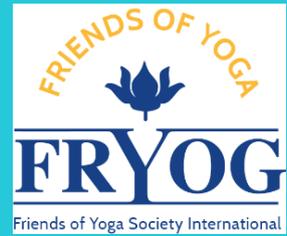


For Friends

News and Updates for Members of
Friends of Yoga Society International



Welcome

This is our first email Newsletter and I really hope you like it.

It contains some key information about the Society and some interesting news articles, which have been provided by members. I hope that the information is useful but that also the website starts to become your source of contact information for Friends of Yoga Society.

This is obviously so you may keep in touch but also so that the Newsletter may be used as a source of real News of interest to members. Mail has its place but as email is more cost effective than postage, with your continued support issues may become more frequent, but remember there is a need to provide News!

So to contribute news and articles for the next or future editions please email the editor using editor.fryog@gmail.com

Please don't be shy, we have members with interest in all aspects of Yoga

Issue 77

Winter 2015



Julie Birbeck

Guest News Coordinator

INSIDE

THE LONDON YOGA SHOW 2015

Lucy and Aimee at the London Yoga show



YOGA WITH CHILDREN

Nancy Driver.

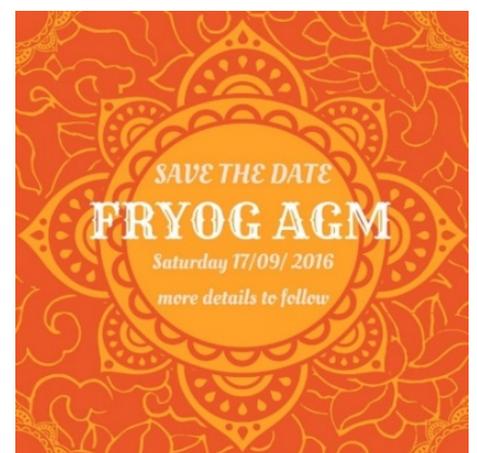
Show you inner child and let your imagination run wild!



EAT MORE RAW FOOD – Lianne Hickman

Give your systems a break and boost your energy levels too.

See Lianne's article and recipe too



Keep in-touch online: www.friendsofyoga.co.uk

Welcome Chairman's message

Maybe Christmas, he
thought... doesn't
come from a store.
Maybe Christmas,
perhaps... means a
little bit more!

The Grinch, Dr Seuss

I love this quote. It reminds me that there is magic and love in the darkest of hearts. If you've not seen the film or read the book, I urge you to do so! At a time like this, when the stark contrast of those with and those without is brought into even sharper relief by our government deciding to take aggressive military action, I find myself working harder than ever to curb fears and anxieties. Not least as a mother, I find myself wondering what kind of world we are creating - weeks after marking the losses of the World Wars, promising to keep remembering, "lest we forget", so called anti-terror airstrikes are being sanctioned. We humans have such short memories. When will they stop and see that "an eye for an eye makes the whole world blind" as Gandhi taught? Violence cannot end terror. And the hate it generates, it makes my heart shudder. And yet, I cannot believe that we are inherently bad, that there really is no other choice. I believe in peace. These days, that does not feel unlike believing in Father Christmas. How many cynics will tell you that neither can possibly exist? And yet, I do believe in Father Christmas.

Every time anyone offers a smile to the lone stranger they pass on their commute to work, or acknowledges the homeless person in the town

centre with a kind word and a warm cuppa instead of absent-minded loose change..

Those precious years when a parent sneaks presents under the tree or an older sibling keeps the secret...Each time an individual denounces the airstrikes... "not in my name"...The driver who stops & lets not one, or two, but three cars out of the junction...Every time someone uses the hashtag #refugeeswelcome or places an extra bag of rice in the food bank collection...Every time a donation is made to charity or a stranger stops to care for an injured person on the street...

My 8 year old son recently told me that he is scared to grow up because "the world is too much". And so I explained that we cannot change the world all by ourselves, but that we can make small differences...planting flowers for bees in our garden, recycling, buying what we need not always what we want, supporting charities and doing voluntary work, being kind, creating ordinary miracles by refusing to close our hearts...we can make our own little corner more peaceful, more magical... We are all Father Christmas, we are all peace. This is the very essence of the festive spirit and of yoga, offering friendship, peace, community, unity.

I wish you love, peace and great joy this Christmas time, and into the New Year & beyond
Lucy x



Lucy
Barlow
Chairman
of Friends
of Yoga

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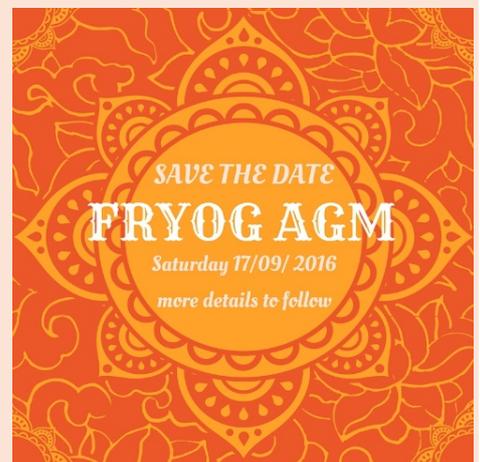
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“Embracing Diversity in Yoga”

Membership News

New Members and Graduates

We currently have 476 Members,
of which there are: 325 Teaching and 14 Tutors

New Members

Friends of Yoga welcomes the following new members:-
Dajit Basra, Anthony Bathmaker, Juliette Battman,
Rebecca Bonnetm, Margaret Brady, Jonathan Clewley,
June Cline, Vanessa Cusak, Graeme Dobson, Hannah Fitzgerald, Nicoleta Florii Stan, Roo Frith, Trudy Hall, Michelle Haslan, Charlotte Ireland,
Punam Kharbanda, Karine Littler,
Louise Longson, Jenny MacDonald, Angela McOwan, Jen Morgan, Tracey Mulas, Laura Mulvey, Stuart Purton, Mary Rutherford, Kamna Sarna,
Caroline Scotcher, Vicky Scott,
Christine Seymour-Smith, Louise Slimm, Jackie Snowdon,
Sumita Williams, Tanya Zhylova

Diploma Graduates.

Congratulations go to the following students on completion of their **foundation** course:

Students of Tutor Sheila Coombes:-

William Alpass
Megan Beck
Sarah Noordewier
Nikki Pryce
Marie Oxley

Congratulations go to the following students on completion of their **200hr** teacher training

Students of Tutor Vikki Bedford:-

Julia Platt
Kevin Stallard
Stefanie Earle

Membership Renewal

For most of us it is renewal time and this is a reminder for your diary that your subscription for membership may be due by 15th January Please click on this [link](#) for details on how to renew your membership.

If you have joined (or renewed) by PayPal or asked your bank to set up a standing order then you may have the renewal scheduled.

Bank Transfer is the preferred route quoting your membership number.

Annual Membership Fees are: £20.00 UK and £23.00 Overseas UK

If you have already renewed your membership for 2016, thank you.

Membership Officer



Position vacant
Please apply

To contact the:-
Membership Officer email
membership.fryog@gmail.com



If you choose to pay by cheque:-
Please make cheques payable to:
Friends of Yoga Society International.
and mail to:
Christine Clist
Brambles
3 Briar Wood
Liss Forest
Hants GU33 7RB

Friends of Yoga Society's nominated Charity is- [Towards Nirvana](#)
Nirvanvan Foundation Trust is a UK registered charity working as Towards Nirvana.
Registered charity number 1124427

“Embracing Diversity in Yoga”

News & Articles

Om Yoga Show - London

In late October Friends of Yoga had a presence at the London Om Yoga show. There was a Friends of Yoga Stand, coordinated by **Pat Cronin**, which was in place to attract potential teachers to our training program.

Lucy Barlow, Aimee Newton and Nancy Driver all offered Open classes. Nancy for children which included singing, breathing and relaxation. (See Nancy's article). Lucy provided a grounding practice opening the hips and freeing the hamstrings, whilst Aimee offered a mindfulness experience – an essential part of prevention of injuries in common asanas. All sessions were well attended. Many thanks to all that manned the stand, and demonstrated to potential students that Friend of Yoga Society' continues in *“Embracing Diversity in Yoga”*

Currently applications for the Yoga Show Coordinator's position are under consideration, as a result no bookings have been made for any 2016 shows. If you have the time to coordinate the resources for a successful show, including the installation and de installation of the stand and networking with members to produce a schedule for manning the stand please contact Lucy.

In 2016, Om are organising shows in Glasgow, Manchester and London, and you may see more at www.omyogashow.com.

The Executive Committee would like to extend their gratitude to **Pat Cronin** for the successful running of the Om Yoga Show stand. Her vision and commitment will be missed and we wish her great joy & success in the ventures that she has planned in the coming months and years.

After several successful years with Pat leading the way, we look forward to introducing the new Yoga Show Coordinator in our next issue.



Aimee Newton
at the London Yoga Show 2015

Thank you to Ann Key

As you all are aware over many years **Ann** volunteered as Newsletter Editor.- In fact it would not have existed without her.

It hasn't been an easy change to the new format, which has really highlight to us all on the committee Ann's dedication to the Society. The Executive Committee cant thank Ann enough for her year on year commitment and we hope she enjoys reading the new format



Thank you **Ann**.

“Embracing Diversity in Yoga”

Discriminative Yoga Intelligence

Who Cares If We Can Prove How Beneficial Yoga Is?

Everyone who has ever practiced or taught yoga can tell you how good it made them feel both physically and mentally; balanced, centred and healthy. There are many success stories from people using yoga to manage all sorts of illnesses and injuries. I don't really need to tell you this, you know the truth if you have ever had a regular practice.

Personally the benefits of my practice are palpable and have far reaching consequences into my everyday life. I encourage all my osteopathic patients to try Hatha Yoga so they can experience the same. My yoga students also express the same beneficial results; they arrive and can't wait to lie in Shavasana. After a stressful day they leave the class glowing in their new found balanced state of body and mind.

The hard part is that it's nearly impossible to quantify these benefits; subjective experience cannot really be measured accurately and this anecdotal evidence, however tried and tested, is not considered proof in any medical or scientific arena. It's considered poor evidence and situated at the bottom of a hierarchy of research.



<https://maggiemcneill.files.wordpress.com/2013/08/hierarchy-of-evidence.jpg>

The claims made in every yoga textbook or teaching manual on the benefits of yoga are wide reaching and a lot of the time do not reference where they get their evidence from. My assumption is that it has been passed down from "guru to disciple". In some cases it's an educated logical assumption but I feel that some of the claims are far-fetched and potentially unfounded without any actual evidence.

An example of this could be found in most yoga books, I am going to use an example from one of my favourite books, APMB by Swami Satyananda Saraswati published by Bihar. I would like to make it clear that I love this book, it's been extremely useful to me especially when I was a newly qualified teacher and fully advocate it being on the FRYOG teacher training reading list. But there is no referencing **throughout the entire** thing or any acknowledgement of how they know the things they publish, and this is not limited to Bihar publications, I urge you to look at any books you have and find out for yourself.

Now I have faith that there is research out there from The Yoga Research Foundation (<http://www.sypublications.com/en/satyananda-yoga/yoga-research-foundation.html>) but unfortunately faith is not enough if you want to convince healthcare professionals of the benefits.

Here's an example about their reported benefits of Sirshasana or Headstand

- "relieves anxiety and other psychological disturbances"
- "recommended for the prevention of asthma, hay fever, diabetes and menopausal imbalance"
- "rectify many forms of nervous or glandular disorder"
- "relieve strain on the back and aid tissue regeneration".

I know that using headstand as an example is quite extreme but it is just an illustration, the same could be said for any of their claims throughout the book. I am not saying that these things don't happen but that the authors have not reported how, or why you get these benefits; specifically they omit where the scientific evidence has come from to support these claims. In my role as a healthcare professional if I went around advertising I could achieve these results I would be in big trouble with The General Osteopathic Council, the governing body for Osteopaths for issues regarding false advertising to patients. How as yoga teachers are we any different? Just because we are not currently regulated with such rigour, does it mean we can make claims like this without evidence? Is it ethical?

So how do we prove the benefits of yoga to medical professionals and why does it even matter in the first place? We know how good it is, so what does it matter if the scientific and medical community believe us or not?

"Embracing Diversity in Yoga"

Discriminative Yoga Intelligence - Cont

We need to use our discriminative intelligence; maybe applying the principles of Jnana Yoga to yoga itself. ***Just because a benefit of an asana is published in a book or the information comes from a trusted guru or Swami it doesn't mean it's true, you need to decide for yourself.***

We need to ask ourselves “how do they know that? Can that be backed up with evidence? Have I experienced that for myself?”

Without this discriminative intelligence being applied to yoga, as a profession we may look incompetent. Potentially it could harm the reputation of yoga and ultimately could be an obstacle to the referral of people to this amazing practice by doctors and other healthcare practitioners; alienating people who may benefit from a regular practice.

The way I look at this is to think of the amount of people who could benefit from yoga if it was supported by all GP's and the NHS. Imagine if cardiac rehabilitation wards taught yoga for people with heart disease, or if all those with high blood pressure learnt certain yoga practices. What effect that could have on the use of pharmaceuticals? Alternatively think about all those suffering from anxiety and stress, what if they were prescribed a yoga practice? Getting the medical profession on board is the first step to helping all those people.

Scientific research has many problems when trying to address something as varied and subjective as yoga, however there is an immense amount of yoga research beginning to emerge meaning there is no need to rely on the anecdotal evidence anymore.

The real challenge for yoga teachers is navigating the world of evidence-based medicine; even understanding what the thousands of published research articles on yoga even mean is difficult and there are thousands of papers on the effects of yoga on all sorts of conditions and this number growing every day.

So the first step really is to understand exactly what a research paper is and how to read one - I have attached a link to a video that goes through how to read a research article and is a really good starting point

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJFH8sUSzI4>

Once you have a basic understanding then it's a matter of finding a paper that interests you; Yoga Alliance have a great repository of information to get you started ...

https://www.yogaalliance.org/Learn/About_Yoga/Yoga_Research

For any questions regarding yoga research or to explore this further please contact me to directly I would be willing to provide a CPD in more detail about yoga research if there is enough interest as I think this is very important for improving the credibility of our profession.

Namaste



Author

Aimee Newton is **Training and Standards Officer** and Tutor for FRYOG, she is also a qualified Osteopath and has been teaching yoga for 10 years. Please contact her for more information about classes or osteopathic treatment and her unique “Asana Clinic”.

training.fryog@gmail.com

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“Embracing Diversity in Yoga”

Eat More Raw - Liane Hickman

Eating more raw plant based foods is a great way to increase your nutrition uptake, give your bodily systems a break and boost your energy levels. I am a great believer that it also improves clarity of mind and provides space for more conscious thinking and lifestyle choices.

Raw veganism is a plant-based diet that involves no cooking. No food is to be heated above 46 degrees Celsius. Food are eaten either fresh, dehydrated using low heat or fermented.



I am sure you will have heard negative views and horror stories about going ‘fully raw’, some of these are probably true as we are all so very different, and our requirements vary from body to body. Your physical make-up and your way of life will directly effect the amount of fuel and the type of food that is right for you. However, there are SO many benefits to the raw vegan lifestyle and incorporating at least some raw plant-based foods in to our diets can have amazing effects on our well-being and our way of thinking

In the summer I too was a raw vegan sceptic. I already eat a lot of raw foods, and my diet is entirely plant based, and yet the concept of this lifestyle concerned me. Surely ALL raw vegans are malnourished and tired ALL the time. My pre-conceptions were quashed at Raw Fest, where I saw just how healthy and vibrant raw-foodies can be. I met so many incredibly vibrant raw vegans at this wonderful festival. They glowed from the inside out, their eyes shone and their energy was intoxicating. Seeing just how alive and well these beautiful people looked encouraged me to go fully raw vegan for one month, to see how I felt and if I could sustain it without negative effects. I felt fantastic, full of energy and my skin glowed. The only problem for me was the quick transition from warm weather to cold, it was October and suddenly it was winter overnight, I began to crave stew, curry and soups! Most of us will find at least one limiting factor with this kind of commitment; whether it be social pressures, the body systems adjusting or craving. With this in mind I recommend introducing one raw meal a day (at least to start with), you will feel the difference and it will be individual to you and your body. Listening to your body is key, but also to what sits right with you on a more spiritual level.

Some of the benefits to eating more raw can be as simple as getting creative with your food and appreciating the colour and beauty of nature's fruits and vegetables in their purest form. The change in your palette and your taste appreciation comes pretty quickly too, anyone who has ever transitioned to a cleaner diet, or to veganism or a generally more plant based diet will have noticed how everything begins to taste so much better (or worse depending on what it is) as your body systems become more sensitive.

“Embracing Diversity in Yoga”

Eat More Raw Continued

The main benefit of eating raw is said to be the nutritional value of food in its purest form. Heating food above 46 degrees Celsius diminishes a lot of nutrients, but can also make the food toxic and less digestible. There are many arguments against this, as it can be seen to be tougher on our digestive systems to eat raw fruits and vegetables. Our bodies need time to adjust to digesting and assimilating changes in food forms, and if we consume fermented foods to assist our digestion before meals and recognise when we are overeating we can usually adjust quite happily. Some people's guts will not be happy about the transition as any speed, and that is why listening to your body is important. You will soon know if you are not getting enough nutrients, craving and malnourishment are two totally different things, so be aware and mindful if you are going to make any real vast changes. Our bodies adjust to what they are used to, and because of this some people need a far slower transition with any dietary changes, to allow the body systems time to reset and recuperate. The cutting out of chemicals, preservatives (if you eat organic; which is recommended as there are far more nutrients available in organic food, eating organic supports sustainable agriculture, wildlife and it tastes great), additives and toxins created by cooking gives the body systems rest and work more efficiently. A great argument against this is that cooking can sometimes reduce certain chemicals in vegetables that inhibit the absorption of certain minerals. For example, cooking spinach can make iron and calcium more available.

Spiritual awareness and conscious living is a huge factor for me in the way I choose to eat, what I put in to my body not only directly affects my physical body but my mental clarity and spiritual awareness too. As most of you know, practising yoga invokes lifestyle changes. We begin to listen to what our soul needs, to live more by our core beliefs. Similarly eating more raw food encourages these same changes, with a clearer mind and a cleaner body we are free to hear more clearly. To be able to feel what is right for us on both cellular and conscious levels. Yoga encourages you to eat better and make more conscious and informed choices about where and who we buy from. We may question whether we want to eat meat or not, or if we want to shop local or go organic. In turn, eating cleaner may encourage people to do more yoga and to meditate as they begin to feel more spiritually aware and the mind becomes clearer.

Raw vegans will talk about the Prana of living plants, the pure life energy that is present in all living things. If you practice yoga you will recognise Prana as the vital energy that is within us and surrounding us, the air we breathe and the food we eat. As I said before, the life force appeared to be strong, bright and balanced in the raw vegans that I have met. Conscious eating and food source choices also contribute to letting our light flow freely and brightly.

So, even if becoming a raw vegan is way off or not even vaguely interesting to you, introducing more raw food in to your diet is a great way to get more nutrients in and to eat more gorgeous, creative and tasty meals! For most of us eating a diet of both raw and cooked foods is far more sustainable and easily accessible in our busy, sociable lives. Try one raw meal a day, or if you already eat mostly plant based and raw, try going fully raw for a month. Maybe keep a diary to see how or if your body and mind changes at all. Listen to your body, give it what it needs to transition comfortably and healthily. Eating fermented foods like sauerkraut and sipping raw apple cider before dinner can help keep the gut healthy and operating optimally. Kombucha is also a great way to sustain good digestive health. Lightly steaming vegetables rather than overcooking or charring helps to preserve the nutrient load of cooked meals, so avoid this when preparing cooked meals.

There are so many easy raw vegan meals that can be thrown together quickly with minimal effort. You will need a food processor for most dishes, a standard food processor or blender will do just fine. A great one is guacamole and carrot sticks, this is my go to snack and last minute dinner. Salads are the most accessible and obvious raw living meals that we are all familiar with. Have a play with your food, there's plenty of recipes online and some excellent creative books out there.

Try out this raw veggie cool recipe. It's one of my favourites.

“Embracing Diversity in Yoga”

Eat More Raw Recipe

High Vibe Veggie Rolls with Hot Ginger Dipping Sauce

Filling:

- 6- 8 rice sheets
- 1 avocado
- 1 cucumber
- 1 large carrot
- 1 small bag/bunch spinach
- 1 small bunch basil
- 1 pack of sprouted seeds (or bean sprouts)
- 3 spring onions

Sauce:

- 1/2 CUP sunflower seeds
- 2-4 TBSP sesame oil OR hot water
- 1 1/2 TBSP soy sauce
- 2 TBSP agave OR maple syrup OR 1-2 dates
- 1 garlic clove OR 1 TSP garlic paste
- 1/2 lime
- 1/1-1 red chilli OR 1 TSP chilli flakes
- 1 inch knuckle of fresh ginger OR 1 TSP ginger powder



Equipment:

- chopping board
- sharp knife
- kettle and heat proof bowl OR stove and saucepan
- mixing bowl
- blender (food processor or nutria bullet will both work fine, but vitamix is ideal)

Method:

1. Prepare vegetables. Rinse soil from roots and leaves. Peel and slice cucumber, avocado and carrot into strips. Thinly slice spring onions into strands.
2. Bring 1/2 litre of water to boil and set aside in a bowl or pan.
3. Prepare the dipping sauce. Soak dates in water to soften if using as sweetener. Flour the sunflower seeds in food processor/blender. Add sesame oil/hot water and soy sauce to create a paste, add more or less depending on desired consistency. Add in garlic, ginger, chilli, sweetener and squeeze of lime to your taste. (I really like the sauce fiery hot and zingy, you may prefer it to be more sweet, go with your taste, make it your own).
4. Soften rice paper sheets one at a time before rolling. Submerge your sheet in the bowl of prepared hot water and leave to soak for 10-20 seconds.
5. Once soft, lay on a clean damp surface or wooden chopping board. Gently smooth out flat.
6. Lay spinach leaves in a thin layer in the centre, I find this helps with rolling and keeps veggies contained. Add in a few basil leaves. Layer up your veggies, avoid over filling as you will split the sheet when you roll. Top with sprouts.
7. Fold bottom of sheet over fillings, then gently roll over once then fold in the sides and roll again until completely sealed.
8. Place rolls on to a serving plate or board, and cover with a clean damp tea towel to keep fresh.
9. Repeat rolling process to create 6-8 veggie rolls.
10. Serve with dipping sauce.

“Embracing Diversity in Yoga”

News Continued

YOGA WITH CHILDREN – NANCY DRIVER

I have represented FRYOG for the last 2 years by running a children's yoga class at the Om Yoga Show. Many of our members have expressed interest in how to structure a yoga practice for young children in their families.

A children's yoga class is very similar to what we are trained to teach under FRYOG using the 8 limbs of Patanjali. Classes start with chanting/breath connection to bring the children to centre, continuing with individual and sequential postures, a breathing practice, meditation and relaxation. At the end of class, I give children something to take home – it can be as simple as a colouring page for a pose we used in class.



There is no limit to what you can adapt from your own practice, but the following ideas might provide a little inspiration.

Relaxation to connect with the present to begin: As they are lying down with hands on tummy, I ask them to listen to air released from a balloon. The noise and action of a balloon deflating is the same as abdominal breath.

Chanting – we clap our hands in unison alternating the mantra Om with chanting their name: clap hands, Nancy, clap hands, Om...

Posture work can often be connected to animals and nature. You can make your own story or link poses to create vibrant imagery. Turn a butterfly into a turtle, or grow a flower (we make buds with our fingertips, and then open into Padma Mudra or with a group get all the children to hold hands making one big flower). In boat pose, we explore: rocking the boat, then the boat flips over to Halasana... We get playful in cat/cow with sounds and children love to make animal noises so embrace lion, elephant, mouse, frog...There are several children's sun salutations online and in specialist children's books.

As in an adult's class, cool down postures are essential - from standing to relaxing forward we might imagine making a sandwich. In a seated forward bend, stroking the muscles can be buttering the bread, chopping cheese can be getting rid of lactic acid, and folding the upper body forward is putting the top piece of bread on the sandwich!

Pranayama offers endless possibilities such as humming bee breath (Brahmari). A bunny rabbit sniffing can be liked to Bhastrika; and for Kapalbhathi, think Thomas the Tank Engine! 4)

Meditation is often best accessed through mindfulness games using sight, sound, touch or taste to bring them into the meditative state before they lie down to rest and become starfish in Savasana. In Savasana, I will check to see if the children are 'cooked spaghetti'. If they are, their limbs will be totally relaxed and they all want to be cooked spaghetti at the end of class!

Yoga with children is great fun! The creativity of children's yoga is endless...let your imagination run wild!

Nancy Driver completed her FRYOG Teacher Training with Amanda Coulson in 2013. After qualifying, Nancy completed an intensive post graduate diploma in Teaching Yoga to Children with Jo Manuel.

“Embracing Diversity in Yoga”

Yoga Workshop Focusing on the release of Tension and Anxiety

Here we have two reviews from members who both attended a workshop organised by Gemma Grinter.

The Steep Village Hall soon began to fill with friendly chatter and the sound of unrolling yoga mats. Gemma Grinter welcomed each and every one of us to her yoga workshop focusing on the release of tension and anxiety on Sunday 6th December. The weather was bleak and grey but inside the hall everyone was excited to be able to devote a whole day to explore anxiety and find strategies to be able to cope more effectively with it on the run up to Christmas and the New Year.

Gemma herself realises the importance of coping strategies for trying times and wanted to share her knowledge with our group of twenty four that day. The workshop explored all aspects of anxiety and the effect it has on your mind, body and general well being through asanas, pranayama and meditation exercises. We commenced with a discussion in small groups about how we individually coped with anxiety and then shared these thoughts with the group as a whole. Many interesting and common themes arose from this discussion including breathing techniques, positive affirmations, sharing your worries with a friend or loved one, Bach's rescue remedy, exercise and of course yoga. We also realised how damaging some of our releases can be such as reaching for the chocolate, caffeine, alcohol or cigarettes – a good reminder of the importance of ahimsa and a sattvic diet just before Christmas!

The whole group was then led by Gemma into a wonderfully relaxing and grounding yoga practice culminating in Sama Vritti pranayama, meditation using Varuna and Apan Vayu mudras and Kaya Kriya relaxation during a long Savasana.

During lunch we all had time to catch up on each other's news and made some new friends along the way. The afternoon session began with the discussion of affirmations and their uses in daily life to provoke true, positive emotions. This was followed by practicing Tse, Uttarabodh and Pran mudras and discussion of their benefits. Gemma led us through a long meditation and ended the day with Marmanasthanam Kriya – a delight for the close of the workshop and much appreciated by everyone.

It was good to be able to devote the whole day to our yoga and give us the opportunity to have an unhurried and extensive practice bringing the individual knowledge of each member of the group together. We went home relaxed and with a plethora of techniques and strategies to use when needed and share with our families, friends and students.

Chrissy Gorham

To contribute **your** News Articles
please email the editor using
editor.fryog@gmail.com

“Embracing Diversity in Yoga”

The Calm After The Storm - Shushma

After storm Desmond had blown down trees, closed roads resulting in diversions down winding country lanes, my friend Aviva and I finally arrived at the lovely village of Steep, to find the village hall brimming with fellow yogis who had also braved the elements. It was quite fitting following this horrendous journey that we were at this yoga workshop to focus on the release of tension and anxiety. Talking of stress, ironically it was just over a year ago that Gemma Grinter, who was running the workshop, had been our examiner.

It is increasingly well known, that anxiety and excessive worrying and repetitive thought patterns can cause a wide range of conditions including insomnia, migraines, digestive issues, dizziness, to list but a few. Increasingly yoga has been proven to help with anxiety whether it is through asanas, breathing, affirmations or meditation.

We commenced the session by addressing and recognising our anxiety and the extent to which it impacts our lives. After completing a questionnaire and group discussion as to our levels of concerns and coping strategies, Gemma led us through a superb sequence of asanas, designed to ground and connect us with the Earth. After all, without stability and grounding we are unable to focus on our inner strength. Through the windows I could see these tall trees swaying in the strong winds, managing to stay rooted, exemplifying the importance of grounding ourselves through the Muladhara chakra.

This chakra is the most instinctual of all chakras - it is our survival centre. Our fight and flight response is initiated from this chakra.

Thoroughly rooted and focused following the asanas, we then concentrated on how affirmations can assist with anxiety and fears and help us to eliminate negative thought patterns.

Our group discussions revealed some interesting affirmations and the realisation that each affirmation is personal and what works for someone may not be effective for another person.

One of my favourites is

“Accept what is, let go of what was and have faith in what will be.”

Gemma also discussed the importance of pranayama and how our breathing can affect anxiety levels when we fail to breathe properly. Through various pranayama we can learn to relax and control the chatter of the monkey mind and reduce our anxiety.

Together with the pranayama we also practiced some interesting mudras. Everyone had their own favourite but the one that resonated with me was the Tse mudra. This mudra relieves stress drives away fear, sadness, depression & anxiety

To end the session Gemma led us through a short relaxation and talked of the benefits of Savasana and how it helps to rejuvenate the body as well as the mind of an individual. On a physical level it helps to stimulate circulation and regular practice helps an individual to improve focus and concentration, helping us to achieve perfect harmony between mind and body.

Thoroughly calm, rooted and at peace we set off on our return journey ,better equipped to deal with the 5PM traffic on the M25 ,on a stormy Sunday afternoon.

Wishing everyone a stress free Christmas, a peaceful New Year and:

**Let Us Welcome The New Year,
Give The Happy Adieu To The Old,
Start The New Beginning Without Fear,
And Cherish The Memories We Hold!**

Om Shanti
Shushma



“Embracing Diversity in Yoga”

MEDIATIONS FOR EQUANIMITY

BY FRAN HODGSON

None of us know what changes life will bring or how things will work out. There is very little we can control other than our own approach and reaction to life as it comes along. Equanimity allows this unknowable, uncontrollable nature of things to be just as they are and in this acceptance we can prevail no matter what circumstances we find ourselves in. Equanimity means to always do our best and be able to change without adding layers of resistance and emotion to make it even harder. **The ability to remain balanced amidst changing conditions gives you the energy to persist, regardless of the outcome, because you are connected to the integrity of the effort itself.**

Holding all sensations equally in awareness

Pain and mental turmoil attract our attention very strongly and often we can take positive action to reduce or heal them. But when there is nothing we can do to alleviate them they still continue to attract our attention and this may mean that the absence of pain and turmoil in other parts of the body/mind goes unnoticed. The wholeness of our existence is lost and our world is narrowed. Use this meditation to develop awareness of the wholeness of the present experience of body, inner world and outer world and to see the balance in that experience.

Meditation to relieve physical, mental or emotional pain or turmoil

Focus all your attention on a part of the body/mind that is feeling some pain or turmoil right now. You might find this easy to do because your attention goes there often. Now focus on a part of the body/mind that is not in pain or turmoil, that is comfy and at ease. You may find this harder but keep trying.

Keep focussing on the comfy part and notice that while you focus there the pain in other places seems to diminish. This is because your attention can only be in one place at a time. The pain hasn't changed at all, you have moved your attention to another place that is not painful and balanced the pain with non-pain.

Let your attention go back and forth between pain and comfy then invite them both to come at once and balance each other. Both sensations are equally present, you are aware of them simultaneously. Now become aware of the wholeness of body, mind, breath, energy, intelligence and radiance. Realise that the entire range of sensation and emotion is always present simultaneously. Whatever we are feeling the opposite feeling is also there. Get to know the facial expressions and posture patterns that occur as different emotions arise. Notice how your mouth, scalp, neck and shoulders set themselves into a form that both expresses and holds onto the emotion until another one comes along. Notice how the breathing and overall body posture is affected. If you can change the expressions and patterns then the emotion is changed also. **We don't have to let afflictive emotions take us over we can let them pass.**



“Embracing Diversity in Yoga”

MEDIATIONS FOR EQUANIMITY

Awareness Meditation

Find an object to gaze at. Anything will do, it's just a point of focus to keep the eyes and brain still.

Focus your attention fully on the object for a few minutes, blink and breathe normally, then close your eyes and be conscious of yourself being attentive.

Note any tension or effort in the face or body, relax them away then open your eyes and gaze at the object again.

Go back and forth, opening and closing the eyes, until there is no difference between the two states, when the eyes open there is no reaction from body or mind and you remain centred within yourself.

This trains you to use the senses calmly in full consciousness.

Now close your eyes, forget the object and be conscious of the wholeness of body/breath/energy. Notice your internal world and notice yourself observing it.

Be conscious of the skin and activity in the brain then become aware of space and air around and within you.

Go back and forth between skin/brain and space/air.

Note the skin sensations of radiant warmth and watch the breath come and go. See how it's only the brain that's trying, needing, expecting. Bring the brain into consciousness and relax it.

Note the weightless, buoyant sensations of space/air and the formless radiance of awareness.

Now listen to the sounds from the external world and invite them into awareness. Remain relaxed as they come spontaneously into awareness. Notice the presence of equanimity, the balance of activity/relaxation.

After a while open your eyes and look around, the quality of awareness will remain with you, it's always there not as a special experience but an everyday presence. Dip into it often during the day and it will gradually become the foreground of life from which positive action and relaxation naturally arise.

Awareness is the expansive essence of who you are. It is free from the disturbance of attachment, attraction and aversion. Awareness is like the sun, it illuminates everything, it is your radiant presence always at ease and contented. It brings perspective, acceptance and happiness.

Time and Space

Much of our daily activity is regulated by the clock and routine is good for us but don't forget to enjoy the seasons and the stages of your life. Balance time, priority and purpose with space, freedom and intuition. When time rushes you along stop and take a moment to breathe. When you feel dull and woolly-headed use time to provide a priority.

Equanimity means to always do what is appropriate to the situation, to do your best with the resources you currently have. If you feel you made wrong actions in the past then understand why, forgive yourself and do better today.

Fran Hodgson

Yoga Pamper Weekend – Cate Knott Carpenter

Please join Cate for an extra special weekend of asana practice, pranayama, chanting, yoga nidra, guided meditations and a campfire under a full moon. Most importantly it will be a fun relaxing event with likeminded people. 20th to 22nd May 2016 - East Dene, Bonchurch, Isle of Wight

with **Cate Knott Carpenter**, guest yoga teachers and therapists (This will count as CPD for attending teachers)

Please telephone Cate on 02392462475 or email cateyoga@gmail.com to book

see more at <http://www.friendsofyoga.co.uk/cpd/>

“Embracing Diversity in Yoga”

Classified Section

To advertise workshops, retreats etc.; please email your ad(s) the Editor via editor.fryog@gmail.com.

If you want to advertise non CPD activities (Workshops, Retreats, Seminars, Holiday etc.) on the website, or in the Newsletter this is possible. Please contact the Editor. There is an administration fee of £10.00 for all placed adverts

We cannot check the authenticity of all adverts, and their inclusion should not be taken as endorsement of or reflect the opinions of the Editor or the Committee. Please make your own thorough checks.

Friends of Yoga Merchandise

Did you know you may purchase Friends of Yoga Merchandise?

Follow the link to the [Cafe Press on line store](#) to purchase items and help encourage others in the study and practice of classical hatha yoga. Proceeds from the profit of these products go to help fund the society's activities



Insurance for Friend of Yoga Teachers

The Society has arranged insurance for its qualified teachers with a group policy for Friends of Yoga teachers with the bespoke Yoga-Link scheme arranged especially for Yoga teachers throughout the wider Yoga community.

This provides both Malpractice and Public Liability cover to an indemnity of £5million as standard. The basic annual renewal cost is £41.20 inclusive (£51.20 for new applicants and reinstatements). Additional but entirely optional Legal Expenses cover for the Yoga teacher can be arranged for an extra sum of £15.60 inclusive. Other types of cover can also be arranged and/or advised upon.

Contact our Brokers, DSC Insurance Services for cover.

You will need your Friends of Yoga Society **membership** number when you apply.

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“Embracing Diversity in Yoga”

Continuing Professional Development

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Every Calendar Year at least One CPD day **MUST** be performed.

For more details on what is available please visit the [website](#) Or Face book

To provide a CPD day for members; please submit your proposal for approval to **Training Standards Officer**



Aimee Newton. training.fryog@gmail.com

Post approval unless otherwise instructed the details will be posted on the Friends of Yoga website without charge in order to notify members that the activity is offered.

Could you become a Tutor?

If you have been a Friends of Yoga Teacher for 5 years; you are eligible to apply to become a **Tutor**.

This may be your opportunity to further your Yoga career.

A **Tutor**:

- Serves Yoga by turning out excellent Yoga teachers.
- Serves Friends of Yoga by promoting our teacher training course,
- Serves their own career by growing, learning and progressing.

We welcome your application.

Applications please to
Aimee Newton **Training Standards Officer**
training.fryog@gmail.com or
Maggie Brocklehurst **Diploma Board Officer**
dbo.fryog@gmail.com

Please contact the **Training Standards Officer** in **advance** of committing to a workshop/course run outside Friends of Yoga Society but that you wish to be considered as your CPD.
This is to ensure the content is appropriate to be accepted as a CPD day.

If you don't have internet access please contact **Training Standards Officer** who will provide you with the details of the CPD days in hard copy.

Have you booked your CPD Day?



Keeping in Touch

We use the Newsletter to keep in touch with you, to let you know what has been happening over the last 3 months, both within the Society and the wider Yoga world. We want to give you information and News that you find of interest and we hope you find it useful.

The aim is to publish regularly, and all suggestions, and good quality articles will be considered. These could include links to articles published elsewhere and ideas for yoga/meditation practice

It is vital that you keep us informed about changes in your contact details. So if you think our records may need updating, please contact the **Membership Officer**.

If you don't have internet access please contact the Secretary - Chris on 01730 894281 who will provide you with the details requested in hard copy.

We also have facebook and a twitter accounts where you may **Follow Us**.



Facebook



Twitter



Friends of Yoga Contacts

Please visit the [website](#) for the most up to-date details.

The next Annual General Meeting (AGM) will take place on **Saturday, 17th September 2016** at the Quaker Meeting House in Reading.

More details to follow.

Please **reserve** the date in your diary.

Vacancies

Based on founding principles posts at Friend of Yoga continue to be held on a **voluntary** basis, placing the emphasis on **voluntary** work for the good of yoga and promoting a world-wide spirit of friendship.

Interest in any posts are always welcome and there are currently opportunities for:-

Membership Officer,
Yoga Show Coordinator,
Newsletter Coordinator.

Please Contact Lucy or Chris if you can commit to support the Society by performing one of these important roles.

Lucy Barlow Lucy.yoga@ntlworld.com
Chris Clist 01730 894281

Unsubscribing

To unsubscribe please follow the link on this Newsletter or contact the **Membership Officer** membership.fryog@gmail.com

The views expressed in this newsletter may not be those of the Editor or the Society

Friends of Yoga Society International is:-

A registered Yoga school with [Yoga Alliance](#) at the 200 hour level.

Affiliated to the Institute of Complementary and Natural Medicine (ICNM)

Member of the British Council for Yoga Therapy (BCYT)

Member of the Independent Yoga Network (IYN)



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