or until the onions have softened slightly, stirring regularly.

Deseed and finely slice the peppers, add to the pan and cook for 10-15 minutes until soft and sticky.

Tip in the tinned tomatoes with one tin of water, breaking the tomatoes up with a wooden spoon. Season with a little sea salt and black pepper. Give it all a good stir and turn the heat down and leave to bubble for 10 minutes or so until the liquid has reduced and thickened.

Spread the vegetable sauce out in the pan and make four little pockets with the back of a spoon. Crack the eggs into each one then cover with a lid or foil and cook for 3-5 minutes or until the whites are cooked – or longer if you prefer.

Roughly chop the parsley and scatter over the dish and dollop over the yogurt. Delicious served with flat breads or toast.



Happy Easter to all our members