



April 2018

40 Days to Personal Revolution:

Sign up NOW to participate in **40 Days to Personal Revolution**. This course, designed by Baron Baptiste and set out in his book of the same name.

This is a fantastic course that we have run in spring and autumn every year since Apollo Power Yoga opening in mid-2013. We offer this programme because it works. It works to give you power in your asana practice and to build better understanding of the sequence and the alignment of the asanas.

It works to introduce you to the practice of meditation – or to help you recommit to an existing or lapsed meditation practice.

It works to enhance your nutritional awareness.

It works to introduce you to personal inquiry and to aid you in shedding limiting self-beliefs and the states of mind that burden you and hold you back.

We begin this course on **Sunday 6 May at 6:00 pm**. The fee for the course is \$350 (\$150 for annual members). For that you receive:

- Attendance at the six workshops held on Sundays at 6:00 pm.
- All your practice at Apollo Power Yoga for the 40 days of the course.
- A copy of Baron Baptiste's book, *40 Days to Personal Revolution*.
- Weekly hand-outs distributed at the workshops.
- Daily motivational emails.

Commit by yourself, or with your partner or with a friend or group of friends and make yoga the foundation of your most fulfilled way of being.

Step into your Power:

Step into your Power, Apollo Power Yoga's yoga intensive/teacher training, concluded on Saturday 28 April. We had a great and diverse group of participants from around New Zealand and from overseas join us for a week of transformation and growth.

Here is one participant's immediate and unsolicited reaction to her experience on the course:

Back in Auckland from my amazing yoga teacher training in Christchurch. It was a life changing experience not for the non-committed; with blood, sweat and tears (literally); skilfully, facilitated and guided with discipline and love by Hamish Kenworthy and Margo Perpick at Apollo Power Yoga. I take not just a better knowledge and understanding of the power vinyasa yoga series by Baron Baptiste with me but transformation in my body, the (no)mind and my soul which has created a new way of being for me.



Make the commitment now to be part of Step into your Power in 2019. We will run intensives in mid-January and late April. Plan ahead and do not miss your chance to be part of a truly rewarding and transformational process.

One of the great features that we added for this past intensive was by bringing on board Sam from The Rolling Om to do our catering. The food was fresh, well-prepared and was a great complement to the work we did during the week. You can see more about Sam and his work here: <http://www.therollingom.org/>

To apply or for more information contact Hamish (hamish@apollopoweryoga.co.nz or by phone on 0210551884).

Never Say Never:

On our recent yoga intensive, *Step into your Power*, one of the readings was on the subject of Never say Never.

The person who gave the reading is back living in Christchurch having left here when they were 21 on the basis they would *never* come back to live.

“Never” is an abbreviation of “not ever”. It means at no time in the past or future, not ever. It is dramatically emphatic in its meaning. I see yoga students living from “never” often. I see yoga students who are new to practice watching the poses of other more experienced students and saying to themselves “I will never be able to do that!”

I see students taking their past experience and making from their past an agreement as to their future. For instance, they will say of themselves that they have never been able to do crow pose, for example, and then, from that past experience, they will extrapolate to their future and say I will never be able to do crow.

The use of “never” in their inner dialogue or in their conversation with their friends or family about their yoga practice may have an element

of hyperbole about it – they may be exaggerating for the purposes of effect.

And yet, the “never” in their dialogue has an energy about it. There is a closing down of possibility and a denial of potential in “never”. As the reading exhorted us, never say never. Sir Winston Churchill said that practice, not strength or intelligence, was the key to unlocking potential. Taking this sage advice and applying it to the example of crow pose, there are those who saw they are not strong enough to do crow and conclude that they cannot do it and will never be able to do it.

Others say they do not know how – that is they lack the alignment and mechanical intelligence for the pose. They similarly conclude that they will never do it. It is a sad state of affairs as crow pose is fun.

What may the answer be? As Churchill rightly states, practice is the key. Start by placing your hands at the floor, just wider than shoulder width apart, and tuck your knees up as high on your arms as you can. That is the start and may be your crow for some time.



Progressively, shift more weight away from your feet to your hands until you can lift one foot from the floor. Reach your head and chest further forward and set your gaze out in front of you by a foot or two. Ultimately your two feet will lift from the floor without you even

needing to even think of them. And so it will progress.

It does not happen overnight. It happens over a period of sustained practice and with an open mind rather than a closed mind of “never”. The joy in one student’s voice as she called out in the middle of class one day “I’m in crow” was tremendous. She had been practicing yoga for some years and doing our style of practice at Apollo Power Yoga for perhaps 18 months. In that time she had experienced difficulty with crow but had been a yes for the endeavour and the result was rewarding.

One way that some students say never is by saying “always”. Always is simply the opposite of never. “I always modify my low plank” a student will think to themselves. Another will substitute or add side plank to that phrase. Another will say “I always do bridge not wheel”. The commitment to doing one thing is as limiting as the commitment to never doing another thing.

It can be the same with someone hell-bent on doing the “tricks” of practice. I feel powerful resistance to thunderbolt with prayer and twist, especially when twisting to my left. At times I have taken side crow, just to avoid the challenge of thunderbolt with prayer and twist. I have seen others do just that – take the optional variation rather than do the foundational pose.

In that case, what side crow offers denies you the experience of what thunderbolt with prayer and twist has to offer. Accordingly, in my own practice I have made a resolve that I will do side crow only when I have been in thunderbolt with prayer and twist long enough to get the juice of that pose. I get both poses some of the time and deny myself neither. There is no always and no never.

The beauty of yoga practice is that it works on your entire being such that a consistent

practice will allow you avenues of growth in all areas so long as you are not coming from a place of never or always.

Strength may be a barrier to you in a particular pose but by consistently practicing you will build strength from other poses or transitions in the class and this accumulating strength will eventually give you access to the pose(s) where you have been blocked.

The same applies to the poses where mobility is a barrier. The same applies to the aspects of your practice where your mind is a barrier due to its restlessness.

If you have barriers of never or always in your asana practice, ask yourself where else in your life you limit yourself or predetermine your experience in the same way. Reframe what is possible by being open to transformation.

Stay with the practice. Be patient. If you find yourself demanding overnight cures or sudden transformation or a quick fix be present to that. Consider what it is that is driving your need for instant gratification and how does that show up in your life.

I have found that the quick pleasures of life – an instant hit of white sugar or the numbness of a television screen, or whatever – do not offer the fulfilment or contentment of the slow-cooked pleasures that come from persistence and hard work.

The *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, a source of ancient yogic philosophy, describes practice as that which is adhered to, in all earnestness for a long period of time. Be patient. Work steadily. The outcome will be an emergence of strengths within you: strengths of stability, strengths of mobility and strengths of presence and calmness.

Right now in my own asana I am working on poses and transitions that I once thought were

beyond me. They have emerged because I never said never and kept ajar to door to the possibility of those poses and transitions. They are possible because the work I have done in the rest of my practice has created the strengths necessary to move into new areas.

Make possibility and the fulfilment of your potential your long-term goal. Keep your mind and spirit open to new experience and the evolution of your whole being through yoga. Never say never. Never consign yourself to the limiting parameters of always as the flip-side of never. Be up to something bigger.

Asana Spotlight:

The next pose in the Grounding series from Journey into Power that we address is *parsvottanasana* (split leg standing forward fold). This is a technically challenging position that requires a good foundation from your feet to your hips.

- From straddle legged forward fold (last month's focus asana) set your hands at your hips, engage your core and lift your torso to vertical. Turn your right foot to face the front of your mat on 12 o'clock. Step your back foot forward by about a third of the distance of your stance in straddle legged forward fold.
- The precise distance by which you need to shorten your base varies from person to person. The key is that the length of your base should allow you to now rotate your hips such that they face the front of the room. This action should be able to be taken but without too much ease. Work for it. Experiment with what happens with different lengths to your base and work towards a length that works for you in each practice with little variations (your body may be less responsive in a morning practice or your body may be more

responsive when you have been sitting less)

- Align your back foot to about 10:30 on the clock. Again, this angle (45° off-centre) is approximate. Those with tighter hips may require a slightly narrower angle. Those with greater hip mobility may be able to work with a wider angle (perhaps 60° off-centre). For those with tighter hips avoid seeking too much ease by having too narrow an angle at your back foot. There is work to be done here.
- Ground the big toe mound of your front foot and the centre of your front heel. Press the outer edge of your back foot to the floor. Rotate inwards and upwards through your legs to your pelvic floor and turn your hips to face the front of your mat.
- This is a straight-legged pose but, as with all forward folds, there is no need to be rigidly straight in your legs if doing so causes you to experience strain or bad pain, or causes you to hyper-extend your right knee, or creates a hooping and rounding of your low back. A slight bend at your front knee can free up your experience in the pose.
- Similarly, you may experience a strong counter-action between your back foot and the squaring action of your hips. Creating a square with your hips is more important than having the outer edge of your back foot or even your back heel grounded. A slight lift here is permissible but take this variation only if necessary to ensure you can square your hips.
- There are a variety of arm variations for this pose but here we will offer reverse namaskar. Lower your arms by your sides and rotate your arms inwards. To initiate this action watch for the outcome at your hands. An internal rotation of your arms will cause your thumbs to turn in towards

your thighs and your pinkie fingers to turn outwards away from your thighs.

- Bend your elbows and bring your hands into a prayer position between your shoulder blades. Not everyone can do this. One alternative is to have your hands in prayer but pointing down rather than up your back. Another alternative is to bend your elbows and clasp your hands to the opposite elbow as you would for rag doll pose but with your arms behind your back.
- Having internally rotated your arms to enable you to fold them up behind your back, once your hands are in reverse prayer position, take your arm bones and shoulders to your back and externally rotate your upper arms. Press your thoracic spine in towards your chest but draw your front ribs in towards centreline.
- Hinge at your hips and fold your torso towards your right thigh. More important than flexion or rounding in your spine in this moment is the action of tilting your pelvis forwards at your hips.



- As you fold forward be aware of the orientation of your spine relative to your front leg. If your spine is aligned or angled to the centre of your mat or even towards the front left corner of your mat, that is an indicator that there is more work to do at your feet and the rotation of your hips. Pull your right hip straight back towards the back of the room and rotate your left hip forward towards the front of your mat.

In doing so be aware of the re-orientation of your spine such that it is aligned over your right thigh.

- Hold for 5 breaths or more. With each round of breath invite more length into your back body and lower the tip of your nose towards your right shin.

Split legged forward fold can be challenging. Beware collapsing in to your weaknesses or over-reaching for the perception of depth. Come with integrity to this pose and be done unto by *parsvottanasana*.

New Regent Street Businesses

We know it's tough to get to them, with so many roadworks in the surrounding area, but don't forget that there are lots of great central city businesses in New Regent Street – "the most beautiful street in the world"!

A newbie on the street, and one which Apollo yogis will definitely want to check out, is STAGE DOOR. Its main business is dance wear and shoes, but it has a great line of yoga wear and street wear, too.

Right next door is the eternally cool BEADZ. Catering to any kind of bead work that you want to do, and with a great line of jewellery from Rowena Watson as well.



Speaking of jewellery, just a few doors down is YOUNG'S JEWELLERS, specialising in vintage jewellery. Just wow.

Across the street, our yogi Mandy Nelson and her partner Greg operate the socially conscious marketing agency G&A. This is a “GiveBack” marketing agency, that pairs up its clients with a cause, charity or not-for-profit, for the mutual publicity and benefit to all involved.

Also in the street are Nspyre Red Boutique Hair Lounge, Expressions Tattoo & Gallery, Mrs Higgins Oven Fresh Cookies, Trudy’s Groovy Eyewear Emporium, Rekindle, Shop Eight Food & Wine, Moko Cafe, and The Last Word. Check it out!

From Baron Baptiste:



*Positive change comes not when we declare
“I’ve earned this” but rather when we are
ready and willing to receive it.*

Namaste

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