

# PARTNER YOGA

## When Two Become One

BY JUNE CHAN

Whether in a 200-hour teacher training in Goa or a kids and family yoga course in Hong Kong, partner yoga has been special for me. Connecting and bonding to whomever I was partnering with.

The energy within oneself can be shared by connecting hands and feet. Nothing is more powerful than bonding between a group of strangers sitting in a circle, sharing the first touch - knee to knee and palm to palm. Our hands are gifted with healing powers. Right hand gives energy and left hand receives. This is my ritual to start every partner yoga class, to connect the group.

When it comes to practicing yoga with another person, a simple neck stretch can become a beautiful moment of surrender. As we sit back to back and tilt our heads back and rest one side of the ear on our partner's shoulder, we take in the support. At the same time we share our support. With the comfort of this pose, we simply surrender and

breathe in to the stretch.

As much as we try to surrender in *asana*, sometimes it's just hard with the physical challenge. During tough poses, we have to constantly keep in touch with our body to prevent forcing which could cause injuries.

The same principle works in partner yoga. As one person sits in butterfly pose, the other person aids by pushing and pulling simultaneously. Our feet push to our partner's shins to stabilise the pose and our hands hold on to their wrists to pull them forward. The key connection is our hands. We wrap our fingers to each other's wrists to communicate. The first reaction of overstretch is the grasping of our fingers. This sends the signal the stretch is too forceful and the partner has respond by releasing slightly. Alternatively, our partner can keep leading the stretch through the response of our hands until it comes to an understanding the stretch is just right. The

exploration of different poses open up a whole new channel of communication between two people. This foundation builds up the quality of trust.

Partner yoga can take us out of our comfort zone bold poses. My favourite looks like two L shapes forming a closed box. This pose not only requires trust, but also communication. Getting to the pose involves one person on the back and the other facing head to feet to grasp on the ankles. The support begins when the base lifts the other person's ankles away from the floor. Together we count to three and simultaneously push and lift up into the L shape. Both partners have to work equally hard to achieve the end result and this doesn't happen without strength, trust and communication.

There are endless possibilities in creating partner yoga poses. As creative as you can be, the core of this practice is to experience union.

*We are now in Central, Hong Kong*

**Colorpilla**

Colorpilla 型色  
Room B, 7/F, Tack Building  
48 Gilman Street, Central  
中環機利文街48號  
德享大廈7樓B室

Mon-Sat 12-7pm  
Tel 21997887  
debby@colorpilla.com

*A collection of all time favorite brands of yoga mats, apparel and accessories*

**manduka**

**JADE|YOGA**  
www.jadeyoga.com

**HARD ★ TAIL FOREVER**

**CARROT BANANA PEACH Clothing Co.**