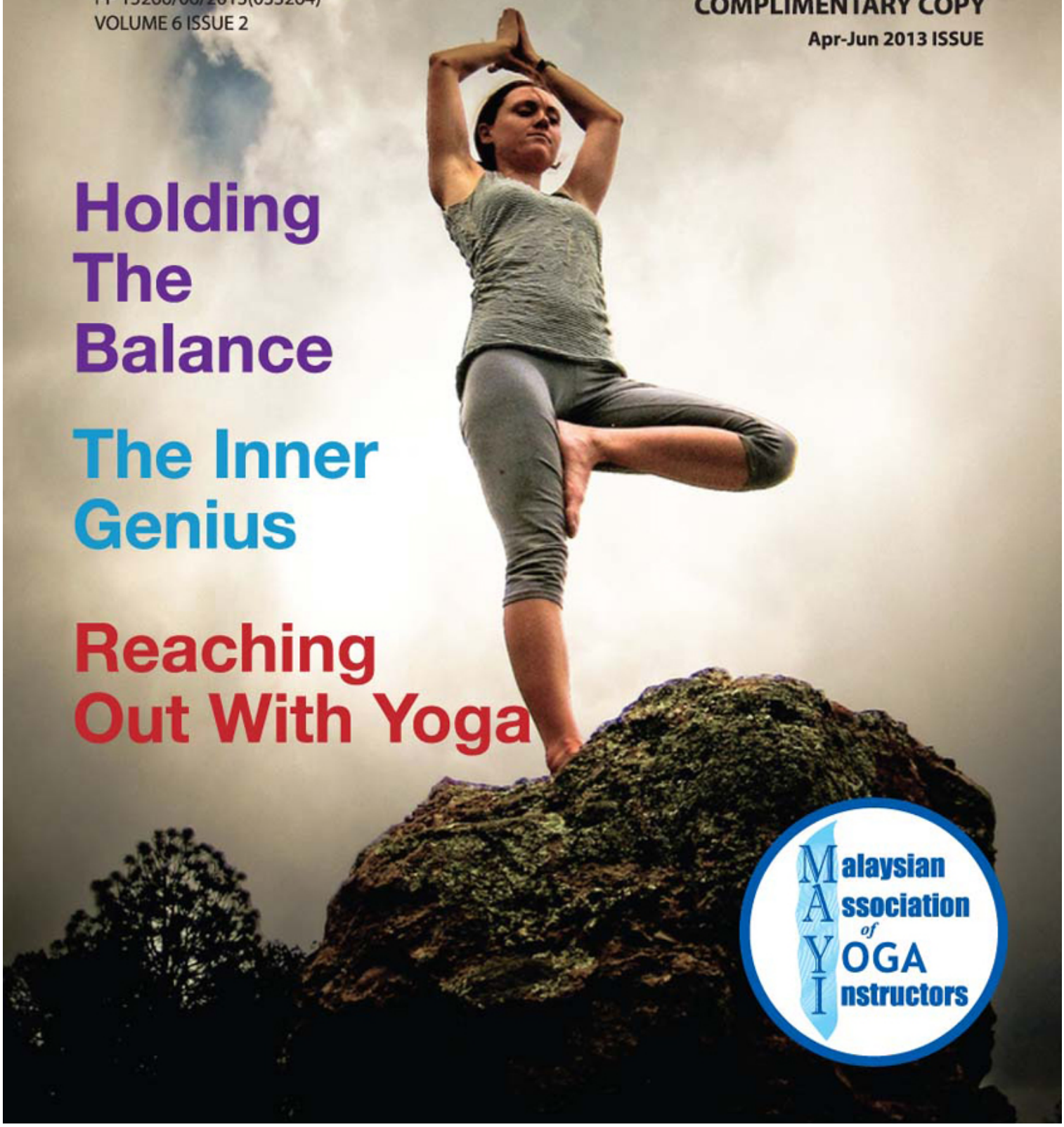
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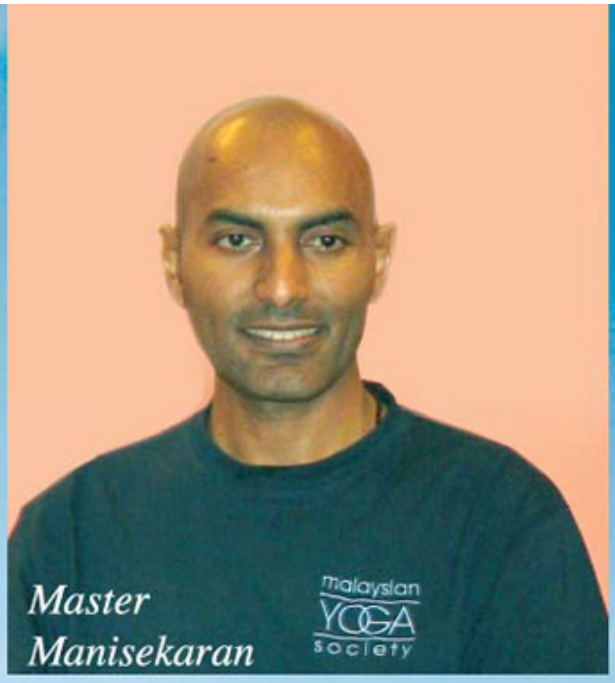
Holding The Balance

The Inner Genius

Reaching Out With Yoga

Malaysian Association of YOGA Instructors

Message from Master Mani



I see very positive and beautiful transformation taking place in my classes at all times. Students enjoy the classes and truly appreciate them. They are happy to be there and value their lessons. Many feel that the classes are the reason for the growth they see in themselves because they seem to fall back into their old belief systems, or mindset, if they don't continue with the practices.

I believe that a certain time frame of practicing with a teacher is beneficial to neutralise lethargy and procrastination. The other reason is that techniques need to be deepened through continuity.

Nevertheless, short-term courses are introduced to suit the fast-paced modern way of living. They serve to suit the rush, hurry and round-the-clock working culture of this age. Asanas, in fact, can be mastered in a short period of time. Even instructors' training can be done this way, but not the higher practices. Meditation technology and the process of severing layers of illusion take time, devotion and uninterrupted practice. The duration and intensity is crucial.

The presence of a teacher will ensure healthy learning. These techniques need to be learnt in the correct manner. Part of the teacher's job is to prevent students from entering unwanted zones of behaviour or peculiar thinking patterns. Such misconceptions happen due to the illusion that they did it by themselves. It will put them on an ego-centred journey instead — which will end in tragedy for themselves and also their students, if they also start teaching. They need to understand that it was the mentor who planted the seed of realisation and he is seeing to its growth.

The start and end of yoga is moksha, or liberation. A true teacher is there to ensure the aspirant achieves that end. Someone who says the students need to be exclusively his or lets them idealise him, needs to be abandoned right away.

Train with devotion and excel; develop an excellent character; dive deep into the art of yoga and practice karma yoga in its real sense. Think and appreciate your teachers for a lifetime. Be aware of and avoid false ego, or mistakenly think that all knowledge is descending from the sky. Knowledge is within, but it needs to be triggered by a guru. Guru worship is slavery ... but the age-old guru-disciple tradition of strict and disciplined learning under a competent teacher is the most beautiful gift that one may get in his lifetime.

A person who is graced by the presence of a benevolent guru, a teacher par excellence, a shower of humility, grace and gentleness; one who lets go rather than controls; one who gives unconditionally; one who doesn't ask for respect, worship or glory is truly a blessing to have in one's life.

If it is hard to be a good student, it will be harder to find a good teacher. **YM**

Visit us at Facebook:
Malaysian Association Of Yoga Instructors
and ***Manisekaran Yoga***

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Holding The Balance

by Vijaya

Can there be harmony when there's no balance — whether in the macrocosm or the microcosm; whether in life, in the body or in the mind?

The universe itself is a perfect example of balance. If everything that exists in the universe is not in its rightful place in an amazing equilibrium, where would that put us? There's a mathematical precision to every single detail in creation — from the last bit of an atom right up to the largest entity in space. In fact, in the "pink" perfect balance of nature, there's no space for anything wrong to happen.

I mean, we don't spend our days worrying whether the sun is going to come up tomorrow. We trust the balance in nature enough to trust the continuity of its existence.

Balance can be seen in the demeanour. In some people, the countenance is of such balance and such composure that no one can disturb them or their state of being.

I thought Poorna's face looked like that when I first saw her during the 2008 Himalayan trip. A petite gal with short, straight hair, which she would shed later at Haridwar; very sweet and beautiful smile. It was at a roadside daba (stall) that I got to talk to her. We had a pleasant chat.

My initial encounters with her were strangely unplanned.

Half way, walking down the beautiful mountain of Yamunotri, half-dead, exhausted, tired and almost at the point of fainting, I saw her again. Just like me, she was determined to walk all the way down, no matter what. We sank onto a flat stone nearby. Cold and pretty lost, we looked at each other and smiled. My eyes closed slightly... "You go ahead, Poorna," I told her. She did and I was a bit surprised at her strength.



The surprise didn't stop there. There were more occasions when we would suddenly bump into each other at the road side, or other places.

We also exchange greetings at the yoga centre. I think she has a smile that can brighten up the whole room, and she does. But I wasn't feeling very close to her until maybe a few more years later.

One day, not long ago, coming from KL Sentral, I was crossing the road to Brickfields when suddenly, more than 100 metres away, I became aware of a pair of intense, static eyes, full of God knows how many emotions, staring right into mine ... and her car was perched at an odd angle right in front of a turning that goes into the shopping area. The car had been stopped abruptly. She had seen me and was waiting.

She told me then unimaginable stories about her life. She was crying as she held my hands and I was crying too.

The pain she had gone through you cannot read from her calm face. Married into a family of a very jealous mother-in-law, sick sister-in-law, a husband who smoked and drank, she didn't want a child because she didn't want to extend that unhappiness to him. Then to make things worse, after many years of marriage, she found out that her husband had a child from an extramarital affair.

When I saw her at the Himalayas, she was already a yoga and kriya practitioner.

Still holding my hands, she spoke of amazing strength and balance. Kriya Yoga had given her so much clarity and grit to go through life that she had, after a short, horrible separation from her husband, got back with him. They have a child now and life is going smoothly, she said.

I wanted to dig deeper into the meaning and importance of balance and took my query to Surya and Mei Wan, both instructors at MAYI Yoga Academy.

My question to them was: In the hierarchy of successful qualities, where would you place 'balance'. What does balance mean to you? And why?

I got very interesting answers that I must share with everyone.

Surya said, "My definition of balance: Inner self-centredness at all times, even when things fall apart. Or when watching the self fail, or react/act in a less than desirable manner. Ultimately, able to move forward fearlessly, totally aware of my true intentions which may not reflect outwardly to society. If this is balance then it's at the top!"

Mei Wan said, "The point of balance is not stationary. It goes where awareness goes. Preferably full awareness coupled with understanding. In some ways, success is where balance is. Not the material kind but more in the sense of contentment known only to the person himself. So if success is at the top of the hierarchy, then balance is right there with him. A person may seem/look successful but may not feel successful unless he's contented. Success = contentment = inner balance."

Walking on a rope, if you tip your balance, you'd fall. But how many times in our lives have we walked on a rope? It's a specialised skill that a few would have acquired through long-term practice.

My friends equated balance to self-centredness and contentment. Poorna equated balance to harmony and smooth flow in life. With her strength and determination magnified, she's now able to handle all her problems in a much better and wiser way, she said.

All of them are ardent practitioners in the specialised techniques of yoga, Kriya Yoga, Manipuraka and other yogic gems.

In the realm of creation, duality is the building block. One side has to be balanced at the other with an equal weight. A pulling force has to be balanced by an equally opposing force for there to be balance.

Hot and cold, happiness and sadness, troubles and triumphs, weakness and strength.... that's what life is made of.

But can we accept duality and forever live in this equilibrium? What's the rational of being forever stuck in the balance of the dual forces?

Lastly, I went to Master Mani and asked the same question.

"Balance cannot compromise truth," he said. "But truth has to be presented in such a creative way that balance is maintained."

Well any true master will not be afraid to tip that balance. Guru is here to remove ignorance and give his eternal light. What's the point of being balanced if we never learn? That peace, that harmony, that smooth flow ... is it for real? Or just a show?

Learning all your yogic techniques here at the feet of a humble and beautiful master and paying homage to some siddar far, far away is like going all the way to India to thank Ramana Maharishi's photos, statue, memoirs and memorabilia for the A-Z you have learnt here from Master Mani. And he's here in person. The worst thing that can happen is when you think that it's you who has done it all. That's confusion at the highest level. Whatever you're experiencing, is it for real? Have you attained the alchemy of the character? Are you able to change every bit of a "baser metal" in you into gold? Everything and every person you see, must show you the glory that is He.

The techniques themselves are empty movements without the master key in the guru's hands. In order to get it, there should be gratitude. This is why in every yogic sastras (text), in every Upanishad, and in every realisation, guru kripa (grace) is the most important factor.

Real happiness has to awaken every tiny atom in the body. And the whole being will rejoice and dance in the glory and grace of the guru. It has to. That is what ultimately yoga, kriya and any other practices are all about. It's an untold truth you must read on the face of a master and hear from the words he does not utter.

Having a husband who's not wholly committed to the happiness of a marriage and sweeping the real issues under the carpet in order to make things look like they are "running smoothly" is not what truth is all about. Poorna was guided by Master, he kept her marriage intact, and allowed her to blossom into a stronger individual. When she spoke about running away, divorce and even taking her life, it was master who changed her views and provided her the balance. Gratitude was missing in her. For this story to end in complete balance, Poorna has to bring the seed of gratitude and lay it at the master's feet and then experience real balance thereafter in her life. **YM**

The Inner Genius

by K.Saravana Sealan

Imagine trying to remember your name…

We could only do that if we have the ability to truly, momentarily forget it, and then somehow remember. Most of the time, we don't even think about our names because there is no necessity to remember what we already know, and unless of course, when we are to introduce ourselves.

Now, here's a bigger question. When a mere name becomes utterly difficult to forget, how then could it be that we have 'forgotten' who we really are, in essence?

Each day we are expressing our innate self to an extent, and seemingly getting closer and closer to the obvious. The intensity of our expression seems to fall directly in proportion to how congruently we are connected to our innate self — to be able to shine through from the very essence… brilliantly!

Energies that seem to come uninhibited from the core could create masterpieces and revolutionise human evolution. These pure energies seem like the expression of our higher selves, the very "beingness" that we are born with and shall cease not, unless…

Now, the 'unless', part of the equation.
We become shy. It could be seemingly intimidating to express this higher self, as the saying goes. Our deepest fear in Not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond belief. That, it's our light, not our darkness that most frightens us.



Most of us choose to suppress some of our energies. Why? One might ask. Because, unconsciously we know that if we let the core energy to surface to its fullest, it could hurricane through, rocking our boat, knocking down all our walls, and with that, opening up our core wounds and pains. And that is what we are so afraid of. We are unsure of how to handle it, and rightfully, we fear it.

Most of the time, we are too afraid to show how much we care, how much we love, and how much we long for an AWESOME life. We inhibit it, we judge it, to make it insignificant and settle for less, for us to abide by our internalised parental voice that has been subtly suppressing us in many ways, in its instructions for us to behave 'appropriately'.

And that has been the safest "duality" game that we've chosen to play, until now.

But now rises a deeper conviction to re-align and bring about the union of mind, body and soul in a deeper sense. We no longer want to contain ourselves in this disconnected self, to allow our defence mechanism to continue this 'Military dictatorship', crippling our creative living. We want to live this AWESOME life, awesomely free!

If there was a technique, a practice that we could use to alleviate our fears, instilling confidence and conviction, to be able to weather the effect of AWESOMENESS that is about to hurricane through, when we unleash our truest potential, then we could safely open our doors and windows, and "whisper"', inviting the Awesome tornado in… As the evolution would be so subtle, the mind has to be prepared to embrace the mammoth change without any hesitation or dismay.

Blocked energies, along with blocks in chakras — as in vortex, wheel or whirlpool — come to mind as the major contributing factor to this disconnectedness. If we could somehow cleanse, and allow the energy flow to return to its peak, we are Game!

Chakras were introduced to me by Master Manisekaran in his Self Mastery (Kriya Yoga) class.

Kriya Yoga is a process revealed by the rishis (seers). It is a higher yogic practice to stabilise the energy and prepare the mind to be eventually self-illumined. It is said that the mind has many splits, and it's pretty evident in the many split personalities that we see emerging. According to Master Mani, it takes twelve years of daily practice to scorch the entire neural network to revitalise it.

The Self Mastery Course that I enrolled into was conducted over 20 Saturdays. It encompassed hatha yoga (postures), relaxation techniques, pranayama, shatkarma (cleansing), yoga nidra (tapping into the vast powerhouse), Kriya Yoga, Manas Dharana (superior technique towards mental health and clarity), Bija Manas (cleaning and seeding the mind with new and vibrant energies), Trataka (developing super memory), Yogic philosophy, Mudras (gestures) and Bandhas (energy locks) and more.

It's always a delight to meet Master and fellow course mates, and evolve together through the practices.

Predominantly, there are seven major chakras in the body, which are: Mooladhara (the root chakra), Swadhisthana (the sacral chakra), Manipura (the solar plexus chakra), Anahata (the heart chakra), Vishuddhi (the throat chakra), Ajna (the eyebrow chakra) and Sahasrara (the crown chakra).

Chakras are said to function as an intake organ or tubes for the universal energy to flow through.
The chakras are aligned in an ascending column from the base of the spine to the top of the head. The function of the chakras is to spin and draw in this energy to keep the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health of the body in balance.

They are the tubes connecting to the brain, eventually contributing to the heightening and the fuller use of the brain's capacity.

My initial experience during the few months into the practice was a turmoil of energy. It was as though everything that was left under the carpet was being pulled out. Having an awesome dear Master as in Master Mani was a boon, as I could go to him seeking advice every so often to return to the practice with deeper conviction and understanding.

Now, the practice is becoming somewhat second nature as it seems to be inscribed in the consciousness somehow.

One experience that would shed some light on the awesomeness of this practice was when I took the responsibility of revamping the Malaysian Yoga Society (MYS) website. It required a complete change in the look and feel. It was during the MYS trip to China last year. At first, I was completely stuck as I was new to the website development application and there was no one to turn to. I had to use the visualisation techniques taught by Master Mani at the Self Mastery class.

I told myself, what if I actually know, and I shall allow myself five minutes to find what I already know, to resolve this situation. And rightfully, the answer came. I noticed that a particular practice called 'Bindu Bedan' was happening within my head as the answer was "impregnated" into the conscious mind. Then on, I knew things are different.

We have believed of ourselves as wounded healers who are very reluctant to become undefended, to become unveiled. It is time we give each other plenty of space, time and loving affirmations.
Let us recognise who we truly are, deep within. We are our beautiful core essence.
Let us share the truth of our inner being, that is readily directing to abundance — the awesome life-supporting universe that is pure.

Self Mastery is our birth right. Let us embrace it and shine forth the light from within, enabling others to shine brilliantly too!

My deepest gratitude to Master Mani for his awesome presence as a guru, a teacher, and a guide to enable this purity in transformation, and also to my awesome family, friends and fellow practitioners. Every time I am invited to write my story, a new chapter unfolds, and it has begun to read into me.

Namaskar, and have an AWESOME day, everyone!
Love to ALL! **YM**

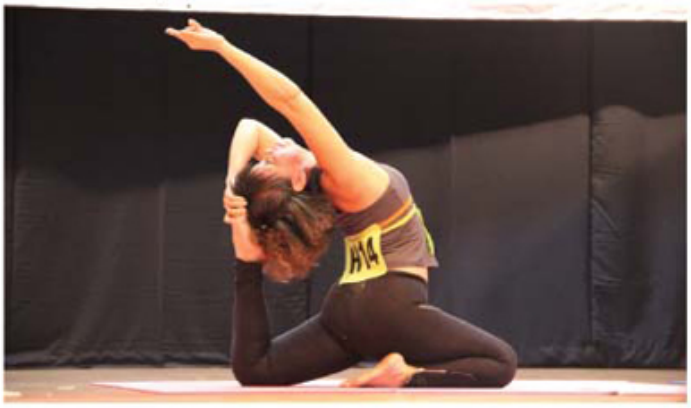
Reaching Out With Yoga

by Vijaya

Yoga is not solely about bending, stretching and twisting the body into unimaginable positions. It requires innate knowledge, wisdom and deeper understanding about the body, its connection to the mind and breath, and its holistic effect on the human mechanism.

The Malaysian Yoga Society (MYS) is again proudly organising the annual Malaysian International Yoga Competition (MIYC) on the 1st of May, 2013. Yoga practitioners from different parts of the world will be convening at Kandiah Hall, SJK(T) Vivekananda, Brickfields, Kuala Lumpur, to show their expertise in doing the asanas.

Last year, the competition was held at the same venue with about 500 participants in the children's category and more than 100 participants in the adult's category. Besides local school students and children from homes, competitors came from as far as China, Iran, India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Indonesia, Thailand and Singapore to rock the arena with their exemplary and extraordinary performance.



Yogacharya Navanesan, a full-time yoga instructor with MYS said that the students who took part in the competition were amazed to see so many varieties and different styles of yoga. They were impressed with the yoga community in Malaysia and amazed at the international participants and their unique standard of yoga.

According to Master Manisekaran, the founder and president of MYS, the purpose of the competition is largely to bring awareness about the true meaning of yoga; to inspire children, students, youth, adults and also senior citizens to do yoga; to break the myth that yoga is difficult to do; and to provide a common platform for yoga enthusiasts from around the world to



gather and learn more from each other. It's mostly about sharing the truth and the far-reaching benefits of yoga with others — regardless of age, race or religion.

"Thousands of students have been trained under MYS' 'Learn to Teach, Teach to Learn' free yoga instructor courses and also under the MAYI Yoga Academy courses. Yoga doesn't start or end in the asanas. Through MIYC and our other community-based programmes, students get an opportunity to practice what they learn in class. This is their chance to do karma yoga," said Master Manisekaran.
"Karma yoga is the highest path to evolution and we should not limit the meaning of yoga to the postures alone," he added.

For the record, karma yoga means doing action without being attached to the fruits of the action. It's the highest form of service one can render to others.

Learning how to do yoga asanas in its proper manner, sequence, duration and intensity is a good start to the journey of yoga. Once people have this knowledge, it's benevolent to share it with others. For example, something as simple as Vajrasana, or the adamantine pose, is good to improve digestion, helps bowel movement and the reproductive system. It is especially beneficial to do it early in the morning and also about 5-15 minutes after meals.



"I suffered from very bad lower back pain for many years prior to yoga. In fact, every 3 months I'd have to get a jab. I also had chronic constipation for more than 10 years. Seriously, after a few months, yoga had helped alleviate both problems. I have no qualms about sitting for hours at the office now and feel energetic and lively at all times," said Suguna from Klang. Suguna has been so inspired by yoga that her whole family has been taking part in the competition these past few years.

In the previous years, the youngest participant was 4 years old and the oldest one was above 80 years old. Age or body limitations are not barriers to yoga. Through the competition, students learned to overcome stage fright and gained self-confidence, while the older performers awed the world with their determination, strength and flexibility.

The participants will be divided into 8 different categories according to their age. Each participant is required to go on stage to perform 5 of his favourite yoga postures, for 4 minutes.

MIYC is sponsored by MAYI Yoga Academy and generous donations from the public. Prizes include



trophies and medals for 1st, 2nd and 3rd placements for each category. Certificates will be given to everyone who goes on stage. MAYI Yoga Academy is sponsoring the prizes for all categories in the form of Courses' Vouchers worth more than RM20,000.00

Registration forms can be obtained online at www.malaysianyogasociety.org or at any of the MAYI Yoga Academy centres in Bangsar, Brickfields and Damansara Utama. Registration fee is RM35 for adults and RM15 for children below 18 years old.

For more information, call Persatuan Yoga Malaysia (MYS) at 03-2260 5322, or email malaysianyogasociety@gmail.com. Those who wish to volunteer or contribute in cash or kind are welcome with open arms. **YM**

MIYC 2013

MALAYSIAN INTERNATIONAL YOGA COMPETITION 2013

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Vegetarian Food Fair
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DATE: 1st May 2013
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TEL: 03-2282 4980

Malaysian Yoga Society (MYS)

www.malaysianyogasociety.org

EVENTS MYS's Visit to Rumah Kanak-Kanak Wilayah Persekutuan

by Chandra Nanthakumar

2nd February was a scorching Saturday afternoon when we made our way to the Rumah Kanak-kanak W.P. in Kepong. The Yoga Sharing team, led by Mona, started the day by serving pure vegetarian lunch to the children, courtesy of Vijaya. It was a simple yet complete meal, and the children enjoyed it with all who were present.

Before we knew it, it was time for yoga sharing. Vijaya took over the floor and kicked off the session with a few basic asanas incorporated with breathing techniques. The children and adults of the home followed gracefully, mimicking every single move. Some partner yoga followed which the children enjoyed very much.

After the yoga session, Saravana led a line-up of interesting games which really got all the children in action. Joy and laughter filled the air as the children busily communicated with one another. Observing the children's behavior and level of enthusiasm, I was totally in awe. Even though they do not have parents (at least some of them), they behaved like any other well-to-do kid on the street. Even though they do not come from loaded families, their energy levels were just as any other. Even though they are deprived of luxuries of the modern-day city child, these children did not show any signs of misery. In fact they appeared more exuberant, bubbly and lively than any other child I have seen in my own neighbourhood.

In one's mind's eye, they may appear poor and destitute, but I saw God's greatest gift in them – LOVE and HAPPINESS; something that money cannot buy. These children have so much love to give, and I reckon they longed to be loved too. They glowed with happiness, a rare quality that one would find amongst the rich and famous. With the right kind of guidance and nurturing, I am sure they will make it big someday. It is not as easy as it seems, but I believe that with sheer determination and guidance, they will.

These children have ended up at this home for a reason. For a few, their birth parents abandoned them; for others, their single parents have given them away as they are unable to provide sustenance for their offspring. Mr. and Mrs. Vinoth, the caretakers, have given up their lives to care for these underprivileged. How noble of them!

In the midst of the activity, two huge vehicles halted at the main gate. They happened to be residents from the neighbourhood. Since Chinese New Year was round the corner, they had come to generously donate foodstuff to the home. In addition, they had 'Red Packets' for each and every one of us. A magnanimous deed indeed! I watched the children jump with joy as they received the 'Red Packets' and oranges.

Before we called it a day, the Yoga Sharing team donated foodstuff and stationery to the home, and Vijaya took the opportunity to announce to the children about the upcoming Malaysian International Yoga Competition in May. Without hesitation, all of them affirmed their participation. That is the spirit of these children!





EVENTS ABC Day at UCSI

On the beautiful morning of 27th January 2013, five MYS yoga instructors were invited to UCSI University to conduct a yoga session at the Active and Burning Calories (ABC) Day 2013 organised by the university's Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences. This fund raising event, which is in support of their public health campaign, is set up to raise awareness of the public on the importance of exercising for good health and to promote healthy daily lifestyle.

A total of 220 young adults and health enthusiasts pre-registered themselves for the session, eager to get a taste of a more balanced and rejuvenating 'work out' from yoga. The 90 minutes session led by Iswari, assisted by Daisy, Mogana, Jennifer and Meiwan, commenced with a calming awareness practice, followed by a series of yoga postures that required them to flex their muscles, stretch their spine and balance their bodies in ways some of them have never before attempted. Nevertheless, everyone had a go at it!

A candid moment quickly followed suit when everyone was asked to do the Simhagarjasana (Roaring Lion Pose). All hesitations were soon dissolved when they experienced the instant stress relieving benefits of the posture – filling the hall with mighty roars, followed by roars of laughter! A balancing pose with a partner was also introduced. Some pairs did it with grace while others shuffled to keep their balance, while trying to maintain a cool composure. What a stark difference this was from the 5km Run earlier that day!

The yoga session ended with a group photo session and students lingered to take pictures with the MYS yoga instructors while getting some health tips as well. How thrilling it was that these promising young adults have the option to walk the healthy path towards total wellbeing. Kudos to the organising committee of the event and students of UCSI!



Yoga Session at KBU

It was a delightful day at Kolej Bandar Utama with more than 100 students taking part in a yoga session conducted by Master Mani himself. Cheerful outbursts of laughter followed realisation that yoga can be a lot of fun too, especially with Master.

The students happily followed the simple yoga exercises that were taught and greatly enjoyed the breathing and relaxation techniques. The otherwise formal lecture hall quickly transformed into a place of rejuvenation and relaxation.

Though it was a short one-hour programme, everyone interacted well, showed lots of enthusiasm and was eager to learn. With their torsos stretched, limbs exercised and minds refreshed, the session was a great success. The loud applause at the end of the programme conveyed the students' appreciation.



Through the session, their young minds were opened to a renewed awareness of health and their part in making a conscious effort towards realising it. Hopefully, they will continue the pursuit of yoga — for their own well-being and holistic development.

Featured Asana
Dhanurasana (Bow Pose)

Step by Step

1. Lie flat on stomach with arms by the side of the body, palms facing up (use a folded blanket to pad the front of torso and legs).
2. Bend both knees, bringing heels as close as possible near buttocks.
3. Reach back with hands and hold of each ankle (not the tops of the feet). Ensure knees are not wider than hips. Keep knees at hip width for the duration of the pose.
4. Inhale and strongly lift heels away from buttocks and, at the same time, lift thighs away from the floor. This will have the effect of pulling the upper torso and head off the floor. Gently lengthen the tailbone down toward the floor while keeping the back muscles soft. As the heels continue lifting and thighs raise higher, sink shoulder blades firmly into the back to open the heart. Draw the tops of the shoulders away from ears. Gaze forward.
5. Exhale to slowly release the pose.

Benefits

- Stretches the entire front of the body, ankles, thighs and groins, abdomen and chest, and throat, and deep hip flexors (psoas)
- Strengthens the back muscles
- Massages the abdominal organs
- Improves the functioning of the digestive, excretory and reproductive organs and helps to remove gastrointestinal disorders, dyspepsia, chronic constipation and sluggishness of the liver
- Useful for the management of diabetes and menstrual disorders
- Realigns the spinal column and helps to correct hunching of the upper back, and removing stiffness

Contraindications and Cautions

- High or low blood pressure
- Weak heart
- Migraine
- Insomnia
- Hernia
- Colitis
- Peptic or duodenal ulcers
- Serious lower-back or neck injury



Articles by Practitioners

Sthiram Sukham

by Angie Yim

The modern yoga industry has entered mainstream from fitness centres to corporations. Since the aerobic fitness craze in the 1990's, yoga studios offering classes under different styles, names and brands have sprouted and are booming all over the world at an unprecedented speed. In North America alone, it is estimated that some 16 million Americans practice yoga in an industry worth more than USD7billion. There are some 26,000 yoga studios and 70,000 certified teachers in the US (based on an article in the Huffington Post in September 2012).

It has become rather complicated for a new or even seasoned practitioner to choose a yoga class and style.

Unfortunately with commercialization and the overemphasis on physical fitness, some of these yoga studios do not have an understanding of the yogic system, let alone the yogic tradition. It is not surprising that many yoga instructors are teaching push-and-pull yoga.

Against this scenario, an important piece of advice to practitioners is to go back to the basic definition of asana. In Sage Patanjali's classic treatise on yoga, *The Yoga Sutras* which is cited as an authoritative yogic text, he described asana in a short single sentence, *sthiram sukham asanam*.

Sthiram means firm, stable or just being steady. *Sukham* means a feeling of ease or being comfortable. These are the two important definitions of yoga asana. An asana has to be steady and comfortable. If not, it is not asana; at best, some position of the body.

Asanas balance, harmonize, and bring integration between physical and mental health. It produces homeostasis in the system – restores endocrinal balance, balances the inhibitors and stimulator circuits, regulates secretions and optimizes the functions of the entire system of the body.

Sukham also relates to the state of mind, which is relaxed. Muscles contain stretch receptors; the stretching movements of asanas send relaxing impulses to the brain, which induce a relaxed state of mind.

In the early days of my yoga practice, I knew nothing about the deeper aspects of yoga apart from the physical emphasis. My focus on physical asanas was to develop strength and flexibility. Not surprisingly, sometimes I would push myself beyond comfortable limits. This led to an inability to move and breathe freely and built tension in body and mind. In many ways, this was the fault of yoga instructors when they fail to see the starting point of the student. They keep pushing the student to go beyond their level in order to perfect an asana.

On a physical level, knowledge of *sthiram sukham asanam* guide us that a yoga posture is intended to be a balance between effort and ease. To find the *sthiram sukham* qualities in an asana, we have to know and recognize our own starting point and learn to accept it. Before we start each practice, we check, listen to our body and be honest with our capacity.

On a mental level, *sthiram sukham* offer a way to deal with all situations with awareness. When one strives for perfect poses, the attention is externalized and one loses sensitivity of the inner world. The point of yoga practice is not to attain perfect postures but to allow the asanas to help us find our wisdom, centering and help us create that steadiness and ease no matter what life throws at us.

Now when I attend a group class where the pace is faster than I can manage, I just keep to my own pace. I use asanas to alleviate tension, restore a comfortable range of movement, sharpen the senses and bring the mind back into the body and anchor the awareness in a state of witnessing. Simple asanas practiced with breath coordination can be more effective than challenging postures because they can give us the opportunity to develop a deeper awareness, release emotions and open the body from within.

So the next time you take to your mat, remember *sthiram sukham asanam*. Before you begin your asana practice, take time to connect with your breath, feel and listen to your body, mind and emotions. Make a shift from the state of just doing into just being and let your body lead you in the practice. That is yoga. **YM**

Articles by Practitioners

Hatha and Kriya – A Practitioner's Perspective

by Chandra Nanthakumar

Being one who was reserved and selective, I was most of the time left to do things on my own. My life since childhood has been quite eventful. Lots of challenges have come in my way; many beautiful things have happened, but being human, I supposed the quest for betterment in life is always deep down within us.

I picked up Hatha Yoga at the age of 16. At that time not many people spoke of yoga and the person who taught me the Sun Salutation did not go beyond the twelve steps, neither did he explain the reason behind doing it. The internet was not in then, so it was a handicap when it came to looking for resources on yoga. Naive and ignorant, I just coolly stopped the practice.

It was not until decades later when I seriously started attending hatha yoga classes. I began to enjoy it and because I wanted to be equipped with not only the science but also the philosophy of yoga, I joined MAYI. Then on, I took my practices seriously. It felt so good – each time I had a query, there was always someone at the centre to fill me in. I was constantly exposed to lots of reading material provided by MAYI. With the advancement of technology, I could also access information readily on the World Wide Web.

I felt a significant improvement in my health. The feeling of lethargy and indolence just diminished with each and every session of Hatha Yoga.

However, the urge for more crept in and thus I went in quest of the different aspects of yoga. After scouting, reading up and talking to senior practitioners of yoga, I plunged into the practice of Kriya, an ancient technique of yoga to enhance personal development. Kriya is purely scientific and it is a time-tested means to synchronise the energies within one's body. Being a person of science background, I truly enjoyed my classes with Master Mani as I could relate the teachings and the practice to science.

To those who are oblivious of Kriya, it is an activity to harmonize the energies within the body. It is a sadhana to refine the mental and psychic forces to allow one's awareness to penetrate deeper into the realms of nature. It induces dynamic relaxation and mental intelligibility, while decimating unpleasant characteristics of the mind such as phobia, depression and conflicts.

The teachings and the philosophy of Kriya Yoga are simply beyond one's imagination. Now that I practice it on a regular basis, a conspicuous feeling of satisfaction and calmness seeps in every time I complete a session. A feeling of harmony simply penetrates the body and I feel just so relaxed.



While Hatha Yoga helps me overcome lethargy and keeps me hale and hearty, Kriya practice has brought me altogether to a different plane. For one who used to get so worked up over the slightest thing on earth, I see myself being more serene, not only at home but also at work. I am rather chary of my surroundings. I am amazed by the fact that I use my cranium more intelligently than I ever did before. I see myself listening a lot more and speaking a lot less unlike in the past where I almost always rambled on and on justifying my doings.

Coupled with the practices of Manipuraka healing, I am able to now sense or rather scan energy around me. I can walk into a place and tell if the place feels good or otherwise. Above everything else, I am able to heal. Whenever I feel under the weather, I just tap the energy from the universe and I cure myself. I feel so good because I have overcome my constipation issues by just devoting myself to these two practices, Kriya and Manipuraka. In fact, lately I was struck with food poisoning. By just healing myself, I managed to stay away from the doctors.

At the home front, unlike in the past, I am more in control now. I understand all my family members better as I am more rational in my thinking. Being more patient with my spouse and everyone else at home, I rarely react to situations as I am quick to remind myself of my impulsive temperaments. I feel so good as I am able to think before I react. I also feel so good that I am able to make other members in the family see things in a different light.

Having shared all these, I have come to realize one crucial thing. Ultimately, one has to be in constant practice in order to reap the utmost benefits of these powerful sciences.

Hatha and Kriya have made a tremendous change in my life. **YM**

Yogic Wisdom For Daily Living

II.20 drasta drsimatrah suddhah api pratyayanupasyah

by Jamie Spatafore

The seer is consciousness pure. He witnesses nature without being reliant on it.

The seer is the one who sees. Who is it that sees? Is it the eyes that see? Do they actually see or are they just the instruments of seeing? In other words, do the eyes actually do anything besides accept and transmit light and shadow?

Who is it that sees? Is it the brain that sees? The brain will take those images transmitted from the eye and they will rearrange them into an information matrix. Is that seeing?

All of the above are just instruments in "seeing". Who is it that actually sees? Ask someone if they have seen anything. They will say "I have seen this" or "I have seen that". Now what they mean by I is their body and mind. But is it true? Does the body and mind see? The body contains the instruments that see and the brain rearranges the information of seeing but neither one has the ability to actually "see".

Just the other day it was very cloudy and everyone I met that day would say "Shame the Sun is not out today" or "There is no Sun today". Now we all know this is absolutely false. The Sun is always there. It is just covered up by the clouds. Now I didn't say anything to them because they are on a different path than us. However, it just goes to show that we live with falsehood everyday and we never even notice. I believe that if you start a journey a few metres out of alignment, you will be a few kilometres off target by the time you get there. We might as well get it straight in the beginning.

So who is it that "sees"? Doesn't there have to be consciousness to be able to see? If I am comatose, I will certainly not be seeing much will I? I have to be there to witness it don't I? So we can say that consciousness is the doing the seeing. Let's stay with that. Consciousness sees and what else? That is it. Consciousness only sees. It doesn't make judgements. It doesn't evaluate. It doesn't make decisions. It just sees. All of these are in the area of the mind.

Therefore, Patanjali says the seer is a witness to nature but he is not dependant on it. That is all the seer does. He just sees. The mind and body is what is dependent on nature for food, shelter, the fulfilling of desires and the obstruction of fears.

So does it make sense that if we could live life in tune with the seer instead of nature (objects), then perhaps we wouldn't have any problems? Let me rephrase that. Perhaps our problems wouldn't be able to bother us as much?

Maybe that is what all of these practices (sadhana) is actually for? Maybe they are trying to get us in touch with the seer instead of the seen? After all, it does not matter what Master Mani or any other teacher says until we experience it for ourselves. That is when a great impact will happen. So let us going on practicing but let us always remember the ends and not the means. That is our goal. Peace. **YM**

At Your Fingertips:
Gentle Balance Herb - Triphala

by Lee Yan

An Ayurveda blend of herbs, called Triphala, is a helpful blend of herbs to revitalise your body and restore the eliminative system back to normal. People often think of Triphala as a laxative, but it is actually a bowel tonic. It tones the bowel walls and helps the colon to function at its optimal level. Ayurveda texts refer to Triphala as an "ama scraper"; it helps pull toxins out of the intestines and draws them out of the body.



Triphala is made up of three fruits, Haritaki, Amalaki and Bihitaki. These herbs can be consumed daily as the combination helps to regulate the whole digestive system. The combination of three types of herbs in this blend helps to balance the three doshas in the body and also the spectrum of five tastes which can be used to reduce food cravings and prevent over eating. Therefore, it is ideal for weight loss especially from excessive eating or constant indulging where many will have the feeling of bloatedness and heaviness.

Haritaki is very useful in restore any imbalances. It has the characteristic of astringent, lubricant, anti-parasitical and antispasmodic properties. Therefore, it is useful in treating acute and chronic constipation, nervousness, anxiety and feelings of physical heaviness. Meanwhile, Amalaki or Amla supports cellular repair in intestinal wall and liver. It is a cooling tonic and astringent. It is useful in reducing ulcers, inflammation of the stomach and intestines, constipation, diarrhoea, liver congestion and burning feelings throughout the body. Lastly, Bibhitaki supports optimal health of the intestinal wall and natural scrubbing. It is good in purifying and balancing excess mucus, improves asthma and allergies conditions.

It is a common solution for many to use laxatives to help ease their bowel. Most laxatives act as irritants to the bowel causing it to gradually desensitize the intestinal mucous membranes, becoming very sluggish and non-responsive. Over time, the amount of laxatives needed to help the bowel to eliminate wastes will increase. The consistent use of laxatives will further deplete the body's store of minerals and vitamins and cause the imbalance of beneficial intestinal microorganisms. In order to obtain a healthy body, it needs to maintain and gain strength through good nutrition and at the same time eliminate wastes. Triphala is able to provide such balance and support both of the vital processes simultaneously.

Ideally, we need to have one or two bowel movements a day to help our body get rid of toxins efficiently. It is a growing concern where a lady who suffered from chronic constipation for a month and had to be rushed to the emergency unit to ease the pain. Based on some recent surveys, many revealed that on the days that they are constipated, they feel sluggish, bloated and irritated. But when the bowel is smooth, they feel that the world is bright and beautiful.

There are many reasons that cause indigestion and constipation, such as eating too late at night, having too much junk food, insufficient intake of water, excessive consumption of strong coffee or tea and many more.



Being a completely balanced energetic formula, this herbal blend is the most popular amongst all in Ayurveda because it not only regulates bowel movements but also has numerous of other valuable benefits such as detoxifying the liver, reduce high blood pressure and improves circulation. It is also useful for reducing excess cholesterol and lipid levels throughout the body by stimulating bile secretions.

Triphala can also be an herbal eye tonic. It is beneficial for all eye diseases including conjunctivitis, progressive myopia, early stages of glaucoma and cataracts. With the combined tonic and eliminative properties, Triphala is generally beneficial for those who experience fatigue, anemia and assimilation. It can be used for symptoms of inflammation, heat and infection.

Being such a gentle and balanced herb, Triphala can be consumed on a regular basis simply for health maintenance for its nutritional properties will help to prevent sicknesses. This unique herb blend has remarkable abilities to cleanse impurities, nurture the body and restore health. It is best used for detox or as a daily rejuvenation tonic. For proper guidance on how to use this herb for specific conditions, please speak to us at NSR Centre. We can be contacted at **03-7724 1072.**

General tips on how to use Triphala :
Take ½ teaspoon after every meal to support optimal intestinal and digestive function.

Therapeutic Bodyworks & Inner Rejuvenation
with the Science of Ayurveda



Explore the system of natural healing embraced by the concept of Ayurveda. NSR offers therapeutic bodyworks and therapies in a friendly and comfortable environment ensuring pleasant and relaxing experiences.

Types of therapy available :

- Deep Relaxing Abhyanga Massage
- Vasti for back , knee , neck
- Hair Restoration & Natural Hair Dye
- Abdominal Rejuvenation
- Shirodhara
- Facial Point Massage
- Skin Rejuvenation
- Slimming Bodyworks

NSR CENTRE
Contact : 03-77241072
www.nsrcentre.com

Improving women's health naturally



Testimonials :

" I've lost 10lbs and it's simply amazing. I've never felt better in a long time.."

" My bowel movement has improved and it is a truly great experience."

" My irregular menstrual cycle has normalised after the detox programme.Thanks. "

" To my amazement , I got pregnant after the programme and delivered a healthy baby boy.Thank you for the wonderful programme! "

Cleanse your way to good health & vitality!

Join **NSR Total Body Cleansing Programme** to enhance your body's natural ability to detoxify it's internal system.

In this comprehensive, step-by-step detoxification solution ,your body internal system will be restored through effective, systematic and most importantly non-invasive way.

This 1 month programme is gentle and allows your body to be gradually strengthened and returned to Prime Health.

an experiential journey for a women to feel...

- More energy
- Improved skin condition
- More peaceful sleep
- Improved bowel movements
- Calmer emotions
- Healthy menstrual cycles
- Balanced hormones
- Increased of fertility rate.

What is inclusive in this programme.

- Detox Discovery workshop
- Personalised Consultation
- NSR Herbs & Detoxification Kit

To find out more on how you can benefit from this programme , Call us at 03-7724 1072, www.nsrcentre.com

NSR CENTRE
NATURAL · SLIMMING · REJUVENATION

Yoga Therapy: Sense of Balance

by Surya Tay

Dizziness, vertigo, and motion sickness all relate to the sense of balance and equilibrium (sense spatial orientation) which tells the brain where the body is "in space:"(ie. direction it is pointing/moving, and if it is turning/standing still).

The sense of balance is maintained by interaction of various parts of the nervous system:

- The inner ears which monitor the directions of motion, such as turning, or forward-backward, side-to-side, and up-and-down motions
- The eyes, which monitor where the body is in space (i.e. upside down, right side up, etc.) and also directions of motion.
- The skin pressure receptors (in the joints and spine) which tell what part of the body is down and touching the ground
- The central nervous system (brain and spinal cord), which processes all the bits of information from the four other systems, to be able to coordinate.

Symptoms of motion sickness and dizziness appear when the central nervous system receives conflicting messages from the other four systems.

Yoga postures can improve balance and stimulate the nervous system to help alleviate imbalances. Postures are chosen to activate the nervous system and the balance centers in the inner ear, improve circulation, focus and concentration.

1. Malasana



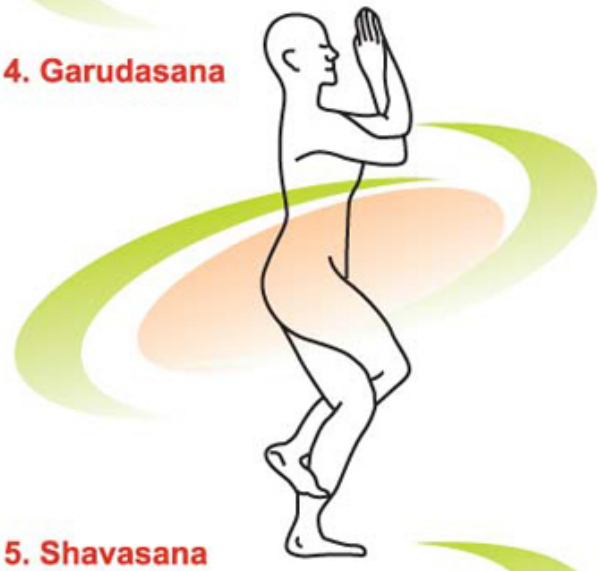
2. Halasana



3. Paschimottanasana



4. Garudasana



5. Shavasana



Mudra:
1. Shanmukhi



Pranayama (Breathing Techniques):
1. Brahmari
2. Nadi Sodhana

Shatkarma (Cleansing Techniques):
1. Jala Neti (Nasal Cleansing)
2. Trataka (Candle Gazing)

All yoga techniques should be learned from an experienced yoga therapist.

For your first free yoga therapy consultation, please call: 03-2260 5322 (Brickfields/Bangsar); 03-7727 6682 (Damansara Utama)

Eco's Echoes: Permaculture - taking organic farming one step further



Organic Farming promotes the use of natural fertilisers, making use of the natural carbon cycle so that waste from plants becomes the food (fertiliser) of another, to produce food while establishing an ecological balance to prevent soil fertility or pest problems.

The concept of permaculture takes one step further by bringing the people's wastes back into the cycle. It also reduces the energy wasted in transporting the foods by producing the foods where the people are. In permaculture the people contribute in their daily life toward the production of their food and other needs. The permaculture garden is:

- It is also responsible for its waste, it aims not to pollute the surrounding environment, i.e. neither with excess nitrogen released into the water systems, nor weed seed into any natural systems.
- It uses design to minimise the gardeners chores and energy input.
- It mimics the patterns found in nature so that there is rarely bare soil, the conservation of soil and water is a high priority. Plants are allowed to set seed and are inter-planted for pest control.
- This system aims to harvest and maximise water, sun and other natural energies, eg. wind, dust, leaves, bird droppings.
- It aims to provide nutritious food and habitat for people AND native animals and birds.



Finding balance with the Ethics of Permaculture:

The ethics of permaculture provide a sense of place in the larger scheme of things, and serve as a guidepost to right livelihood in concert with the global community and the environment, rather than individualism and indifference. It suggests that we think and act responsibly in relation to each other and the earth.

1. **Care of the Earth ...includes all living and non-living things– plants, animals, land, water and air**
2. **Care of People ...promotes self-reliance and community responsibility– access to resources necessary for existence**
3. **Setting Limits to Population & Consumption ...gives away surplus– contribution of surplus time, labor, money, information, and energy to achieve the aims of earth and people care.**

Permaculture also acknowledges a basic life ethic, which recognizes the intrinsic worth of every living thing. A tree has value in itself, even if it presents no commercial value to humans. That the tree is alive and functioning is worthwhile. It is doing its part in nature: recycling litter, producing oxygen, sequestering carbon dioxide, sheltering animals, building soils, and so on.



Permaculture principles are brief statements or slogans that can be remembered as a checklist when considering the options for design and evolution of ecological support systems. These principles can be seen as universal:

1. Observe and Interact
2. Capture and store energy
3. Get a yield
4. Apply self-regulation and accept feedback
5. Use and value renewable resources and services
6. Produce no waste (recycle)
7. Integrate rather than segregate
9. Use small and slow solutions
10. Creatively use and respond to change

2013 Workshops *For Your* Health

INTRODUCTION *to* CHAKRAS



The Wheels Of Life

Hundreds of chakras, also referred to as energy centres, are said to exist in our body and that they are the key to the operation of our being. Chakras correspond to vital points in the physical body i.e. major plexuses of arteries, veins and nerves, and have been described as metaphysical counter parts to the endocrine glands. Learn about the chakras and how we can achieve a total balance through the understanding of these magnificent energy centres.

21st July 2013,
3pm - 5pm, D'sara Uptown

SHATKARMA



6 Cleansing & Detox Techniques

You know it's time to detox when to detox when you experience unexplained fatigue, breathing problems, constipation, irritated skin or breakouts, allergies, frequent colds, mental confusions, and other dis-ease. This workshop will help you acquire the know-how of yogic natural cleansing of the sinus, lungs, bowel, organs of digestion which are especially good for removal of toxins build-up, and restoring the natural internal balance.

15th September 2013,
3pm - 6pm Bangsar

PARTNER *with* PRECISION

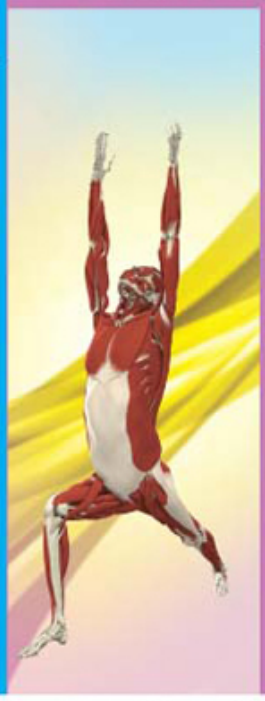


Movements With Awareness

The practice of yoga asanas are well known for their health benefits - Partner with Precision workshop holds true to this claim with some added perks thrown in. This workshop enables the participants to heighten the level of awareness on their own individual body as well as developing sensitivity and respect towards other people. Simply a great way to deepen the yoga asanas which we sometimes have difficulty attempting!

3rd November,
3.00pm - 5.30pm at Bangsar

ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY



The Body From Within

Understand the basic anatomy and physiology of the human system along with the inner works of bodily movements. Discover what happens when we blend, flex and stretch our body during yoga sessions, and how simple understanding and awareness of the body system can elevate our well-being.

27th October 2013,
3pm - 6pm at Bangsar



Guided by one of the world's leading Yoga Master Master Manisekaran

With 32 years of experience in yoga, Master Manisekaran continues his 14 years track record of full time instructing commitment, propelling him as one of the world's leading yoga exponents. He propagates some of the most effective human potential technology trainings and today, he is on the crest of a rapidly growing yoga movement in Malaysia and globally.

MAYI YOGA ACADEMY
MindBody • Authentic • Yoga • Inspiration

Contact: **03-2260 5322, 03-7726 6682**
Email: yoga@mayiyogaacademy.com Website: www.yogafranchise.com.my

Inner Insights: New Year's Resolution

(Part 2)

by NSR newbie

One morning a few days later, I was back at NSR..... I had a very good hunch that my New Year's resolution will finally materialise.

And the story continues.....

It was a Saturday evening and I was taking a stroll in the park across from my apartment. I noticed the lush greenery surrounding the park and beds of pretty flowers that coloured the entire place. There was a well paved joggers track and a fully equipped children's playground but I never noticed how beautiful this park was before. This is not surprising as I used to spend all my time holed up in my apartment. The weather that evening was pleasant, so there were many people at the park. Elderly couples were taking slow walks, young ones were jogging and parents were accompanying their children at various activities.

My attention was caught by a father with his young daughter. I admired his patience and persistence in teaching his little girl how to ride a bicycle. My thoughts wandered back to the conversation I had earlier with my father. "Stop wasting your money and time, you'll never lose weight" was what he said when I called him earlier to update him about what was happening in the last three months of my life. Since I was a child, I was bigger built than my older siblings and other children of my age. I was never included in any games or activities. As I grew older, I was often teased by schoolmates and relatives for being fat. My family found me embarrassing and had always left me out of any outings. When I completed schooling I had a hard time looking for a job as I was discriminated due to my size. My family was not supportive so I ended up living on my own. I needed to have a place where I could be alone without anyone judging me all the time. I will never forget what my dad told me when I was 16, "It doesn't matter if you're 100kg or 120kg, you'll still be fat!" These words still haunt me. With tears welling up in my eyes, I made my way back to the apartment. That night, feeling miserable again, I resorted to ordering pizza take out, finished one whole large pizza, a bottle of soft drink and fell asleep in front of the TV.

The next morning, I was supposed to attend classes at NSR Centre. It has been a routine for me for the past three months. I woke up early but felt reluctant to get out of bed. Maybe my father was right. So what if I've shed a couple of kilos? I'm still fat. Then my mobile rang. It was a friend from class making sure I was awake. I confessed to her my plans to skip class but her words of encouragement made me decide otherwise. I also remembered the times that I had spoken to the coach at NSR and her comforting words always made me feel so much better. So I got out of bed and as I was getting changed, I looked at myself in the mirror. The image I saw was a fitter, more vibrant and happier me. I was no longer the sluggish, dull-looking girl. Sure, I may have only shed a few kilos and lost a few inches but my life is definitely changing for the better. I am no longer seeking solace from food because I have made new friends who understand me instead of judging me. I no longer felt lethargic all the time because I felt motivated to move more. Since I joined NSR, I felt an extraordinary link which naturally built a connection to my body. I have never felt that in myself before. I learnt to understand my own body, that every person's body composition, diet and energy requirements are different. Only with proper understanding can we obtain the most suitable approach in achieving an ideal body weight while providing it with proper nourishment.

I had been living in a vicious cycle all this while and the only way to come out of it is to change my perception of life. Being "born fat" does not mean that I will remain fat for the rest of my life. But being constantly degraded by my family and friends had indirectly affected my mental health and unconsciously created a mental perception of my self-worth, that I am what I am now and nothing can be done to change it. This state of mind controlled my physical health which caused my body to go out of sync and finally led to serious weight gain issues. The most important lesson I have learnt is also that our body is a miraculous entity that has a natural ability to perform a multitude of vital life tasks, simultaneously and continuously. However everything will only work together in perfect harmony if the body is in a healthy, balanced state. The choices we make in our everyday life in terms of thoughts, food and action will either work in harmony with or against it. I was able to find balance physically and mentally through the various types of movements taught in the NSR class.

Once I was done changing, I rushed out the door to make up for time lost, so I could get to class on time. You see, now I can understand the big picture. I realise that I can determine my own self-worth and knowing that there is hope is a great motivation for me towards improving my weight issues and the entire process seemed much more effortless. **YM**

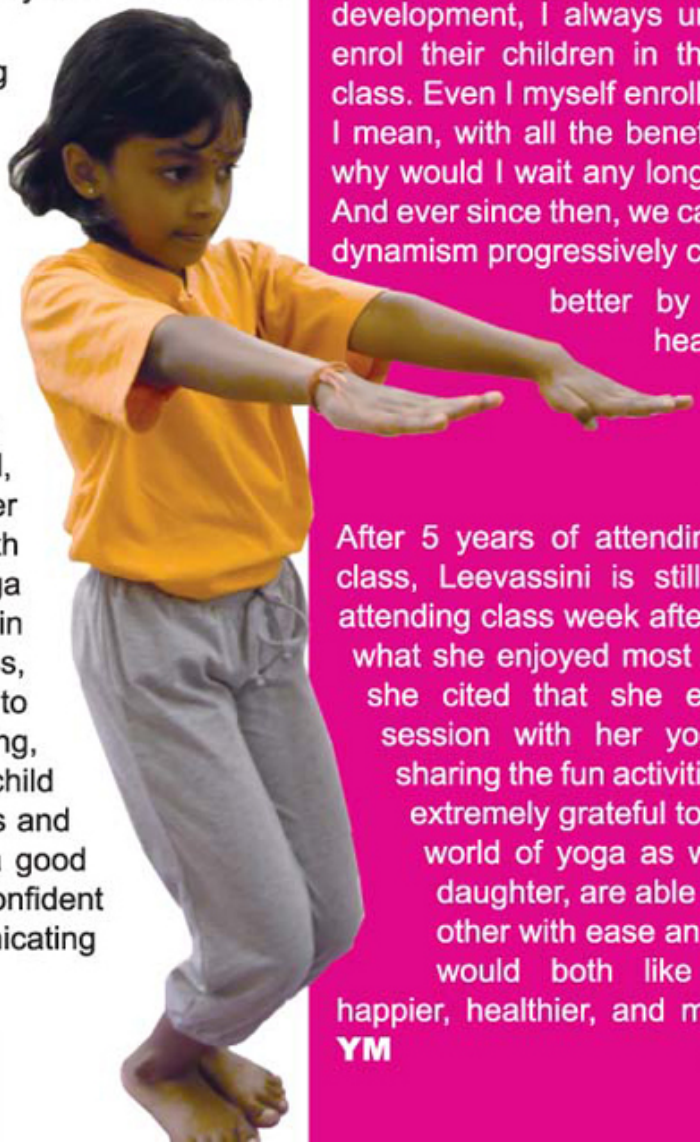
Inner Insights:
Yoga in the Family

by Devi Velusamy



My ten year old daughter, who is growing up in the world of yoga, began her first yoga session when she was just five years old. I remember that first time, she beamed with enthusiasm and obediently followed the yoga instructor's instructions, happily playing along oblivious to the benefits that she was reaping, and the rest of the many weeks, months and years to come are history…

I may not be an avid yoga practitioner myself but I signed Leevassini up for the Super Yoga Kids Class because I know that Yoga is the answer to a good physical, mental and emotional health. As a parent, I would like to provide all that I can for my growing child. I wish for her to become a healthy, functional and responsible person of society. And to achieve this, I understand that it's important to have a strong foundation laid while she is still young.



Along the years of attending yoga classes, she has become more adaptable to her surroundings and enjoys going to school as learning is a breeze for her. Well, that's also because her memory has improved! With the many aspects of yoga being taught to children, in the Super Yoga Kids Class, from physical training to mental and emotional tuning, she is naturally a happy child who demonstrates kindness and understanding along with a good dose of empathy. She is confident and at ease when communicating with others.

Her improved physical posture and agility is very noticeable too. Her body has become stronger and I can see that her immune system and digestive system are also in tip-top condition! I'm very relieved as when given a choice, she prefers healthier foods and she enjoys her weekly workout. When she participated in the Malaysian International Yoga Competition, she had no qualms about being on stage in front of hundreds of people! I'm so happy to see her so composed and confident!

Seeing her marked improvement and positive development, I always urge other parents to enrol their children in the Super Yoga Kids class. Even I myself enrolled into a yoga class! I mean, with all the benefits that come along, why would I wait any longer to practice yoga? And ever since then, we can see that our family dynamism progressively changing for the better by collectively making healthier choices that further strengthen the family's bondage.

After 5 years of attending Super Yoga Kids class, Leevassini is still looking forward to attending class week after week. When asked what she enjoyed most in the yoga session, she cited that she enjoys being in the session with her yoga classmates and sharing the fun activities with them! We are extremely grateful to be introduced to the world of yoga as we, both mother and daughter, are able to connect with each other with ease and understanding. We would both like wish everyone a happier, healthier, and more peaceful future.

YM

Inner Insights:
Learning to Teach Kids

by K. Saravana Sealan

While conducting Yoga sessions initially for school children via Malaysian Yoga Society's Karma projects, the delivery of yoga methodology has been just like how I would teach adult participants.

Little did I know I was going be a kid again, when I attended the Super Yoga Kids Instructor Course (SYKIC). What an amazing Journey it was with the SYKIC teacher and fellow participants.

The SYKIC is so well structured, encompassing a theory portion explaining the effective art of communicating intricacies of Yoga postures to children without compromising its contents. It appeared important that parents are made to understand, Yoga for kids is taught in a playful manner at times, to engage their minds to remain focused while the effects of these postures and other yogic techniques gradually make a difference when practice regularly. Imagine a way where all the technicalities and 'bombastic' Sanskrit terms for yoga practices are at times replaced with 'child-friendly' and creative names. That is Super Yoga Kids Instructor Course in a nutshell.

Fun ways of warming up in joint exercises, postures (such as the teapot, tree, pyramid, pretzel twist poses, effective breathing, etc.) were introduced, whilst the course.

We participants were given the space and comfort to be sporting, trusting, encouraging, open and creative ~ coupled with Loads of FUN! All of us, who were initially apprehensive about getting down to moving like children, enjoyed the sessions thoroughly as days went by. We even began to imagine coming in diapers like babies if the course extended for a couple days more. I was even given a new name 'Super' Sealan, which would supposedly come with a red cape, minus the underwear worn outside, of course!

There is more to Yoga postures than flexing muscles and bringing about balance and centeredness, when dealing with kids. At SYKIC, it is more about getting into the presence of the children to be able to tap into their creativities, and then teach Yoga in a way that best appeal to them. In short to be inspired by them and to Inspire them in return.



Because of the way the class was conducted, coupled with the amazing energy that fellow participants and the teacher contributed, it sparked an Inspiration to do my best in nurturing my dormant potential. Materials created in our required assignments were soon used as practical teaching materials. SYKIC has been about self-acceptance and self-learning, as well as 'hard-work' in breaking my mental fatigue then.

For the 2 research papers assigned, I chose 'Child Psychology' as it is essential for me to learn the psychology of children, to be able to connect with them better. In the research process I realized that the whole SYKIC encompasses child psychology.

Two concepts that came up at this time were:

a) Children are adults in small bodies
b) Children have a unique way of thinking, completely different from adults ~ by Jean Piaget

The first theory has been the one that I've lived by. It was the latter that took me by surprise... and got me wondering. "What was I, as a kid, ~ how were my thought patterns", I began to ponder in my Inward Journey.

Whilst 'introspecting', I realised an 'Energy Blockage' had been subtly contributing to my 'self-doubt' up to that moment in my Life. It had been cleverly disguising itself, as 'an agent' in 'humbling me', as a person. It was time to take a deeper look, at the blocked energy to transcend it. Surely that 'blocked energy', had gained momentum by now and it was indeed intimidating to even face. But the spark of Inspiration given by the teacher and fellow participants, through the learning experience and the celebrated ego as 'Super' Sealan, seem to give enough courage for me to Face the 'energy block' and look right into its 'eyes'.

"As the Light arrives, Darkness dispels..." when the Awareness was placed on the 'blocked energy' long enough, it dissipated, leaving 'Saravana Sealan' Free-er, Joyful with much Vigor. It unleashed the trapped 'child', who had been doubting himself subtly and remaining an underperformer. I was Free to do my best, without fear of being judged.

That moment was like King Arthur lifting the Excalibur, pierced on a rock, to protect the throne.
What an Awesome awakening and Joy!

These days, in the kids yoga sessions, we are 'playing' in yoga postures, singing 'kirtans' (songs depicting noble characteristics, such as contentment (santosha), sharing, caring for one another, devotion and more). So to speak, as a Super Yoga Kids Instructor, showing children the beauty they possess inside, while giving them a sense of pride!

Children who came distracted and with low self-esteem are now more focused and able to come forward to give speeches in their classrooms. The parents are seeing tremendous improvements in their children's attitude towards life in general, in terms of respect, love, giving a hand to help, dedication in completing a task, and not to mention their academic results. They also find a better way of curbing life situations by finding the ability to 'decode' their innate emotions, and allow their stillness of mind to find the answers and explanations over pressing situations by themselves.

My conviction is that these children with a profound internal awareness (physical, mental, emotional), clarity and focus, will turn out to be responsible individuals with potential as future evolved leaders.

Thanks to all behind SYKIC at MAYI Yoga Academy, who have played their role in the process of discovering the innate gift within me. Since this experience, my motto in life has been "Bring it On!"

May every child be seen as the Angel they are each meant to BE. Shine ON! **YM**

Super Yoga Kids Instructor Course (SYKIC)

Learn to stimulate young minds while nurturing their physical and mental development!

- Use yoga practice, creative stories, engaging games and integrated movements to create fun lesson plans
- The know-how of Super Memory & Concentration Training
- Recognise the needs of children of different stages
- Effectively create and use teaching materials

Commencing in May 2013



super yoga kids
Educating the Whole Child

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super yoga kids corner

Educating the Whole Child

When Left and Right UNITE!

We know that the brain is divided into two hemispheres connected by a bundle of fibres (the corpus callosum) which sends messages back and forth between the hemispheres – otherwise dubbed as the super highway of the brain. Each side of the brain controls different types of thinking, and people are said to prefer one type of thinking over the other. For example, a person who is 'left brain dominant' is often said to be more logical, analytical and objective, while a person who is 'right brain dominant' is said to be more intuitive, thoughtful and subjective.

In a nutshell, the left and right hemispheres of our brain process information in different ways, and we tend to process information using our dominant side. Yet, a dominant side simply points to a preferred side. It is not the absolute. It has been shown that when we experience a stressful situation, our brain goes on an 'auto pilot' mode which gears towards the dominant side. However, learning process is enhanced when all of our senses are used. This includes using our less dominant side of the brain.

The development and usage of both hemispheres of the brain are essential to almost anything and everything we do. We can and must use and develop both sides of the brain. We draw upon specific sides of our brain for a variety of daily functions, depending on things such as our age, education and experiences.



LEFT BRAIN FUNCTIONS	RIGHT BRAIN FUNCTIONS
Uses logic	*Uses feeling*
Detail oriented	*'big picture' oriented*
Facts rule	*Imagination rules*
Words and language	*Symbols and images*
Math and science	*Philosophy & religion*
Can comprehend	*Can 'get it' (i.e. meaning)*
Knowing	*Believes*
Acknowledges	*Appreciates*
Order/pattern perception	*Spatial perception*
Reality based	*Fantasy based*
Forms strategies	*Presents possibilities*
Analytic	*Intuitive*

In general, schools tend to lean towards left-brain modes of thinking and learning, while little attention is given to the right-brain activities. Left-brain subjects favour logical thinking, analysis, and precision. Right-brained subjects, on the other hand are more artistry, feeling and creativity inclined. Yet of late, educational researchers have shown that lessons that encompass a balanced involvement of both sides of the brain can produce surprising learning expansions in the students and concluded that learning can advance remarkably when teachers advocate integration of both sides of the students' brains in a lesson.

Let's face it. The brain, often related to as a muscle, works on the 'use it or lose it principle'— the more you use it, the better it gets.

Some fun activities to delight both the left and right brain:



PICTURE THIS, PICTURE THAT

Look at a picture and alternate between zooming into the details of every inch of the picture and shifting your vision to view the picture as a whole. Tips: you can also look at scenery, your desk, your pet, etc.



BEING HANDY

Simultaneously draw a picture with both hands. With ample of practice, you can even draw with one hand and write with the other at the same time!



STRATEGIZE AND CREATE

Think of something that you would like to create (eg: a pair of bouncing shoes?!) Plan and prepare the materials needed and let your intuition (and hands) do the rest. Beautify your project and think of at least 10 other ways that you can make use of it!



MOVE YOUR BODY

Touch the right hand to the left toes, release and touch the left hand to the right toes. This can also be done while walking where one will resemble an exaggerated marching movement. Then, try doing it while going backwards!



NOSING IN AND OUT

Cover the right nostril and breathe in through the left nostril, then release the right nostril and cover the left nostril to breathe out through the right nostril. Then reverse it by breathing in through the right nostril (while still maintaining the covered left nostril), and release the left nostril and cover the right nostril to breathe out through the left nostril. Repeat a few rounds.

SYK classes include: Yoga Kids Class, Teens Yoga Class, Family Yoga Class and Pregnancy Yoga Class. For more information about Super Yoga Kids , log on to www.superyogakids.com or find us at Facebook: SYK Superyogakids

Chef Yogi's Food Notes!

Fresh Salad Popiah



Ingredients
10 pcs fresh spring roll wrapper / popiah skin
1 small sengkuang - shredded
1 Japanese cucumber -shredded
1 carrot -shredded
1 beetroot -shredded

Salad Sauce
(mix well the following ingredients)
½ teaspoon salt
¼ cup olive oil or grapeseed oil
½ lemon Juice
½ tablespoon brown sugar
1 red chilli – finely chopped
1 pcs beancurd – mashed

Methods:

1. To assemble, fill 1 spring roll wrapper with shredded sengkuang, Japanese cucumber, carrot and beetroot.
2. Spread evenly 1 teaspoon of salad sauce over shredded vegetables.
3. To wrap, lift bottom corner of wrapper over filling; pull wrapper back against filling to tighten. Fold in sides, and roll forward to form a 5"-long roll, about 2 ½" thick; repeat with remaining wrappers.
4. Eat fresh.

Benefits of Raw Beetroot

- **Liver's Friend**: The betacyanin in beetroot can help detox liver, having a knock-on effect for your blood-stream, by helping the body to eliminate toxins and potentially preventing the build-up of fatty deposits.
- **Prevent Strokes & Heart Attacks**: Beetroot juice has been shown to reduce high blood pressure.
- **Immune System Booster**: Beetroot is a super-storehouse of both vitamin C and iron. Beetroot's amazing range of vitamins and nutrients has been shown to boost immune system, helping to fight off infection. These nutrients help stimulate the re-oxygenation of cells and the production of new blood cells.

Schedule of Courses: Apr - Jul 2013

APRIL		
15/04/2013	BSR	International Yoga Instructor Course - Advance
17/04/2013	DU	Yoga Foundation Course - Beginner Level 1
19/04/2013	DU	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course
20/04/2013	BFS	Yoga Foundation Course - Beginner Level 1
20/04/2013	Kuala Selangor	A Sparkling Night with the Fireflies
21/04/2013	BSR	Partner Yoga Instructor Course
21/04/2013	DU	Partner with Precision: Movements with Awareness
28/04/2013	BSR	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course

MAY		
01/05/2013	Kandiah Hall	Malaysian International Yoga Competition 2013
04/05/2013	DU	Precision & Alignment: Level 1 Practitioner Workshop 1
05/05/2013	DU	Precision & Alignment: Level 1 Practitioner Workshop 2
05/05/2013	DU	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course
05/05/2013	BSR	Super Yoga Kids Instructor Course
11/05/2013	DU	Precision & Alignment: Level 1 Practitioner Workshop 3
12/05/2013	DU	Precision & Alignment: Level 1 Practitioner Workshop 4
18/05/2013	DU	Precision & Alignment: Level 2 Practitioner Workshop 1
19/05/2013	DU	Precision & Alignment: Level 2 Practitioner Workshop 2
25/05/2013	DU	Precision & Alignment: Level 2 Practitioner Workshop 3
26/05/2013	DU	Precision & Alignment: Level 2 Practitioner Workshop 4
25/05 - 06/06/2013	India	Himalaya Tour 2013

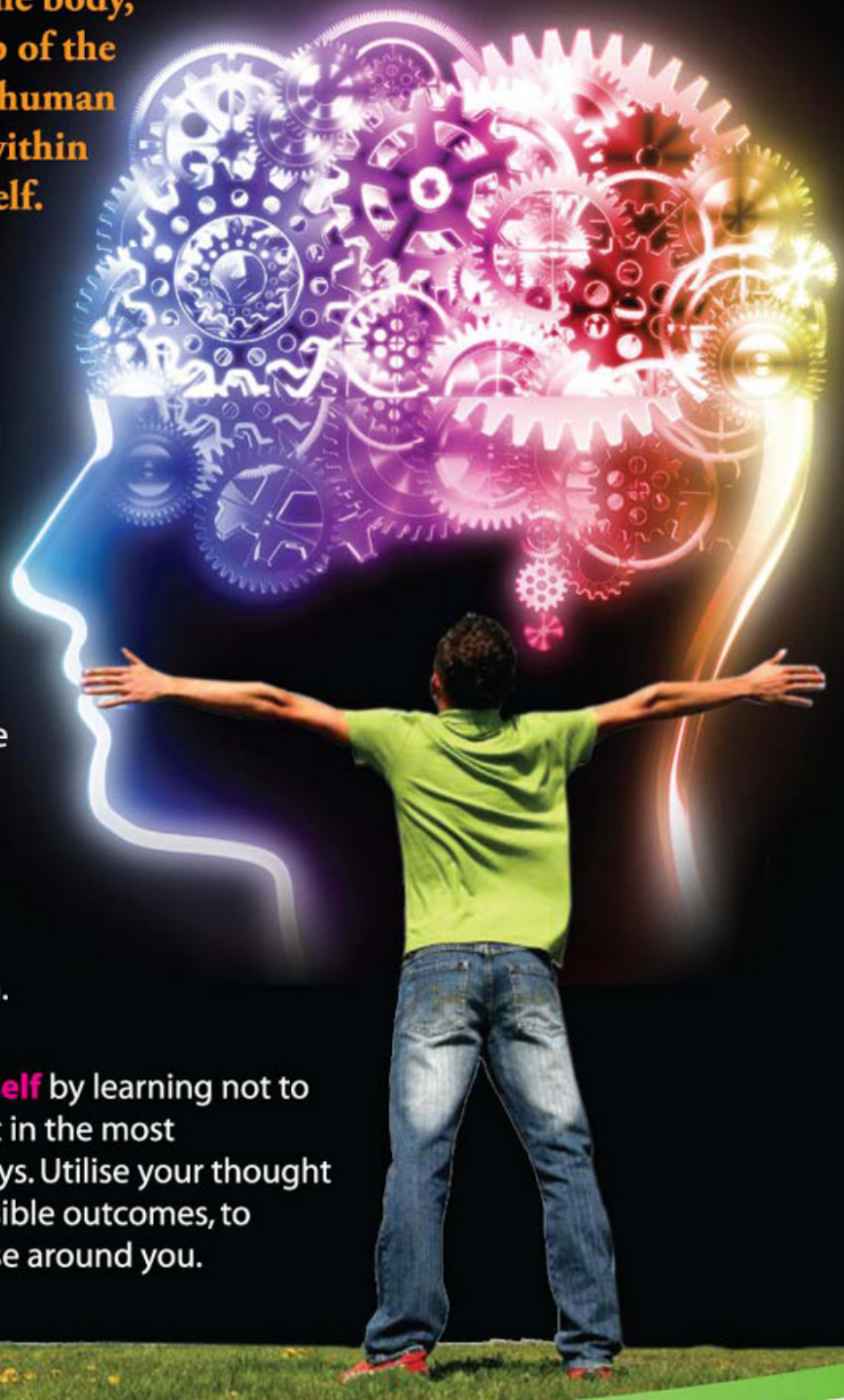
JUNE		
03/06/2013	DU	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course
09/06/2013	BSR	International Yoga Instructor Course - Intermediate
12/06/2013	BSR	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course
22/06/2013	BSR	Self Mastery
30/06/2013	Batu Cave	Dark Cave Adventure

JULY		
07/07/2013	DU	Super Yoga Kids Instructor Course
13/07/2013	BSR	Manipuraka Practice Session
14/07/2013	DU	International Yoga Instructor Foundation Course
14/07/2013	BSR	International Yoga Instructor Course - Advance
21/07/2013	DU	Introduction to Chakras: The Wheel of Life

BFS: Brickfields; BSR: Bangsar; DU: D'sara Uptown
**Subject to change without prior notice*

Self Mastery

Know everything about the body, the mind and the makeup of the intricate workings of the human machinery, the energies within and the truth about the self.



Realise your infinite potentials. Be dynamic and industrious in body and mind while resting in an ever expanding peace and absolute calmness within.

Learn to be aware of every single thought and turn them into productive, positive and progressive actions that lighten up your entire life.

Live in truth while enjoying the deepest of wisdom flowing endlessly from within.

Mostly, learn to **master yourself** by learning not to control the mind but to fuel it in the most constructive and uplifting ways. Utilise your thought power to create the best possible outcomes, to elevate your life and also those around you.

Next Intake: 22nd June 2013

MAYI
YOGA ACADEMY
MindBody • Authentic • Yoga • Inspiration
(Formerly known as Yoga Franchise Sdn. Bhd)

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