

Breathing is the key to inner peace



YOGA OFF THE MAT
BY ERYN KIRKWOOD

It is my experience that few stimuli arouse irritability as efficiently and consistently as summertime construction. You know what I'm talking about. You're driving down Greenbank, you take a left on Fallowfield, and you see it: the uncharacteristic build-up of cars, and ahead of that, the jaws of life digging and ripping and pulling and moving—all of which require multiple four-point turns in the one-way roadway. You check the rearview—it's too late to turn around. Maybe you skimped on the AC when you bought the car to save a few bucks in your pocket—a

small sacrifice that seemed brilliant in sub-zero December temperatures.

Other younger and more spontaneous drivers squeal their tires and graze the ditch to escape the dreaded unknown, but you're a different person now. You're a calmer, more peaceful (dare I say Zen) civilian. You're grateful that we, as a community, honour the importance of safe and comfortable highway travel. And that sometimes we must sacrifice our comfort with these small inconveniences to serve the greater good. You're calm, cool and collected. You're mental state will not be disturbed. You practice yoga.

Spiritual gurus like Eckhart Tolle (author of *The Power of Now*) will tell you that such irritants are our best teachers. Those things that cause us to shoot from 0 to 90 on the emotional odometer are ideal grounds for practicing the techniques that will bring long-lasting inner peace. Although I'm not there quite yet, I must say, my reaction times are shorter, my irritability fuse is longer, and although it's a daily practice, I do lay claim to much inner peace.

The secret? Breathing. It's as simple as that, and it's something we do 24 hours a day. The trick is to breathe correctly and with awareness. From a young age, many of us were taught to suck in our stomachs as a way to improve posture. For men, this created the illusion of a broad chest, and for women, a trim waist: two aesthetic gems in Western culture. The physiological impact, however, is severe.

Sucking in the stomach invokes chest breathing and inhibits diaphragmatic breathing — two major contributors to stress and tension. And most of us know that stress has nothing to offer as far as "looking good" is concerned.

You may not even know if you are one of the many who breathe incorrectly. See for yourself: lie on your back and bring both hands onto your stomach. Close the eyes, and take a minute to get calm. Now, when you inhale, do the hands rise or do they draw back toward the floor? If it's the latter, you're a chest breather. It's time to make some changes. Start with this simple technique: notice how you breathe. And then notice it more often. Lengthen out your breath to 3 or 4 seconds. Notice when it gets short (the kids won't stop screaming, the person ahead of you at Loblaws forgot the ketchup, the dog couldn't hold it any longer), and lengthen it out.

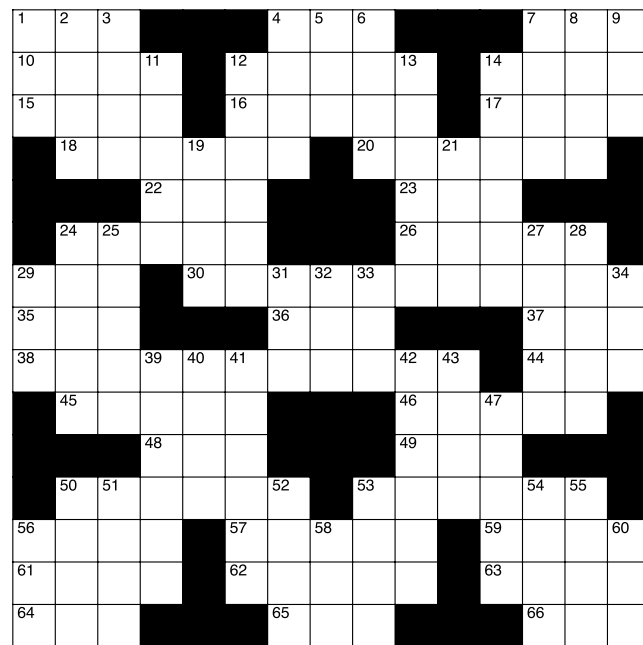
Before you know it, you'll look forward to construction as a challenge: Hah! Try and tick me off now! My patience is unwavering! It's simple, but it works.

I'm Eryn, and that's your tip for practicing Yoga off the mat.

Eryn Kirkwood, M.A., is a Certified Yoga Specialist and the owner and facilitator of Barrhaven Yoga. She offers group and private classes for all levels of ability. View the Barrhaven Yoga web site at www.BarrhavenYoga.com or contact her directly at 613-724-YOGA. If you have any questions for Eryn, e-mail her at Eryn@barrhavenyoga.com.

BARRHAVEN INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

August 21, 2009



ACROSS

1. Married woman
4. Converged
7. Point one point S of due E
10. Table condiment
12. Trade
14. Indian frock
15. Bombast
16. Blighia tree (var.)
17. Pre-college school
18. Give clear expression to
20. _____ Tomei, actress
22. Tall hardwood tree
23. Actress Ryan
24. Not true
26. Organic compounds
29. Hill (Celtic)
30. Apprehension
35. They ____
36. 1st state abbr. (var.)
37. Chicken ____ King
38. "Me & Bobby McGee" singer
44. Horny jaws of a bird
45. Beheaded queen Antoinette
46. Goatlike Eurasian antelope
48. Wrath
49. Container cover
50. Also-rans
53. So. Spanish port city
56. Brood of pheasant
57. Coal tar product
59. Retained
61. Sagu____: treelike cacti
62. Challenged
63. Clods
64. Pinna
65. Cotter or straight
66. Tell on

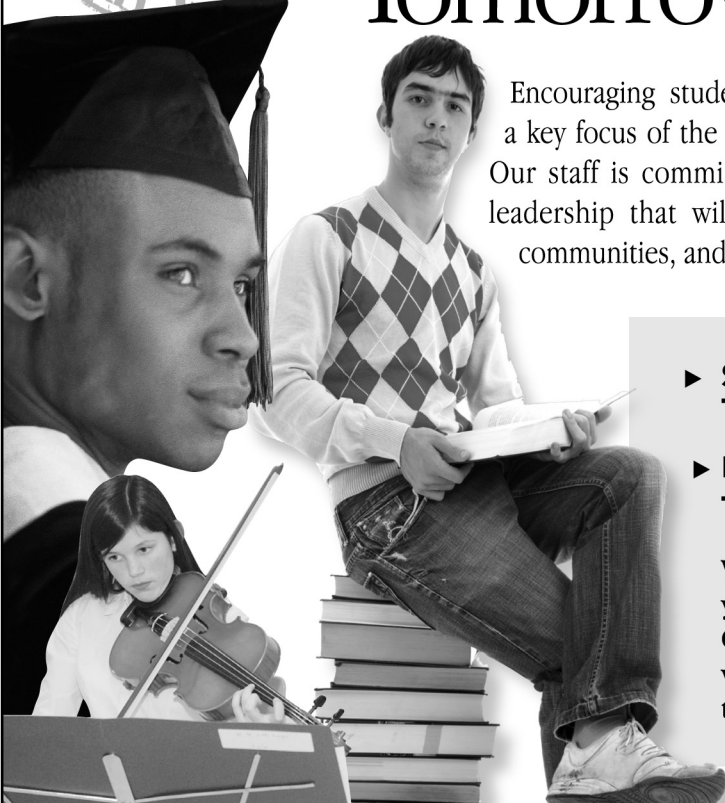
DOWN

1. Mutual savings bank
2. Abnormal breathing
3. E. European people
4. Nutmeg covering spice
5. Large northern deer
6. Spill over
7. Auricles
8. La ____ Tar Pits in L.A.
9. A way to take in liquids
11. Mercaptan
12. One who fires
13. Sewed together
14. Water tap
19. Vogue publisher Conde
21. ____l: of the kidneys
24. Nummulite
25. Space for public entertainments
27. Chinese dynasty 502-557
28. Genus of the Soleidae
29. ____ Mahal
31. Tokyo
32. High spirits
33. Not in good health
34. Seize suddenly
39. Bearded plants
40. Beget
41. Shouted derisively
42. No man is one
43. A hammered fastener
47. N.W. state
50. Old Italian money
51. Aroma
52. Detergent
53. Demeanor
54. Sports paraphernalia
55. ____ Romeo, car
56. No (Scottish)
58. ____ Lanka
60. Fall back time

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Solution to August 5th puzzle

