

Watching ocean's movement can be so powerful, evocative of the constancy of change.

Feeling all around us the rhythms of currents and tides, fogs and storms of the ocean that surrounds this island home.

Ocean's movement shapes the *interbeing* of this place. As I sit I know/feel/am the dance of orca and salmon, big trees reaching to the sky holding rivers in place, otter and crow at play in the between. Energy. Movement. Ebb and flow.

Calming at times.

Stirring at others.

It can be inspiring, overwhelming, yet always reminding me that there is something greater than my own small perceptions of the world.

A text of teachings of so many lessons offered to our human imaginings.

Lekwungen Peoples on these unceded lands have drawn nourishment and inspiration from this ocean for thousands of years, gradually developing their own codification of traditional ecological knowledge based on its being and movements. As have we who have come to this land; we also have our older lessons of the sea if we remember to listen.

Traditions meeting in the basic lesson of gratitude for the many small gifts in our lives.

Including for some, this small gift of a yoga practice, drawn from another ancient lineage providing grounding and release, strengthening and softening, developing presence and interconnection.

Gratitude in coming to our yoga mats, be it at home alone, or woven into community via *livestreaming*, or settled alongside others on a rare treasured space in the studio.

Each day we are shaped by the energies of the many intersecting weaves of ebb and flow in our lives.

These days, luxuriating in last moments of summer warmth, settled on a rock nestled into a beach, I watch the ebb and flow of tide moving on this edge between land and water.

Observing the causal energy of circling moon at play with the earth beneath my feet.

Clear summer evenings have provided opportunities of watching the waning and waxing of the moon through its cycle, reminding me of a quote attributed to the Buddha, "Regardless of the shadows that cross the moon to make it appear less than it is, to the moon, it is always full. So it is with us."

Understanding more fully in the movement of waters, the usefulness at times of the wisdom model of the moon of yin entwined in dance with the sun of yang.

Whether settled on my mat, or standing in line at the grocery finding my square or symbol of two feet on the floor again, and again finding my breath.

The beauty of moon energy welcoming me to observe and pay attention, let go and accept for a few moments, as I move through the busy flow of my days.

The yogic play of yin and yang.

Feeling my own breath mimicking that greater tidal flow and ebb in me.

Following my attention on breath ever inwards to simple sensation, watching the ebb and flow of thought and emotions all around. Using my focus on sensation as

one way to create space and some potential calm, along with flashes of awareness.  
Using my practice of witnessing attention to the gentle ebb and flow of breath,  
and thought and feeling to support my working through the impatience or grief,  
and pain, fear and loss entering my mind and heart.  
Creating the ground for calm or full joy in the moment.

Even as I watch the ebb of the tide and feel the ebb of summer, I can see this time of Covid conveying a feeling of ebb as well. A quieter time in which the flow of busy fullness has moved away for a time.

A time of relative stillness, stagnancy, even stuckness.  
It has struck me how we tend to see the richness of life more *in flow*, and see loss or a lessening *in ebb*. And with this dualistic valuing, a fearing of *the ebb* and disproportionate overvaluing of *the flow*. Add in as well the story of conflict and the metaphoric tide of battle, of flow and ebb, and the noticing of the death left behind.

Craving more the sweetness of being in the flow while seeing in that ebbing movement, loss and conflict, fear and perhaps even a sense of losing ones way – unable to see next steps.

But then I remember the teachings of ocean about the gifts of flow, and ebb.

Ocean tides flow towards shore bringing the nutrients and oxygen of the wider sea close into shore, that place of exchange.

A margin between land and sea, not of *power over* but of *power with*, richness and celebration on either side, enriched by breathing of ocean.

Life flows, stirring images of easy movement of liquid. And then that tide ebbs....and reveals the hidden, world below, obscured by shadows of conditioning, yet deeply rich and complete. As ocean tide ebbs, invitation beckons us to walk outwards exploring what lies below.



*Revealed*

Photograph by brad davis

Visiting tide pools, home to urchins and sea stars, barnacles and small fish.  
Playing with bull kelp, watching clams squirt and crabs scurry about.  
Peoples who have lived on this land for centuries have shared knowledge  
of the rich foraging possibilities of this coastline; of seaweeds and clam and oyster.

Exposed to eye expanses of eelgrass meadows that provide safety to wee herring, entwined with tidal flat homes of worms and other invertebrates that provide the sustenance for millions of migrating birds, and buffer somewhat our urban toxic overflows – the result of our forgetting the impact of our choices on other beings.

Richness revealed.

So much possibility in the ebb – to transform energy and materials; to cleanse and reveal.

Certainly for many of us, this time of Covid has brought the energy of ebb to what we saw as the flow of the normal; loss and fear, lack of clarity of vision. It has certainly challenged and even overwhelmed businesses and organizations doing work that support our lives, including those places where we practice yoga together. I have observed how it has shaped our community's yoga practice as we adapt to live streaming, and more recently the opportunity to return to the sacred spaces of community practice at times. ...Accepting even how our practice so dear and useful can ebb and flow as well. Yet this ebb has also revealed much, showing us aspects of fragility and shadows of the structures of our lives including the systems that limit access and inclusion, cause harm to those who are different in ways that are marginalized, often hidden in the normal, business as usual. It has shown us the work of compassion that needs to be done more clearly. And even as it has shown us our external worlds, it has possibly revealed more of our own conscious and unconscious patterns affecting how we live life. This includes illuminating more of what, and who, and how is most important to us. With clarity and space, comes opportunity for fuller choices. As many have stepped into this time and space in creative, life affirming ways, as I wrote in 'Butterfly Garden' (See *Moksana Newsletter* June 2020), maybe we too can choose what to plant in our 'butterfly gardens' to draw the *beauty of butterfly* into our lives. Even tapping into that modern cultural energy of *summer ebb into fall flow*, of reinvigorating our commitments to learning, finding our important places of learning and nourishing self and community. As ebb has offered the reveal of what is important, so too can we choose our flow into what speaks to us, be it reinvigorating our practice, stepping into supporting movements such as *Black Lives Matter* or *Metoo* or *Climate Justice*, to supporting the local businesses in our lives, or remembering to walk amongst the trees and along the ocean's edge.

*As we settle onto our mat, ocean ebbs and flows all about us. There is power to grow and transform in both flow and ebb. Energies that reveal. Energies that cleanse. Energies that move us to create. Developing ways that support our full unfolding in life. I breathe in, I breathe out. I draw in the oxygen of forest and ocean. I let go the carbon dioxide that nourishes those forests of big Cedar and Douglas Fir, Arbutus and Gary Oak that surround us, hold us. I feel the energies of ebb and flow, as things move away, to when they return, never same but different. My practice may ebb and flow, as my breath, in this time of shifting forces. All is movement and change. As I sit by the ocean, I sit in my awareness that life often moves in ebb and flow. Pay attention, and we may glean our gifts of learning from either the ebb or the flow in any moment of time.*