

IYENGAR YOGA IN SUSSEX

WELCOME



As I think back to the IYS Spring 2020 newsletter, I find there is a world of difference between life as it was then and the way we experience it now. No doubt all of our members feel the same. Since early March our world has been experiencing the ferocious effects of the Covid virus. Looking back we read of events that had taken place before Covid hit when we were still enjoying face to face classes and workshops. Now we are seeing a few green shoots of recovery, some face to face classes are running again and we are slowly emerging from our retreat to the safety of our online platforms, but as we enter the Winter we see we are not out of the woods yet. Members of the Iyengar community have made valuable contributions and responses to the Covid emergency. The IYUK, the IYS, and teachers at the Institute in Pune have all made contributions which have allowed us to continue to practice and benefit from Yoga, and this is in addition to those live local classes that have continued with social distancing. It has become evident how important a role Yoga plays in helping us to come through the virus with a positive attitude. Practices to aid recuperation from long Covid have been made available by IYUK, [see page 6 for details,] and you can read reviews of recent events from members' online diaries and reports. Thank goodness for our thriving Iyengar Yoga community and the strength, commitment and never ending support it offers.

Namasté
Sara Calder-Jones

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EVENT ANNOUNCEMENT

We have not been able to organise an event quickly enough to be publicised in this edition but are working hard to rectify this situation and will email or post information to you shortly. In the mean time we hope you enjoy all the articles.



OUR VIRTUAL AGM

By Brian Ingram IYS Chair of IYS

The “new normal” has been a bit of a learning curve for everyone including the IYS. The committee was scheduled for a pre-AGM meeting to sort out the details when the lock-down kicked in (probably worthwhile pointing out that this meeting was to be an old fashioned face-to-face, all in the same room at the same time, maybe even sitting close to each other with not a bubble in sight, type of meeting). We knew very little about holding meetings online but a small working group of Mike Bliss, Randall Evans and myself looked into the best platform to use and then went on to have mini meetings with other committee members so that everyone knew how to use the technology. At our pre-AGM Zoom meeting our initial thought was to put off the AGM and perhaps hold it later in the year but as that was an unknown it was felt that we should bite the bullet and hold it online. It turned out to be the right decision as the whole world was going online.

After various email communications we ended up holding the AGM on 23rd May and 18 members “Zoomed” in to take part. I glanced back at the numbers for other AGMs and at 20 for 2019, and 19 for 2018, this was actually almost normal. The main points of the AGM are below.

- **Website:** IYS member Andy Roughton has rebuilt the website and we are now found on: www.iyengaryogasussex.org.uk. Andy was thanked for his time and energy in getting this done.
- **Centenary Celebrations:** £140 was collected and donated to the Bellur Trust.
- **Name change to Iyengar Yoga Sussex:** The constitution had been amended to include the new name and some small operational changes and this was presented to those present to approve. A vote was held and the changes were passed unanimously.
- **Review of Events:** Cathy Rogers Evans reported that we had held 4 workshops and 1 teacher’s PD Day with numbers attending ranging from 23 – 44. The AGM live workshop and Gerry Chambers Day had been cancelled*

- **Review of Membership:** Randall Evans reported that IYS had 71 members at present with 35 teachers and 36 non-teachers. We need at least 50 members to have a representative on the IY UK Executive Committee. The membership fee is now £14 and can be paid by bank transfer.
- **Treasurer’s Report:** Jen Henwood reported that we have accumulated funds of £6397 which is an increase of £443 on 2018 – 19. This year we have earned more than we spent despite the cost of rebuilding the website. Events made £1581.
- **IY UK Representatives Report:** Cathy reported that IY UK is drawing up a list of acceptable 1st Aid qualifications. The Ethics Committee is adding sustainability to its brief. Post Brexit Eire can no longer use the UK for its certification mark. The 2020 Convention is cancelled this year.** Cathy will complete her term of office next April and we will need someone else to come forward to be our Representative.
- **Election of Committee:** All the committee members present stood for re-election and were duly re-elected.
- Brian called for new members. None were forthcoming.

Current Committee members:

Brian Ingram (Chair)
 Randall Evans (Membership)
 Jen Henwood (Treasurer)
 Cathy Rogers Evans (Events Secretary & IY UK Representative)
 Jenny Deadman (Equipment)
 Sallie Sullivan (Minutes)
 Sara Calder Jones (Newsletter Editor)
 Mike Bliss
 Colin Mandry
 Darren Bloom

* Since the AGM Cathy & Randall held our first online workshop linked to the AGM attendance, and the Gerry Chambers workshop was also held online.

** This Years IY UK Convention was held virtually.

MY LOCKDOWN DIARY

By Brian Ingram, Chair of IYS

I was one of the lucky ones when the lockdown started in that I had been freelancing at my old company near London Bridge when I was asked if I would trial working from home for them in case it became necessary to close the office. The intention was to work from home on the Monday and come back into the office on Tuesday. So, on Friday at 5pm I got into a taxi with a 27" imac in the seat beside me (I wasn't allowed to use my own computer for security purposes) and was driven from London Bridge all the way home to Burgess Hill. Then late Monday we were asked to work from home for the foreseeable future and the lockdown had begun.

There was a lot of work to be done and I had to sit in front of the computer all day. I noticed how cold and drained one felt at 5.30pm. Quite apart from commuting I don't think we notice how much moving around we do during the working day even in an office, and I missed the casual interactions. During this period as soon as I'd turned off the computer I used to practice for half an hour in the bedroom.

It was early Spring, when all sorts of minor colds and coughs are around. Also, we believed our son, who lives with us, had the virus. He certainly had all the symptoms we now know of. So, in line with Guruji's immunity boosting sequence, inverted poses were the order of the day. Dog head down; headstand; shoulder stand; and Setu Bandha. Prashant's online lesson came along and I noticed he emphasised the importance of abdominal health for immunity so a few twists were added to the sequence.

The other thing I felt I needed was to just open the chest and get the lungs moving. About this time I offered my work colleagues an online "at your desk" yoga session. They were all feeling strange about being at home working in their bedrooms and on kitchen tables, so my intention was to give them something to look forward to and just get them moving a bit. I noticed that the immunity sequence emailed around from the US featured Parivrtta Adho Mukha Virasana precisely to open the intercostal muscles and benefit the spleen, kidneys and liver, so I utilised that in my lesson plan, sitting square on a chair, stretching arms forward onto the desk and then turning.

As the weeks continued things started to settle down into a routine, the eponymous new normal. I can't say I embraced teaching online but felt it was my responsibility to do it and found that students actually appreciated it. I started attending online classes at Yoga South as often as I could and enjoyed just being part of a class again.

I had noticed how my mood had been going up and down and recognised that what Yoga was giving me now was emotional stability. By being in a pose, almost any pose, and paying attention to all aspects of it; spreading one's awareness and trying to be faithful to the form of



Teaching from the living room.

the asana; made my mind quieter, focussed and more accepting. Less troubled. It also became an opportunity to improve one's own practice, and since I, perversely, like to practise the poses I am not good at I decided to improve my Urdhva Dhanurasana. I still can't say it's my favourite pose but I have noticed an improvement.

Finally, at the time of writing, face-to-face teaching is beginning again. Nothing can replace this type of teaching but some students are reluctant, for various reasons, to restart this just yet with the virus still in circulation. So, it does look like online is going to be around for some time. One positive I have found is that I can teach students from anywhere now and have students from London, Norfolk, Wiltshire, as well as Sussex, which I really enjoy.

Sallie Sullivan took advantage of the many online Iyengar yoga events taking place around the world. A positive outcome of the devastating pandemic has been our ability to experience online so many more Iyengar events and teachers, ordinarily out of reach. Here, Sallie paints a picture of her experience with Abhijata.

Sara



7 DAYS WITH ABHI **By Sallie Sullivan**

Abhi was very considerate of the strains people may be under, whether they had been ill or not. She was constantly aware that 1,000 people were taking part although she could see only 6 students at a time in the USA. It felt as if she spoke to all of us and felt with us. At the outset, she advised 80% effort but 100% observation. She shared others' state of being at home with family – her daughter appeared at the start and again towards the end of a later session, silently looking over her mother's shoulder at her computer screen.

Abhi taught in a bedroom with basic equipment and made time and allowances throughout for people to go find a space by the wall, or to gather props – books for example if bricks were not available. She even suggested getting a spouse to help with balance in Ardha Chandrasana. She reminded us that this is how Guruji started with props, using simple domestic items. Seeing just six people at a time, she used them to highlight a point or to correct them. But a good part of the time she demonstrated on herself.

We did almost all the asanas with support – the wall for standing asana, soft support under the head in Adho Mukha Svanasana and Uttanasana, chair, bolsters or blankets for the head in seated forward bends. She insisted on two mats or mat and blanket for Sirsasana. We did not hold for long and she took great care to explain the rationale behind adaptations. The emphasis was on creating sensitivity to our needs, not pushing and pulling to the utmost. This gave

more space, not less, in the thoracic cavity, giving a chance to spread as well as lengthen. When it came to backbends, she advised that this is not the time to be doing unsupported Urdhva Dhanurasana. She taught all backward extensions with full support. The final hour of the final session was all about using props.

The range of asanas was small for 14 hours of teaching, and some were repeated on more than one day: basic standings, Janu Sirsasana and Pascimottanasana, chair Sarvangasana or Setu Bandha, Bharadvajasana. We sat in Upavistha Konasana or Baddha Konasana while she explained a point or told stories about learning from Guruji. She sprinkled into the mix a judicious pinch of philosophy, and related a conversation with Guruji about his reliance on Patanjali as a prop for yoga. She spoke about the emotional stresses, the feelings that arise at home especially at this time. She put herself totally on our level, yet conveyed authority and wisdom beyond her years. She spoke of the mother earth, abused and harmed by us, that will yet support us. And she showed humour – remarking with engaging laughter that if someone in their home was sipping a hot coffee, she would never know. Remarkably this was her first go at teaching online, and she admitted she had made no prior plan. She relied on what came into her mind to teach us. Yet every session was bang on time and on the point. She is a fresh flower on the Iyengar family tree and the sap, the inheritance runs true.

IY UK VIRTUAL CONVENTION June 20th and 21st 2020

By Jenny Deadman



This year the annual convention was held online with Zoom because of the outbreak of coronavirus.

It has become the new normal. I had previously attended a morning online class with Uday, listened to Prashant Iyengar's lecture on classical Yoga which is on youtube, 'attended' Abijata's fundraiser class for the NHS, and attended Cathy and Randall's AGM class. I was getting used to the opportunity to study with great teachers in the virtual format of the internet.

This wealth of teaching being delivered by the greats in Pune and elsewhere will raise the profile of Iyengar yoga and hopefully draw students towards the online classes set up by many of our local British teachers. At these extraordinary times new opportunities open up.

The convention, usually a babble of friends and fellow yogis, was an utterly different experience this year. Instead of babble it was bubble, each in our own. But it was wonderful. There were roughly 500 participants from the UK and a further 140 from all round the globe. And yet the connection with the teachers felt so intimate. Less so, of course, the connection with the other students.

The format was classes and events running from 8.30 am and throughout the day and evening on Saturday and again on Sunday, with the chance to view recordings of the classes for a further four days. The yoga and pranayama sessions alone were a very rich meal so I enjoyed listening to the philosophy sessions later in the week.

Some of us attended Navaz Kamdin's pranayama classes in May last year at the convention in Nottingham. She is a teacher steeped in the Iyengar family traditions over decades, fully able to lead her students through both seated and supine pranayamas with clarity good humour and consideration for peoples' varying levels of ability and experience. Uday and

Navaz work seamlessly together as he demonstrates while she describes and holds the attention with her words. 'My boy' she called him at one point, demonstrating the harmony of their work together.

I was bowled over...not literally...by the excellence of Judy Sweeting's class for mobility and stability of the pelvis. Judy has had hip replacements and was teaching a program of work specifically to address the kind of pain suffered by people with arthritic hips. It was wonderful! Thank you Judy and Tig.

On Monday and Tuesday I was absorbed in the recordings of the convention which were still available to us. The philosophy talks and workshops on the Bhagavad Gita were given from his garden in the USA by Professor Edwin Bryant. Energetic, resembling Alan Ginsberg in his intensity, Professor Bryant spoke on the Bhagavad Gita and the teachings contained therein on the yoga of action which he claimed had got mislaid and forgotten by that time in history and which the Gita very importantly reintroduced. Professor Bryant, eloquent in Sanskrit, energetic in delivery, made a point about capitalism and consumerism, both of which are leading us further into the fog where we do not know the difference between real fulfilment and the restless flitting of our monkey minds led by desires. We are spoiling the planet we depend on, and negating our better selves. Having read the Gita a few times I was aware of the verses he was referencing but he did take me out of my comfort zone when he spoke of



Judy and Tig's class on mobility & stability of the pelvis.

the Atman who is immanent in the real Self of us all. I love that kind of thought but have to come back to the ground to metaphorically, peel the potatoes.

I hope I have given you a taste of what the first Iyengar Yoga virtual convention meant for me. I did not attend all of the yoga classes and so there is a gap in my account of the asana class of forward bends and twists lead by Julie Brown and Jayne Orton. All in all, it was a veritable feast.

IYS MEMBERS

For this newsletter, Felicity has chosen a poem about Elm trees. Many readers will know so many UK ancient Elm trees have died as a result of Dutch Elm Disease. Brighton Council introduced a conservation plan in the 1970s and as a result has one of the country's finest collections of Elm trees. Definitely worth a visit.

For more information on local Elm trees, visit:

<https://www.brightonelmtrees.com/>

Sara

WITHIN A WALK By Felicity Goodson

They spread entwined below

In a rich darkness

A wreath of roots

While boughs coupled

Bowl to catch the light

Four Elms defying extinction

With delicate Field Maple folded in.

An embrace

That makes one

United

Complete

Whole

Linked

Yoked but not tethered by ivy

From a distance we see

One tree

That stands within the storms

The seasons

Silhouette in sky blue

Drawing me into its heart

There less is more

Six life forces

We gather and share

We are

We become

One

Creation.



COVID 19 RECOVERY A Suggested Yoga Programme

See link below to the Covid Recovery programme compiled by Iyengar Yoga (UK) Therapy Committee.

<https://iyengaryoga.org.uk/covid-19-a-suggested-recovery-programme/>

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE CHAIR

A LETTER TO MEMBERS

Dear Members,

At the end of every AGM I make a call for new members to serve on the Committee of the IYS and occasionally I am successful.

But that would not be the "normal", old or new.

Committee work is seen as boring and officious, but without it no societies of any kind would exist. I glanced back to see if I could find out when I

joined the committee and found my name on minutes of the 2001 AGM, so at least 19 years ago. I know that both Mike and Jenny have served much longer than me and that Cathy was one of the founding members. My first job was to help out Mike with the newsletter and that job has stayed with me. I have also been the Events Secretary, the IYA UK Representative, the Treasurer and, briefly, the Membership Secretary.

You may wonder what was my qualification for these posts? Simply put - I didn't have any, zero; zilch.

In fact, I had no previous experience of serving on any committee up until that point (I did jury service once, if that counts). I just wanted to be involved with Iyengar Yoga – a practice that has given me so much. I wanted to give something back.

The nub of the matter is that we need new committee members to be able to keep the IYS going into the future. New members bring new ideas, boost enthusiasm and offer different abilities, so that we can make the IYS even better. And we need non-teacher as well as teacher members.

IY UK Representative

One role that is immediately available is the IY UK Representative. Cathy has been our Representative for two terms now, has done a superb job, but cannot stand again. The role of our Representative on the National Committee is to represent Sussex, attend two meetings a year and report back to our members at the AGM. There is a requirement to become involved in one of the other Committees that do the main work of running the IY UK. As an earlier Representative myself I can vouch for the experience being educational. You make new contacts and friends and get to understand the wider world of Iyengar Yoga.

I ask you to think about what I've written above and seriously consider helping out. Email me or speak to any of the committee members. It would be such a shame if the IYA were to fade away.

Best wishes and namasté

Brian

Chair of IYS (brianiyoga@gmail.com)



NOTICE BOARD

EQUIPMENT FOR SALE

Members Prices

Classic Yoga Mat, Dark Blue _____	£22.00
Belts, White, Classic Sliding Buckle, 2.5cm Wide, 2 metres Long _____	£4.00
Pressed Foam Yoga Blocks _____	£4.00

Non-Members Prices

Classic Yoga Mat, Dark Blue _____	£24.00
Belts, White, Classic Sliding Buckle, 2.5cm Wide, 2 metres Long _____	£4.50
Pressed Foam Yoga Blocks _____	£4.50

To purchase contact Jenny Deadman, on 07817 239363

We are always interested in any archive material or memories of days past. ALSO THE IY(UK) ARE PUTTING TOGETHER A NATIONAL ARCHIVE AND WOULD BE VERY INTERESTED TO HEAR OR SEE ANY RELEVANT MATERIAL. Randall Evans is the IYS member on the national IY(UK) archives committee. Please send any material or photos to him at randallevans1@gmail.com

USEFUL WEB LINKS

Iyengar Yoga Sussex (IYS):

www.iyengaryogasussex.org.uk

Please visit our site for up-to-date IYS event information and membership details.

The Iyengar Yoga UK IY(UK):

www.iyengaryoga.org.uk

The Official BKS Iyengar website:

www.bksiyengar.com

Other useful links

YogaSouth, Lancing

www.yogasouth.com

The Brighton Natural Health Centre:

www.bnhc.co.uk

Just Yoga, Worthing:

www.justyoga.co.uk

Lewes Yoga:

www.lewesyoga.co.uk

www.iyengaryogainthemews.co.uk

www.learnnyoganow.co.uk

IYS Member Teachers who wish their websites to be included should email the Newsletter Editor.

THE FINAL WORD



We welcome any comments, contributions and articles relating to Iyengar Yoga in Sussex - reflections on workshops, classes, poems, photos, drawings.....

By email to: saracalderjones@btinternet.com

or by post to the Editor, 57 Sea Lane, East Preston, West Sussex BN16 1ND

A huge thank you to all contributors who have helped to make this newsletter possible.

BKS Iyengar in Parivrtta Parsvakonasana.



THE IYENGAR® YOGA CERTIFICATION MARK

This mark is only awarded to fully qualified and approved teachers of Iyengar® Yoga. In order to qualify for this mark they have to undergo rigorous training assessments, continually update their skills and have the necessary insurance in order to teach.



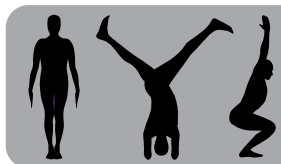
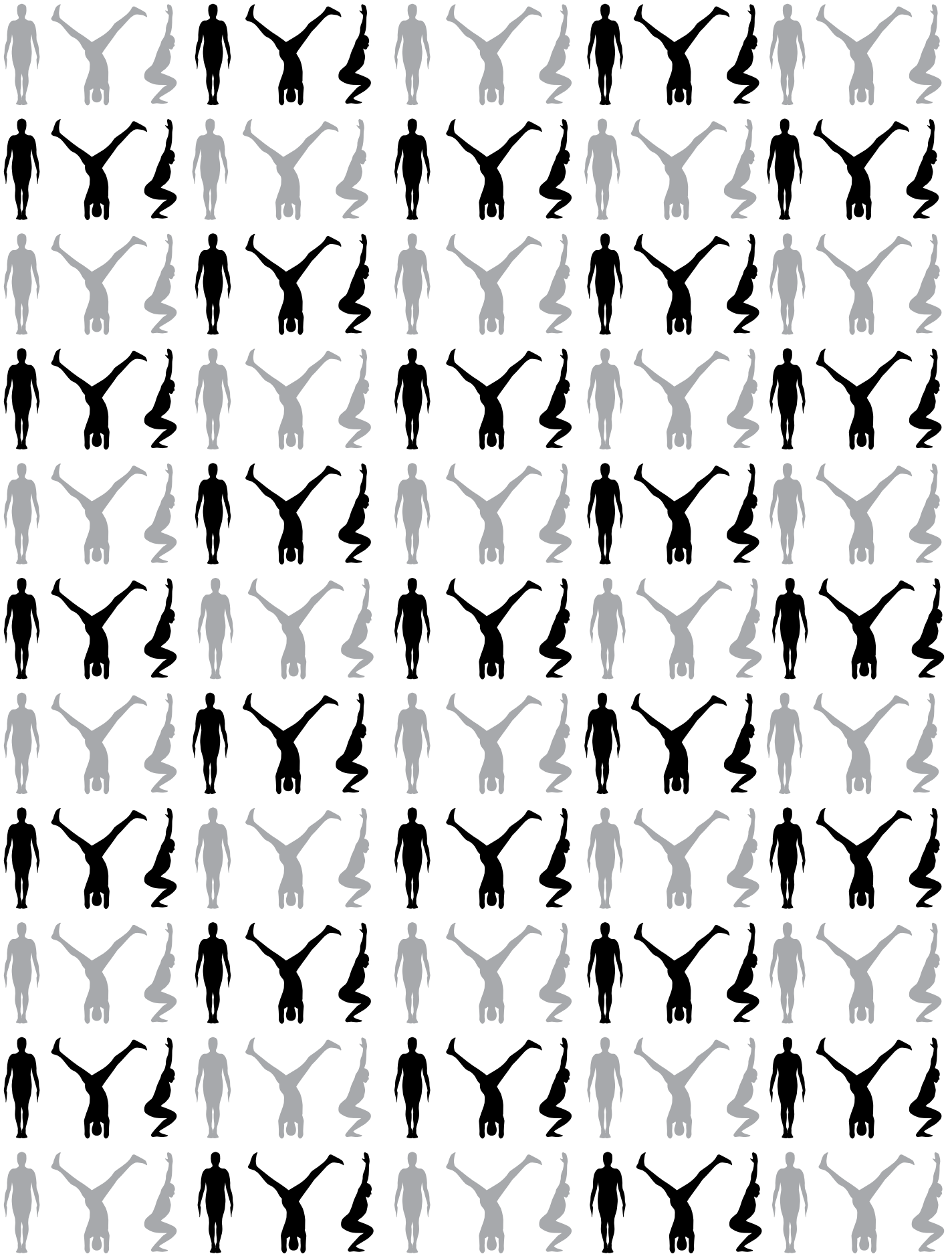
BSK IYENGAR 1918 - 2014

BKS Iyengar was born in Bellur in Southern India. After being introduced to yoga by his Guru T.K.V. Krishnamacharya, he went on to study and teach yoga for over 80 years. He taught on all five continents winning global respect and admiration. His books on yoga have become classics, and he is recognised as a major contributor to the popularity of yoga in both the west and east. Iyengar® Yoga, named after him and taught in his name, has become a widely practiced form of yoga with teachers and organisations in more than 40 countries around the world. Sussex was one of B.K.S. Iyengar's earliest centres.



IYENGAR YOGA SUSSEX

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