

A Friday Morning Practice with Guruji

RIMYI – Friday, 24th February 2006

Notes by Kay Parry

The following article by Kay Parry is notes of Guruji's practice on 24th February, 2006. Abhijata (Abhi) Sridharan, Guruji's granddaughter was also doing her practice. Guruji, as always, was the definitive practitioner and teacher.

Guruji's practice started near the grill wall – near the equipment room.* (see note at end of article)

- *Sirsasana* - 20 minutes
- *Sirsasana* – legs bent crossed with knees to the ceiling, shins toward the grill - approximately 1 minute each crossing.



- *Sirsasana* – legs bent in *Virasana*, feet on the grill - 1 minute.
- *Dwi Pada Viparita Dandasana* over the backbender. Positioned on the backbender were two long sandbags vertically and one horizontally on top – 20 minutes.
 - i] Hands folded on the abdomen
 - ii] Arms straight extended beyond the head
 - iii] Arms bend, hands taken back beyond the head to holding the backbender.



Guruji observes Abhi doing her practice.
Guruji adjusts her in *Urdhva Dhanurasana*.

- Placing a strap around her limbs. Around her arms and legs at the base of the knee and at the elbow joint.



Guruji to Abhi: Are you totally attentive? Can your mind wander? Was what you were doing a backbend or is this backbending? See without the strap this is a dead body.

Guruji gives several other adjustments:

- Placing a strap around her upper buttock and below the knees.





- Further refinement with the same strapping foam brick was placed at the sacrum. To hold in position the strap at the sides, from the front another strap was looped around the strap at both sides and tightened to hold the correct positioning of the strap and foam brick.

Guruji then takes Abhi to the grill wall.

- A strap was attached to the grill and around her pelvis - *Urdhva Dhanurasana*.



Guruji teaching Abhi: Hands, wrist on the floor.

Guruji further refines the positioning by placing a bolster between the grill and her legs.

Guruji teaching Abhi: Touch with the kneecaps.

Guruji to Abhi and to the student who were observing:

She cannot say, I can't do. She cannot cry. She is afraid to say, I cannot do and that is why the *asana* comes.

Guruji teaching Abhi: Knees touching the bolster - come up. With the use of the bolster - see how you can work the legs.



Guruji to Abhi: Do you like doing like this? **Abhi:** Yes.

Guruji: This is progressive. What is progressive? Do and don't do as you were.

Abhi continues doing.

Guruji to Abhi: Tailbone, did it go thick or thin?

Abhi: Thin.

Guruji teaching Abhi: Back ribs moving up to the front ribs.

Guruji resumes his own practice sitting in Baddha Konasana near the grill wall - 20 minutes.

Guruji: With the medical class on Tuesday my body cannot take that teaching, though my teaching is still strong.

Abhi continues doing.

Guruji teaching Abhi:

Roll in and the belt won't cut.

Roll in.

When coming up the belt should roll in not out.



Guruji directs Abhi to do *Kapotasana* with a strap attached to the grill and around her pelvis. With a weight placed between her feet.

- Hold the weight.
- Press the inner heel.
- Lift the inner heel.
- Now head on the weight.

Guruji: The mind says, I don't want to do it. The body says, I do want to do it.

Guruji teaching Abhi: Why are you sandwiching your toes? Extend your toes. All ten toes should touch the floor.



- Two move weights were uses – one on each foot.
- Touch your head on the centre weight and walk the hands back.

Guruji to Abhi: The weight tells you if your feet are straight. Was your foot active or dull?

Abhi: Active.

Guruji: the weight made it active. Which part was *tamasic*? Which part was *rajasic*?



Guruji to Abhi: Do now without the weight on the feet.

- The weight was removed from Abhi's feet.



Guruji to Abhi: Does your little toe have weight?

Abhi: No.

While Abhi was in the pose Guruji adjusted her feet.

Guruji to Abhi: Now, is it comfortable?

Abhi: Yes.

Guruji: So you can stay 1 minute.

Abhi comes out of the pose and stands.

Guruji: Do you feel tall or thin?

Abhi: I feel tall and thin.

Guruji: You can't acquire this from book learning.

Guruji: *Svadyaya* is self-study. Why does one part go down and why the other is not going down?

Abhi: Intelligence has to come.

Guruji: Through the chain of karma *buddhi* comes.



Guruji is now sitting in *Upavistha Konasana* near the grill wall. Guruji then observes a student doing her practice.



The student is in *Uttanasana* with her legs against the wall.

- A long belt is around her sacrum and soles of the feet.
- Her chin is supported on weights on top of a tall stool giving her the correct height.
- Her arms are resting on the stool.

Guruji instructs: Tailbone to the ground.

Guruji is not satisfied with her adjustment.

Guruji: I will make her understand. Guruji instructs how the strapping has to be adjusted. The strap is on the tailbone end of the sacrum and the foot at the base of the little toe bone.

Guruji instructs:

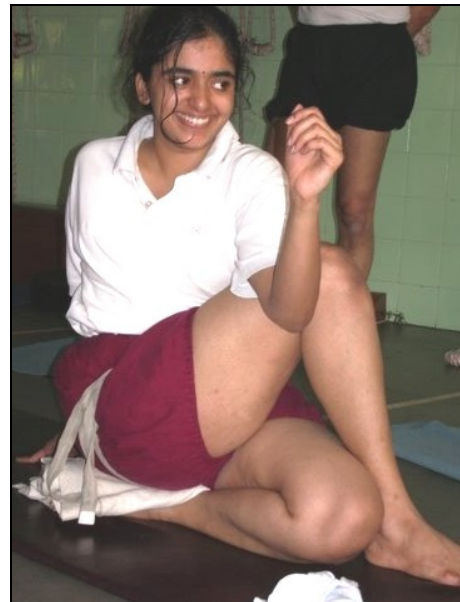
Bend the knees – tighten the belt and now straighten the legs.

Again bend ½ inch tighter then legs straight.

- Broaden the feet.
- Take the feet wider apart.
- Look up.
- Be strong in your legs.
- Inner leg is strong, outer leg is not so strong.

Abhi continues her practice she is doing *Ardha Matsyendrasana*.

- She is sitting on a blanket.
- The blanket is placed between her foot and buttock.
- A belt is 4-fold and at the head of the right leg (turning to the right)



Guruji adjusts: A strap is placed around the top of each leg so that when the strap is pulled the buckles have to turn.

Guruji then continues his own practice.

Sarvangasana - 15mins. Legs bent hooked over the trestler.



Supported *Halasana* – 10mins. Supported on a pillow on a small stool.
Sarvangasana – 5mins. Legs straight up.

Abhi then assists and teaches Chandra, a fellow teacher at the Institute.



*Note: * Some of the windows in the Institute hall have an iron grill covering them which is used extensively in practice. See Guruji doing Sirsasana.*

Kay Parry teaches in Sydney at the Iyengar Yoga Institute of Bondi Junction. She holds an Advanced Junior teaching certificate and attends classes at RIMYI, Pune regularly.



Reference: Yoga Vaani 88 - December 2006