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YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA NEWSLETTER

MARCH 1983



An Interview with B.K.S. Iyengar

Interview begins on page 9.

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An Interview with B.K.S. Iyengar

Prepared by Norman MacKenzie

Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar is a contemporary yoga master who has developed a unique approach to the transformation of the body into an instrument for realizing the divinity within. A teacher of yoga for more than 40 years, he has been an inspiration to many students and teachers throughout the world. With courage and single-pointed determination he has sparked a light that has revived aspects of hatha yoga that were once considered lost.

B.K.S. Iyengar is the author of two classic texts, "Light on Yoga" and "Light on Pranayama", which provide comprehensive information for students of yoga concentrating on asana and pranayama in particular.

In November, 1982, nine teachers from the Victoria Yoga Centre were privileged to participate with an international group of teachers in an intensive course for three weeks under the direction of B.K.S. Iyengar.

This interview was conducted at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute in Pune, India, on December 1, 1982. Present were Swami Sivananda and Swami Radhananda of Yasodhara Ashram, Kootenay Bay, B.C.; Shirley Daventry French and Norman MacKenzie of the Victoria Yoga Centre.

This interview has been prepared for publication by Norman MacKenzie.

Yoga Centre: During the Intensive you have emphasized the unity of all yoga practices and that it has only been in recent times that they have been separated into "categories" of yoga practices.

Iyengar: There is a tremendous historical background for the break of the continuity of our Indian traditions in art, science and philosophy. When our country once upon a time was completely free, people used to move without any hindrances or fear complexes. When India was attacked from the north, our country was looted, people were massacred and the wealth of the nation was carried away. Fear complexes set in at that moment.

When their religious traditions were forced on us, this had a tremendous bearing on the loss of our great ancient art. The Indian people had to live guarding their women in order to see that they maintained that purity. So each one was suspicious of the others, and they formed small groups and protected themselves in those groups so communication was cut short. Due to that the understanding lost its background and it remained a secret subject and couldn't spread, whereas once upon a time it was known to each and everyone.

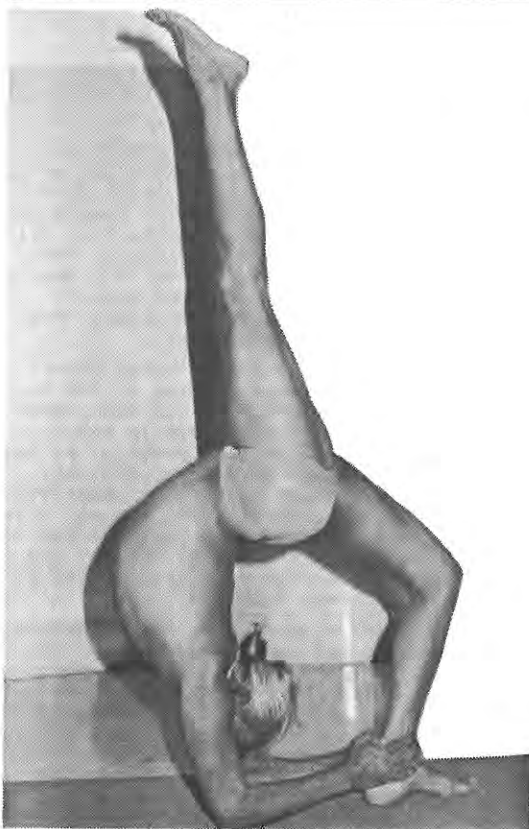
Some people carried away certain manuscripts, other people carried away other manuscripts, and they had to depend on those manuscripts to work on. So although the human chain of civilization did not break, the methodology, the way in which one had to reach that goal, started breaking. That's how the traditions got disunited. Even today you can see the impact of that with each individual group practising Indian art and tradition. They do not come together because they live in small sects. That is how we developed various sects in our Hindu religion which became castes and sub-castes.

That's the reason we lost the real essence of that flow of intelligence. Someone had to find out where the old and the present time could meet and how it could be united. That's how I am working on it. I am trying my best to bring it together.

Y.C.: In the West it seems misunderstanding has led to divisions of yoga, such as Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga and so on. Can you discuss this?

Iyengar: If I am more interested in gaining knowledge, analytically, and sit as a thinker, naturally I am a Jnana Yogi because that is predominant to other things. If I am a Bhakti Yogi then jnana is submerged and the bhakti takes the lead. Devotional aspects will be more emphasized and expressed than the side of knowledge, like the thinker. But as far as I understand, none can differentiate except one part may predominate. So it cannot be divided.

If, for example, I am devoting my time to asana, pranayama or meditation, that is my key. From



that I have to develop my tree of knowledge. That's my trunk, that's my root, so I can't get out of that trunk. So whatever practice one does in their day-to-day life, they are known as following such and such a path. But without knowledge there is no love. You may have tremendous knowledge, but if you have no compassion, no concern for being good to your neighbour, then what is the use of that knowledge? If you have tremendous desire to help and do not know the way to help, then what is the use of that bhakti? They are interconnected. So being inter-connected it's incorrect for any person to say, "I am this, I am not that".

Patanjali has stated it so beautifully: "What is this yoga?" TAPAH-SVADHYAESVARA-FRANIDHAN-ANI KRIYA-YOGAH. (Sutras II.1). In this sutra he describes Kriya Yoga. Some people in western countries like Swami Yogananda and others have said, "We teach Kriya Yoga, our new method!" It's not at all a new method. Patanjali has described it. The proper definition has not been given in any of their books which I have read. They speak only of Pranayama. The Kumbhakas, antara kumbhaka and bahya kumbhaka, the surrendering of the breath as your

fire into your body, that they have taken, is also from the Gita.

"Tapas" means tremendous discipline, tremendous cleanliness, to purge the weaknesses in every human being. Burning desire, burning passion, the love to purge these weaknesses, is the meaning of TAPASA. Tapas means "fire". Your desire should be burning second to second. When it burns, what do you do? You act. That is known as Kriya Yoga - Karma Marga.

Then second, he speaks of SVADHYA. Now, after disciplining myself, after doing a certain action in order to get myself purified, let me understand myself - Self Study. Let me know myself. Let me know my neighbours. Let me know my mind. So what is the right mind? What is the wrong mind?



Inside the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute



So it is not, as it is sometimes translated, studying of books in order to understand the self. You need not study the book, you can understand yourself. Your way of movement is a book. How am I behaving with my neighbour? How is my neighbour behaving with me? How should I react? How should he react? So what is the way to come together in a communion?

This is known as self-study, SVADHYAYA. What is Svadhyaya? Self-study means "jnana", knowledge. So SVADHYAYA means Jnana Marga. Tapas is Karma Marga.

ISVARA PRANIDHANA. After acquiring that cleanliness, after acquiring this tremendous amount of awareness of your own mind, surrender to God is Bhakti Marga.

Even Patanjali has not used the words: "This is Raja Yoga". He has used Kriya Yoga. In one sentence he has described the teaching of Kriya Yoga. "Astanga" means the eight limbs of Yoga. Astanga is not eight aspects of yoga he has explained but he has not given the name that I am teaching you this yoga. Only here he has used the word "I am teaching you Kriya Yoga", in the second chapter which is meant for Sadhana Pada.

Sadhana means practice. So now I am explaining what this sadhana is, which is covered by Karma Marga, Jnana Marga and Bhakti Marga. So how do you use these eight aspects of yoga in these three categories of Karma, Jnana and Bhakti? How do you use Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi in these three?



Outside the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute

Patanjali divides and explains them. If you ask Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, it is Kriya Yoga. So it is also Jnana Yoga. It is also Bhakti Yoga. Why? He says the end of yoga is: SAMADHI-SIDDHIR ISVARA-PRANIDHANAT. (Sutras II.45). When you reach the state of samadhi you are one with God. What is that? Is it not Bhakti Marga? Patanjali has explained this. I am not going out of the book.

"YOGANGANUSTHANAS ASUDDHI-KSAYE JNANA-DIPTIR A VIVEKA-KRHYATEH". (Sutras II.28). By the regular practice of yoga what do you develop? The ignorance in me is destroyed, knowledge dawns. So Jnana Marga comes. This is a subject which works on Karma Marga, Bhakti Marga and Jnana Marga and cannot be separated. So they are three in one. Those who call it Raja Yoga, as I have said, want to show off. The word "Raja" has come, not in Patanjali Yoga-Sutras, for your information, but only in Hathayogapradipika of Svamarama.

Who is the King of the Senses? Mind is the King of the Senses. And who is the King of the Mind? Breath is the King of the Mind. Who is the King of the Breath? The nerves are the Controller. There they do not use the word "King", but the word "Controller". If the nerves are rhythmic, your breath is rhythmic. If the breath is rhythmic your Mind is under control. If the Mind is under control, your Senses are controlled. Or, if the Senses are



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controlled your Mind is under control. If the Mind is wandering you have to control the breath. The moment you control the Breath, it depends upon the strength of your nerves.

In Patanjali's sutras: "CITTA-VRTTI-NIRODHAH", (Sutras I.2) "Citta" means Mind, the outer expression. Raja Yoga has taken the terms from this. "Who is the King? Mind is the King". As I said the other day, "CITTA-VRTTI-NIRODHAH" describes a rajasic nature. Mind is wandering in various directions. How can you bring to it a sattvic nature, when it has a rajasic nature or "supreme, rajasic quality". You have to bring it out to see that the tamasic, rajasic nature is brought under control.

When the rajasic nature comes to the uppermost and controls this vibrant flow of the mind then you have to understand from that you reach the state of being which is known as SUPTA GUNA. Because they have used the word "Citta" here, the modern translators have called Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras "Raja Yoga". It is supported by Hatha Yoga for the simple reason that Mind is the King of the Senses.

The tradition is Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Karma Yoga, which Patanjali calls in one word "Kriya Yoga". He does not use the word "Karma Yoga". Karma means action, Kriya also means action. Karma here is a noun. It's just objectively taken.

Kriya Yoga, you have to do it, you can't get out of it. That is why I use the word Kriya Yoga whether it is Tapas, Svadhyaya, Isvara Pranidhanah, you have to do it. That's why the word Kriya has been used. Otherwise he would not have used Kriya Yoga, he would have used Karma Yoga. That means Jnana is also Kriya, action. Bhakti is also an action. Discipline is also an action. He has not separated the action from these three parts; that's why he used the word "Kriya".

If you want to do good to others, if your mind is unhealthy, how can you help? There are savants in the West and the East with unhealthy bodies who have done a lot of work. But are they in majority? So don't refer to those few examples. That's only escapism. Why refer to those who were born saints? What about you and me and the 99.9% of the people? How do they behave? We have to talk from that angle, not from that 0.1% of humanity.

Saints come once in a hundred years, once in a thousand years. They are just examples and go away. But we live day to day. People are born, people die, again we are reborn. What is our nature? It doesn't change. So for us yoga is the firm foundation for a good life.

If you are healthy within it will rebound outward and in that healthy atmosphere you can serve your neighbours better. If you are unhealthy and asking compassion, you cannot show

compassion to others. I am unhealthy, somebody guide me, somebody help me. Are you not asking for help? You cannot help at all. Within a few years, you say "I am collapsed" and you hunt for something. From that point of view Yoga is meant more for the ordinary personality than for the top personality.

Patanjali never left even the uneducated person. The others have. If a person has no knowledge, what can he do? If he has no understanding, what can he do? Modern saints say "You should analyse". I have no power to analyse at all. It's easy to say "analyse, find out". Even Ramanamaharshi said, "Find out. Know who am I." But how can a foolish man learn from this? So somebody has to show the way.

That is what Patanjali has done. He has divided the Mind into five categories: the dull, the oscillating (sometimes you have the power of concentration, sometimes you lose it and sometimes you have tremendous concentration) and so on. For such persons, these are the eight aspects of Yoga which he devised. If he is a very dull person, he has to do certain things. If he is slightly above the dull person he has other things to do. If he is extraordinarily intelligent there are other things he can do. That is the beauty of Patanjali's system. He has not left anyone out.

So we have to think, whether in philosophy, art or science, how to help the majority of people. Scientists are researching yogis who can stop their heartbeat. A saint comes once in a hundred years, but of crowds of people, one man may stop the heart. What is this going to do for humanity at large? They may do some research, record it, be satisfied with it, but nothing has come for the good of society in this research work.

There is therefore no compassion in this science. They only want to get credit that "I have done some research work". Because I suffered, I know what things are going to be good for people and so I work in that direction.

Y.C.: Was it out of that kind of thinking that the "non-traditional" asanas developed?

Iyengar: No. I said in answer to the first question that these things were lost because people lost contact and the refined art disappeared. Now what everybody sees is in crude form. You don't see the vitality, super-force, super-dynamism, super-presentations in present yogis. What they say is all in text, they are repeating the text. Why? Because the refinement has disappeared.

All practices remain only crude, superficial. Someone had to struggle. As I said, God allowed me only to work; he never allowed me to think of anything else in my life. Of course, many people tempted me. "You have so much art, I will do this, I will do that, I will give you this, I will give you that."

Nobody will believe that even Swami Yogananda in 1936 offered to bring me to America. At that time I told him: "I have one Guru as people have one father, one mother, one wife, one husband, so I will have one Guru. I cannot have two Gurus." I told him that when I was only 14 years old. When he visited India in 1935-36 as the guest of the Maharajah of Mysore, he came and saw my demonstration. He immediately said: "What a super movement you have got. Come with me." At that time I was just a raw person. He said, "I will give you all facilities." I was not tempted. I lived with Krishnamurti for 20 years. Nothing tempted me. Swami Sivananda said: "I will give you Sannyas....Why don't you come?" Recently someone said, "For your art you should have an orange robe." I said: "Why should I? I don't need any robes at all."

That's why I could go into the subject because none could influence me to change. That strength in me made me study and I went on and on and on. By the grace of God I say something new has come to me though I have not broken the tradition.

Y.C.: So you feel that at one time those asanas were, in fact, practised by the earlier yogis?

Iyengar: Otherwise how could it be?

Yogis have the power of imagination. They have to think, they have to work out. For example, the other day I told you I'd been

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to South Africa. I was taken to a zoo and saw the gorilla sitting in Baddha Knoasana, Upavista Konasana, Supta Padangusthana so perfectly. I have got those slides with me. Unbelievable! I said, "We struggle and these are the natural poses". (Laughter) You have not seen them at all? Please go and see how the gorillas sit. You'll be surprised. So that's what I'm saying. I see like this.

Some years ago I was asked whether I could give a demonstration for the United Nations in the United States. My demonstration was one-and-a-half hours. I finished everything and one intelligent man stood up on the platform and said: "You have shown so many things. You haven't shown the asana called Bhujangasana." I had shown the Scorpion pose and all. The man should be ashamed to ask this when hundreds of people are watching me, thousands. He said, "You have not shown this at all and it's a major pose." You will be surprised to know what I told him.

I asked him, "Have you seen a cobra?" He said he had. "Do you know Bhujangasana?" He said, "Yes". "How do you do it?" He said, "We press our hands and we lift up". I said: "You press your hands? Have you seen a cobra having hands?" (Laughter) In front of so many people he thought he was putting a very intelligent question. I made him a completely stupid person on the platform.

Then I showed him my Bhujangasana. How I use my hands on the knees. I said: "That is Bhujangasana. Have I taken any support on my trunk?" He said, "No". "Now can you do it? Then don't ask next time when you see some others giving; when they can show a better pose you should never ask a crude pose, a simple pose, Sir. Probably you may not know it." (Laughter)

Y.C.: You've talked quite a bit from time to time during the session of the art of teaching. It was mentioned that someone had requested you to write a book.

Iyengar: The art of teaching is a practical subject, not a theoretical subject. How could the art of teaching be written? It is direct perception. The direct perception has to be observed, explained, and made to be handled. A book cannot be written on the art of teaching.

But, of course, I have been asked to write on the art of Yoga, which I am doing. I think they want to boost some of my final poses of "Light on Yoga". They saw the laminated photographs which were exhibited in London. The publisher got interested just last month. He said, "We want a book, 'Light on the Art of Yoga'," so it's the latest.

They were only asking about teaching but I said: "No, how can I teach the art of teaching? It can't be written in books; it is hard to hand." A doctor can become a doctor and an M.D., but as soon as he has got the degree he has to work under the experienced doctor; he cannot teach him through a book. He has to undergo training with him. It is a practical subject so teachers have to be trained but not through books at all. Learning can be taught through books, but teaching cannot be taught through books. Only certain ideas can be given.



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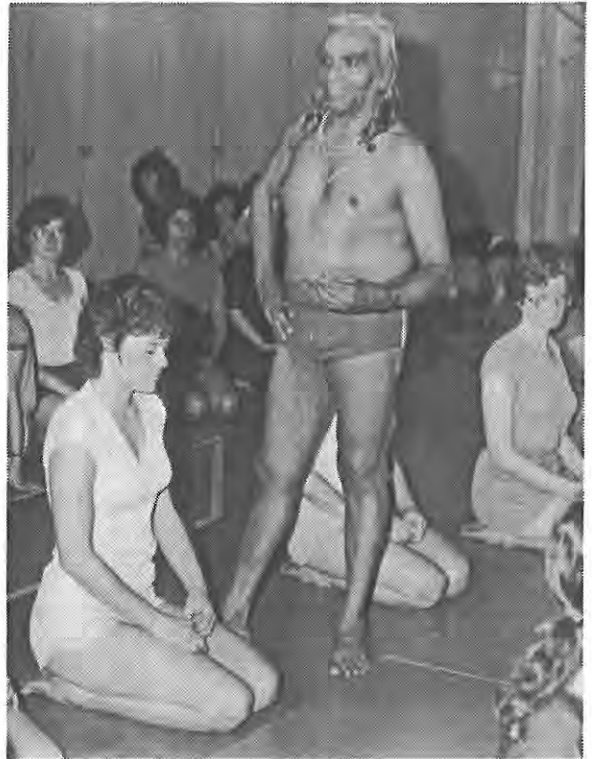
Y.C.: Do you foresee any other publications?

Iyengar: I am translating Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras for the common man to understand. There are complicated translations done by lots of commentators, but I am trying to simplify it so it could be understood by an average person. I don't think of the intellectuals at all, because they can read even complicated sentences; they can understand. So I am trying to write this book so that a person with average intellect can grasp this subject. I have drafted two chapters. Now I have been caught in writing this book, "Art of Yoga", so that is sleeping. I don't know when I could complete that, but I am making a small contribution of my way of thinking into that book.

It is going to be a long-term project because there are so many controversies which are going to be touched upon by me. I am going to give new interpretations to some of the sutras, which may cause conflicts. Either they will have to say it's all out of the brain or they have to say let us re-think. It is easy to dismiss it. But if somebody tries to understand why this man has written this when no others have said it, if they try to re-think it, probably some new light may come to that thinker.

It is all original, as with all original work when new things have come, mistakes may be there. It may be true. It may be false. But my convictions have made me touch points, through my experience of asanas and pranayama, that will fit into the sutras.

Secondly, previous commentators on Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras have treated each sutra as a chapter by itself. "Sutra" means a linking word, one sutra linking to the other. As far as I have read, the commentators haven't linked the sutras together at all. That is why when you read it you get confused. So I am trying to describe why this sentence came before and this sentence after.



Celia Ward, Mr. Iyengar

Y.C.: So you look at it as a whole?

Iyengar: Yes. It's almost a new method. As I have done with "Light on Yoga" and "Light on Pranayama", so I should give a rational touch to this book in my own interpretations.

Y.C.: Light on Patanjali?

Iyengar: Light on Patanjali Yoga-Sutras, I would say.

Y.C.: Can you talk about the importance of ethics in terms of practice and in relationship to yoga?

Iyengar: If my one right toe is turning out, and left toe turning in, there is indiscipline. It is unethical on one side, ethical on the other side. So ethics, as I said, is a way of life. Moment to moment in each movement you have to observe the ethics. As such, it's no good saying, "What are the ethical disciplines to be followed?"

Today I told you, when you were doing Paschimottanasana, "If the right eye is coming forward and the left eye is not moving, one is ethical, one is unethical". It is in the way of doing, it is in the way of thinking, that all these things can be put together.

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without ethical means. Even the breath that you take has a certain regulated flow. That regulated flow is ethics. When you sit for meditation and you close your eyes, how the eyes are closed is ethics. It's not a technique. So how can I say in a few words what ethics is?

As I said the other day when you were doing the asana, if you are stretching more on the right side and less on the left you are doing himsa to one part, ahimsa to the other. One part is moving in purity, the other part is moving in impurity. This is known as ethics.

Ethics and spiritual discipline are like two hands of an individual. They cannot be separated. It is wrong to say to anyone that you can reach salvation, you can reach God without ethical discipline. Ethics is the beginning of spiritual sadhana. If a man has no ethics, he can never be a spiritual man. They go together, so whoever practises spiritual practices has to have ethical discipline, and a man with ethical discipline is a spiritual man in his heart.

Ethics and spirituality are like two sides of the coin, they can never be separated at all. The moment you say, "This is ethics", then regimentation comes. Because the regimentation comes, when you say, "This is not this" and "this is not that", we fight.

Walking on the street without caring for the other vehicles when they are moving, what happens to you? You get hurt. The unethical way of walking makes you get hurt by the moving car or moving vehicle, moving cycle, moving man. So if you have a certain discipline in your walking, that is ethics. (Laughs)

Y.C.: Very practical! (Laughter) It's very important to remember that in Pune!



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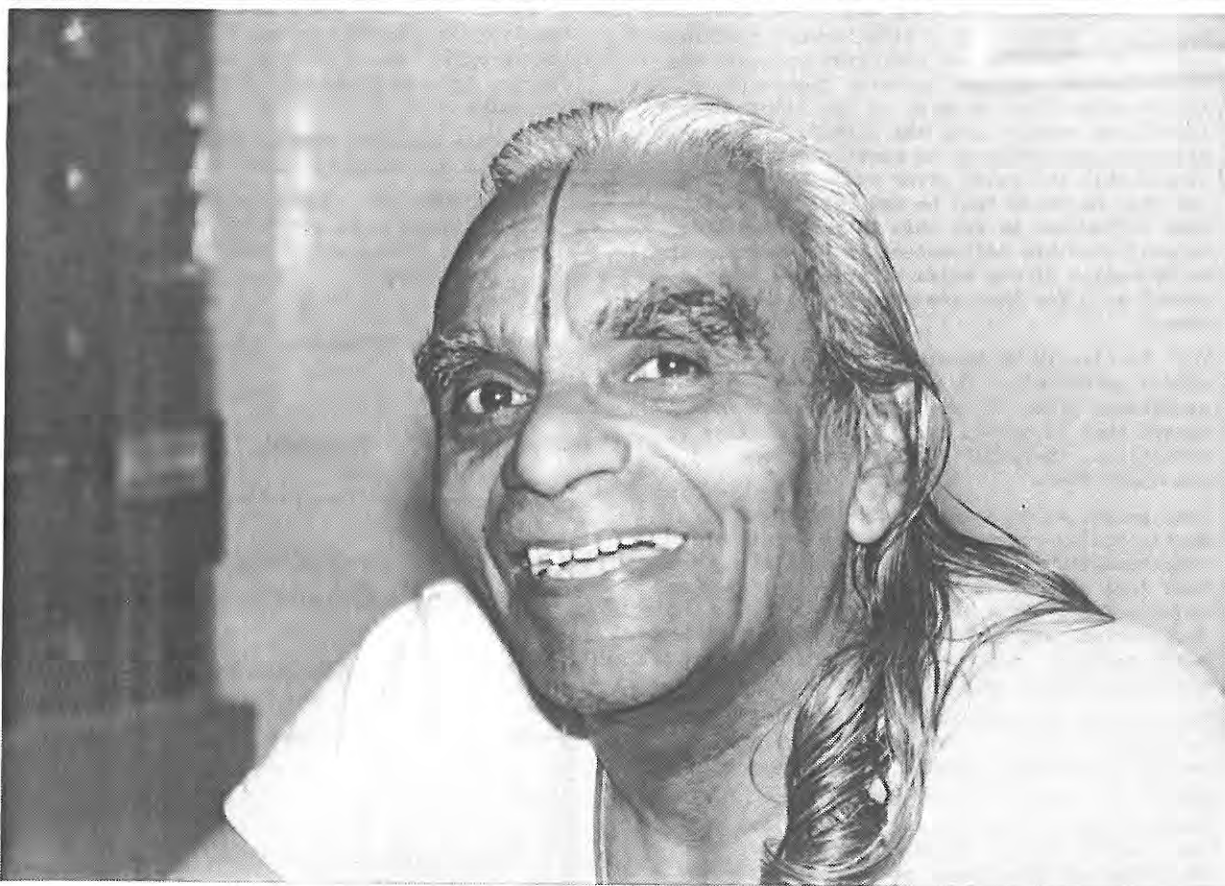
YOGA CENTRE OF VICTORIA NEWSLETTER

APRIL 1983



"We thank thee God, for most this amazing day. For the leaping, greening, spirit of trees and a blue true dream of sky, for everything which is natural, which is infinite, which is yes. For we who have died are alive again today and this is the son's birthday — the birthday of life and of love and of wings, and of the gay, great happening illimitable earth. How should — touching, tasting, seeing, hearing, breathing — any lifted from the no of all nothing doubt unimaginable you. Now the eyes of my eyes are opened and the ears of my ears can hear.

— e.e. cummings



An Interview with B.K.S. Iyengar Part II

Prepared by Norman MacKenzie

Yogacharya B.K.S. Iyengar is a contemporary yoga master who has developed a unique approach to the transformation of the body into an instrument for realizing the divinity within. A teacher of yoga for more than 40 years, he has been an inspiration to many students and teachers throughout the world. With courage and single-pointed determination he has sparked a light that has revived aspects of hatha yoga that were once considered lost.

This interview was conducted at the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute in Pune, India, on December 1, 1982. Present were Swami Sivananda and Swami Radhananda of Yasodhara Ashram, Kootenay Bay, B.C.; Shirley Daventry French and Norman MacKenzie of the Victoria Yoga Centre.

Y.C.: We've seen you work on some of your senior teachers here. Can you describe what you feel are the important characteristics of a good teacher?

Iyengar: Clarity, confidence, to some extent even, one should be very clever too, because clarity and cleverness are not the same. Cleverness is playing, clarity is purity. So sometimes with some students we have to be clever, but mostly we should be clear. Tremendous confidence is required and, at the same time, compassion. So compassion, clarity, cleverness, confidence are essential to be a good teacher. You may know the art, but if you have no confidence, how can you teach? You may have clarity and the power of transmitting, but if you have no compassion, how can you give?

In order to be compassionate, one has to be cruel. Never forget that too. Compassion is not softness. Compassion is cruel. If I have to do good to you I cannot speak soft words. You have to improve fast. You have to improve only through action, not by words. By just patting a person on the back: "I am sorry,

my dear friend, you are suffering. Try this, may God bless you." That's not compassion.

In compassion, the teacher has to act, and that action appears cruel to the observer; it is not cruel for the teacher or the participant. It is the observers who see, especially my teaching, and say, "He's very cruel! He's very rough!"

Yesterday you saw the patients in the therapeutic class. How bad they were. You all saw a woman crying. I asked her: "Now, when you are crying, why do you want to come to the class? Next week stop." What did she say? You heard? Ask Maureen (Carruthers). She said: "No, I want to come because I am moving at least. It is painful. It is killing. But the after effect is very good for me."

Y.C.: That was the woman with arthritis.

Iyengar: Yes, arthritis. You saw the man who comes on crutches. They say they are what I made them. So I am also cruel, otherwise I can't include them at all. The confidence comes because I know that I can take them so much more beyond. I'm not playing with them, as I said this morning in class. "I think I should do", "I think I should try".

I never just try. If it's possible I will try, if it's not possible I will find some other means. The other means becomes cruel to them also because I still have to find the ways to get into the right one. We go even to wrong ones to come to the right ones because we have to observe. This compassion is very difficult for anyone to understand as a practical man.

If you go to a saint, he keeps his hand on your head and he says, "I bless you" and you come out, "He blessed me!" Why? That momentary feeling has not done you any good. But afterwards there is an effect. Why? Your mind was trained beforehand that you are going to meet so and so. So there is a little bit of relaxation in your nerves, which people never observe. Because you are relaxed you felt that the blessing had an effect, but before that you had already relaxed because you were to meet a very big person, a big personality.

When people come to me, they don't come with a relaxed body. Mr. Iyengar is so and so. You come with tensions. (Laughter) Not that I do not know. That tension means you have created an obstruction in your system to following me because you have heard people. So naturally I become cruel because you are holding yourself.

Speaking of ethics, in this way you are not ethically open to me. Whereas when you go to the other person and say, "Oh, he does not do any harm but I have heard he is a very nice man, a very quiet man, a very soft man," you are relaxed. You go with a certain ethic, saying, "Oh, he is going to bless me", so probably it will have the effect. If you come here you say, "Mr.

Iyengar is going to kick me", (laughter) so this is the way that happens. If I have to show compassion I have to go out of my way to help man. That appears cruel.

Y.C.: Compassion is the most direct route.

Iyengar: Ah, direct route. (Laughter). So I can't help it otherwise. Otherwise I am cheating myself and I am deceiving that person who has come for my help, I am also deceiving myself. If I don't act this way, knowing very well that unless I act in this way that man cannot improve at all.

What do we do if there is some leakage in the house?

Y.C.: We try to fix it.

Iyengar: Ah-- what do you do before that? Before you fix it? You bring your hammers, hit more, create more space. Are you not injuring that wall?

Y.C.: You have to tear it apart to find out the real source of the problem.

Iyengar: We also tear apart here to find out the source. Nobody understands that. As an engineer says, "It is leaking here, therefore it is probably coming from there." To get to that leak I have to try from here to find the source.

So I also have to tap in so many directions to get this source. This tapping in various places is cruel because when it is only leaking here, why should you be cruel in that other area? (Laughter) In order to repair it, you are cruel from one area to the other. Then the real compassion comes.

Yesterday you saw that man who could not walk? Did I not make him walk? When I said, "Ask your wife and take a few steps," did you hear what he said? He said, "I can't trust my wife." I never said, "Have confidence in me." He has only come to me four times or five times and he has lived with his wife for years. This is why the teacher should have tremendous confidence in order to create confidence and hope in the person, even if it appears cruel. That is the characteristic needed for a teacher.

I must know I can go to the maximum extent to make maximum use of this body without damaging it. It is not the maximum movement that I can think of in my body--my body may go beyond that range--but what maximum movement can I take in that person? If I give the minimum movement in that minimum body the effect is just like a scratch.

If there is a wound and you go to the doctor and say "I am scratching every day." The doctor says, "No, it has to be operated on. It's deep in." For example with 'wet boils', the boil which does not create pus but goes on growing. Doctors have to penetrate in.

Yoga is like that. All these diseases which come, we treat as wet boils (cold boils) not dry boils (hot boils). They grow inside only. They have to be operated on. It grows again, and has to be operated on again. Ask Bruce (Dr. Bruce Carruthers), he can explain that to

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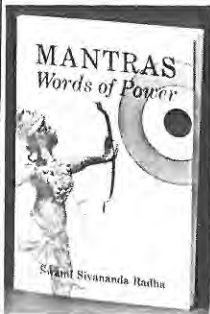
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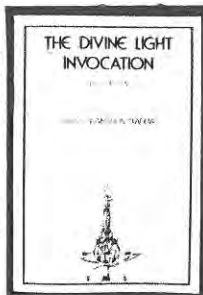
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you. If there is a cold boil in the anus, it should be scraped every two or three years because it grows, is removed, and grows again. We know that it should not grow, so we act to penetrate deeply. That's cruelty.

Y.C.: Many teachers don't have the confidence to do that.

Iyengar: That's true. That is true, but I guide them in what they should do. They should know their capacity to take the risk.

In some cases I asked (Dr.) Bruce (Carruthers) and (Dr. David) Kell, "Can you treat this person if I give him to you?" They say "Certainly not." Now see, what courage I must have to touch them. So that is another word. Teachers must have not only confidence but also courage.

Courage I have. I've got clarity; I've got cruelty; I've got compassion; I've got five Cs. (Laughs) Cruelty, compassion, courage, confidence, clarity, and I add cleverness. With some people I have to be dextrous—not with all. With 90% I can act with clarity; only with 10% must I play with cleverness. When they are clever I also have to be clever.

Y.C.: To match their cleverness.

Iyengar: Yes, to match their cleverness. As I said in the class, if you show ego, I can also show ego. If you show vanity, I can also vanity. If you show humility, I can also show humility. What is that? It is all hidden. It is coming in contact with how you behave.

I have to be one inch above or one inch below. If I am one inch below then I am not a teacher, because my pupil is one inch above in egoism. I have to prove by demonstration that I am one inch above you.

As I said in Trikonasana today, "You have all come for the Intense Course and you can't even do one Trikonasana." That is one point which I demonstrate. This is all part of the great art of teaching. It is not that I am showing my vanity. It is to train my pupils to be careful, to not become egotistic without knowing it.

Today I showed them that they didn't know Trikonasana at all. I can say this in one sentence because I have shown Trikonasana so many ways which they never knew even though they have been students for twenty years. That is why vanity should not be there.

If you say, "Sir, I don't know," my teaching will be quite different. I will have a friendly approach: "If you have not understood, why didn't you tell me before." Say "I am dull" and I will teach you accordingly and bring you up. That is humility, humbleness. If the students show humbleness; I will also show humbleness. If you say that "I know it" then I know that you don't know it, so naturally I go into that anger.

Y.C.: Then you teach humility! (Laughter)

Iyengar: Yes. You are right.

Y.C.: You've accomplished a great deal in your life. That's evident here at the Institute and

in the teachers you have trained. What remains for you, in terms of your goals?

Iyengar: Nothing in my life. What had to be seen has been seen. What had to be achieved has been achieved. What had to be felt has been felt. Nothing is left for me to do. What I am doing is to try to give other people the taste of the same nectar, the fragrance I am experiencing. I have no aim in my life now, because what had to be fulfilled has been fulfilled.

The only ambition is, "Let me not lose what I have got." Then it is ethics. (Laughs) I don't say it's a spiritual thing, it's my ethics, principle. Who know at what moment I may lose this fragrance if I neglect it. So let me not neglect it. If it does not show me the further way I will not bother. I don't mind if it does not come to me but let me not lose what has come to me with hard labour. So let me maintain it.

The only other one is to give pupils a glimpse of that supreme feeling, which cannot be expressed by word, which is an experience instead. If they get it, then I am sure that I have done good work in this world. Otherwise I will say I have not done anything.

For example, take Ramanamaharshi--a great man! Aurobindo--a great man! Mahatma Gandhi--a great man! There were three great men in the same century. Ramanamaharshi sat in one place though he was an open heart, he was open to everyone. Aurobindo was close to everyone, but he sat at one place. Neither mingled with the masses. People may only say I read Aurobindo. It's not direct knowledge, it's knowledge from a book.

Ramana lived directly but he could not express. He never gave anything to many people, others were translating his works. They were adding material. His original words are very few. He couldn't express but people could follow from the way he lived. With Aurobindo, people did not know he lived, but could understand him through his books.

Only Mahatma Gandhi took both and came into the world. It is he who moved with the masses.

It is he who uplifted the masses. Were there three great men in the same century for examples? I say no. Mahatma Gandhi was a Karma Yogi; he was a Jnana Yogi; he was a Bhakti Yogi.

All the great characteristics of these first two were in that third man.

Health is the foundation for anything. If the health is unsound, disease is waiting next to our skin. Just as Russia and America are waiting to win over the other, both are afraid and both are careful. So like that, the disease is slightly outside the skin waiting for this man to be careless so that it can gain entry. Yoga is meant for that. We practice yoga to keep them apart more and more. If that is carried by my pupils then I have done a good service.

I remember, and I think that you must also have read, Lord Buddha said that if people give health it is a great thing; if people give spiritual health, it is the greatest of all things. Today I say, because the world is topsyturvy now, if you give physical and mental health, you have done the greatest service to society, rather than saying you should give spiritual health.

Without these physical and mental health, spiritual health cannot come. The fruit cannot come without a tree. The tree is necessary in order to get the fruit. With these two things, physical and mental health, spiritual fruit will come. We need not think of the fruit at all for this present generation. If my pupils do that, they have served society and their lives are also meaningful and fulfilled.

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Y.C.: You've had many students from the West. You seem to have had a special role in bringing more awareness to people in the West. What are your observations of these people?

Iyengar: The culture of the various places may be different, but the culture of yoga is another matter. Yoga is a universal culture. It has nothing to do with any religion, and without religion, too. Each human being, whether in the east or in the west, north or south, has the same problems.

The culture may be different, but the problems of emotional upheavals, intellectual cloudiness, whether it be the east or the west, is there any difference? That is why Yoga is a universal culture; it is meant for humanity.

In bringing each individual to perfect physical health, stability in emotion and clarity in their head, culture or civilization does not interfere.

Buddha was a single person. Christ was a single person. Krishna was a single person. Rama-Krishna Paramahansa was a single person. If you study them, one single person's culture became the civilization of the world. If they had not been born then what would the religions be?

One man's perfect culture is the civilization of the world.

They have all developed for the good of humanity. That's why they have survived. Yoga has survived because it is for the good of humanity. Yoga is never associated with a particular sect.

Religion, if you ask, is meant for the sectarian way which man made, but the original religion is only the art of realisation. It is learning how to use the day to day work to reach God. Religion deals mostly with ethics.

There should be no quarrel from the angle of the environment. Christ said "If you think of God you get dates" because dates were growing there. Dates don't grow in India, so naturally here you will get plenty of mangoes, because mangoes grow here.

This is the way of leading people to change for good. All the old books speak of ethics more than the ways because they were inducing people to come to the right method. We cannot criticise them because the environments were like that in those days--they had to teach according to the environment also. The West has one good thing; tremendous will power. The East can bear any amount of pain; they can tolerate pain. The West cannot tolerate pain. I am indicating some difference here.

Indians are a little bit slow to get stabilised. Because they are slow, establishment will come to them because they will not stop, they continue ... but slowly! What you reach in ten days, they will take ten years, but they still continue.

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Y.C.: They have endurance.

Iyengar: That is why they have tremendous emotional bearing. They cannot become quick victims of emotion. In the West, people become victims in a split second. You don't feel that with the Indian culture. See how Japanese women are--how quiet, how silent. How much they can bear the strain. These are "geographical" or "cultural" adjustments from their environments.

If this tolerance of the East can be combined with the willpower of the West, and if the East can take a little of the aggressive nature of the West then the society will be tremendously unified. You move through the head, we move through the heart.

Some years ago while I was in England as well as in America I considered sex problems. Sex is an emotional act and how can this be solved through the head? That is why divorce is very common in the West, because they want to settle everything in their heads. So I ask doctors, "How can you talk from your head regarding this emotional weakness or strength?"

We Indians try to solve emotional problems emotionally, intellectual problems we try to solve intellectually. But in the West, everything has to be solved intellectually because the science has come to such a state that you think you can solve even emotions through your heads. You can find out the facts, but you cannot solve them.

In the East they take it. Because they take it, what happens to the nervous system? They are relaxed. They have repose. Because they have repose, health flows into the body. You

are tense. What have I to do? You go to people and say, "What are you doing?" You are blocking the system. You say, "Can I get the answer here; can I get the answer there? Can I get the answer? No, this answer is wrong." That means you are always tense.

So where is the repose? Emotional stability is repose. Without it the emotional side of disease goes on increasing. Your health should improve because you have got wonderful nourishment, you have got wonderful things, but what is the nourishment for the emotions? There is where the art of yoga comes in. No other system opens the heart this way. It stretches the trunk in all directions, so it keeps this in rest and makes it work.

That's why when you practice yoga you develop more emotional stability. The moment emotional stability comes, clarity is there. You tense everything when you want to solve through your brain. You are also blocking the brain, you are blocking the circulatory system, you are blocking the movement of the breath. How can the energy flow? It is only from here to here. So there is disease. There is no circulation because everything is blocked by the head. So there is no irrigation of the system taking place. Diseases go on increasing because you are worrying more and more, demanding all the blood for the brain to solve intellectually all the emotional problems.

Yesterday you saw the diabetic patient. How was I explaining? Even in Sarvangasana to find out whether the liver is working or not, whether I am stretching the bladder or not. Medical science says the pancreas cannot be exercised.

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Yesterday I showed four doctors a person in Sarvangasana. I said, "Keep your fingers on the pancreas as I adjust the person." They said, "Yes we feel it, spasms are coming." What do we do? We tone them.

We are not saying that we are removing the sugar content by teaching, but we are toning those muscles. Whether the sugar is controlled or not, toning is taking place. So if you test and discover the sugar is still there, you continue. What about the toning? They can go on taking insulin injections. So is it a cure? No, toning has taken place.

I explained how to teach people poses to help them to hold urine so that they may not pass urine so often. This is part of the emotional way of teaching.

If I only think intellectually and say, "Never mind, take it--you do it this way" with out knowing what is happening, I have to also be able to "see" emotionally. Intellectually I have to think; emotionally I have to observe whether it is working or not. When the emotion and the intellect are together it is a blended, harmonious personality. Others say, he is a saint, a superman, he is a god. Yoga brings this emotional intelligence and intellectual intelligence to balance evenly in all other walks of life.

There is no other system to balance them except yoga, because yoga belongs to the heart, though you have to think. The practical side belongs to the heart, the thinking side belongs to the head. You have to use both (Laughter)

In Jnana Marga they don't use the heart, they only use the head. I am talking technologically, technologists are using their heads. Jnana yoga of today is nothing but head work. Karma yoga is nothing but hands and leg work. Bhakti yoga is nothing but emotion; I surrender. No head, no legs, no work.

It is the only yoga which unifies these three, that is why it is called Kriya yoga. It blends the person and molds him by regular practices to bring the body to co-operate with the mind, the mind with the self, and the self co-operating again with the mind and the body. That is the beauty of the union and the beauty of health, and westerners are doing it.

I have noticed that the senior students have definitely changed. Molding is taking place, the behaviour of their heart is changing, so they may light the Light more and more.

Y.C.: So you feel the West is learning slowly?
(Laughs)

Iyengar: They have taken it. We have forgotten it but you have taken it. Now again, it has to be taught properly. Who knows, after 50 years you may become the founders of yoga! (Laughs) It's a forgotten, dead science, and actually even my art was a dead art. Nobody knew its value.

When everybody was saying that hatha yoga was only physical, I also thought it was. But when it brought me to such an extent that I then realized its value. Today there are logs of yoga centres and advertisements everywhere who popularise.

Whatever advertisement I see is an imitation of Iyengar's pose. Any magazine you take, any advertisements, even advertisements of industrial concerns. Yoga stretches, they say, need a cloth. You can stretch, this cloth also stretches with your moves. In Indian advertisements, you can see all my poses. They have stretched in Virabhadrasana and they say, "our cloth stretches as the yogi stretches his body."

I have been doing yoga since the 1930s and even at that time you all knew that there were so many swamis everywhere, and they never popularized it with all that. So they never took this art to the common man. They were only trying to get the highlights of the people so that they could become popular, and it is I who popularised.

In 1952 to 53, in India I was the first to introduce it in schools and colleges. Now everybody is fighting and they have thrown me out. I was the first man to show how yoga could be done in the field without mats, without carpets. They said India is a poor country, they cannot do head balance. I didn't care, I knew how to teach without any carpets, without mats. So I took those challenges in those days, and I introduced it. The yogis became an enemy of me because I became very popular, they could not do it. They said, "Yoga cannot be taught to the masses," so they put me down. Now they are praying for it. I just laugh. So this is going on everywhere.

It is I who introduced yoga in schools and colleges of the whole of England; now you see it everywhere there. Now how many community colleges have taken it up in America? Who started it? I only started it. So that means I have planted a very good seed. It is my senior pupils who must see that it does not fade. (Laughs)

Y.C.: There are many flowers.

Iyengar: So it will grow. I am happy about that work. I am not demeaning it at all. I am only unhappy because pride is coming. All I am concerned with now is how to hit that pride. Otherwise, if they just leave it, it is God's work which we are doing and let us carry it to our utmost. The utmost is your honesty.

Even if you know very little, a minimum, even if in your minimum you go to that utmost, you have done a good service to yourself, to the society, to God. Even don't think of God. Once somebody asked me a very simple question: "Sir,

have you to pray always to God?" In London, I was asked "Everybody was saying Bhakti Marga, always think of God, think of God, think of God." I told them, "I don't think of God at all." "Very unfair as a yogi that you don't think of God." I said, "Do you think of your father and mother all the 24 hours? Haven't you got respect for your father and mother? Do you think of them all the 24 hours? So that's all, I have got respect for my God because I am paying respect to Him already." So indirectly we are in it, indirectly we are thinking of our parents. "So whether in our breath, or indirectly it is all God, so why is extra prayer required," I said. (Laughter)

Sometimes of course I do laugh, you know, when such questions come to me. It is a tricky question, you know, if I say, "No you have to think of God" then I can't convert that person. So I converted that person immediately. "But do you think of your mother and father all the 24 hours?" then I said, "You have to think of God all the 24 hours?" "You don't think of your parents at all, but have you lost your respect for them? So only respect should be shown to God." (Laughter)

"Why are you so egoistic?" some say. "Why are you so full of vanity when you are teaching?" I said, "Why should I not have the vanity when I have the clarity. You people have no clarity and you show vanity. But I have clarity so why should I not have the vanity?" I hit that way. As I said, for an egotist I know how to answer, but an humble man I also know how to answer. (Laughter) So that is why I say, cleverness is also required for a teacher. (Laughter) God bless you all.

Y.C.: Thank you sir.

Iyengar: Good work! Lucky that I was in a good mood! (Laughter)

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