



perth sanga

The inaugural Perth Sanga was held at Yvonne's on Friday 5th December 2003, a calming and nurturing experience at that busy time of the year, which followed the teachings of Sri Krishnamacharya as taught by his son TKV Desikachar and grandson Kausthub Desikachar.

We will be holding the second Yoga Sanga at Yvonne's on Friday June 11th at 6.30pm and you are all very welcome to come and experience these teachings. Yvonne will give a short talk about her recent experience studying at the KYM – Krishnamachariya Yoga Mandirum in Chennai, India, so you will be able to obtain an insight into what it is like to study there.

Kausthub visited us in Perth in January this year giving a seminar on – ‘Yoga for Power and Vitality’, ‘Exploring the Breathing Body’ and ‘The Yoga of Sound’, for those of you lucky enough to attend, I am sure you gained invaluable insights and knowledge, Kausthub is a wonderful and very knowledgeable teacher. For those unable to attend, read Sally Riddell's report on the event in this newsletter.

From Perth, Kausthub went straight to Melbourne and ran a seminar called ‘Deal with the Body, Heal with the Mind’, dealing with the healing aspects of yoga. Morag Local and I attended this event, not wanting to miss this opportunity to broaden our understanding of the synergy between mind and body. It was a wonderful workshop with so much knowledge shared through lectures, stories and practices.

Future Sangas for 2004 will be held at Yvonne's home, 145 Brighton Road, Scarborough, on the following dates:

Fridays 13th August 6.30p.m.
24th September 6.30p.m.
5th November 6.30p.m.

Please confirm with Yvonne one week prior if you plan to attend by calling 9341 5904 or 0403 942 882 or e-mail info@yogaksetram.com.au

Dael Hunter

Kausthub in Perth.2004

by Sally Riddell,

The sun shone brightly as the turquoise water rolled lazily onto the white, white sand. It was the Australia Day weekend and Kausthub Desikachar was in Perth for a seminar.

At the seminar he presented three topics: "Yoga for Power and Vitality" which were asana practices; "Exploring the Breathing Body", pranayama practices; and "The Yoga of Sound", chanting and meditation practices. The first three mornings were devoted to asana, the afternoons to pranayama, and the fourth day to sound.

The tools of yoga are many and varied and can be combined in ways that enliven and extend the myriad of different ways we have of experiencing our bodies, breath and mind. By aligning asana, breath and chant in various combinations, Kausthub challenged and enriched our understandings on so many different levels.

As is the practice of the teachings of Krishnamacharya, Kausthub had an overall end goal that he wished us to experience, and so each morning built on the lessons of the previous day. Thus by the end of the three days we had a very clear picture of the methods by which an asana practice can be moulded towards both power and vitality.

The theme of power and vitality was a constant with the asana practices. For example, when Kausthub used breath or chant as an adjunct to an asana practice, he did so to enrich the aspects of strength, power and vitality.

The asana practices themselves were robust and challenging. They engaged us very much on a physical level, and, by combining movement with sound and breath in different ways with each practice, these practices became even stronger, and intriguing in their effects on the entirety of our physical and emotional selves.



The combination of asana and chant gave us the further experience of the power of vibration throughout the body, and the choice of chant itself provided an example of how different sounds activate different parts of the body and mind. The lengthening of breath in moving sequences and static postures led us down another path of discovery, as did the use of breath retention. By showing us how to encourage the body to control very specifically the ways in which it moves and holds postures, and by using the breath to enhance this control, he provided yet another way in which we as practitioners could access the power and vitality inherent in yoga teachings.

During the discussions and practices on breath we were guided through the whys and wherefores of breath, its function and its effect throughout the body and mind. With our pranayama practices, we explored the effect of lengthening the breath using techniques initially to encourage the lengthening of the exhalation so that we could then lengthen the whole of the breath. We practiced breathing consciously with breath ratios and the stilling/quietening effect this had. We also looked at the ways in which mudras, specific yoga breathing techniques (e.g. nadi sodana, sithai, ujjayi) and position of the physical body inform the ways in which we can develop our pranayama practice.

Chanting with Kausthub is always a delight. When he addressed the topic of chanting and meditation, he did so by giving us a very clear understanding of the intricacies associated with sound and the intention with which we approach these practices. He led us through the experience of the vibrational quality of chant in a meditative practice, and the impact of duration of chant and the effects of this sort of practice.

Kausthub's presentations were always clear and practical. His humorous and approachable personality helped to inform in a very easy and accessible manner, and his generosity in sharing his knowledge and experience was inspirational. Question and answer sessions provided a further opportunity to explore and develop all areas of learning.

As the sun set slowly over the sea, our four days with Kausthub came to an end. Each of us returned to our homes feeling as rich as the glorious colours of the setting sun. Thanks Kausthub, we look forward to next time.

