



the devon school of yoga

newsletter

SPRING 2016

welcome to spring!

Welcome to the 2016 Spring edition of the Devon School of Yoga's Newsletter. We trust that you will find items of interest in this issue. With all articles written by DSY students and graduates there's an international feel to many of the articles, from reports of practice in Boston, Maui and Dorset to retreat destinations as far as Spain and India. There is plenty to choose from to keep you yoga inspired.

Thank you to everyone who contributes and reads the newsletter. Please feel free to share it with anyone you think may be interested.

Duncan, Sue & Jules

DSY events diary

DSY Holistic Yoga Workshop

June 11, 9.30am-4.30pm

Long Downs, Penryn, Cornwall

Breath only kriyas, asana, shavasana, satsang, other miscellaneous practices and pranayama with Duncan Hulin.

For booking: www.bekarmayoga.uk

DSY Summer Workshop

June 25, 10am-5pm

The Barefoot Barn, Chagford, Devon.

Holistic yoga including breath kriyas, asana, pranayama, DSY bodywork and chanting with Duncan Hulin.

£40, deposit to hold a place £20

For booking: @devonyoga.com

Devon Yoga Festival's Summer Sangha

FULLY BOOKED

22-24 July 2016

DSY Autumn Retreat Weekend at the Rill Estate

28-30 October 2016

For booking: info@devonyoga.com

A wonderful day had by all

by Nadiya Wynn

It was a treat to have Duncan Hulin visiting Dorset for the day and leading a Holistic Yoga Workshop. The day brought together 25 of us from all yoga traditions and teachings and from beginners to the more experienced. During the morning practice, Duncan guided us through Cleansing Breath only Kriyas, Classic Asana and a blissful Shavasana. This was followed by a colourful and enticing array of dishes and snacks for the bring and share lunch, which was eagerly tucked into after the revitalizing morning practise. Following on with a Satsang and Therapeutic Asana the day was completed with focused pranayama rhythms and a yoga circle.

***"The day brought together 25
of us from all yoga traditions
and teachings"***

Having trained with the DSY from 2009-2012 it was a joy to invite the inspiring Duncan to Dorset and share a day of yoga with friends, family, students and teachers. Yoga has certainly become a way of life for me since undertaking my training and beginning on my teaching path. I will always have a heartfelt thank-you for the DSY and am very much looking forward to the continuation of my yoga journey.

Sat Nam

Nadiya Wynn

www.yogawithnadiya.co.uk

send us a tweet: twitter.com/devonyoga

Bowing to the Wisdom of the Heart: finding the flow of liberation and joy on Maui

By Tanja Bartlett

For the last few years I have been gravitating towards Ashtanga Vinyasa practice; I would tell people this was a surprise for me, as I didn't regard myself as a typical Ashtanga person – I'm no type-A, ambitious, driven perfectionist! But I found the primary series deeply healing and my deepening commitment to the practice culminated in a trip to Maui, Hawaii at the end of 2015, where I planned to immerse myself in the Maui Mysore experience. So much for plans!

Maui was a revelation. The beauty of the island was almost too much to take in, visions of loveliness so absurdly beautiful I often found myself bursting out laughing as I drove around. Surrounded by the incredible wonder of this paradise place, driving around and feeling free, I felt an uninhibited joy I hadn't experienced since childhood. Being surrounded by such a visual feast was nourishment for the soul. Maui was bliss for my vata body too: heat and light and sun... Even in Mysore classes I never broke a sweat!

Those classes I'd travelled all that way for were generally over within 90 minutes, and people just took off immediately afterwards; disappointingly, yoga was not really forming much of my Maui experience. And more seriously, I was experiencing a creeping disillusionment: realising the strictness, dogmatism and devotion to the guru were alive and well here and a real turn-off for me. I decided to try a different tack: Maui is full of yoga studios, why not go try some other classes in the afternoons and on moon days? So I began secretly (!) exploring non-Ashtanga classes.

Maybe doing Ashtanga had made me judgemental about other vinyasa styles...Not hardcore enough? Not "authentic" enough? They play music?! They make up their own styles and call them things like "Maui Flow", "Aloha Flow"?...They do Yoga Journal poses with names like "Bird of Paradise"?! I decided to lighten up and to be open-minded and just go try a bunch of stuff...And so it was that in a Wisdom Flow Yoga class, unexpectedly but undeniably, I began to experience incredibly powerful emotional release.

The teacher, Jennifer Lynn, (now a good friend!) created her own beautifully heart-centred vinyasa style, blending elements from Anusara, Ashtanga, and other styles. Her teachings about being led by the wisdom of the heart, the head needing to bow to the heart, the power of emotions to guide us to our higher intuition, resonated deeply and spoke to a part of myself long neglected. I found myself feeling so free, so released, feeling the beautiful expression of the body in these joyful postures. My whole being seemed to be crying out "This is what I need! THIS is what

I've been missing!" It was such a joy, after submitting myself to (or imposing upon myself) the strength and harsh strictness of ashtanga. At the end of the class, Jennifer produced a tray of peanut butter cookies for everyone... "THIS IS WHAT I NEED!" Nourishment. Nurturing. Sweetness.

That night I dreamed I was in a play and forgot all my lines, couldn't carry on – I woke up thinking "This is to do with that yoga class!!" I had to google the meaning of the dream and it turns out it's to do with realising you can't continue playing the same role; but also, that you are ready to create your own role, write your own lines.

After a while of struggling with a sense of "I should keep going to mysore", I realised how ridiculous it was to force myself out of a false sense of obligation. In my heart I was getting so much more from the Wisdom Flow classes –physically too – so eventually I went with my heart and let the mysore classes go. Please yourself – you don't have to justify your actions to anyone. You don't need anyone else's approval. You are free.

I came to the realisation that, ultimately, the only authority, the only validation for what we do or teach is our own experience and our own yoga practice - no need to seek validation or authenticity through others. I have not radically changed my practice or teaching (yet!): I realised that there's no need to abandon these things if they still work for me and my students, so for now I simply continue to practice and teach my own version of Holistic and Ashtanga-inspired yoga, letting elements of the Wisdom Flow practice filter into my practice and teaching organically.

For a long time, I experienced yoga as primarily a healing practice – on Maui, I really discovered the liberating, empowering aspects. It has all reinforced the DSY's consistent teaching that "The only guru is the guru within"...

For more information about Wisdom Flow Yoga on Maui: www.wisdomflowyoga.com/ find my facebook page: Holistic Ashtanga Yoga



DSY North India Yoga Retreats at the unique Basunti Private Retreat Centre

On 25th March (Good Friday) Andrea and I headed back to Basunti with this year's retreat group. Basunti is an idyllic and unique private retreat centre set on a promontory in a nature reserve nestling in the foothills of the great Indian Himalaya.

Since 2010, we have been running annual retreats at Basunti. These popular retreats always get booked up well in advance. The retreat has proved especially popular with those who are venturing to India for the first time because it is run as a whole/complete package.

In 2017, we are running the retreat in a new format. This will be a 10 day retreat inclusive of 10 night's accommodation, all meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner), drinks and 28 yoga sessions. This format means that participants make their own way to India and Basunti.

The full yoga programme also allows time to enjoy relaxing by the pool or on your private veranda, swimming in the lake or walking and discovering.

Dates and price are: 31 March - 10 April, 2017. Inclusive price = £1195. (Excludes flights and transfers). Deposit to confirm booking a place = £395.00." Helpful flight and transfers in India information is provided. Note: the 2017 retreat is already over half booked.

In 2018 the retreat returns to our 15 day package format inclusive of flights and transfers in India, 15 night's accommodation, including a two day trip to McLeod Gang (home of the Dalai Lama) and a final day in Amritsar to visit the golden temple and full board at Basunti.

Details to be posted soon at:
www.devonyoga.com/residential-and-retreats

www.basunti.com

Search for 'Devon School of Yoga' on facebook and join the group



Yoga Luxury – muses on holistic yoga teaching

By Tilly Young

I am teaching again at last! With a full time job making pottery, running a weekly class became too time-consuming without enough financial reward. I did teach for 6 years, but found that without putting effort into recruiting new students quite regularly, it remained a small and exclusive class, appreciated for that, by the 4 or 5 regulars.

I now have a private student, new to yoga, whose profession makes her free time variable and precious, and she can afford to have trainers come to her house. Honing a class for an individual is a luxury.

I maintain my own practice and having a student makes sure I do! However, suppleness has never been my forte and I appreciate the difficulties of the beginner when it comes to asana. I would not be the appropriate teacher for anyone wanting to learn advanced postures. But what I like to call yoga attitude, presence, centering, pranayama, working with the body rather than ruling from the mind, releasing attachment to goal, finding strength through self-compassion, plus developing awareness of the flow of prana/chi and explaining the functions and benefits of the simpler asanas for our body, mind and spirit – these things I endeavour to introduce to my student. She finds little time to practice between weekly sessions though I do of course encourage this, but she says that the yogic approach has altered the way she lives and works. She also says the yoga enhances the benefits of her other regular physical practices of brisk dog-walking and a weekly personal trainer. One hour is not long but we usually include, beyond the regular initial breathing, tuning in and warm-up, several standing and seated asana involving forward and back bends, a balance posture, twists and inversions. I leave her to a recommended minimum of 10 minutes savasana beyond the hour.

I enjoy the class and feel I also learn from it, bringing to the fore what yoga practice teaches me. I am glad of the opportunity to pass on something of what I have learnt. With a lesson in mind I find my own practice is enhanced: more conscious, committed and exploratory.

Search for '**Devon School of Yoga**' on facebook and join the group

workshops & retreats

Yoga and Mindfulness Get Away, Devon

13th – 15th May

Taking place on a farm on the rural Devon, Cornwall border

Prices from £224 per person, based on two sharing, £180

for Devon School of Yoga Community

For more information, please see the following website:

www.horizonretreats.org/#!may-retreat/b3bme

India Day

Bollywood and Bangles!

Saturday 11th June

Litton Cheney, Dorset

A colourful and exciting

afternoon: Chai & Snacks,

Bindi's, Bangles, Sarees, Henna

and Bollywood Dancing

workshop followed by a

delicious homecooked Thali meal. Further details coming soon - please email to register

your interest.

info@yogawithnadiya.co.uk

www.yogawithnadiya.co.uk

TREE: A Yoga immersion in Andalucia, Spain with Alex Giffoni and Sally Ornellas

10th to 17th June

Deepen all aspects of your practice as we explore

Patanjali's Eight Limbs of Yoga

in stunning surroundings, a nourishing and supportive group environment and three daily

yoga and meditation practices

£625 (all Yoga practices, full board and spacious Moroccan

style bell tents accommodation included) For more

information and bookings: Alex 7794917675/ breathingyoga.co.uk

or Sally 7879478747/

yogabreathing.co.uk

Spring clean 'in more ways than one'

By Duncan Hulin

Spring is the time of year when many people naturally get the urge to spring clean the house, sometimes including the attic, garage and garden shed. Whether the urge is there or not it is also a good time of year to spring clean ones digestive tract.

The digestive system rarely gets and deserves a good rest! Using the upward energy and increased light and warmth of the season we can help eliminate the build up of toxins that accumulate through normal bodily processes and which are increased by the higher consumption and lesser activity of the winter months. From a naturopathic / yogic perspective this could take the form of distilled water fasting for several days, through to less extreme approaches, of which here are a few suggestions:

One to three day fasting (with regular vegetable / fruit juice or water only).

Twenty four hour fasting (with regular juice or water only).

One to three days or twenty four hours with liquids only to midday, then one main meal, followed by liquids only. If liquid only fasting is not your 'cup of tea', try an easily digested more liquid diet for one to three days i.e. vegetable/lentil soups, soft cooked grains, well chewed salads. For best effect over these days stay clear of stimulants, meat and dairy products. For increased effect over these days have a balanced asana/pranayama practice, some time off from normal daily activities i.e. walk and breathe well in nature and practice a yoga nidra.

Receive massage or give self massage. Feel appreciation. After waking include a tongue scrape (to clean the tongue from overnight accumulation / toxin discharge) as part of ones bathroom routine.

Note 1: Tongue scrappers are available from selected yoga equipment suppliers.

Note 2: It is helpful to plan in advance and communicate clearly with others.

On re introducing solids and a wider variety of foods, regular guidance would be to leave three hours from solid food consumption before retiring to bed and when eating it is best to be seated (not on the move and not in front of a computer), to be mentally calm (if worried or anxious it is best not to eat as digestion will be hampered) and chew well. As the saying goes 'chew your liquids and drink your solids'.

I don't think I can emphasise enough how important the above points are, especially be calm and chew well.

Finally, in our practice of the first 'Niyama' (observances) 'Saucha'(purification), we move from spring cleaning our 'ana' and 'prana' 'maya- kosha's' (physical and energy body/sheaths) through all the practices mentioned above, to spring cleaning our minds from unnecessary/negative or simply excess thinking (klisha vrittis) through our 'samyama' (meditative practices).

Enjoy springtime and your holistic yoga! Yogash citta vritti nirodahah.

Share your inspiring stories: info@devonyoga.com

workshops & retreats



Yoga Retreat

22nd-29th August

Relaxation and holistic yoga holiday at Suleyman's Garden, part of the Huzur Vadisi retreat. With Jacqueline Payton and Helen Humble Set on hill-side in a beautiful garden, Suleyman grows all the food that's served to us in the terraced plot overlooking the glorious Aegean Sea. For details please email laidbackyoga@gmail.com or <http://www.huzurvadisi.com/venues/courses/yoga-with-jacqui-payton-and-helen-humble/>

The International Macrobiotic School

in Totnes is offering a course on Holistic Nutrition for Body and Soul. For further details please contact info@macroschool.co.uk or phone 01803-762598

Yoga Practitioners Survey

would you like to dedicate 15 minutes of your time to help in identifying the profile of a modern yogi? This research is designed by a DSY trainee yoga teacher who would like to learn how yoga is practised within the UK today. The survey is anonymous and questions are optional. However you can leave your email address at the end of the survey to learn about insights from the research. Link to the survey: <https://goo.gl/Rq2zMA>

Boston Yoga Experience

By Sharon Hull

Just sitting in the garden of my friend's house, watching the bluest sky along with beautiful sunshine while wrapped up in coat & scarf sipping a hot cup of tea. I'm nearing the end of my stay of a week in a town which is 40 mins from Boston. It's been ok, but I'm beginning to miss home & the reality of British normal life, as everything here is too big, too noisy & everyone I've met just a tad lazy!

The yoga experience started off terribly on the second day here, I enrolled with my friend on a vinyasa style class, but nobody thought to tell me it was to be done hot yoga style. I should have known something was up when I walked in - it was absolutely boiling!! I don't think I've ever been so hot in all my life - it was horrible - girls were practicing with hardly anything on. Fortunately the classes improved as the week has gone on & up to now I have met & practiced with 3 other lovely teachers. One of the sessions was a Hatha session & I could have been in a mine or Duncan's session it was so similar. We were all given chocolate at the end of the practice. I'm not sure really what all this was about, but it was well appreciated. I also practiced a pure Yin session, which I've never done before. There were only 6 postures that we practiced, but these were held for between 3 to 5 mins each. It was a beautiful class, the room warm, but not boiling this time, so it enabled the muscles & body to really relax & let go!

The classes have been big between 20 & 25 people attending. All shapes & sizes (actually quite pleasing to see very large girls giving yoga a go & many of them managing very well with adaptations!). One class was so busy that the mats were practically touching which made lying supine twist interesting!

The studio I've been visiting up to now is certainly not as nice as I practice in England. It is in a huge sports complex, right beside a body pump room & massive gym. It has been a challenge at times keeping my concentration with pumping music coming from the other disciplines & all the yoga teachers play their own music and at times they have been in competition with each other. It made me certainly appreciate my beautiful Dragonfly Yoga Studio at home & at times I thought how lucky my students are to have such a lovely 'space' to roll out their mats!

Tonight we are going to a restorative session and this time it is at another studio. It will be interesting how this one fares with the other one. I was supposed to be visiting a one day retreat whilst I was here, but unfortunately the teacher who was planning to run this has been to jury duty and it was cancelled.

In a nut shell I have seen that yoga is certainly very popular here. Loads of shops selling yoga products, equipment & the top of fashion yoga gear. In one class, the Friday evening, I did feel slightly that it was one big fashion show - some of them slightly preening themselves in front of the mirrors, but the majority you can tell they love their yoga.

continued on the next page...

Well to tonight's class - I'm looking forward to yet another new experience... Here are my thoughts: This evening was the last class of the trip and I have to say possibly my favourite of them all.

We went to a different studio than the one at the sports centre, but when we drove up to it first of all my heart sank. It was on what we would know as a 'trading estate' & was thinking how can I be doing yoga this evening next to B&Q style shop! However, as soon as I walked into the building a feeling of calm enveloped me & the most beautiful aromatherapy smell welcomed my senses.

The centre was new & modern with good facilities for changing & storing all your personal belongings. I was amazed how busy it was as it was a Sunday evening & there were students coming & going from the two well sized yoga studios. As all the other classes I had visited during the week, it was full, with mixed abilities, ages & body sizes. I again thought how incredible it was to see so many wishing to spend their Sunday evening on their mats. Besides having our mats we were given two bolsters, a strap, two bricks, two yoga rolling balls & a blanket.

The session started with the normal arrival, very similar to what many of us use, progressing towards 15 mins of gentle sitting & kneeling prelims to awaken the body. We then flowed towards using the yoga rolling balls for massaging the whole of the neck, jaw line & temples. I've never done anything like this before & to start with it was slightly tricky to

get the hang of, but after a while it was lovely using this 'prop' correctly to massage these sometimes problem areas. From here we then sat in the darkness with only light from a couple of candles & meditated for 10 minutes. The teacher gave us a simple mantra to help with concentration alongside our breath. 'On the inhalation - I am happy, I am healthy & on the exhalation - I am happy, I am healthy in every cell of my body'.

From here we travelled gracefully through to the restorative practice using all the rest of the equipment. By this stage I was feeling so wonderfully relaxed my body completely melted into the poses. We did 6 restorative asanas, holding each for at least 5 mins & when the teacher was sure we were all settled & comfortable with the props, she would then go around the room making further adjustments with the most gorgeous aromatherapy on her hands (she had checked at the beginning of the class if anyone was allergic to her oils). She was also a qualified Reiki master & her hands had a wonderful healing quality & by the time we had completed Viparita Karani & moved finally into Savasana, I have never ever felt so completed & utterly relaxed & at peace with myself after a yoga session. The slow quality of the practice, the lovely aromatherapy smells, the superb music & the quality of the teaching, certainly has put this class in my top five sessions of being the best after practicing yoga for nearly 17 years.

Thank you America! Namaste, love & light,
Sharon X

Namaskaram

Namaskaram is the online magazine and newsletter of The Independent Yoga Network. Here you will find news, views, and authoritative articles on all matters Yoga, plus an up-to-date list of workshops, retreats and seminars put on by Independent Yoga Network members. If you are an Independent Yoga Network member you can list your classes, workshops and events - go to the 'what's on' page to find out how to add your listing. For more information: www.namaskaram.co.uk

“Karma” and “Prana” – two poems by Philip Xerri

Below are two short commentaries and poems by Philip. For those interested, he has a new CD and book coming out soon “Yoga: Poetry, Prose and Stories”

Karma

I was prompted to write this following a chance encounter with a fellow Yogi that I bumped into at the Yoga Show in London a few years ago. He was trying to find the ‘teaching zone’ and was rather lost. I can’t quite remember what he actually said although I do remember that it contained allusions to ‘murdering’ someone (presumably ‘tongue in cheek’) and my response (I believe also tongue in cheek) had been something akin to ‘that sounds like bad karma to me’. He reacted quite strongly and said (not tongue in cheek) ‘there is no such thing as karma’. He left before I could respond. I was going to ask how he (or, in fact, anyone) could actually know whether it did or did not exist. And so, the poem was born.

*What is karma?
What is its worth.
Is it just the
circumstance of birth!
Does the accumulated stress and strain
and pain and gain
of life’s twists and turns
ensure, that we
Return!

Surely;
it cannot be so simple
that the good go up and the bad go down.
We do good deeds
and sow good seeds
that fruit and flower
across the curtain of death
to blossom and grow
in a future life
that we; will never know!*

*We do bad deeds
and sow bad seeds whose growth
is like choking weeds
they flourish
across that curtain of death
and in that unknown future life
they give us; strife.*

*Is Karma just the same as
the natural process of life?
But simply extended - life after life.*

*In this life
some of us may learn by our mistakes
and move on,
and if we carry on
learning and improving
we may die without regret;
leaving a legacy
that those we leave behind
will never forget.
Some of us never learn
Never move on
And when we are gone
we are gone.
Forgotten*

*or remembered with regret
of a life lost
and its challenges;
never met.*

*So,
what is the difference
if karma exists or not!*

*If it doesn’t;
then it is what we leave behind
that is crucial to humankind.
And,
if it does exist;
then our legacy
is also a latent seed
that will fruit and flower
across the curtain of death
to blossom and grow
in a future life
that we; will never know.*

Prana

I was sitting in a Costa one day looking through some notes on a workshop within which I was exploring the link between the breath and the emotions and the mind; how prana was the animating force of our existence; and I thought ‘what a rhyme’: Prana - the link, Prana - the ink with which we write our lives. Thus this short poem was born:

*Prana
is
we think
The juice of life
the central mystery
The ink
with which we write
our personal history.*

*Prana
is
we think
The life force
the central power
The intoxicating drink
the energy give
when
cometh the hour.*

*Prana
is
we think
The substance of space
beyond reality
The link
with which
we transcend
our physicality.*

*Prana
is
we believe
A cosmic force
the energy supreme
The weave
with which we dare
to dream.*

*Prana
is
we know
The subtle breath
the fourth limb
The bow
that makes
the arrow sing.*