



New Year Musings 2022



Here we are with a brand new year before us! How do you view it? Just like a wrapped gift, we don't really know what's inside. We might have some idea based on the size or shape of the package in our hands. We look at the wrapping. Is it decorated? How is the wrapping fixed? Tape, ribbon, string? Can we squeeze, shake, sniff to get further clues as to what the wrapping may reveal. How do you open your gifts? Excitedly tearing away or carefully peeling back without spoiling the paper? Perhaps this gift looks like one you have received before? We don't truly know what it is until we get inside. As we open our gift of 2022, I wonder what we will find.

Occasionally we receive gifts that turn out to be not quite what we had hoped – rather like the last two years which have thrown us challenges. I was really hoping to be confidently saying I am looking forward to welcoming people back to face to face classes from 10th January but as I write, there is still a degree of uncertainty about possible restrictions. However, I am thinking positively and will be uploading classes for booking in the couple of days. You might prefer to wait to book your place until there is more news on potential restrictions. Online classes of course are not affected by restriction so I will upload the Tuesday morning and Thursday evening sessions first.

Thank you from me to you

I'd like to thank everyone for their understanding, good wishes, messages of condolence, Happy Birthdays and Christmas wishes in recent weeks. It's been a tough few months.

Sorry for another analogy – I think life is like a journey. We know the destination but not the route. Some parts of our journey are smooth but we meet obstacles, potholes, steep hills and heavy traffic occasionally. We get to glimpse at wonderful views and not such pleasant ones too. We meet many people on our journey and I consider myself extremely fortunate to have met most of you (I know I am yet to meet some of my readers). On my journey to date, I have learned so much from each of the rocky sections and I have also come to accept that impermanence is a fact, all things

change. During the tough times, I try to remember that (its not always easy). I try to look for positives where I can find them. The clouds are so easy to see but the more I search for the silver linings, the better I get at spotting them. I could be really stuck in the sadness of recent weeks but I remember that I got to spend rather longer with the Canadian contingent than planned. I was welcomed in and made very comfortable. We shared, we cared and we remembered together. We supported each other. I got to slow down. I watched cardinals and blue jays in the bushes and on the bird feeders. I watched snow falling most days. I watched the efficiency of the snow clearing teams (roads and sidewalks) keeping the province moving. I was able to give practical and administrative help to my mum. I even got to learn the differences between Canadian and British systems for final arrangements! Most importantly, I got to see my dad and he knew I was there. He even, despite barely having the strength to speak, recited a poem. A poem he often recited when I was young. A poem so poignant at that moment. I marvel at the human body. Then I got to travel home. To a lovely welcome from family and friends. (It seems I was missed after all!) That welcome was mostly by phone or online due to the isolation requirements etc but even that allowed me some decompression time and prevented me from my usual rush back to full speed. Hopefully, tomorrow, I will get clearance from isolation to meet and share New Year with my UK close family members. Im rescheduling my Birthday so will celebrate 60.5 in the summer (I have always thought a summer Birthday would be far nicer anyway).



After New Year, I need to knuckle down and catch up with my Yoga Therapy Course work and practice. I am scarily behind now.

I really hope all of you have been looking after yourselves and keeping up with some yoga practice. It was fabulous to see those of you who were booked into the online sessions through December. It was fab being able to Zoom across the world once I had worked out the time difference and a 4am alarm isn't so bad after all!

THE GOAL OF YOGA (No, it's not the Handstand).

The yoga pose is not the goal. Becoming flexible is not the goal. Standing on your hands is not the goal.

The goal is to create space where you were once stuck. To unveil the layers of protection you've built around your heart. To appreciate your body and become aware of the mind and the noise it creates. To make peace with who you are. The goal is to love, well... You.

Come to your yoga mat to feel; not to accomplish. Shift your focus and your heart will grow.

-Rachel Brathen-

As we return to yoga classes in 2022, I am aiming to use this fabulous quote for my theme. I am so impressed by most of those on mats before me in class and the way they have learned to look after themselves on the yoga mat. To know that is okay to modify a pose, remembering that its not supposed to hurt. To remember the breath and how it can guide us to a safe pose. My aim is that every single participant remembers its not about comparing oneself to others in the class or achieving. Its about our own experience on our mat. Its how we feel. Can we breath easily where we are? Where are our thoughts? What do we notice when we hold the pose? Would it be better for me not to hold the pose? Whether working through a sequence of poses flowing from one to the next or holding a pose, it's a personal practice. Each person working with their unique body and its history, strengths and injuries. Remember too that although we might have easily moved into a seated forward fold last week, it could feel very challenging this week. We work from where we are, not where we were or would like to be. We look to bring together the body, mind and breath throughout our practice. The more we practice this on the mat, the more likely we will find ourselves carrying this into other parts of our lives.



As I sign off now on this newsletter. I wish all readers the best 2022 possible. I really hope the 2022 section of your journey is an easy one with pleasant views along the route. I hope there aren't too many steep climbs but please remember that often from the top of a hill, you get the best views. As you open your gift of 2022, I wonder what you will find?



The Lake Isle of Innisfree

BY WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.



Happy New Year All

