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ISSUE 04

Little Pockets of Calm

Wonder

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April Theory

Maybe January was never meant
to be the beginning.

Maybe the year starts slowly
on purpose -
a quiet stretch,
a deep inhale,
the soft ache
of waking up.

Maybe February was shaking off,
and March was the gathering
of strength,
a slow return to ourselves.

And maybe April
is when it really begins.

When the light lingers,
when our hearts beat louder,
when we are truly ready
to start again.

Not because we should,
but because we're finally
warm enough to want to.



Kaylin Weir

Editor's note

Hello again and welcome to Little Pockets of Calm. The world seems to have changed since our last issue and, even if our everyday is feeling similar, there are clouds overhead.

With that can come a feeling of uncertainty, things are changing and not everything is clear. It's easy to feel swept up or overwhelmed by the news; to feel anxious for ourselves, our loved ones and the planet. We might feel a pressure or temptation to try and rush ahead, to not engage fully, or to try and define or direct what's unfolding - to try and make sense of it.

This is where Yoga can support us. In its simplest form, Yoga offers us a place to return to again and again. Not to perfect anything, but to notice. To feel what's there, to be with the breath, and to sit with what's changing without needing to resolve it. It reminds us that we are part of a collective and something bigger than us. It becomes less about physical progression or perfection, or even about the poses themselves, and more about the steady presence we cultivate. It's the golden key we can come back to, even when everything else feels uncertain.

"Yoga is the golden key that unlocks the door to peace, tranquility, and joy" B.K.S. Iyengar

Over the last few weeks, I've felt such a calling to return to my mat everyday. It's almost a physical sensation bringing me to practice - to carve out the time to move, breathe and pause. To find my own inner peace so that I can find a place amongst everything else.

We are constantly surrounded by change, nothing is constant in life except change, and this time of year often feels like turning a fresh page, a sense of space opening up. We talk a lot about the influence of having more daylight and now that the days are feeling longer, our mood and sense of possibilities shift in subtle ways. It's April and we have found ourselves somewhere new, even if we can't quite name where that is yet.

I think it's very natural, and very human, to be affected by what is going on around us, the positive and the negative. So wherever this month finds you, I hope this issue offers a small sense of grounding. A respite from the noise. In this issue, we have mini-projects full of joy that we can pick up when we need a pick-me-up, yoga and meditation and tips for your home practice, and lots and lots of calm.

Lokah samastah sukhino bhavantu, may all beings everywhere be happy and free.
With love, Lucy

Yoga

Camatkarasana
Wild Thing, or Wonder, pose



“Wild Thing” is open, expressive, a little playful and very much about trusting where you are. I also love this pose because it’s about taking up space in a special and unusual way - it’s in the name: it’s about embracing our inner wild thing.

When we practice, we often enter this pose from a familiar place like Downward Dog, but then Camatkarasana then asks for us to shift into something less predictable. As the body turns and the heart lifts, there can be a moment of uncertainty, a moment of ‘what if’.

As much as I love the English name of ‘Wild Thing,’ I recently learnt that the Sanskrit Camatkarasana has actually been mis-translated. It should be ‘Wonder’ pose and it’s the physical representation of our human wonder at the magic of the surrounding world. The universal joy of birdsong, the beauty of the ocean or a sunrise, the twinkling stars above us and the solidity of the ground beneath us. That there are mountains and rivers and nature older than time, but also that there things we’ve created - paintings and books, and boats and skyscrapers, that we can be in our kitchens and enjoy the tastes of fresh coffee and cinnamon. Each breath and beat of our hearts in our bodies that are doing a million and one things for us at any one time without us even being aware. It’s joys big and joys small that make us open our eyes and hearts in wonder that we get to be a part of this wonderful world.

To practice this pose, begin in Downward Dog, taking a few breaths to feel grounded through your hands and feet. Lift your right leg behind you, keeping the movement soft rather than high. Then bend the knee and begin to open your hip, letting your foot move towards your left bum cheek. Slowly shift your weight into your left hand and left foot, turning your body as you step your right foot over and behind you onto the mat. As the foot lands, allow your chest to turn upward and reach your right arm overhead. Press gently into your supporting hand, lift through your open chest, and take a few steady and expansive breaths. Marvel at the wonder of the universe and that you are part of it.

To come out, slowly reverse the movement with care, returning to Downward Dog or resting in Child’s Pose.

Rather than striving for a deep backbend, think of this pose as an exploration and let your breath guide the shape. Your version might be small and steady, or more expansive - this is your practice.

Camatkarasana can feel energising, but also grounding when approached with awareness. It encourages trust - in your body, in your breath and in your ability to move into something new without needing to force it.

Heart-Space Meditation



Find a comfortable position, either seated or lying down, and allow your body to settle, just as it is. Gently close your eyes, or soften your gaze.

Take a slow breath in... and a steady breath out. Again, breathing in... and out, letting your shoulders and face soften.

When you're ready, let your awareness move to the centre of your chest, the area around your heart. Notice whatever is there, without trying to change anything. What does this awareness feel like to you? Is it a sensation, a feeling, a swirling or a beating? Does it have a colour, a taste or a sound? Explore what is going on in your heart in this moment here and now.

Now visualise yourself outdoors, somewhere quiet in early spring, a place that's meaningful to you. The air is soft, but not yet warm, and there's a sense of space surrounding you. Take a moment to notice all the details of this special place - the light, the smells, the noises.

You begin to notice how, around you, the landscape is slowly changing. Small signs of growth are starting to appear, new shoots, unfolding leaves, hints of colour returning. Some things are still bare. Some are already beginning to open.

Let yourself rest here for a moment. You might notice how the light feels a little brighter, a little longer. How the ground still holds the memory of winter, even as something new begins to rise. There is no urgency, everything is happening in its own time.

You breathe to your heartspace again, breathing in the nature that surrounds you. Your peaceful place.

And when you're ready, slowly bring your awareness back, carrying with you a sense of steadiness and trust in what is unfolding.

Top-Tips for a Home Yoga Practice

Building a home yoga or meditation practice can feel simple in theory, but not always in reality. It's easy to feel unsure where to begin, or to think it needs to be a certain amount of time or look a certain way to count. In practice, it's often much quieter than that: it's something that fits around your life, rather than adding to it.

These small suggestions are here to support you in finding a rhythm that feels natural and sustainable, so you can create a practice that works for you.

Keep it simple

Your practice doesn't need to be long or complicated to be meaningful. Ten minutes of movement or stillness is enough. Let it be something you can return to easily, rather than something that feels like a big commitment.

Create a small familiar space

You don't need a dedicated room - just enough space for your mat and a cushion. Over time, returning to the same spot can help your body and mind recognise it as a place to pause.





Let it change day to day

Be flexible: some days might feel energising, others softer. Try to meet yourself where you are, rather than sticking to a fixed idea of what your practice should look like. All Yoga moves us towards a single horizon.

Presence over perfection

There's no perfect way to practise. It doesn't need to look like a class or feel profound every time. Simply showing up is enough.

Start small, and begin again

If you're unsure where to begin, start with one pose, one stretch or one minute of stillness. And if you fall out of the habit, gently begin again without any judgement or criticism.

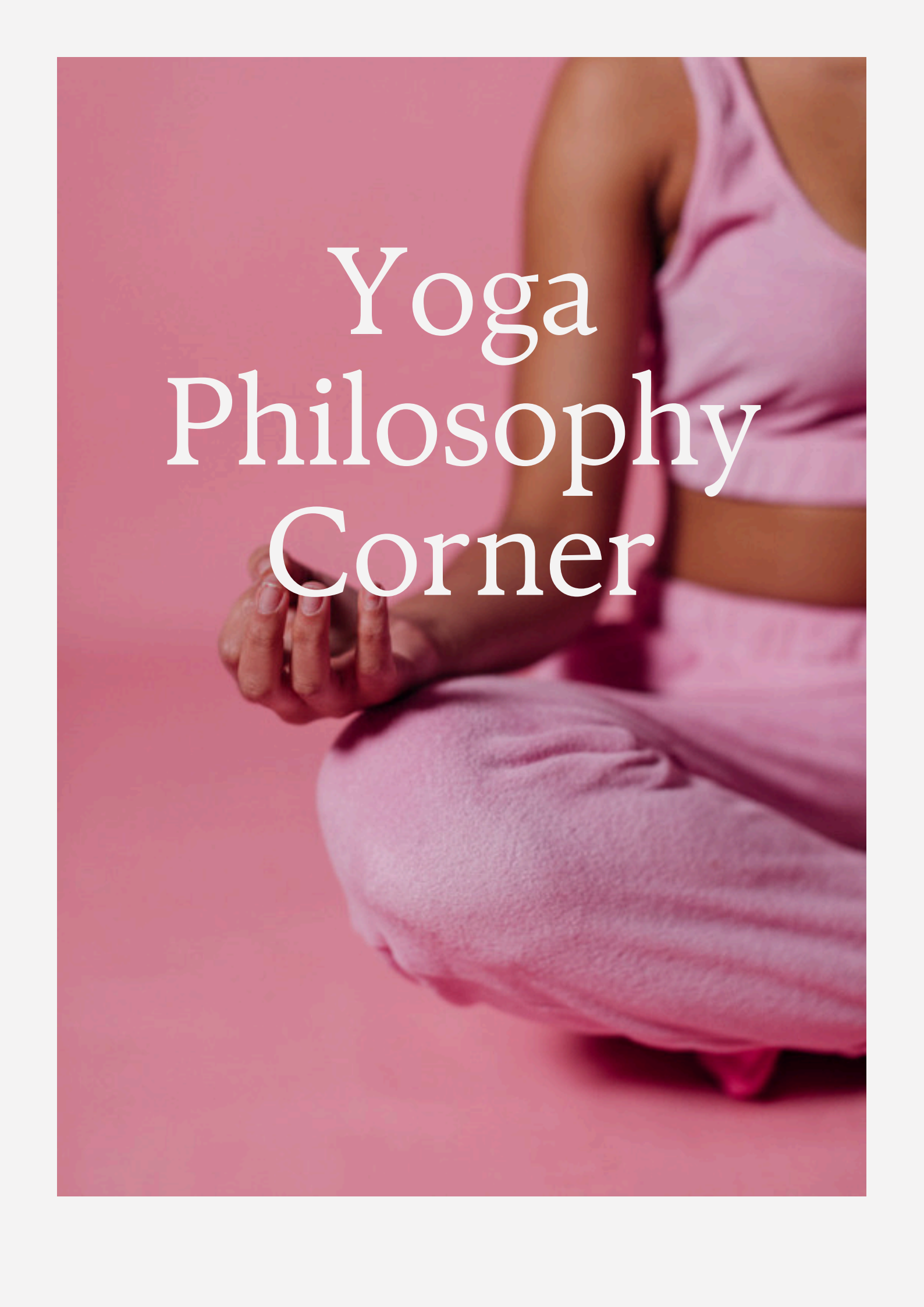
Use your breath or surroundings as an anchor

Next time you sit in your yoga space, take a moment to really notice what's around you. Whether it's the feeling of your breath, the sounds around you, or the contact of your body with the floor, having something simple to return to can help steady your attention.

Let it be a place you come back to

Your practice doesn't need to move you forward. It can simply be somewhere you return to. A steady thread through changing days.

I hope this helps.

A person wearing a pink tank top and pink pants is sitting in a meditative pose (Padmasana) on a pink background. Their hands are resting on their knees in a mudra. The text "Yoga Philosophy Corner" is overlaid in white serif font.

Yoga Philosophy Corner

Aparigraha

Non-grasping, non-forcing, letting go of control

In Yoga philosophy, there's a framework known as the 'Eight Limbs of Yoga' written by the sage Patanjali. It's a guide to living with greater awareness, balance and connection. Imagine an eight-limbed tree, where each limb represents an aspect of the whole practice of Yoga, supporting how we move through the world, both on and off the mat.

The first limb is the 'Yamas' which then divides into five smaller branches. The Yamas are ethical guides that help us live in harmony with other things. There is Ahimsa (non-violence), Satya (truthfulness), Asteya (non-stealing), Brahmacharya (right use of energy), and Aparigraha often translated as 'non-grasping.' I could write pages on the Eight Limbs and the Yamas, but we will just focus on Aparigraha today.

It's an invitation to loosen our grip on the things we cling to. Whether that's other people, pets or physical possessions, we can sometimes love and care to a point of obsession and unhealthiness. But also outcomes, expectations or even ideas about how things should be - the things that we want to direct and control.

Aparigraha doesn't ask us to stop caring. Rather, it gently encourages us to notice what we are holding on to too tightly - to the point of damage. This can show up in small, everyday ways. The urge to push a little further in a yoga pose and getting injured. The need to have a plan fully mapped out including someone else's role within that plan even if it's against their wishes. The discomfort of not knowing what comes next. Aparigraha offers a different approach: to stay present with what is, without needing to grasp for what isn't there yet.

This doesn't mean letting go of intention, but softening our attachment to the outcome. Trusting that we can take part in the process without needing to control every step.

In this way, Aparigraha becomes a practice of trust, letting us know that sometimes, the most loving and supportive thing we can do is to loosen our grip and allow things to unfold.

Little Pockets Book Club



A month of good reads
and a recap of the first in-
person meeting

What we read in March

The Names, by Florence Knapp

To say I consumed this book would be an understatement: I just couldn't put it down. The way the three different stories were threaded together, as well as dealing with themes of loss and domestic violence in such a tender way, it was so clever. Each chapter was the perfect length to draw you in to that narrative and then leave you wanting more.

The Sirens, by Emilia Hart

This novel follows two sisters sent from Ireland to Australia on a convict ship, alongside the story of two modern-day sisters living on the edges of society, struggling to find where they fit. It was an engrossing and often surprising read, with twists woven throughout. As with her first book, *Weyward*, Emilia Fox blends historical detail with touches of magical realism grounding the story in real events while adding a layer of the unexpected.

At times, it was not an easy read. The descriptions of life aboard the convict ship are harrowing, and each of the main characters faces their own share of hardship. There's a weight to this story that stays with you. That said, it sparked plenty of thoughtful discussion, and as the first book for our in-person club, it was a memorable choice.

At the club, we enjoyed two-hours of goodness - we eased in with a gentle, water-themed yoga flow, drifted into a short and calming sound bath, before settling with tea and homemade biscuits (thanks to one of our lovely members for baking!) to chat about this book as well as other recommendations.

I'm so grateful to those who joined the first event - it feels like something special is growing in this little community and I'm so happy that it's been so well received.

PTO to see what we've chosen for next month...



April's book picks

The Women, by Kristin Hannah

When Frankie's brother ships out to serve in Vietnam, she joins the Army Nurse Corps and follows his path. As inexperienced men sent to Vietnam to fight, Frankie is overwhelmed by the chaos and destruction of war. Each day is a gamble of life and death, hope and betrayal; friendships run deep and can be shattered in an instant.

But war is just the beginning for Frankie and her veteran friends. The real battle lies in coming home to a changed and divided America, to angry protesters, and a country that wants to forget Vietnam.

We will be discussing this book at April's bookclub meet-up which is already fully-booked. There are spaces available on the May's bookclub session which also includes a yoga session and tea and biscuits .

The Wedding People, by Alison Espach

It's a beautiful day in Newport, Rhode Island when Phoebe Stone arrives at the grand Cornwall Inn wearing a green dress and gold heels, without luggage, alone. Everyone in the lobby mistakes her for one of the guests at an impending wedding on the site, but she's actually the only person at the Cornwall who isn't there for the big event. When the bride discovers her wedding could be ruined by a divorced and depressed stranger, she's furious.

Soon both women find their best-laid plans derailed and unlikely confidantes in each other.

Let me know what you think of this month's choices!



In the Kitchen

Inspired by my recent travels to Mexico, these dishes use some of April's best ingredients (hello, rhubarb), but gives them a Central American punch of flavour

Chipotle Roasted Cauliflower Tacos

Ingredients:

For the Chipotle Cauliflower

- 1 large head of cauliflower, cut into bite-size florets
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp chipotle paste
- 1 tbsp honey
- 1 tsp ground cumin, garlic powder, smoked paprika
- Salt and pepper to taste

For the lime sauce

- 2 tbsp Greek yogurt
- 1 tbsp lime juice (plus more for serving)
- 1 tsp garlic paste
- 2 tbsp chopped coriander

For the assembly

- 8-10 small corn or flour tortillas
- Sliced avocado
- Shredded cabbage or lettuce

Instructions:

1. Preheat your oven to 220°C and line a large baking sheet with greaseproof paper
2. Make the marinade: In a large bowl, mix together the oil, chipotle paste, honey, cumin, garlic powder, smoked paprika, salt and pepper
3. Add the cauliflower to the bowl and toss until thoroughly coated
4. Spread the cauliflower out on the tray and roast for 25–30 minutes, tossing halfway through, until the edges are crispy and charred
5. Make the sauce: while the cauliflower roasts, mix together the yogurt, lime juice, garlic and coriander
6. Warm the tortillas in a pan
7. When everything is ready, fill with the tortillas with the roasted cauliflower, top with the cabbage/lettuce, drizzle with the lime sauce, add the avocado and extra coriander.



Lime and Honey Baked Rhubarb

Ingredients:

- 500g fresh rhubarb stalks
- 3-4 tbsp clear honey
- Juice and zest of 1 large lime
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Pinch of salt
- 1 tbsp melted butter

Instructions:

- Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/Gas Mark 6
- Wash the rhubarb, trim and then cut the stalks into 2-inch chunks
- Place the chunks into a large bowl and drizzle with the honey, lime juice, melted butter, vanilla and a pinch of salt. Toss gently to ensure they're all coated
- Transfer the rhubarb to a shallow, ovenproof dish or baking sheet lined with greaseproof paper. Spread it out into a single layer to ensure even roasting
- Roast for 15-20 minutes - the rhubarb should be tender but still hold its shape
- Remove from the oven and grate the lime zest over the top.

Caballeros Pobres (Poor Gentlemen)

Ingredients:

- 1 stale/day-old baguette
- Soaking mixture: regular milk, condensed milk and vanilla extract
- 2 eggs
- Syrup: water, sugar, cinnamon stick and vanilla

Instructions:

- Slice the bread diagonally into thick slices
- Dip the bread slices in the soaking mixture until well absorbed
- Then dip the soaked bread into the beaten eggs
- Fry until golden brown
- Make the syrup: boil water, sugar and cinnamon until it forms a light syrup
- Arrange the fried bread in a baking dish and pour the syrup over
- Allow it to sit for at least 10-minutes to absorb the syrup; typically served cold



Let's craft

Four mini-projects that don't need a lot of equipment and still celebrate the season.

Enjoy bringing your unique insight and creativity to each object you make.

Creativity is emotional regulation.
A nervous system reset.
Especially when you're overwhelmed.



Project 1 Biscuit decorating

This is a sweet (apologies for the pun), mini-project and a perfect way to celebrate Spring. You could make them for yourself, or take them to your next coffee morning with a friend.

You will need:

- A batch of plain vanilla biscuits (homemade or shop-bought is absolutely fine!)
- Icing sugar ready to drizzle (pastel colours are perfect for Springtime)
- Any other cute little decorations you would like to use for your biscuits

Using a spoon or piping bag, gently spread or drizzle the icing over your biscuits. There's no need for perfection - let shapes be uneven and natural. Remember, Aparigraha.

While the icing is still soft, sprinkle with decorations or add simple patterns. You might create flowers, dots or soft swirls. If you're feeling adventurous make them into little animals or characters.



Project 2 Make your walk a work of art

It's always nice to get outside in the sunshine this time of year, and with this project you can turn your next walk into a mindful crafting exercise too. All you need is some card!

On the bottom-half of the card draw your vase and then poke in a few holes above it. As you walk, you can collect any flowers that have already fallen and place the stems through the holes.

Et voila - your very own work of art.

Project 3 Scrappy hearts bunting

This is a great craft for using up bits you might have leftover from other projects. For example, scraps of material, wadding or ribbon. You will need:

- Material scraps
- Needle and thread
- Material scissors (I used a scalloped edge)
- Wadding/stuffing
- Heart template
- Pencil or heat-disappearing pen

Fold your material in half and place on your work-surface, draw around the heart template.

Start to stitch along the traced line, leaving a small gap - through this gap push the wadding into the centre of the heart. Sew up the gap.

Cut around the heart, leaving a couple of millimetres edge.

To turn into bunting, cut a piece of thread the length you wish the bunting to be. Insert the needle into just the back piece of material of the first heart, and then pull through about 2cm later (depending on size of heart). Then do the same to the next heart on the bunting, and so on.

Creating with our hands teaches us to slow down in a world that wants us to rush.



Project 4

Air-dry clay butterflies

This project does take a couple of days due to needing to leave things to dry thoroughly before moving on to the next stage. It's nice to make something that can't be rushed. You will need:

- Air-dry clay
- Butterfly cutter or template to cut round
- Skewer
- Paint
- Metal floral wire
- Gloss (optional)

Roll out the clay, I like to cover it with clingfilm before using the cutter (this gives it a rounder edge). Poke four holes in the centre using the skewer, and then leave to dry. Paint and leave to dry again.

Insert one of the metal wires through one of the holes, and then thread it back down through the hole diagonally opposite. Then the other wire, goes through the other two holes. Twist the wires together so they create a stand for your butterfly.



Move with Lucy

What's coming up
in April



Special workshops

Relax & Unwind

This workshop blends the supportive stillness of restorative yoga and the deeply restful practice of Yoga Nidra. If you have been experiencing stress or struggling to sleep, this workshop is all about tuning into your para-sympathetic nervous system to find deep relaxation. There will also be the option to receive the supportive energy of Reiki during this workshop should you wish.

Friday 24 April, 7.00-8.15pm
Eastthorpe Hall, Mirfield

Strength & Stretch

Deepen your yoga practice with this vin-to-yin still workshop. We will flow through 45-minutes of vinyasa to warm up and connect with our bodies, before dropping into longer holds of postures. We will also explore the philosophy behind the poses - this workshop will focus on the Warrior sequence. This is a fiery story about Shiva avenging the death of his wife, Sati.

Saturday 25 April, 9.00-10.30am
Eastthorpe Hall, Mirfield

Summer Retreat Day - Saturday 20 June

Give yourself permission to slow down for a day, to take some time for you to move, breathe and create. I'm so looking forward to hosting a day of yoga, meditation, crafts and more. It's a day to relax and have fun, and I would love for you to let me guide you through a retreat designed to feel easy, joyful and quietly restorative.

Also included is a two-course lunch with tea and sweet treats throughout the day.

There are still a few Early Bird tickets left, once they're gone, they're gone and the price will go to the full ticket value so be sure to book your space now!

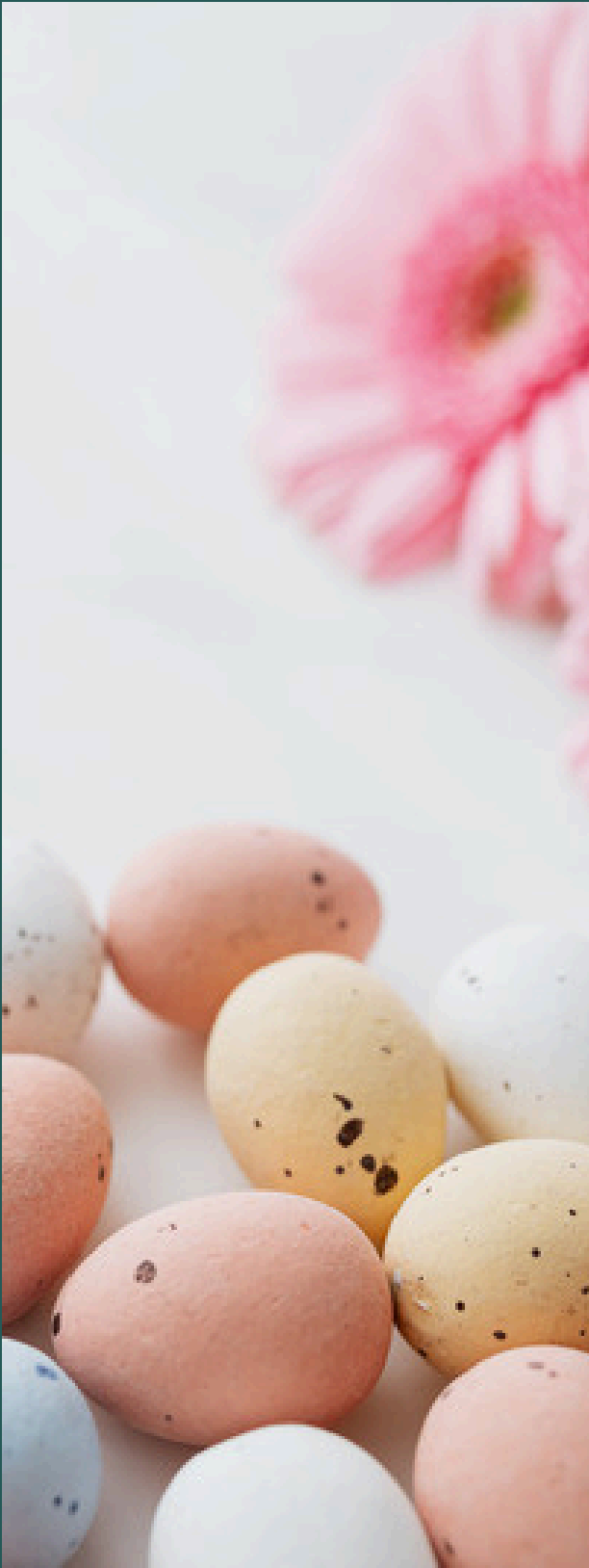


Thank you for taking the time to read this edition of Little Pockets of Calm - I hope you have found a few moments of calm along the way.

I'm already drafting up May's magazine, did you know that May has two full moons in it? We'll be exploring how we can let the moon be a quiet guide, honouring both fullness and release.

I hope you have a joyful and peaceful April and enjoy the lighter evenings with the space and time it gives. I also hope you have time to stop and enjoy the wonder of the world and your special place within it.

Hope to see you on the mat soon, take care,
Lucy x



Little Pockets of Calm

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