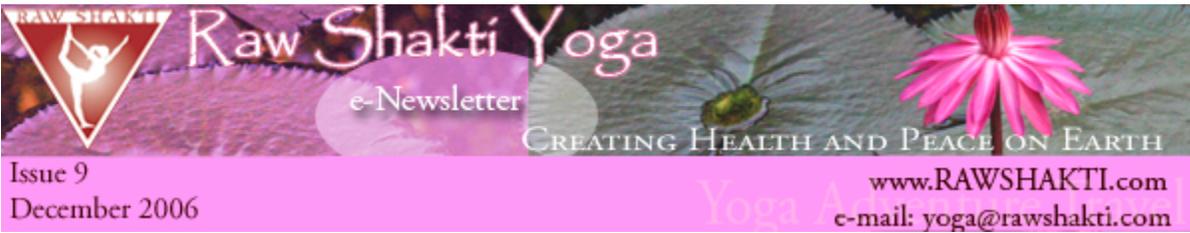


[Back to Newsletter Archives](#)

[Raw Shakti Home](#)

Raw Shakti e-Newsletter Issue 9 December, 2006



## In This Issue

### FEATURE ARTICLES

- Yoga with the ones you love
- Yoga in Australia
- Yoga Day USA

### WHAT'S NEW WITH RAW SHAKTI

- Everything yoga. com article
- Yoga for the National Kidney Foundation of Samoa
- Yoga Teacher Training in China

### CALENDAR

- Move your mind, move your body in Samoa
- China, California, Canada, Peru

### EXPANDING THE PRACTICE

- Highlighted Asana
- Hana's Cooking Corner

### RAW SHAKTI CONTRIBUTORS

- Vicky Peters
- Vedantin



## On The Path

My grandfather who has been a huge inspiration in my life has recently passed on. I was blessed to be able to fly to Carlinville, Illinois, USA to be with him during his final week of life. It was a time of deep sadness although being with family and observing Grandpa's journey onward was a time of beauty as well.

Sometimes I think we just have to make choices. Either we choose to dedicate time to being with our family or we don't. Everyone has their reasons to be away from loved ones. For me, developing Raw Shakti Yoga, a month of work had to be canceled last minute to be able to be with my Grandpa (his death was sudden but we had a couple weeks notice). I feel so glad that I made the choice to put family first. Some of his last words to me were, "Ghandi changed the world and so can you. It only takes a person to believe in and live in peace and peace can happen." He held a torch for peace and he gave me the courage to pursue my ultimate dreams of working towards peace and health on earth. His torch lit my candle and lit candles for many other people as well. He was a great teacher for many. To have him



move on feels like the end of an era.

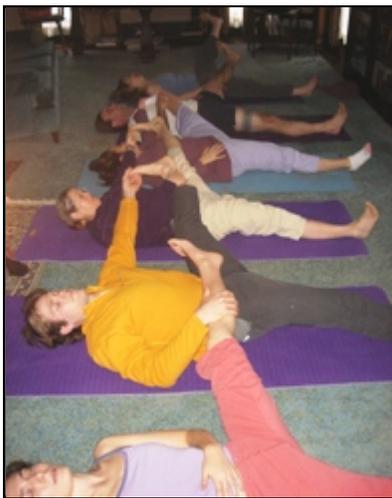
For many of us perhaps the holidays feel sad as well as joyful. Whatever your holiday is like for you may it be filled with choices made that are about being with your loved ones. For to make this choice in the world today is a tough one but well worth it. These decisions will link us all more closely on the way to peace on this planet.

May the new year bring new hope and may you be brave enough to tell the people that you love that you love them and be willing to pursue a dream this coming year, no matter how great or small. Everything we do matters. Thank you to all of the peace keepers and teachers and loved ones that have come before us.

For the blessing of new beginnings,  
Tialofa

## Feature Articles

### Yoga with the ones you love



This year in Carlinville , Illinois many members of Raw Shakti Yoga and family have been gathering for morning yoga together in the living room of the Russell family home on East Main Street . We have 4 yoga teachers in the family and each day we take turns teaching. Yoga is a nice way to start the days as a family. Even during family vacations and holidays we are blessed with family that enjoys rising to greet the sun with yoga. The comfort, relaxation, and beautiful balance one feels while being close with family and experiencing yoga is contagious. We all basked in the love of connecting and supporting each other. Yoga as a family becomes less about achieving a certain pose, but rather experiencing laughter and love especially as family yoga will often include people who are

fresh to the practice. Family Yoga is certainly something to explore!

My own yoga exploration while completing my master's degree in education through Antioch New England Graduate School expanded boundlessly through the meeting of my partner, Bryan Russell. Entering each day with the one you love and coupling those daily experiences with the presence, awareness and connectedness yoga provides brought a level of peace and appreciation to my life while in graduate school. I used to wake up each morning with a prepared coffee pot by the night stand where my initial morning greeting to the world would occur through hitting the on button. As the smell of caffeine-laden coffee filled the air, I'd awaken to the school mode. In a mindset filled with consuming "to-do" lists taking the time to discover each moment seemed superfluous. At times I often felt as though I had blinders on, not only that they were present, but that they "had" to be present. How could I complete x,y, and z without steadily plugging along. However momentarily productive that mindset may be, it did not allow me to truly understand and appreciate the full scope of my learning. Education is a constant ebb and flow, not a discipline which benefits through blinders or exclusion. As I opened my hips, shoulders and breath more I felt my life echo the experience. The coffee turned into breath, the blinders turned into partnership and awareness.

I can fully say I am not the same person I was before I met Bryan and before he brought yoga into my life. My to-do-list remains full, but no longer all consuming. Balance is not simply about asanas, rather balance in yoga and life is about connecting, be it the yin and the yang, the inhale and exhale, or the work and peace. I feel Bryan is one of the strongest individuals I know, and not because he goes into a beautiful scorpion pose, rather, because his strength holds an ever growing awareness of consciousness and compassion. Yoga flows through his family, and into his veins, out through his breath and into his relationships. Doing yoga with the Russell family has expanded so much in my life, at times even uncomfortably so. Not in a negative mode, rather simply a new mode. Change requires a shift from the norm. I feel this is an important point. Yoga is not easy. Feeling aware is not always fun; however, it is a true state that is worthwhile to pursue. Awareness is a state that love, yoga, and family all share.

by Vicky Peters

## **Yoga in Australia!**



In October I was in Sydney and Byron Bay, Australia experiencing the yoga world there and sharing with them about the yoga retreats in Samoa. Sydney is a beautiful city! The Opera house happens to be where I took my first steps in 1976! This was my first time back since then. Perhaps I was inspired by its beauty and just stood up and walked? It is so grand! Walking to various yoga studios was a pleasure. There



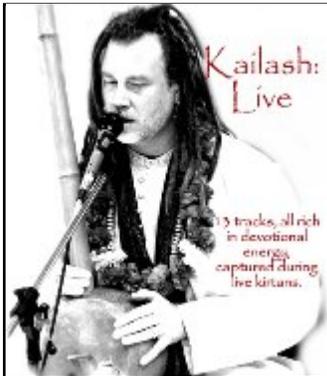
were birds in the parks and colors seemed to look different somehow. It felt like a very ancient land, even in the city. Byron Bay reminded me of Sedona, Arizona in the US. A town filled with

people exploring their spiritual side.

I was blessed to meet and study yoga with Flo Fenton and John Ogilvie among others. Flo is the queen of asana and teaches at Gaia Retreat among other places. John runs Byron Yoga Center and has lead yoga in AU for 18 years. I met some amazing body workers as well at the various spas. I took my own time to rejuvenate at Gaia retreat. This is Olivia Newton John's and her good friend Greg's creation. Gaia is a gorgeous spa with yoga and healthy fine dining! What a treat! I would recommend Gaia to anyone going to Australia and looking for a retreat to a place of beauty where the treatments are organic and fully rejuvenating. We all need to receive in order to give. Let us be good to our selves in the New Year!

Taialofa

## Yoga Day USA



C.S. Lewis spoke about that any experience is complete when; one, we look forward to it; two, we experience it and; three, we reflect upon it. I suppose that leading up to Yoga Day USA, part of looking forward to it is how I met a man named Kailash. Upon meeting Kailash I recognized the synchronicity and how the universe brings people together who are meant to meet. Just last week I met Kailash in North Carolina, USA. I was there visiting my mother's parents, who are getting older now and I was enjoying visiting the various yoga studios and spas of Asheville, NC while I was there. One Sunday morning, I was driving to my grandparents and drove by the yoga studio called Namaste. I had the intuition to go inside and it turns out it was Ashram Sunday and they were having open meditation

followed by Sanskrit chanting! As I walked into the studio I saw a man and a lady with a beautiful baby. Upon looking at the man I realized it was Kailash, the man who I had organized via email from Samoa to be chanting with us in New Hampshire on Yoga Day USA! We were very surprised to meet in person a month before. We had a great time exchanging life stories and dreams and his chanting was glorious and brought me to the place of contentment that I love to reside in.

Yoga Day USA will be held at Lady of America in Keene, New Hampshire, USA. About fifteen Yoga teachers will lead free yoga classes all day! We will lead a Samoa-inspired vinyasa class as part of the day and Kailash, [www.omkailash.com](http://www.omkailash.com), will lead the chanting to complete the day. Come and join us for this educational day of yoga! All the donations will go to the National Kidney Foundation of Samoa to help native people living with diabetes to practice a healthy lifestyle and be able to take free, fun and informative

yoga classes. -Taialofa

## What's New with Raw Shakti

### **Everything Yoga**

We have an article on the [Everthingyoga.com](http://Everthingyoga.com) website called Let us Evolve. We are happy to be connecting and sharing stories with other companies promoting health and yoga. Our life is everything yoga so to be on this website was a fun part of Raw Shakti Yoga's evolution.

### **Yoga for the National Kidney Foundation of Samoa**

We have been leading classes in Samoa for the staff of the National Kidney Foundation in Samoa. For many people this was their first time to experience yoga. People shared that they enjoy this new thing called yoga as it is not "bouncy" and they can do it right on their hand woven mats, which are common or people to sit on in Samoa throughout the day. So in essence they don't even have to get up or put on shoes or anything to be able to practice yoga! We look forward to working with NKF in 2007.

### **Yoga Teacher Training in China**

We now have expanded to offer a yoga teacher training in China! This will be a wonderful time of yogic lifestyle and immersing into the land and culture of China. All levels welcome!

## 2006 Calendar

### **Yoga Day USA: New Hampshire, USA**

**January 28th, 2007**

We will have yoga and kirtan (bhakti yoga). Save the date! We hope to see you there! ([more](#))

### **Move Your Body, Move Your Mind: Samoa**

**May 8 - 22, 2007**

A Life Coaching and Yoga Retreat. To Awaken your Spirit and Balance your Life... ([more](#))

### **Wilderness Yoga Retreat: Sierra Mountains, California, USA**

**June and July, 2007**

Join us for a journey inward as we venture out into the wilderness of the Sierra Mountains. Enjoy this fully guided backpacking trip... ([more](#))

### **Sacred Mountain Yoga Retreats: China**

**July 15 - August 11, 2007**

Buddhists regard the mountains as being the 'Gateway to the Gods'... ([more](#))

### **200 hour Yoga Teacher Training Certification: China**

**July 15 - August 11, 2007**

This month long TTCC is theoretical and experiential based... ([more](#))

### **Canoeing and Yoga with Bryan Russell: Canada**

**Summer/Fall 2007**

There is no better way to access true wilderness than in a canoe...(more)

### **A Magical Yoga Journey to Machu Picchu: Peru**

**Fall 2007**

Peru is a magical place, a powerful place, a wonderful place for yoga...(more)

## Expanding the Practice

### **Highlighted Asana: Wheel**



This is a photo of Bryan on the California yoga retreat. You can see his cultivated strength and openness as he creates a wheel with his body. The wheel of life is always asking us to be our own unique part of it everything. To cultivate strength in this pose helps us to cultivate this quality in our everyday life. Yoga often gives us a foundation for our life. Start by lying on your back in a relaxed position. Next, move into this asana by placing your palms to the earth under your shoulders. Press into your palms and feet and rise through your hips. Maybe you will stay on the top of your head or perhaps you can

press fully up. Please be careful with this pose if you have lower back challenges. Enjoy this back bending, heart opening wheel.

### **Hana's Cooking Corner: Island Beans**

vegan, serves 2

Citrus grows abundantly in the warm tropical islands of the earth and I find it very pleasant to remind myself of turquoise water and warm sand during this cold and wet New England November. This recipe features lime which reminds me of one of those wonderful tropical places: Samoa. And, if the idea that this dish can transport you to a lovely paradise is not enough to entice you, the fact that it is also very easy to make will hopefully get you to try it out!

- 1 tsp canola oil (or coconut oil)
- 4 cloves garlic (minced);
- 1 medium onion (chopped small);
- 1 cup green or red bell peppers (chopped small);
- 1 can (or freshly cooked about 2 cups) black-eyed peas, rinsed and drained;
- 2 TBSP fresh lime juice or more to your preference;

Combine oil, garlic, onion and peppers in a wok or comparable pan and cook over medium heat, adding water if the ingredients stick, until onions are soft and translucent. Add beans and lime juice, heat through, add salt and pepper to your liking and serve over whole wheat couscous, brown rice or quinoa. Enjoy in Peace!

## Raw Shakti Contributors

### **Vicky Peters**



Vicky's recently completed her masters degree in Education. She is currently working at an elementary school. Her personal and professional interests are like two partners in a constant dance. Some of her hobbies: cooking, nature, reflective moments, and crafts. The ebb and flow of her role in the classroom fuels her life goal of inspiring the youth of America. Guiding students through their different questions and discoveries allows her to shape the space and encourage student's voices and interests to emerge. The rhythm of life can change at any moment. Her journey with yoga began during college while taking dance classes. Yoga felt natural for her and soon became a part of her life's landscape. She has a joyful presence and loves to play and encourages those around her to explore their inner child. She is currently working towards headstand recognizing the benefits of this full inversion while being patient and enjoying the process that will take her there.

### **Vedantin Ping Luo, Ed. D, RYT 500**



Vedantin leading a Raw Shakti yoga retreat to China in July '07. He is the director of SchoolYoga Institute (Registered Yoga School (RYS) with Yoga Alliance), and a Certified Vinyasa Ashtanga Yoga Teacher (CVAYT) by BNS Iyengar at Patanjali Vinyasa Ashtanga Yogashala, Mysore, India. He has studied extensively with BNS Iyengar, Sri Patabhi Jois, Tim Miller, Berle Bender Birch, David Swenson, and other yogins. He believes there are many yogic paths but the essence of all the paths is One that is to realize the SELF and to be in the state of contentment, happiness, and bliss. He was born and raised in a Buddhist community, the sacred Emei Mountain. He has learned Buddhist principles at early age and integrated them into his lifestyle. Practicing meditation, Taichi, Chigong, and Chinese Martial arts was an integral part of growing up. He started to teach these principles over 20 years. He has been teaching for many years at university, yoga studios, health clubs. His dedication and love to Yoga would benefit those who are pursuing stillness of mind and body and happiness and contentment of life.

Please feel welcome and invited to FORWARD this newsletter to all whom you think might enjoy this journey toward health and peace! We kindly appreciate your sending this newsletter to others! Thank you for reading!

Raw Shakti is a Yoga Enterprise Dedicated to Promoting Health and Peace on Earth.



Raw Shakti - P.O. Box 684 - Western Samoa

Phone: 011 685 779 6400

Email: [yoga@rawshakti.com](mailto:yoga@rawshakti.com)

Web site: [www.rawshakti.com](http://www.rawshakti.com)