



April 2014

**ANZAC Timetable:** By popular demand we are open on ANZAC Day contrary to what was stated in last month's magazine. Our classes that day are:

25 April – Anzac Day – 9am PAL60 and 5:30pm PG60.

#### **Workshops:**

**40 Days to Personal Revolution:** This programme kicks off on **11 May and runs to 22 June**. Based on Baron Baptiste's book, the programme involves daily meditation, asana practice, good nutritional practice and personal inquiry. Be the change you want to see in your life! Registration is \$250 (half price for annual members). Book now!

**Healing Tao Qigong for Women:** Gabrielle Euteneuer is leading this Introduction and Mini Workshop on **Friday 9 May from 7-8pm**. Bookings are preferred: with Gabrielle ([tao@taomotion.com](mailto:tao@taomotion.com)) or at Apollo Power Yoga. The cost is a gold coin donation.

**Yoga Mats:** There is a wide range of yoga mats to choose from when making the commitment to a purchase. Some are made of "all natural" materials. Some are moulded petro-chemicals. Some are really thin. Some are light. Some are like stretches of tarmac. How to choose?

In a hot yoga class even a "sticky" mat is likely to get slippery as the palms of your hands and the soles of your feet begin to perspire. Having a towel on your mat – or at least to hand to wipe on – is necessary. There is a mat that is half mat/half towel but it is very thin

and is not recommended, especially for use on a hard floor.

**Lululemon** produce a mat called "The Mat", which has a soft side and a firmer side. The firmer side is good for vinyasa style classes and the mat is very absorbent. This is an excellent mat. Its efficacy in absorbing sweat reduces over time, but it provides a good foundation for your practice. Beware though, it is a dense and heavy mat.

"The Mat" has a big brother called "The Big Mat" – same material and thickness but wider and longer. This is a good choice for taller practitioners or those whose limited mobility means they have trouble hinging their hips and confining themselves to the parameters of standard mats in downward facing dog. Cleaning these mats has its challenges – they are so absorbent! – but it is worthwhile. Letting an absorbent mat become a toxic wasteland of sweat is not ideal.

These mats come at a cost – the standard price is \$79.00.

At Apollo we stock mats for \$45.00 that are perfectly good for everyday practice and are easy to clean. These mats are not as hard wearing and are not absorbent in the manner of "The Mat". They are thick enough (5mm) for comfortable practice on a hard floor and are easy to clean and maintain.

Mats as thin as 3mm are available but they afford scant protection from hard floors and little stability on softer surfaces. We do not recommend them. Some 3mm thick mats

start to stretch under the strain of downward facing dog. Such mats are unsuitable. Even the 3mm thick **Jade** and **Manduka** mats (made from a lovely fabric with a good gripping texture to practice on) will not please the points of your hips as you take floor bow or your knees in dragon. Jade and Manduka (eKO mat) both produce mats that are sustainably produced using natural rubber. Manduka have been making a mat called “The Black Mat” for years. It is thicker, very hard wearing and well-reviewed. This mat will improve in feel once it has been used a little and some of its freshly manufactured sheen is gone. At US\$100 it is not cheap but will outlast most other mats available and there is a long-term saving in that. It is not strictly an eco-mat but if it does not need to be replaced as regularly as other mats it helps the environment in that way.

**prAna** is another mat producer of good repute. I have used their E.C.O. mat. It was good while it lasted but it did not last long and was a bit slippery. Since I purchased mine, they claim to have made improvements to this mat. I also had an extra-large prAna mat that I called “the road” because it just rolled out flat like a road. It too was good while it lasted. I still use it at home from time to time but it wore heavily where I put my hands and feet and The Black Mat by Manduka would be preferable.

There are plenty of good mats out there. There are also some absolute stinkers. Do NOT buy a cheap mat from the Warehouse. They have been selling things that are too thin and too short to practice on. Know the dimensions before you buy. A yoga mat needs to be at least 6 feet (72 inches/180cm) long. They also need to be wide enough. I recently saw a man trying to do downward facing dog on a mat so narrow he has his hands on the

floor either side of the mat. A mat needs to be at least 2 feet wide (24 inches/60cm).

Many men will need a longer and wider mat than that.

Mats do not last forever. If your mat is leaving little pieces everywhere it is time for you to get a new one. If the mat is coming apart it is ceasing to provide you with the stability and support you need.

**Rental mats.** When renting a mat please ensure your toenails are not too long. They cause excessive wear if they are long and cut into the mat. Clean your rental mat after use with the spray bottles and sponges provided and leave it lying flat in the practice room to air dry. If you are particularly sweaty please clean both sides of the mat and move it off the place where you practiced. Thank you. A final word on **mat etiquette**. Try not to stand on other people’s mats unless it is necessary, for example, when assisting them in a workshop.

**New Hemisphere Hempseed Oil Draw:** New Hemisphere have been kind enough to donate three bottles of their New Zealand made hempseed oil to us. The winners are the three people who practiced the most at Apollo Power Yoga from 20 March to 18 April. The winners are: Alice Matheson, Owen Paulsen and Janet Jones-Poole.

Please collect your bottle of New Hemisphere hempseed oil when you are next at the studio. For more information about hempseed oil please visit this website:

<http://www.nzhemppoil.co.nz>

**Baptiste Yoga Teacher Training – Journey into Power:** Have you been thinking about training to be a yoga teacher, either in addition to your current work or as a career change? Or would you just like to immerse yourself in asana,

meditation and personal inquiry for a week? Either way, you should consider the Journey into Power programme at the Baptiste Power Yoga Institute (BPYI).

### ***Go to the Source***

The style of yoga that we practice at Apollo Power Yoga was created by Baron Baptiste during the 1980s. Since then, many other yoga teachers have adopted the style, and in some cases modified it – often by watering it down to make it a weaker practice. When you undertake your teacher training with Baron, you are going to the source. Baron is the person who created this style of yoga, and on his trainings, Baron himself conducts most and sometimes all of the asana and other training sessions. It is an amazing opportunity to bring your own practice up to a higher level, while learning how to teach yoga from a true master facilitator.

### ***What is the First Step?***

BPYI has structured its teacher training programme to make it accessible, even for those who have to travel from a distance. The full training course is broken down into components, so that completion of the first component (Level 1) enables you to start teaching. Going deeper into your training by taking Levels 2 and 3, and becoming a certified teacher, is your option. But getting Level 1 under your belt is all you need to get into the yoga room, teaching classes with skill and authenticity.

And even if you're not considering teaching, Level 1 is still a great programme to take. Unlike yoga "retreats" where you simply practice asana, Journey into Power includes meditation and personal inquiry, to lead you into a more yogic way of being.

### ***What to Expect***

Journey into Power (Level 1) runs for 8 days. They are very full days, commencing with a guided meditation, and then an asana practice

for about 3 hours. The mediation and asana practice are led by Baron. Being taught by Baron for this amount of time brings your own practice up to a higher level, and provides you with key understandings of how to effectively teach a yoga class.

These understandings are added to during the middle part of the day, when there are personal inquiry sessions conducted by Baron and other facilitators. The approach taken is that no one else can teach you how to teach, because just repeating what another teacher says will not enable you to teach with authenticity. The BPYI training enables you to find the teacher in you, and let that teacher shine forth. This usually means letting go of limiting beliefs you have developed, and that process occurs most effectively through personal inquiry.

Letting your inner teacher shine forth is put into practice later in the day (and often far into the evenings) when the larger group separates into small groups of 5, and each person takes turns teaching the other 4. This means that you spend most of this time being taken through more asana practice (just in case the 3 hour practice in the morning wasn't enough for you). All of the small groups are located in the one large practice room, so this means that you have to find the confidence, concentration and volume to make yourself heard to your group, while every other group is doing the same thing. After doing that for 8 days, teaching in a regular classroom is a piece of cake!

### ***Where and when is Journey into Power?***

BPYI runs 2 or 3 Journey into Power programmes every year, in different locations. Most of the locations are on mainland USA, but every few years a programme is run in Hawaii. The locations are usually "retreat" type settings, in parks or nature reserves. Accommodation ranges from individual or shared units to camping options.

For 2014, there are currently two Journey into Power programmes being offered: Sedona (Arizona) in June, and the Catskills (New York State) in August. You can check out further details on the Baptiste website [www.baronbaptiste.com](http://www.baronbaptiste.com).

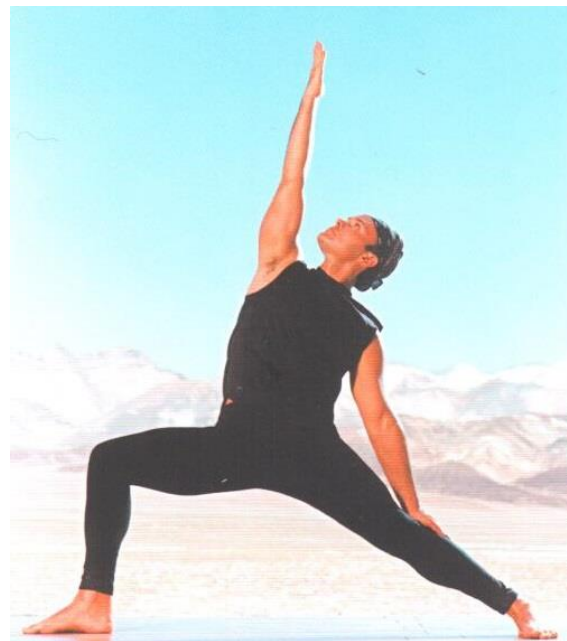


**Asana Spotlight:** Reverse Warrior is a dynamic pose involving a deep lunge, lengthening and strengthening the muscles of the legs, hip opening and back bending. Draw the power up from the earth and radiate outwards through your heart.

- From Warrior 2 with your right foot forward turn your right palm up to the ceiling with an external rotation of the right arm.
- Simultaneously begin to raise your right arm straight up to the sky as you lower your left hand down behind you to your left thigh. Stretch from the top of the right hip, through the waist, the rib cage and the armpit all the way up to your widespread fingers at your right hand.
- Often students begin to lift up out of the lunge at the right knee as they raise their right arm to the sky. Resist this and stay deep in the lunge.
- The left hand can rest lightly at your left thigh or can wrap behind your back. If you wrap the arm behind you work

towards slipping your left fingers to the inside of your upper right thigh with your left shoulder blade drawn in towards your spine. If resting your left hand at your thigh do not collapse your weight into the left hand.

- When you have reached as high through your right arm as you are able you may begin to extend your spine and reach your upper arm over your head towards the wall behind you, arching your spine backwards.
- Your back leg is a bandha here. Do not allow any collapse of the back leg. Hug the outer edge of the left foot to the floor and lift through the inner left thigh and pelvic floor. This will give you a powerful launch pad from which to free up your spine.
- To make the most of this backbend, draw your right shoulder blade down your back and lift your thoracic spine up into your chest.
- Set your gaze through your upper hand and turn your awareness inward to the power of the pose in your body.



- You may find your breathing becomes restricted. Stay calm and breath evenly but perhaps not trying to completely

empty and then fill your lungs with each breath. Try using half to three-quarters of your lung capacity.

- Hold here for five breaths. Then inhale and cartwheel your two hands down to the mat and step back into *chaturanga dandasana* before flowing to downward facing dog and taking the opposite foot forward to repeat Warrior 1, Warrior 2 and Reverse Warrior.

Open your heart and throat and shine from your inner beauty.

**Chakra Theory:** In our ascent through the chakras we have reached the heart chakra, *Anahata*. The focus in this chakra is love. The centremost of the chakras concerns a balancing of all the others and uniting them in our way of being. We have moved from the more physically oriented chakras to a more spiritually oriented one.

The love of this chakra is to be distinguished from that of the second chakra, *Svadhithana*. The second chakra concerns desire and physical love which is centred on another person. The love of *Anahata* is a divine presence of empathetic connection. This love has an eternal quality to it and thus also has a still, unchanging character.

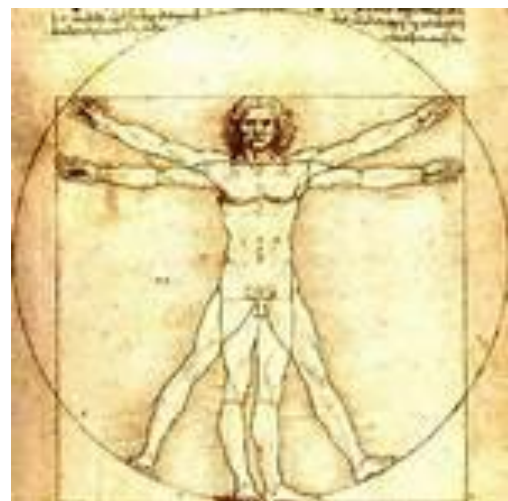
The name *Anahata* has an interesting meaning in Sanskrit: the sound made without any two things coming together. That definition is sometimes extended to meaning unhurt or even clean and pure. In essence this is acceptance of our condition – not approaching our self-image from any sense of lack but from a viewpoint of love.

The heart chakra is a yin chakra. The third chakra, heating and motive in its nature is very yang in quality. The heart is yin. There is more here to be gained by relaxing with what is, being rather than doing, allowing rather than creating or forcing.

The forces at work here are not intellectual in terms of thinking and mind analysis. They are intuitive based on feeling. When the mind gets in the way we can lose the power of the heart. A fear of rejection can prevent us opening up to another. The mind restricts the flow of energy through the heart chakra. What we put out we get back. As we put out aloofness and disconnected individuality others will see as unwelcoming, lacking empathy and warmth and will mirror that back to us.

Opening our hearts can feel vulnerable but is ultimately rewarding. The love we put out will be felt by others and we will receive it back.

The heart chakra is located at the centre of the chest but extends to the physical organs of the heart and lungs and out through the arms to the hands. As da Vinci's Vitruvian Man shows, the vertical line of the *sushumna* through the spine is intersected by a horizontal line through the extended arms. The intersection point is the centre of the heart chakra but the influence of the heart chakra extends outwards through the arms and also up and down, balancing and integrating the forces and energies of the other six chakras. The heart chakra connects with the thymus gland.



The healing powers of love emanating from the heart chakra can be given effect through the hands. An empathetic touch, an embrace or a massage are all ways of expressing healing from the heart's love.

As the lungs are included within this chakra, breathing is a powerful *Anahata* action. *Prana* (Sanskrit for breath) connotes life force. Our respiratory system is highly efficient. The food we eat or the fluid we ingest takes time to reach our cells but air breathed in is almost instantaneously converted into oxygen in the red blood cells and is carried to all the cells in our body. Through our breathing patterns we can resolve chronic tension that comes from fear or anxiety. We can allow each exhalation to be a physical and a spiritual release. Breathe consciously and deeply and feel the full expression of breath in your being.

The tantric symbol of *Anahata* is a twelve-petalled lotus. Inside are two triangles forming a six-pointed star (the same as the Star of David). The two triangles overlapping in this star represent the union of masculine and feminine and also each point can represent the six other chakras with the heart chakra at the centre.



In the centre of the symbol is a *Shiva Lingum* (a symbol of the Lord Shiva) within a

downward pointing triangle. *Ishvara*, the God of unity and *Shakti Kakini* (a female counterpart) are typically shown in the symbol as well as an antelope, which is symbolic of freedom. Green is the colour most often associated with this chakra.

The deities Vishnu, Lakshmi, Krishna and *Ishvara*, all very powerful and noble, are associated with *Anahata*.

*Pranayama* in the form of *nadi shodana* (alternate nostril breathing), *kapalabhati* (breath of fire or skull-cleansing breath) and complete breath (in which one inhales into the abdomen, then the chest and then the shoulders and throat followed by an exhalation in reverse order down the body) are all *Anahata* exercises as they stimulate and encourage the breath. The three principal *bandhas* (*jalandhara*, *uddiyana* and *mula*) are said to trap air in the corresponding parts of the body and are, accordingly, *Anahata* breath exercises.

Yoga poses that open the heart chakra are fish, cobra and a chest opening forward fold in which the hands are clasped behind the back and as you bow forward the arms move over your head towards the floor. In this action the shoulder blades are drawn in towards one another promoting the thoracic spine in towards the centre of the chest and the chest is spread wide.

Arm circles where the arms are lifted outwards to shoulder height and circles of ever increasing diameter are made, first in one direction and then in the opposite direction, and twists of the torso with the arms extended outwards at shoulder height are also heart opening physical exercises.

Meditations for *Anahata* can include:

1. An empathy exercise in which you place yourself in the position of someone with whom you are having difficulties and

- consider your mutual situation from their point of view.
2. A compassion meditation in which you sit alone visualising others or sit together with another or others or sit in a public place. Imagine all that is in the hearts of others– fears, doubts, grief, challenges of life. Fill your heart with love and compassion and send that love in thought to them. Do not try to hang on to the connection. Give them love then move to someone else.
  3. Appreciation ritual. Gather with another or others in a comfortable space without distractions. In turn call one person to receive appreciation from the others – no criticism, no advice. Just appreciation from sincerity. For example, “I like the way you make time every day to ask your children about their day”.

4. Wishing Tree. It is said that lying just below the heart is the *Kalpataru*, or wishing tree lotus that holds the deepest wishes of the heart. Lie still, connect with your breath. Disconnect from thought and feel the intuitive knowledge at your heart. What does your heart desire? Ask for it.

Namaste

Hamish and Margo

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