



AISHA FLOW YOGA

"Healing From Within"

November – December 2015

Included:

- Focus of the Month: Loving Kindness
- Charity Donations: Christmas Party for Special Kids and more
- Event: Christmas Get Together / Vegan Potluck
- Your Yoga Practice: Loving Kindness on the Mat
- Recommended Reading: Loving Kindness – the Revolutionary Art of Happiness"
- Pose of the Month: Vrksasana (tree pose)
- Recipe of the Month: Spicy Cous Cous Salad
- Class punctuality, cancellations and bookings

Remember if you 'Like' Aisha Flow Yoga on facebook (and check 'get notifications' under the Like button) you can receive up to date information and inspirational words based on our theme of the month.



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Theme for this Sequence

Loving Kindness - tenderness and consideration towards others or acts of kindness motivated by love

Charity Donations for this Sequence

This month our charity will be "Christmas Party for Special Children" where we will be sponsoring 4 children to attend the party or as we having trouble making contact with them the **Kmart Christmas Tree**

Last month we gave \$700 a local family to raise finances for a modified vehicle for a child in need. Check out the story of 6 year old Lil at www.facebook.com/letsgolil/?fref=ts&ref=br_tf

Events

Christmas Gathering / Vegan Potluck Afternoon tea

When: 2-4:30pm Sunday 13th December

Where: Aisha Flow Yoga

Come join us for afternoon tea, a swim if you like or just a chat. Children, spouses etc are welcome. I ask that you bring a small plate of vegan food to share and let me know how many will be coming. To make it fun dress up in Christmas theme ☺

Term 4 Dates

Term 4 will run from **5 October – 18 December** being 11 weeks . There will be **no class Thursday 17th December** (my wedding anniversary) but **will reschedule class that week for Tuesday 15th December**. There is a possibility of **classes Monday and Tuesday 21st and 22nd Dec – interested?**

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Focus of the Month – Loving Kindness

A story posted by 'Blessed66' on the internet

On the way back from work every evening, more often than not there would be a homeless man standing at the exit of the freeway. He looked to be in his late 40's but was probably a lot younger. He had shoulder length straight black hair, a short beard and he was of average stature. His eyes were what struck me the most about him, they were brown and they had a sparkle. Like an inside light that was beaming out of his eyes. His eyes, I thought, represented the man in general. People say they can tell a lot from a person's eyes. It was certainly true in his case. He always waved at every car, he was always happy and smiling and sometimes almost dancing.

Every day after work I would remember to gather any spare change, and put it aside to give to him if I saw him. A feeling of joy would come over me every time I saw him, as I came off the ramp. He had that effect. I'd quickly roll down my window and give him the coins. Occasionally the red light would be on for a minute and we would ask each other about our day. His answer would always be the same, "I'm blessed!".

I knew what his answer was going to be every time, yet I would still ask. It amazed me that even in his situation of being homeless he was so positive, and his answer would remind me of how blessed I was - a single mother of four amazing kids, with a place to call home and with a job to provide for my kids.

Then one day I was called into my boss's office and was told that I was being laid off due to the economy. A feeling of worry engulfed me, and for the rest of that day all I could think of was "how am I going to provide for my kids, how am I going to pay rent, what am I going to do?"

Needless to say that on my way home that day I was very sad and upset. I didn't remember to look for my spare change and keep it ready like I usually did. I wasn't feeling the joy as I got off the ramp where the homeless man would be. Yet there he was as always, as I turned the ramp. He set his eyes on me, while still smiling and waving at others.

I'd hoped to catch the green light, but I missed it. While I was waiting for the red light to turn, he strolled over to my car. He had a big smile he looked me straight in the eyes and said "today I will give you a dollar". He then reached into his pocket and pulled out a dollar bill. I was blown away. I burst into tears. I wanted to jump out of my car and hug him!

You see that day he gave me more than a dollar bill, he taught me a valuable lesson. No matter what material things are taken from you, no one can take away your choice to be joyful. My ride home was smooth sailing, I had lost my job, had no savings, but I knew I was blessed!

You just never know how one small act of loving kindness can touch a person and change the trajectory of their life. It may be a gesture, your patience, your support or just a smile. What can you do each day to practice loving kindness?



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Your Yoga Practice Loving Kindness on the Mat

Practicing loving kindness on the mat is an act of self-love and compassion. Here are just a few ways for you to consider:

1. Respecting our emotional state: When we come to our practice we come with many different moods and feelings depending on the day – maybe we are tired, enervated, frustrated, angry, happy, chilled and more. Loving kindness means that we respect the feelings of the day and work with them rather than trying to be something else. Acknowledging the feelings and allowing ourselves to move with them is a way of respecting and honouring ourselves. So called ‘bad’ feelings can be felt and released, good feelings can be experienced and enjoyed. Either way we respect and honour where we are at in the moment and are kind to ourselves in thought, words and deeds. Be where you are – acknowledge, accept, breathe and send love to yourself.

2. Respecting our physical state: Some days our bodies feel great and want to move splendidly and other days it does not. Loving kindness means that we see our practice as an exploration of where we are at in the moment without comparison to the person beside us or how we were doing yesterday. It means we turn our attention inwards and give thanks for the fact that we just turned up and then we do the best we can that day. Sending thanks to each party of our body and sending love in with the breath is a great way to be kind and loving to ourselves.

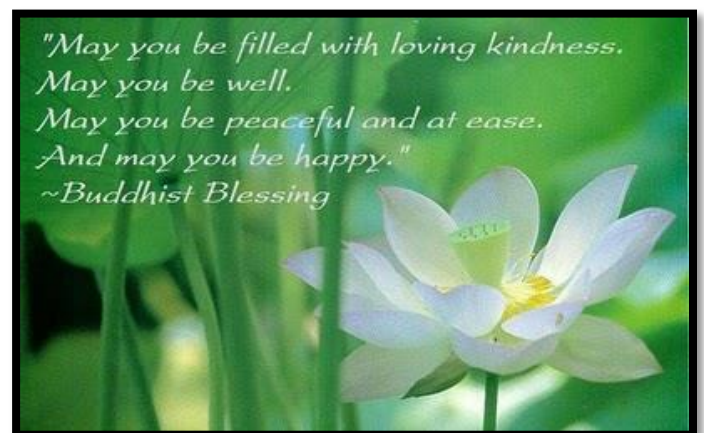
3. Creating a positive dialogue: Internal thought dialogues can work in our favour or against us. It is normal for the mind to race all over the place during the day and most people will have the same thoughts over and over again. The real question is are your thoughts of love and kindness and *if you had a best friend that spoke to you the same way you speak to yourself – would you hang out with them?* Most of us probably would not. So begin by noticing the thoughts you have when on the mat – are you judging, comparing, criticising, moaning, frustrated or are you sympathetic, caring, thankful and kind to yourself? Whatever your experience on the mat is also how you will be living your life – think about that! Begin to change any negative or judgemental thoughts and find areas to be grateful, find words that make you feel joyous, see where you are improving and commend yourself, breathe and send love!

4. Stay for Shavasana: I have found over the years that many people leave before Shavasana but this is the same as preparing a meal for yourself and never eating it. Be kind to yourself and make time for yourself. Shavasana is where all the magic happens. Blockages have been cleared, energy moved and now Shavasana is where the energy and information settles in to where it is needed. The body relaxes, restores and rejuvenates. Be kind to yourself and stay.

Buddhists practice what is called, a loving kindness meditation, which we will practice in class this sequence. Studies show that such a meditation has many benefits including:

1. Increases positive emotions & decreases negative emotions
2. Increases vagal tone, which increases positive emotions & feelings of social connection
3. Decreases migraines, chronic pain, PTSD and schizophrenia-spectrum disorders
7. Activates empathy & emotional processing in the brain
8. Increases gray matter volume
10. Increases telomere length—a biological marker of aging
11. Makes you a more helpful person
12. Increases compassion and empathy
14. Decreases your bias towards others and increases social connection
16. Curbs self-criticism

For more information check out www.mindful.org/18-science-based-reasons-to-try-loving-kindness-meditation/

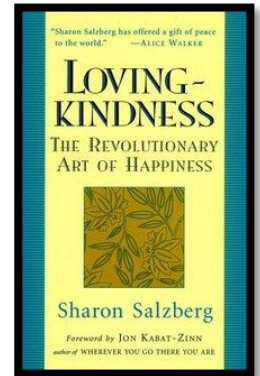


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Recommended Reading – “Loving Kindness – The Revolutionary Art of Happiness”

In this inspiring book, Sharon Salzberg, one of America's leading spiritual teachers, shows us how the Buddhist path of lovingkindness can help us discover the radiant, joyful heart within each of us. This practice of lovingkindness is revolutionary because it has the power to radically change our lives, helping us cultivate true happiness in ourselves and genuine compassion for others. The Buddha described the nature of such a spiritual path as "the liberation of the heart, which is love." The author draws on simple Buddhist teachings, wisdom stories from various traditions, guided meditation practices, and her own experience from twenty-five years of practice and teaching to illustrate how each one of us can cultivate love, compassion, joy, and equanimity—the four "heavenly abodes" of traditional Buddhism.



‘Pose’ of the Month – Vrksasana (Tree Pose)

Tree pose is steady and centred but can also wave with the breeze at times (notice the constant re-adjustment of your body to the balance)

Benefits

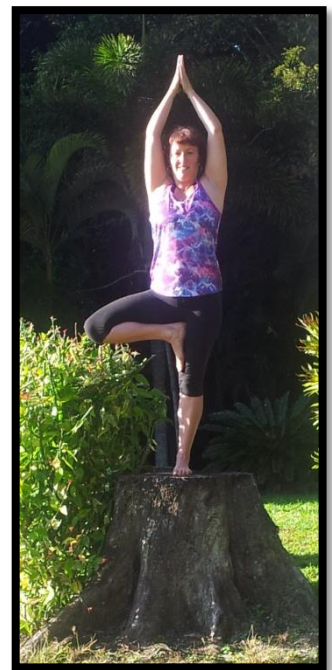
- Strengthens thighs, calves, ankles, and spine
- Stretches the groins and inner thighs, chest and shoulders
- Improves sense of balance
- Relieves sciatica and reduces flat feet

How To Do The Pose

- Tall with feet together. Shift your weight slightly onto the left foot, keeping the inner foot firm to the floor, and bend your right knee. Reach down with your right hand and clasp your right ankle.
- Draw your right foot up and place the sole against the inner left thigh (or the ankle or shin if this is not possible) - if possible, press the right heel into the inner left groin, toes pointing toward the floor. The center of your pelvis should be directly over the left foot.
- Rest your hands on the top rim of your pelvis. Make sure the pelvis is in a neutral position, with the top rim parallel to the floor.
- Lengthen your tailbone toward the floor. Firmly press the right foot sole against the inner thigh and resist with the outer left leg. Press your hands together in Anjali Mudra (prayer). Gaze softly at a fixed point in front of you on the floor about 4 or 5 feet away. Arms can also be raised overhead

Contraindications and Cautions

- Headache
- Insomnia
- Low blood pressure
- High blood pressure: Don't raise arms overhead



See final page of this newsletter for advice from the tree ☺

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Recipe of the Month – Spicy Couscous

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 cups couscous
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 1/2 cups water, boiling
- 1 tbsp vegetable stock powder
- 1 tsp coriander seeds
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1/2 tsp fennel seeds
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp dried chilli flakes (optional)
- 1 can chickpeas
- 1/4 cup sun dried tomatoes
- 1 small red capsicum, diced
- 1 medium zucchini, broccoli or other greens, diced
- 1 bunch fresh coriander, finely chopped
- Olive oil



METHOD

If you are using whole seeds then first grind them in a pestle and mortar or spice grinder.

Add together ground spices (coriander seeds, cumin seeds, fennel seeds, black pepper, chilli flakes - if using - and salt)

Heat olive oil in a large pan. Add onion and garlic and fry gently until translucent.

Add capsicum and zucchini and cook until soft.

Add spice mixture and fry for a further minute, stirring constantly.

Stir couscous into the vegetables then add the boiling water and stock powder to the pan.

Add the chickpeas and sun dried tomatoes to the pan and mix well.

Now put a lid on the pan, turn off the heat and leave for a couple of minutes.

Once the stock has been absorbed, stir through the fresh coriander, breaking up any large lumps of couscous at the same time.

CLASS PUNCTUALITY AND CANCELLATIONS

Punctuality is about respecting the time and space of other participants in the class. Can I please ask that you **please arrive at least 5 MINUTES BEFORE CLASS starts**. This will give you a chance to say hello and get settled so as we can begin on time. ☺ Remember too please that if you **cannot attend a class please can you give me a minimum 24 hours notice** so as I can give those on the waiting list a chance to attend class.

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CLASSES AND BOOKINGS

Classes Times:

- Thursday 7:30pm – 8:45pm
- Friday 6:00am – 7:15am (term packs only for this class)
- Friday 9:30am – 10:45am



Costs and Booking System (50-100% of ALL takings go to charity)

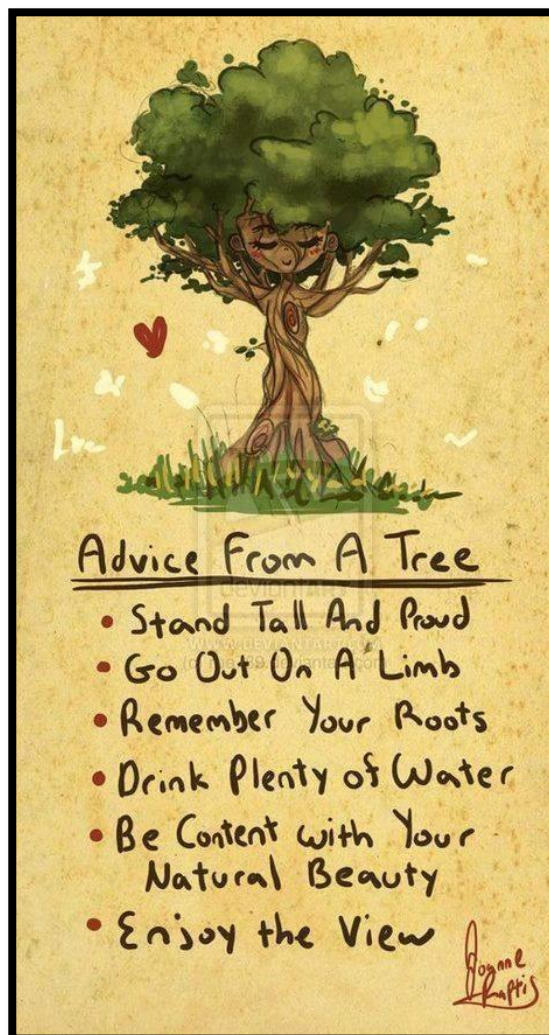
Costs are as follows:

- Casual: \$13 (\$10 for students)
- Term Pack: \$100 (for 10 week terms)...guaranteed place each class of the term but no carry overs

Preference for bookings will be given to those with term packs.

Note:

Term packs - if the term is longer than 10 weeks then you pay \$10 for each subsequent class or if shorter than 10 weeks then you pay the corresponding amount (e.g. 9 weeks = \$90). If there is no class for any reason your pack will be extended. If you join us midway into a term you can pay \$10 per week for remainder of the term if paid up front. PLEASE NOTE THAT IF YOU ARE A 'NO SHOW' (that is without notifying me) MORE THAN TWICE IN THE TERM then your spot may be given to another person.



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