

Thursday morning 30/5

Same same but different..... Uday introduced himself by putting emphasis on what goes on in your mind when going to a workshop and hearing 'trikonasana'. We all know our mind has a preset of memories, how we can do a posture, whether we like it, if it is tiring.... However we should get to the point of whatever comes in our mind, we should prepare ourselves to following a set of instructions, rather than being trapped in our preset. That is where and how we get further in our practice, and that is how the same things might bring you a difference.

In the introduction several points of interest were brought into attention: the importance of sequencing and effects, how to easily implement minor adaptations, how solving the 'very flexible' problem (stiff ones will rarely go wrong, they only get stuck..... and progressing will only take time and effort) and children and teens.

The opening of the knee differs enormously (ex. in Uttanasa and Adho MS) by the instruction given to the students..... compare 'hitting the knees' back vs. 'going back with that part of the knee that stays behind (inner or outer knee) and meanwhile lift the inner thigh' and be aware of the effects you create by the latter in the region from the hips to the groin: the sacrum will be released and grip will be created to lift the upper body.....(we work from the bottom to bloom).

For this reason we may not instruct 'spin the knee around' outwards, because in this way the sacrum will get compression.

Especially the flexible ones get benefits by holding the knee all the way in the right position instead of 'extending the leg'.

AdMSv with

*palms on the bricks by pressing outer knees sliding against an imaginary wall together with pulling the inner thigh higher and moving the outer knee back. There will be better placement of the lower limb getting the legs better placed and the heels further down without the cruel 'hitting back'

* feet on the brick: the legs open better, the legs work more, more space and softness in the abdomen is created as well as length in the back, because there is more and better extension in the torso.

Wall.

AdMuSv against the wall: push the heels backward against the wall and also on the floor, in both ways at the same time and displace the upper thigh versus the wall.

UrPrEkPa

Put the foot against the wall, toes not too high (not the nails-side of the toes) because then the actions will turn out to be impossible. Push the upper heel to the wall so the back of the upper leg will be extended. Make your bottom leg work correctly and the work in the upper leg will pull, make upward traction.... Elongate more than you push.... Put your hand well placed away from the wall because putting them too close makes the abdomen moving the wrong direction because the lumbar part pops out.

And now change to Ad Mu SV

Feel the difference and the effect

Urdhva Dand in Vrks

Ardha Eka Pada Vriksasana

Check lumbar at the side of the raised leg, if the lumbar is overlordosed and floating ribs pushing to the frontal side of body, that means you have to pull the leg up instead of pushing it backward

Wrist problems? Lift the arms has more effect on compression than putting a plank

Lift the legs

Sirsasana (ardha/urdhva dandasana)

Raise the right leg to the ceiling and bring the back heel up and eventually back, and lift the left leg up and become tall, feet apart, press outer thighs and hips and lift them up, the lumbar will lengthen.

Open the armpits to the wall, and the floating ribs need to stay. Move the buttock away from the torso. Pressure in the neck is the clear proof of a downward collapse.

Press the forearms to lift the head up and go light on the crown of the head.

In sirsasana the inner edge and the outer edge go up as a result of a stretching of the whole legs, leave the toes soft so the ankles will not feel the strain.

Repeat- can we connect and make ourselves tall in sirsasana- press the forearms, lift lightly the crown, go against the wall, one leg, other leg, and the pelvis has to lift away from the spine.

Normally we first stand against the wall and then balance in the centre, while being excited that we are ok.... Well, the balance is clearly not the difficulty..... it is the lift that has to be created to get lightness in the lower back. Yes, our hips will start to speak. Unless the hips work, the pelvis will not lift.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON

Something Uday talked about on Thursday afternoon:

How in Iyengar Yoga the philosophy is practiced in the asana's. Iyengar didn't see the 8 limbs of ashtanga yoga as a ladder, but rather as a flower blooming. All aspects can be developed simultaneously and in the physical training. The effect of the asana's will be a growth on the level of the 8 limbs. For example: we can't tell people not to lie or not to hit people. We do tell children, but not adults. Saying that won't cure them. There was an example of a gambler

who met Iyengar. Iyengar did not tell him to stop gambling, he just asked him to come and practice. It was the practice that cured the man. As a result of the practice the vrttis just fall of. The change has to come from within.

The aspect of meditation is present in asana practice: the senses are drawn in, you get internalised in the practice. In pranayama as well. The change inwards comes without relying from an external input.

Asana demonstrated: Sirsasana on the corner of the wall (pillar can work): a very good prop to know if we stand straight or not. For example when having scolioses it is very difficult to feel if one is straight or not, so this variation can help.

In Sirsasana strong work in the arms is necessary until the muscles from the neck are strong and the body is build strong like a tower. Height under the head helps to move the upperarms more forward and create a better lift in the shoulderblades/armpits and upperback.

Asana's done in a sequence to make a transition from asana to pranayama. With emphasis on resting and supporting the head and releasing the head and the neck.

- Adho Mukha Virasana without and with brick under the hands
- Adho Mukha svanasana bricks hands or feet
- Uttanasana
- Prasarita padottanasana
- Setu Bandha Sarvangasana on two bricks lengthwise and a rolled blanket under the thighs. The shoulders are NOT resting on the floor. The edge of the brick is in the upperback just opposite the sternum. The blanket provides a little support for the backthighs. This variation opens the chest with more force to prepare for pranayama.
- Savasana on threefolded blankets to open the chest. Bandage.
- Supta baddhakonasana on threefolded blankets. Bandage.
- Savasana.

Friday Morning 31/5

Swastikasana

Sitting straight: often we only use the stronger muscles of the chest, spine, shoulders. But the longer we sit, we get tired, because we don't use the whole muscular system.

Try to build the pose gradually, lift gradually, so the weaker muscles do get involved too.

Adho Mukha Virasana

About cardio training:

How can we practice with quick movements and have cardio training?

Teenagers/youngsters have to practice this way. Lecturing is the way they have to learn at school most of the time. So make them move, have fun! Trick them, make sure laughter is there! Can you do better than me? Who is taller than me? Those kinds of things you can do in a kids class.

Examples of sequences:

Uttanasana-chaturanga-urdva hastasana sequence

Virabhadra I-II in the sequence

Adho mukha svanasana-trikonasana-parsvakonasana

Dandasana-paschimottanasana-halāsana-urdhva hastasana (shoulderblades down so you create space for your neck).

Parsvottanasana-dandasana-halāsana

Utkatasana-halāsana

Uttanasana-malāsana (slight hight under the heels if needed)-dandasana

Fast movements are dangerous if somebody has a condition (neck, back).

There is not much needed as explanation when you work this fast, so you can just give 10 min. sequence in between the 'normal' ritme of your class. Even adults have this kind of fun. Even a normal group. Often Iyengar has a reputation of a lot of details, a lot of props.

So give people a taste of this.

How to recover?

Supta Baddhakonasana, pull your mat down so you allongate the neck

Breath a little deeper to recover quicker but not too strenous breath.

Guruji in his early days was into fast movements.

Later on he had a lot of elderly people in his private classes. Imagine the difficulty he was confronted with. Once he had to teach an 80 year old to stand. He made him ly on the ground. Thats how he started to use props

It is not the Iyengar way to only stair at the details I haven't got experience in other systems I cannot connect to that.

Don't stick with a particular pattern. You should look at your students.

Teachers need adaptability/versatility. One has to build that from within.

If your group is to heterogeneous you can split them. You give one group a rest of 5 min. while the others can continue. You give the option to choose to continue or to rest.

You should learn to teach is several ways, for youngsters, elderly.....

TWISTS

Women with periods, you can do certain twists but be careful, just don't force yourself.

To make the twisting movement not only deep inhalation/exhalation works. Sometimes you have to do it with a faster breath.

Variations of Jathara Parivartanasana: both legs bend. One leg stretched out to the hand. Both legs stretched like a parivrtta trikonasana on the floor. Keep the upper hip down, level both hips.

Parivrtt Trikonasana:

Don't jump to the final pose!

Don't drop the left hip from the back leg.

Back leg has to give restraint: stability. The weight has to go on the back leg.

Front leg needs to extend to create space for the abdomen.

Hip of the front leg goes back.

Stand firm in the back, than more twist can happen.

Parivrtta parsvakonasana

First create space in the front upper body, abdomen, than twist the torso.

We first need to get the waist firm and strong. Because a flexible person might easily twist the torso without having the waist region right.

The abdomen and intestines should not be compressed.

Do not loose the firmness of the back leg. Keep the heel down. Keeps a better lift of the outer leg and of the knee. Makes you grounded. Keep the back foot at the right angle, not too much in, so it makes the heel go down more easy. Take enough distance otherwise your back does not stretch enough. You can give a beginner less distance to have more control.

There are so many ways to support with props, BUT, use a prop to sharpen your intelligence in the pose. It should generate the action he/she needs, so it brings a person further. Use props wisely. To make a toddler walk we don't jump in with 100 props. Otherwise we will disturb the growth of a child. Same thing with our student.

Parsva bakasana:

a lot of preparation is done with the twists we did. This pose is not only about strength. It requires more coordination.

Bakasana:

The pose should be done with a round back and the knees go high up in the armpits.

Bakasana, parsva bakasana and eka pada koundinyasana... are more advanced but with a preparation as we did today we might find access to those poses. Make your own sequences like that.

Sirsasana-

Parsva Sirsasana with the back leg against the wall. Like this we can observe the position of the legs, as often they go to far back.

Sarvangasana.

Friday 31/5 Afternoon.

Questions&Answers:

How to name your classes?

Pune is a special place. People are queuing up to get in and are eager to learn. Whatever class you teach, people want to be there.

In Europe, here, it is very different. I have a 45 min badge for beginners. 1,5 hour class for mixed groups, more advanced. But sometimes people with more experience do come to the 45 min. class too. So I have to be more creative to have this blend of levels and make sure I address all of them.

As long as you don't have the luxury of a lot of students, you can not separate your classes. You need to be flexible as a teacher to adapt to the group you are facing. To be able to offer different aspects in your classes (like faster, more restorative, pranayama...) you can try to put it in on certain moments that fit well. For example if it is hot, you can give a restorative class and explain about how they need to refresh their body by cooling asana's... So there is a good explanation for what you are doing. So instead of having a restorative class on your schedule, you give some restorative in a regular class. People get a taste of it and might start to like it.

People who come to you, often have been looking around. If you are too strict to them, they won't pick up.

I will tell you a story to illustrate:

I was asked as a substitute for a class from a teacher of a different system. Because of this situation I was a bit nervous, even with my teaching experience in Pune. I could, with my Pune background have yelled at them like : 'What have you been doing for 3 years?!' But ofcourse I would have scared them and they might have not come back.

There was a woman in this class who didn't participate at a certain moment. When I asked her if she was fine she said yes. Still she didn't move. So when I asked her what the problem was, she replied: 'I don't like to bend sideways'. I could have insulted her and would have lost her as a student. Three weeks later she joined the whole class.

We shouldn't be rigid or harsh.

How to motivate teenagers in class when they don't like it?

Make the ones that perform better go in front and demonstrate.

Compliment the ones that are doing well. Compliment the ones that don't like it when they are doing something right.

Guruji was a man of actions. The experience is most important. Has the most impact. So for beginners it is important to make them move. You give the necessary information, but words are not enough. Just telling 'Yoga is good for you', doesn't change somebody. That's why we make beginners move more than in an advanced class.

Asana's done:

Supta Swastikasana, Baddhakonasana, Virasana and Padmasana with bending backwards on the crown of the head.

After a long virasana be careful with stretching the knees afterwards. Going slowly to Dandasana is less work for the knees because you let gravity work for your knees. If you stretch the legs out in AMS it is against gravity, so more strain in the knee.

Supta Baddhakonasana with threefolded blankets sideways to open the chest and a rolled blanket for the neck.

Saturday June 1st morning session

1. Swastikasana

- on firm support in order to lift up
- sitting bones on the support
- finger tips on the side
- further lift up the sides of your trunk in front of the chest

3x Ohm

Invocation to Patanjali

2. Adho mukha Virasana

- extend the shins: lift one knee at the time with your hand
- metatarsis on the floor
- descend ankles to the floor
- lengthen back thighs with your hands from knee to buttocks

□ this will relax the knee joints

- press all 10 toes in the floor and bring heels to the back (buttocks will come up and lift knees slightly from the floor): also little toes in the mat
- roll out the calves
- lengthen shins
- try to bring the big toes together, and the knees
- move with trunk from front to back, multiple times
- □ brings flexibility in the ankles
- □ challenging for the toes, ankles, front of the shins
- □ ankle bones become supple and strong

3. Tadasana both feet with toes on bricks and support of the wall

□ back of the ankle stretches

□ lower leg is more responsive, under control

- bring weight to the outer sides of the feet, raise arches of your feet !big toe has to remain on the floor!
- The mouses of the toes on the brick
- Press weight in the bricks and lift toes when the brick starts flipping

- If bricks are too high, find lower support

Effects: inner legs, hips, calves, lower back feels wider

In Tadasana without bricks: stand on the outer sides of your feet and keep arches lifted

With dropping knees (X legs) , the arches will also drop more easily, bringing discomfort to the knees. Inner thighs should lift upwards and try to separate the thighs. This can be unstable and painful at the beginning, but will change when the structure of the body changes. The effects will be: more space in the lower back and soothing for the abdominal organs.

Tadasana feet on the floor:

- thighs rolled in
 - bend slightly to the front with trunk, place hands just under buttocks and lift and spread out muscles of the back thighs. Keep back of the knees parallel to the wall behind you
 - bring brick between the legs
 - □ result = lengthening of the leg
 - keep the actions in the feet and legs, and lift up the trunk
 - □ hips and thighs have to work
 - □ good for knees and lower back
 - □ more difficult for flexible persons
 - □for beginners is instruction: push the knees back
 - from arches to groins: inside of the legs have to lengthen
- from here, spread step by step wider with the feet, don't lose action of lifting the arches and press outer heels in the floor, go towards prasarita padothanasana: the triangle between the legs has to move upwards

4. Trikonasana

- when turning right foot out, the entire R leg has to roll out, knee too
- lift R arch: shin, knee and thigh will roll with
- L leg: don't lose actions: open pelvis, gives space to R leg to roll open
- buttock L leg active, not loose
- buttock R leg downwards
- bring weight to L leg, extend R leg

5. Virabhadrasana II

- tuck in the buttock of front leg, even stronger than in trikonasana
- don't lose actions in back leg, press heel in floor
- same opening of the hips as in trikonasana roll out front leg, hips have to work hard
- bring weight to back leg, don't lean into front leg
- keep torso upright

6. Parsvakonasana

7. Uttanasana

8. Ardha Chandrasana

come out: bend front leg but keep back hip firm

9. Upavistha Konasana

10. Baddha Konasana

11. Dandasana + Urdva Hasta Dandasana

- if sacrum doesn't move in, the discs of the spine get pushed out
- take sitting bones apart
- bend legs, sit ON the sitting bones and stretch legs,
- hands in the mat, push yourself up

12. Paschimottanasana : with concave back, ascend from the lower back

13. Janu Sirsana : roll calve inside out of bent leg. Make place for the calve

14. Paschimottanasana concave back

15. Swastikasana bith sides

16. Sethu Bandha Sarvangasana on brick

Saturday June 1st afternoon session

1. Adho Mukha virasana with head on a blanket
Put 1 hand at bottom of skull and gently push forward, elongating the neck. Relax throat.
2. Adho Mukha Svanasana with forehead on soft support
3. Uttanasana with head support
Keep feet apart in restful uttanasana
Trapezius up

Questions from the group:

- when we did trikonasana in the morning it led to pain in inner thighs, due to knee problem.
Adaptation in this case is
 - to do trikonasana against wall with bricks to support the hand

- lie on floor in Dandasana to take pressure off the legs, tie the legs with several belts and put a brick between the knees to correct the knees falling in
 - dropped arches : this has impact on the rest of the body not only in posture , skeleton and muscles but also on the abdominal and endocrinal system. How we walk, how we stand, impacts on how we do asana's. If we walk with heel first, all pressure comes on the knee and results in injuries or sensitivity there. The difference between walking in shoes and barefeet : we have to walk differently barefeet than with support of shoes.
 - In general we need firm and strong muscles but not rigid e.g. when we do backbends, forward bends, the abdomen can get tight, but needs to evaluate to softness in abdomen
 - When using supports, they should be soft but firm, a comfortable bolster will just sink in, doesn't give support.
 - Flat feet problem: following sequence of asanas
4. roll 2 blankets tightly or use a firm bolster, sit in virasana or vajrasana with height under ankles. This is soothing for the ankles. Then move slightly forward and rest methatarsalis on the bolster/blankets. This deepens the arch of the feet. Then do virasana on the floor.
 5. Sit on 2 bricks piled up and a blanket and do upavista konasana. Bend right leg to ardha badha konasana. Use left hand in the knee bent and right hand to bring your right foot closer to the bricks. Do left side. The arch is happening there.
 6. Do both sides to mula bandhasana
 7. Bekasana : left, right, left, right, both sides
 8. Virasana on floor
 9. Supta virasana
 10. Put roll back under ankles and do supta virasana
 11. Sirsana 8 min
 12. Halasana
 13. Sarvangasana
 14. Parsva halasana
 15. Supta Konasana
 16. If soreness in the back first bahradvajasana, others straight to Savasana

Sunday June 2nd morning session

With asanas we clean our bodies from leakages, weaknesses

ARMS

Stand by the wall, place palm of the hand at shoulder level, arm stretched, spread fingers, press the palm, roll shoulder and arm out, stretch elbow and fix the shoulder blade down. Elbow pit opens towards the ceiling, help with your left hand to open right arm

□ creates firmness in the shoulderblades

□ if nerves feel stretched: is normal

□ pins and needles will happen with stiffness in neck and shoulders, go out and do again, don't hold too long.

- shoulder blade moves away from spine
- if wrist is stiff: fill up the space with belt

Turn hand with fingers pointing backwards. Bring elbow pit to the front this time. Bring shoulder down

Turn hand with fingers pointing to the floor: biceps and triceps parallel

Over stretched elbow? Poses on arms are more difficult.

□ belt around wrists, brick between elbows, palms facing the ceiling, open chest and roll shoulders back. Pain will diminish with regular practice

After arms exercises, do Tadasana: arms feel longer

Take belt and hold under feet, like rope skipping, take both ends and bend legs, take both sides of the belts short. Stretch slowly both legs: shoulders open, let the arms extend, sides of the neck feel longer

Take belt at shoulder width, hold belt behind the back, bend in uttanasana and bring arms up and over head

Do same with head under bench or stage, helps to keep shoulders in place. To come out, first bend legs.

Urdva Hastasana with belt around the wrists

Lie down in Supta Urdva hastasana and try to bring hands on the floor, helper turns elbow and arm closer to floor . Don't let beginners be helpers! Upper arms extend.

Adho Mukha Virasana

- there needs to be space between the shoulder blades
- roll the shoulders away from the neck
- open armpits towards the floor

□ gives freedom in the neck

Adho Mukha Svanasana

- same actions as above
 - lengthen the collar bones
- ! when you do a corrected pose, don't stay too long because the sensitivity goes away, and you return to old patterns

Urdva Mukha Svanasana

- bend the elbows first
- roll out upper arms
- shoulders back and away from the neck
- stretch the arms
- stretch the elbow pit

Tadasana

- spread arms 90° sideways palms facing the ceiling
- do actions with shoulders
- slowly bring arms down and turn palms without losing shoulders
(same actions as with using the wall)

Urdva Mukha Svanasana

- on chair or platform
- lift sternum, lift chest = most important action
- the backward bend is less important, first work on the chest: push chest forward, shoulders back
- keep shoulders in line with wrists
- elbow pits can turn towards ceiling!

Chaturanga

- turn hands slightly to the sides of your mat, to take shoulders more on the back
- move shoulder blades towards the elbows
- buttocks tucked in

Setu Bandha Sarvangasana

Adho Mukha Virasana

- brick between hands, belt around elbows
- lower arms on the mat
- go from there into adho mukha svanasana
- go from there into Pincha Mayurasana

Sunday June 2nd afternoon session

Questions?

17. demonstrate difference between two persons with elbows that are overstretched (see pictures)

- for the lady : this is rather common, overstretching of elbows. Correction: belt shoulder with around wrists and brick between elbows
- for the male : right arm, is exceptional. Correction: brick between the wrists and belt around the elbows

* can one do sarvangasana without any blankets at all? Reponse: in sarvangasa, our cervical spine that is not the strongest part of the spine, carries all the weight. Our strongest part is the the lumbar spine, where the sacrum is situated. The blankets allow safety to keep the curvature that is needed in the cervical spine to protect that area. When you don't feel any pressure in the neck, you can start taking off blankets.

18. what with students suffering from hip artrosis?

The problems with the hips are derived from our lifestyle. When sitting a lot, the gluteal region goes dull. But also standing, walking, can be done without engaging the right parts, resulting in pressure on the joints. Therefore: effort and attention to sidehips and buttock grip is essential.

The difference when you practice and pay attention, and your daily activities when you are engrossed in other things, has impact on one another. Your corrective action in practice can cover up for wrong work in daily activities. As a rule, it is movement that is needed, long sitting and long standing is not what our body is meant to do. Without movement, there is hardening and tightening. Over working is not contributing, that creates tension. So better do regular repetition of the corrective actions, rather than once a month to work on the hips, or feet, or arms.

Following sequence with specific attention for the hips was done:

- **Tadasana**

- **Vrksjasana**

- without support: squeeze the buttock of the bent leg in, don't try to do perfect asana but concentrate on buttocks and hips.

- Go to wall and do both sides with hand against wall for balance. Again, squeeze buttock in, bent knee long and goes down. If the foot of the bent knee slips off, the hips are not firm enough. The foot should be in the middle area of the thigh, not too much forward or to the back.

On the question what to do with knee pain when doing vrksjasana, can a prop be used in the knee? Yes, but still you need to do the work: elongate the bent thigh hips engaged, otherwise the knee will suffer.

- on the floor, lie on stomach, left leg strong and toes tucked in, take right foot, place high on the groin, then lift right knee. Do same left side.

- **Trikonasana**

Right : tuck right buttock in, squeeze left buttock. Learn to evolve towards practice whereby you do the actions together: feet, knees, hips, as a beginner you learn it separately but as practitioner progress is made in connecting it all, and not so much in quickly reaching the perfect final pose.

- **Virabhadrasana II** : same remarkas as trikonasana
- **Parsvakonasana** : first tuck buttock in, as you start bending the leg, do not loosen the buttock grip!
- Go **from Parsvakonasana to Trikonasana**, keeping that grip, the leg will not straighten as easily when you keep the grip, you can use bricks under your hand, don't try to reach the perfect trikonasana when practicing this way.
- Upavista konasana: don't do the widest you can, a little less. Press firmly the legs on the floor and move sitting bones forward. Feel the buttocks tuck in when doing this.
- **Badha konasana** : same as for Upavista konasana
- **Dandasana** : tie belt around feet and try to crack the belt: feel in the hips

There will come a better lift of the torso when there is grip on the hips, as well as more strength in the legs. Build up awareness how to sit tall like this.

- **Adho Mukha Svanasana** with firm hips: do the asana not as you are used to, but continue this firmness in the hips that is now created
- **Sirsana**: do the asana not as you are used to, but continue this firmness in the hips that is now created
- **Halasana**
- **Sarvangasana** : tie belt around elbows and take the loose end with your hands, place hands on floors to create the space in shoulders as we did in morning session
- **Halasana**
- **Bharadvajasana**
 - R +L with hand behind
 - R+ L with hand on heel
 - R + L with hand on upper arm
- **Paschimottanasana**
- **Savasana**