



# The Lotus Blossom

www.TheYogaCenterInc.com



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**Summer 2009**

**Finding New in the Old by Patrick Starkey**

One of the challenges of Yoga is dealing with the repetitiveness of the practices. We come to the mat and repeat the same poses over and over again, repeat the same *pranayama* practices, regurgitate the same mantras. Each time we repeat them, the potential for us to become absent increases. The real work in Yoga is, to quote Indira Ghandi, to "learn to be still in the midst of activity and to be vibrantly alive in repose." We are usually practicing the opposite. Frenetic in our daily interactions, we are more often reacting to events instead of responding to them. By doing so, we drain ourselves of valuable life force. We then crave the bliss of unconsciousness; craving rest, sleep, food, or some other form of checking out. We show up to class not to reawaken our awareness of the miracle of life but to muddle through a practice waiting for the mindlessness of *Śavasana* that awaits us at the end of our hour or so of toil.

Yoga is about awakening intelligent awareness. It concerns itself with building the ability to sense the entire spectrum of being alive – mentally, physically and spiritually. It is easy to forget this in the repetition of poses, to become bored with the effort in repeating them. The Western mind is constantly attracted to newness. We become bored with traditions, constantly challenging them. In the introduction to *Paths To God*, a fascinating discussion of incorporating the principles of the *Bhagavad Gita* into daily life, Ram Dass writes, "We in the West seem to have become very reactive toward traditional religious forms, which comes from the way we've seen rituals and ceremonies used as ends in themselves – as a mechanical, ritualistic priest craft, with the living spirit gone out of it." He says that there is nothing wrong with ritual or repetition of practices, though. Whether they are religious, spiritual or physical practices, they just need to be re-infused with living spirit. That process is the essence of *Tapas*.

One of the five *niyamas* or personal observances of the eightfold path of Classical Yoga, *Tapas* asks us to practice waking up in the midst of the reverie of the mundane. In the repetition of our practices, lies the opportunity to experience all that is happening in the moment, inside the whole spectrum of feeling, from the outermost sheath of the physical body to the innermost sheath of spiritual awareness. When we practice this aspect of *Tapas*, we can see how the new is actually more easily accessible in the old, and our same old patterns are insidiously hidden in our quest for the new. The call is to first become aware of that place where we are becoming bored with our practice, then look for ways to come alive by seeing how we can sink deeper into our awareness of being "vibrantly alive" in the pose.

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★ **Did you know? About our Center and teachers...** ★  
★ We are *closed* July 3, July 4 & Sept. 7 ? Happy Holidays! ★  
★ Lindy has returned from maternity leave and is teaching Prenatal & Postnatal Yoga? ★  
★ Virginia is recovering nicely from ankle surgery? ★  
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3107-C Franklin Road SW  
Piccadilly Square  
Roanoke, VA 24014  
540-345-4090

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www.TheYogaCenterInc.com

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*Yoga is  
c o n t i n u o u s  
struggle  
over long  
periods of time.*

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### Yogic Perspective by Jack Gray

From this yogi's perspective, two themes have been emphasized at the Yoga Center this spring. First, an idea from Yin, *"the Yin mind awaits patiently without anxiety"*. Second, from a Yang practitioner's perspective, *"yoga is a continuous struggle."* In order to explore these two themes and elaborate on the nature of yin and yang yoga practices, it is necessary to begin with an even more basic definition of yoga itself.

What is yoga? There are many definitions; indeed yoga means different things to different people. For many it is simply a discipline leading to improved physical well being. For some it extends to the philosophical. The most common root word definitions for yoga involve a yoking or a union, implicitly with some universal force. Although yoga has many different meanings and connotations, perhaps it can best be defined as what it is not. Yoga is not a religion with a defined set of principals which, when accepted, entitles the practitioner to a divine benefit. Kripalu Yoga practitioners, to include our own Debbie Stevens, define yoga as a quest. Quests typically involve protracted struggles, but more importantly quest is the root word for question and the eternal question is, "who am I-why am I here? "

Mankind itself has pursued the answer for many millenniums, yet the inquiry continues. Yoga provides a map to follow in pursuit of that never-ending quest, or it can simply provide a salutary benefit for ones physical well being. Practicing the *asanas* (postures) can indeed be a continuous physical struggle, which over time yields considerable physical benefit. Improved physical well being is a desirable goal in its own right. However, many who participate in yoga to promote their physical well being ultimately struggle with metaphysical issues as well. In fact, in the early yogic texts, which predate the Bible, the *asanas* are not even mentioned. For those who approach yoga in a metaphysical sense, *yoga is indeed a continuous struggle*, even as is life. Yoga can be exercise or it can be about the infinite, eternal and whole. These are issues mankind has struggled with since time immemorial.

The second theme resonating in recent months at the Yoga Center has been *"the Yin mind waits patiently without anxiety"*. Yin can best be defined in terms of its opposite, yang. Yin and yang are complementary opposites which unite the whole. The idea of Yin and Yang originate in Taoism which contends that the One created everything and then split it into equal, complementary parts called Yin and Yang.

Yoga, as commonly conceived, focuses on active asana and exercise. Most yoga is yang in nature. Yin is a yoga variation which is not as widely practiced. It provides both physical and meditative benefits. The physical benefits are quite different than those of an active asana based approach. The active asana based or yang like practice creates muscle tone, strength, flexibility. Indeed many benefits accrue from active yang- like yoga, especially physical strength and endurance. The physical benefits flowing from Yin focus more on the joints, connective tissue, or fascia which bind together the various parts of the body to the muscles and organs. The stillness of body and mind created by the Yin practice permits your blood and chi energy to flow toward and saturate the targeted areas. With some practice it is possible to actually feel the flows and salutary effects.

By its nature Yin tends to be slow and still. Yin motion follows a slow, steady movement toward what is called the first edge. The first edge is the initial point of physical discomfort. The Yin practitioner holds the posture just below this first edge at a stress- free extension point where no physical anxiety is perceived. Put another way, upon realizing this first edge the practitioner backs off slightly and holds the posture in stillness. This is when and where the mental or meditative challenge comes in to play. As you hold the position, quiet the mind, overcome the discomfort, and feel the chi or life force as it accrues in the targeted areas of the body. With practice the position will be held longer and the physical and psychic benefits grow exponentially. It is during these moments of stillness that the *"Yin mind waits patiently without anxiety."* jumps feverishly and erratically from one inane thought to the next. The first sutra or lesson in Patanjali's definitive text on yoga translates as "Yoga is about quieting the mind stuff". This could also be the first rule of Yin. Listen to your internal dialogue, calm your mind, and create perspective. A sense of balance and equilibrium is an ever more critical issue in modern life. The philosophers among us believe that humanity is in an era of great change, a time when the universal polarities of east and west, male and female, and yin and yang are being forced together in order to survive what each alone cannot. Yoga can be much more than an exercise program, or not?

Jack Gray is a student of yoga who has opened himself up to this newer style of yoga called Yin....





Special Events! - Keep current through the website! www.TheYogaCenterInc.com

**Free to Be**

**Sunday, July 5, 2009** ~ 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

**Instructor** Michelle of One Tree Yoga in Cleveland, Ohio and live music by **Musician** and yogi, Brandon Kocher of Fireside Symphony

Experience an extended 2-hour Jivamukti Yoga class joined by the energy of live music. This journey seeks to explore the essences of being perfectly free! Translation:

be: what we are, beings, vibration, what we do  
perfect: wholeness or holiness, a perfect action is one that shows that you are already whole or strengthens that knowing

free: beyond constraints (self-imposed or otherwise)  
Music and yoga both are a reminder of this! When do you feel the most free or when can you express perfection? Through yoga and through music!

The Jivamukti Yoga Method is a path to enlightenment through compassion for all beings. It emphasizes *vinyasa*, scriptural study, devotion, music, chanting and meditation with the view of yoga as a practice of spiritual activism. Jivamukti Yoga classes are vigorously physical and intellectually stimulating including *vinyasa*, hands-on adjustments, *pranayama*, meditation, Sanskrit chanting, Yogic philosophical teachings, deep relaxation partnered with an eclectic mix of uplifting music. Jivamukti is one of the nine internationally recognized styles of hatha yoga. check out [www.onetreeyoga.org](http://www.onetreeyoga.org) and [www.firesidesymphony.com](http://www.firesidesymphony.com).

Our journey will be linked with a sutra of Truth. Each participant in the experience will have the opportunity to express their own Truth on a square of fabric (similar to a Buddhist prayer flag) that will then be joined to the Truth of all others. As our tour progresses the sutra will grow and grow symbolizing our connection to all beings!

*"Truth is one, paths are many."* --Swami Satchidananda.  
Followed by potluck dinner!

Fee: \$25 - \$30, sliding scale  
*Registration with payment due July 1*

\*There is no 5:00 PM Yoga 1 class this Sunday evening, (July 5) due to this special event!\*

**Yoga Nidra for Summer**

**Friday, July 10** ~ 7:00 - 8:30 PM

**Instructor:** Patrick Starkey

Plant your intention for Summer deep into the sub-conscious. Focus on the growing season of summer. Yoga Nidra is a technique for deep relaxation, taking the body and mind into deeper states of consciousness. This workshop provides a brief overview of the practice along with some surrounding theory. Yoga mats can be used but are not necessary. Loose clothing is recommended for unrestricted movement.

*Class is suitable for all levels of practitioners*

Beginners are welcome

Fee: \$15 ~ *Registration with payment due Monday, July 6*

**Jivamukti Yoga**

**Saturday, July 11, 2009** ~ 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM

**Instructor:** Mary Brown

*Practice* vigorous *vinyasa* style yoga. *Chant* Om and sing Sanskrit prayers. *Learn* about yogic philosophy. *Learn* to link movements of the body with breath. *Practice* methods of Kriya Yoga. Practice meditation.

This practice is appropriate for graduates of Beginner yoga who want to take their yoga practice to another level.

Fee: \$20 ~ *Registration with payment due Tues. July 7*

**Yoga to Unleash Creative Energies**

**Saturday, August 1** ~ 3:00 - 5:00 PM

**Instructor:** Debbie Stevens, RYT 500

Practice yoga with emphasis on body sensations & the breath to allow the creative juices in your mind to flow into the written word. Yoga postures interspersed with opportunities for writing. This is a meditative and relaxing class.

Fee: \$20 ~ *Registration with payment due July 28*

**Restorative Yoga for Cooling Off**

**Saturday, August 22** ~ 3:00 - 5:00 PM

**Instructors:** Debbie Stevens & Maggie Boyes

Cool yourself off during these summer months. Take the heat off and relax! Ah! Practice yoga poses to help cool and relax the body. Poses may ease the symptoms of menopause or relieve conditions which may create excessive heat in the body. Allow yourself to open up to restorative poses to allow the body to return to its natural state of balance.

Fee: \$20 ~ *Registration with payment due August 18*



3107-C Franklin Road SW  
Piccadilly Square  
Roanoke, VA 24014  
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**Our Summer schedule begins July 13, 2009**  
**Sample each series class FREE July 6-12!**

<b>MONDAY:</b>	3:30 - 4:30 PM	Gentle Yoga ( <i>drop-in</i> ) - Virginia
	*6:00 - 7:15 PM	Intro to Yoga ( <i>series</i> ) - Debbie
	*7:30 - 9:00 PM	Yin Yang Yoga ( <i>series</i> ) - Debbie
<b>TUESDAY:</b>	10:00 - 11:30 AM	Yoga 1 ( <i>drop-in</i> ) - Ann
	6:00 - 7:20 PM	Yoga 1 ( <i>series</i> ) - Pat
	7:30 - 9:00 PM	Yoga 2 ( <i>series</i> ) - Pat
<b>WEDNESDAY:</b>	*8:30 - 9:30 AM	Pilates mat class ( <i>series</i> ) - Rennie
	12:00 - 1:00 PM	Yoga 2 ( <i>drop-in</i> ) - Debbie
	5:30 - 7:00 PM	Integral Yoga ( <i>drop-in</i> ) - Caryl
	7:15 - 8:30 PM	Intro to Yoga ( <i>series</i> ) - Caryl
<b>THURSDAY:</b>	10:00 - 11:30 AM	Yoga 2 ( <i>drop-in</i> ) - Caryl
	*5:30 - 6:45 PM	Prenatal Yoga ( <i>series</i> ) - Lindy
	*7:00 - 8:30 PM	Yoga 2 ( <i>series</i> ) - Gail
<b>FRIDAY:</b>	4:00 - 5:30 PM	Yoga 1 ( <i>series</i> ) - Pat
<b>SATURDAY:</b>	8:30 - 10:00 AM	Yoga 2 ( <i>drop-in</i> ) - Debbie
	10:15 - 11:30 AM	Yoga 1 ( <i>series</i> ) - Debbie
<b>SUNDAY:</b>	8:30 - 9:30 AM	Power Yoga ( <i>series</i> ) - Debbie/Lindy
	2:00 - 3:30 PM	Community Class (FREE!) - Pat
	5:00 - 6:30 PM	Yoga 1 ( <i>drop-in</i> ) - Evie/ Maggie/Gail

(No class July 5 due to Free to Be)

\* All series are 12-week unless indicated with asterisk

**Fee Structure:**

Drop-in Class	\$12.00
Senior/Students	\$10.80
1st 12 Week Series+	\$120.00
Seniors/Students	\$108.00
2nd 12 Week Series+	\$60.00
Seniors/Students	\$54.00
Quarterly Membership	_____
	*\$200.00
Seniors/Students	\$180.00
Annual Membership	_____
Card	*\$650.00
Seniors/Students	\$585.00

+ applies to series or drop-in classes, but must be committed to a specific date and time  
\* Cards pay for series classes with pre-registration and 12 week commitment.

**Postnatal Yoga Workshop**

Sat., July 18, 2009 ~ 1:00 - 3:00 PM

Sat., Aug. 8, 2009 ~ 1:00 - 3:00 PM

**Instructor:** Lindy Dalton

Focus on strengthening poses to help tighten the abdominal muscles, hips and buttocks, to help strengthen the core and pelvis. The use of *bandhas* or locks will be explained and explored, to use breathing and exercising muscles to help strengthen the core. Come prepare to work hard, improve your body image and self-confidence and have fun!

This class is intended for students after 3 months past delivery (4-6 months for Caesarian deliveries)

Fee: \$20 for each class ~ *Registration with payment due by Aug. 4*

**Back Care Basics Workshop**

Saturday, Sept. 19 ~ 2:00 - 4:30 PM

**Instructors:** Pat Starkey/Debbie Stevens  
Learn techniques for relieving back pain naturally and restoring the spine to a healthy condition, nutrition to assist the body's natural capacity for healing, as well as methods of movement that remove the repetitive stressors on the spine that lead to pain and injuries. Proper application of these techniques can increase spinal strength and flexibility, prevent years of aggravating pain, and even remove the need for expensive pain management programs and even surgery-  
Fee: \$20 ~ *Registration due Sept. 15*

**Restorative Yoga**

Saturday, Sept. 26 ~ 3:00 - 5:00 PM

**Instructors:** Maggie Boyes & Debbie Stevens

Allow yourself to open up to restorative poses to allow the body to return to its natural state of balance. Poses offered to help you relax and unwind, in the tradition of Judith Lasater, renowned yoga teacher. In these poses, the body and muscles relax, and the mind powers down, providing the body with opportunity to renew and heal.

Fee: \$20 ~ *Registration due Sept. 22*

**Partner Yoga**

Saturday, Sept. 26 ~ 5:30 - 7:00 PM

**Instructors:** Ann & Kimball Egge  
Connect with the breath, your body & your partner. Find support, stretch deeper and access poses in a new way through practicing yoga postures with a partner. Find ease, a sense of play & have fun!

Fee: \$20 ~ *Registration due Sept. 22*

