

*Musings on Yoga: Spiralling through the blossoms*  
*April 2022*

*Look at the cherry blossoms! Their color and scent fall with them,  
are gone forever, yet mindless, the spring comes again.*  
– Ikkyu

*In the shade of the blossoms no one is a stranger.*  
– Kobayashi Issa

As I have been moving along city streets in March in Victoria, then driving eastwards this past week through mountains, across prairies, beside lakes small and GREAT, to the fields and forests, rivers, sprawl of London, I have been working with transitions. Embracing the “familiar” of the rising wave of springtime, return of cherry blossoms, along with engaging with the challenges and possibilities of returning to live for a time in a place I have lived before. Working with the energy of “spiral learning” as articulated by Mary Catherine Bateson, deepening one’s learning through a process of spiralling again through a “familiar time, or space, relationship or experiences. Leveraging the tensions of the known with the unknown, as we move through the familiar, allowing it to stir memories, feelings, questions then taking time to notice, and reflect, process, make meaning as we do in these lives we live. A process of noticing, similar in a fashion to the way we might use the Japanese tradition of “Hanami”, or “flower viewing” purposefully observing and celebrating the blossoming of the cherry and plum trees each spring. Using this conscious act to acknowledge our interconnection with nature, and the ways it constantly gifts us; reminding us of beauty and the ephemerality of life – there, and then gone. Feeling too, its inherent ‘sense of renewal’ in dormant sleeping trees, new possibilities blossoming again after a long winter. Appreciating as well, how we might integrate this approach in our yoga practice, as I described in that first *Musing on Yoga* years ago, shared in the Moksana Center Newsletter of April 2020 seeking a creative response to the waves of Covid-19 beginning to impact our world. Spiralling.



### ***A Practice of Blossoms***

*The following approach, developed over the years of sharing Yin Yoga as spring brought yet another cycling of again of plum and cherry blossoms, was originally shared in the Moksana Yoga Center Newsletter, April 2020.*

*Bringing this approach to my Yin yoga practice, both on and off the mat has felt so easeful as we spend minutes in stillness in each pose, watching sensation – watching the blossoming of our own experience, learning to work with our wonderful flowing minds and hearts. The reminder of ‘Hanami’ as one more way to come into the moment; learning to see our own inner beauty more fully perhaps, along with better learning how to be with change in life itself. And, while more time may be spent in a yin pose, in many of our yoga practices we are encouraged to drop into to ourselves with each breath and listen deeply thus offering us the opportunity to embrace the aliveness of blooming in each moment. Or, we might envision our entire practice session as a blossoming cycle itself – feeling the energy of formation, along with the brightness and colour of the cherry blossoms. Seeing the exquisite beauty in each moment, no matter what all is going on. Living each moment to the fullest. And then, feeling the ongoing change in life, fading away as we settle into Savasana. Because the practice of Hanami, as some would say of Savasana, contains an inherent acknowledgement of the truth of dying as well. Knowing this as part of living, we can again step into our next moment, our next yoga practice, more fully appreciative of beauty to blossom once again, and again.*

Watching the blooms and their brilliance, and their withering, to finally fall...their ephemerality this year has infused a different energy as I have been also shifting to end a chapter of life living in Victoria begun in 2010 on the traditional territory of the *ləkʷəjən* peoples. Moving me to muse on memories, circles and communities, actions taken, reflections and learning, growth...so many blossoms. Then using this process of sharing writing as another offer of yoga practice to stretch, to learn, to strengthen at the many levels of body, and heart and mind and spirit.

*I am sitting with the emotions and thoughts of the ending of one chapter of life, with the beginning of a new one, cycling through periods of yin and yang, attempting to balance judgement and observing with equanimity in the arising feelings and reflections on the change!!! Mind. Heart, spirit go backwards and forwards... settles for a brief moment in the now, as I manage to connect to breath and settle into my seat. I AM HERE NOW....Thich Nhat Hanh's story on "how to leave a room", (See *Musings/February 2022*) is so REAL. How do I end one chapter well, to begin another? Find the learning within the shift?*

*- Journal Entry: January, 2022*

Some might have noticed some of this energy permeating *Musings on Yoga* over the last months on salmon and crow, endings and making ones road by walking; or during *Yin Space*, classes streamed from London, Ontario over the last months. Much has been kept private, with only occasional sharing with a very few, so I realise this shift will be new to most, but know that you were all thought of, and held close. Reasons for change have mostly centred on family needs, and relationships, leaving wide open the other ways we tend to organize our lives. The process itself has been, chaotic, spontaneous at times even as I have worked to organise it and give it some kind of 'logical' form. And the processing continues, even as I lean into next steps in making this path by walking. Meanwhile, I have been delighting in the 'mindfulness

bells' of blossoming plum, and now cherry trees filling various streets, in their different timings around town, along with the moments of noticing the changing ecotomes and geology that have been so much part of the last few days of a cross-country roadtrip!! Letting the wild nature of them return me to the moment, even as we may 'choose' to use breath or sensation to return us to the home within, even as the home without may shift! Spiralling.

So, going forward, yoga, and Yin....will continue...how can they not?. Livestreaming *Yin Space*, will flow the same in April...maintaining that space for shared practice. Over these last months I have had the opportunity to explore sharing yoga livestream from London, shaped by the flow of the Thames River, embedded in deciduous forest of oak and pine (half way between Windsor and Toronto☺)...in the EST time zone. It turns out that Livestreaming later from London is such a sweet personal practice, and easy flow before bed (Yehhh... *night time Yin!*) And while our interconnections with the natural world might vary with the beings, and geology that surround us, the essential understanding of 'interbeing' as articulated by Thich Nhat Hanh is the same. That said, I am curious how living within the traditional territories of the Attawandaron, Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, and Lunaapeewak Peoples (Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee-Delaware Nation), and living beside river...will shape my sharing of yoga. Exploring this 'flower' of practice that has grown over these last couple of years. Spiralling.

***So, Yin Space, in April...Livestreamed...soft, slow, still and spacious...  
.....live from London.***

Sundays: 6-7:30pm PST   Tuesdays: 7:30-9pm PST   Thursdays: 7:30-9pm PST

As to practicing together ***In Person***, I plan to be back beside the Salish Sea for a bit of time this summer and hope to share some outdoor classes then. Invites will be sent out if you find yourself yin/nature drawn. I will also be spending some time exploring possibilities here if you know of any folks local to London/the east 'yin/yoga drawn'. Other announcements along with *Musings on Yoga* will continue to be found on [www.dragonflyvision.ca](http://www.dragonflyvision.ca). If you have questions or reflections you can always email me, or set up a 'walk and talk beside the river" phone call over the next weeks.

Definitely there is uncertainty here within the spiralling. Yet, whatever its reverberations, there is always the choice of Yin as one part of our balancing - to restore, and release, hold kindness and compassion for self and others, maintain suppleness of body, heart and mind, open ourselves to spaciousness and the moment. As one chapter ends, another begins. As we cycle again into the spring, with all its blossoming and fecund energies I encourage you to engage with the energy of spiralling into the familiar BUT different. Hopefully to continue to find your style of yoga practice, space or collective, along with the teachers (within as much as without!) who will support your journeying, and unfolding within the natural world that is part of our home. Appreciate the wisdom of "Hanami" in moving us to notice the brief beautiful life of a cherry blossom.....blooming, withering, falling to the earth to nourish new life, as the trees themselves rejuvenate into the seasonal cycle of the

spring. Change. Things lost....things born. Feeling deeply the things lost, the closing of a chapter of life, yet also the sheer will of life to begin anew. Reminding us again perhaps, to better learn to be 'in the moment,' in appreciation and gratitude, embracing the deep grace within, even as past and future FILL our thoughts, and hearts...our very being.

*Just as cherry, plum, peach and damson blossoms all possess their own unique qualities each person is unique. We cannot become someone else. The important thing is that we live true to ourselves and cause the great flower of our lives to blossom.*

*- Daisaku Ikeda*

in weaving,

*brad*

brad davis

E-RYT200 RYT500 M.Ed.

Yin Space,

[www.dragonflyvision.ca](http://www.dragonflyvision.ca)

[yinspacebrad@gmail.com](mailto:yinspacebrad@gmail.com)

*I am grateful to be able to live and share this ancient and evolving practice of yoga from the traditional territories of the  $l\acute{a}k^{w}\acute{a}n$  (Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations) and the Attawandaron, Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, and Lunaapeewak Peoples (Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee-Delaware Nation).*