



Meditation News

Newsletter of The World Community for
Christian Meditation in the UK

SUMMER 2015

www.christianmeditation.org.uk

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National Coordinator's Note

Dear Fellow Meditators

I write, having just returned from two events in the Midlands. The larger scale event was organised by an Educational Trust of the Church of England for the Lichfield and Birmingham dioceses (the CECET), attended by 130 head teachers and chairs of governors. During the morning Fr. Laurence and Rt. Rev. and Rt. Hon. Rowan Williams spoke on meditation with children in schools. It is very early days, but we have since had contact from some of the teachers, requesting follow up information and one has asked for help to introduce it into their school. The smaller and more intimate 'event' was to share in a group meditation and social time with a fledgling group in Coventry where the group leaders very kindly provided me with a bed for the night before the larger event. These were what could be called two sides of the same coin, and what Fr. Laurence has sometimes called out-reach and in-reach, where in-reach supports our existing community as it grows and out-reach is the work of reaching out to those who do not know much (if anything) about our community and Christian Meditation, or even about Christ. Supporting our own community members usually feels blessed, rewarding and uplifting (as it was last weekend). Reaching out to those who do not know about meditation can be more challenging and whilst there are times when we are really heard, we may also risk rejection or being misunderstood. But we know that our meditation leads us to want to sow the seeds of the prayer of the heart, so we do what we can, whatever the outcome.

In this edition of the newsletter, we have two articles which some may consider to be about out-reach. Geoff Waterhouse talks of the meditation group that has been running for 3 years with the inmates in Wandsworth Prison. Geoff asks whether there are other people out there who would like to think about setting up a prison group and you might like to consider this if you live near to a prison. Ben Bowmaker writes about a

continued on page 2

In Remembrance

It is with great sadness that I report the death of Patricia (Patty) Posnett. Patty suffered a stroke on 27 May, followed a few days later by a brain haemorrhage and she rested in a coma until passing away peacefully on the evening of 14 June. Her family were present during the last few weeks of her life.

As you will remember, Patty was, with Charles, instrumental in introducing Christian meditation into many primary schools, and latterly secondary schools, in the UK. A full obituary will be included in the next newsletter.

On behalf of the UK Community I would like to acknowledge, with immense gratitude and love, Patty's significant contribution to the spiritual lives of the many children and adults who came into contact with her. Her joy was infectious. She will be sorely missed.

Our thoughts are also with Charles and their four sons at this sad time – may our prayers support them as they grieve.

Roz

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Contributions to the Newsletter are warmly welcomed. Please send all items to:

uknewsletter@wccm.org:

Editor: Margaret Comerford

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**Deadline for the Autumn (October) issue:
1 September 2015**



The School of Meditation School Retreat

Led by Kim Nataraja

At the Briery Retreat Centre
Ilkley, W. Yorks LS29 9BW

4-11 September 2015

The School Retreat is a week long residential intensive. It is suitable for people who have been meditating seriously for some time in our tradition, and have some experience of integrating meditation into daily life. It forms a very natural progression from the Essential Teaching Weekend. It is a time of silence and stillness with a daily flow of meditation, a short talk and a regular meeting with one of the retreat leaders. It offers a profound, integrated experience of both sides of the spiritual journey of meditation - of solitude and fellowship, and gently opens participants to explore how they are called to share the gift.

Cost per person £550 inclusive.

For further details please contact: Jacqueline Russell
01296 488450 or email: jacquell3@gmail.com

Publication Dates and Events

Meditation News is published quarterly in early January, April, July and October. We include events from the beginning of the publication month in both the web and printed versions, and events for at least a month into the next edition (the end of October for this one).

We suggest that events early in a publication month are included in the previous edition; so for early January the details should go in the Autumn edition and either be sent to the UK office (uk@wccm.org) to be added to the the UK diary or sent direct to uknewsletter@wccm.org before 1 September.



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National Coordinator's Note *continued from page 1*

homeless project, the personal challenges that he has faced and what keeps him going.

However, as with any definition of terms, there are usually grey areas, and another article shows us that both out-reach and in-reach, as descriptors, are not always helpful, for how do we 'label' a meditation course for ordinands – is it perhaps a little of both? In the article entitled Meditation Course for Ordinands, which I have adapted from a report by Liz Watson, we share how we are working to introduce the contemplative approach to prayer to trainee priests.

When we look at our own meditation practice, we may rarely, sometimes, often, mostly (select which descriptor applies to you!) experience distractions and don't know what to make of them or indeed what to do about them. Sue Guitoni has put into words how she has made sense of some physical distractions which may be experienced – as she says we may experience none or some of these but if we do, its good to know that we are not alone and the thing to do is to just let them go. I thought about this the other night as I meditated and become very hot. This time I didn't adjust my clothing and just focused on my mantra and at the end I realized I wasn't hot any more. Thank you Sue.

In June, the UK Community Gathering was held in Swanwick, entitled Being in Community, Growing in Love. It was a special and intimate event and a short report on what the speakers, Rev Robert Fruehwirth, Carolina Ghiuzan and Kathy Kramers shared with us is included in this issue. A fuller report on the gathering will be included in the autumn newsletter and the version of this Newsletter on the Christian Meditation website has additional content.

There has been one change in our community since the last edition and I would like to welcome May Nicol as joint Special Interest Coordinator for addiction, working alongside Mike Sarson. May's background is in social work, in both the statutory and voluntary sectors, and in social work education and training. She is involved in the work of Christian Meditation as an 11th Step Practice. "

I hope you enjoy this Summer edition of the newsletter and, as always, if there is something you would like to share with others in our community, please write to the editor, Margaret Comerford, we'd love to hear from you.

With lots of love as always,

Roz

UK Community Gathering 2015

At the end of a wonderful weekend, Roz Stockley provided a synopsis of the talks given by Rev Robert Fruehwirth, Carolina Ghiuzan and Kathy Kramer.

"I think I can speak for many of us that this weekend has been a delight and it has been a pleasure to have the opportunity to share, for a short time, with 3 such uplifting and open speakers. The warmth and generosity of spirit, which has touched many, if not all of us, will remain with us for a long time to come.

We opened our weekend with Robert, Carolina and Kathy telling us a little about their life experience, taking us into their personal worlds in an intimate way, which started to touch our souls. We heard a little about Robert's childhood and monastic life and why he had made the choices he did, about Carolina's move to L'Arche and about how Kathy likes living in L'Arche Community and to pray. Then on Saturday morning Robert reminded us that, as meditators, we all participate together during our time together. This set the pattern for the rest of the weekend, as we explored together what Robert, Carolina and Kathy had to share with us.

Robert's theme for the first talk was Seeing the Other, Growing in Love, where for seeing, read attention. We started with our damaged selves, distorted and strange to ourselves and each other, and then were reminded that meditation facilitates attention and acceptance in our relationships, of self and others, through love and this can lead to growth. Through this growth we can get closer to who we really are, and at this point Robert shared some stories of his life as a monastic to illustrate the experience of personal growth whilst being in community. However, we also explored how being in community does not necessarily mean growing in love and that some communities may, at times, promote fear, control and corporate scapegoating and get stuck. And then Robert took us to the place of Jesus, as the Word of Love, in human history. That we need to step out, in love, of our comfort zones and accept and love others – as acceptance itself promotes love. And meditation changes us little by little, opening up the whole felt sense of myself to myself and thus to God. We are letting God look at us and hold us during the meditation time, enabling us to grow. It is here that the changes to community can happen, through the changes we first make to ourselves. But, Robert says, meditation is best practiced for others, not for ourselves, where we have 'you' already at the centre of 'me', in God. He finished with the lovely image of us as earth, watered and warmed by the rain and sun of God, where seeds are sown and new shoots flourish. After coffee, the Lectio Divina on Jean Vanier and John Main quotes enabled us



Robert Carolina Kathy Roz

to connect with some aspects of community that had personal meaning.

In the afternoon, Carolina and Kathy introduced us to Jean Vanier, L'Arche and the part meditation is beginning to play in their lives. We began to understand what Kathy does in her work with the community, and in an intimate way Carolina led us along her personal path of discovery, sharing the practicality of finding her home in L'Arche and her development on a spiritual level. We learnt how their community has adopted meditation, which is in fact being encouraged by the core residents, and that Carolina says there is no difference between disabled and able members as meditators – they are all naked in front of God. Carolina shared her deepening experience of meditation at a retreat she participated in recently with Jean Vanier and Fr Laurence. Carolina and Kathy's session ended with a video of an enactment by L'Arche members of The Beatitudes in Silence, a beautiful expression of lived prayer.

Robert's final session took us to the monastic life again, questioning the total surrender of self, leading us to consider the paradox of wanting to put the other first in self surrendering whilst also considering our own wishes. He called it the two-eyed, or the binocular, view of life. He recalled being asked, "what do you want for lunch?" beginning to open up the question "who am I?" We were then led to God, possibly, exercising silence, waiting for us to speak, meeting us with non-judgmental cherishing, wanting to see what we will chose to do with our freedom. And leading us back to meditation again, meditation as a letting go of desire but recognizing that it is also the desire to be there with God.

In all three sessions, our speakers asked for questions from the floor and we were well rewarded by the experience of being in easy, friendly and considerate conversation and, in my view, learnt much from this opportunity. During the final plenary there was feedback on the delegates' post-it note thoughts, which had been pinned up on a screen during the weekend, followed by a final question and answer and discussion time."

The weekend came to blessed close with the Eucharist, celebrated by Robert.

Community News

Mary Colwell: Being a Christian and a Mammal What it means to be a Human on a Living Planet.



Roger Layet Mary Colwell Hester Jones

On Saturday 9th May, the Bristol region held a discussion morning as the community's contribution to the Bristol 2015 European Green Capital event. Mary Colwell was the keynote speaker at *Being a Christian and a Mammal - What it means to be a Human on a Living Planet* with an introduction to Christian meditation by Roger Layet and Hester Jones.

Mary Colwell (www.curlewmedia.com) is an award-winning freelance producer and writer. She makes programmes on nature and the environment for the BBC Natural History Unit and the independent sector, is a feature writer for The Tablet and has just published a book on John Muir.

An understanding of both who and what we are is essential as we search for solutions to the most pressing problem of our time - the environmental crisis.

- Who we are: spiritual beings with a capacity for communion with God.
- What we are: a mammal that has evolved alongside millions of other species on a unique planet.

Only by bringing these two together will we forge a lasting community that lives in harmony with life on earth.

So Roger linked ecological concerns to the practice of meditation. He quoted Thomas Merton's comment 'life in all its myriad forms embodies what no one form could express of God's infinite creativity'. Merton, with the Desert Fathers and others, saw the world as filled with the glory of God, with nothing separated from God. And yet we humans separate ourselves continuously. 'But once we break free from our false image of ourselves, we find what we are: and we are in Christ'. Which is, of course, why we meditate - to be present to the Presence within.

In meditation we practice awareness and attention. These are surely the attributes we need to be open to the underlying unity that connects all beings to one another, and to be aware of the root causes in our own behaviour that contribute to the fragmentation of self, community and world.

After meditation, Mary explained how mammals developed from a group of tiny creatures, prey of the dinosaurs, to the diverse range we have to day. Along with physical development, mammals also developed society: how they interact as groups, how they are 'better together'. Humans share many attributes with other mammals – group activities and bonding, gender roles, territory, tribalism and passing information (gossip!). Some, though, are solely human, such as the appreciation of art and music, understanding philosophy, literature and religion, but as those have developed our senses have dimmed and other mammals are far better at sensing vibrations, electrical impulses, sound, light and smells. Mary talked about how sin as we understand it has parallels in other mammalian groups; how the seven heavenly virtues and their opposing seven deadly sins can apply to all group interactions. Finally Mary challenged us with questions of how we as humans react to our history: does it help us to understand who we are; do men and women experience this differently; does Christianity contribute to our understanding of our deep past?



The introduction and Mary's talk are available on YouTube:

- Introduction: <http://tinyurl.com/pmdkobb>
- Talk: <http://tinyurl.com/pc6hzfy>

Or search You Tube for 'mary colwell mammal'

Oblate Community Day Saturday 25 April 2015, London

"In Benedict's dining room, where everyone serves and everyone washes feet and everyone returns the utensils clean and intact for the next person's use, love and

accountability become the fulcrum of community life." So comments Joan Chittister.

Though exception was made for the sick and those engaged in some important business of the monastery, no doubt all in their time had taken part in this work and Benedict says "...such service increases reward and fosters love." (The Rule of Benedict Chapter 35)

This was the chapter of the Rule for our quarterly Oblate Community Day at the Meditatio House, Hamilton Road, Ealing, and which for a short time we were able to embody together.

The day has a simple pattern – a warm welcome by the resident Oblate community, and a time of gathering, greeting, introductions and plans for the day, followed by Midday Prayer and meditation. Shared lunch



provides a time to greet old friends and meet new, all in the lovely setting of the house and garden. Lectio Divina commences the afternoon, followed by the Rule and then Evening Prayer and meditation. Before departure, there is time for a drink and informal discussion on the day.

Fr Sergio from Argentina led us in Lectio Divina on John 10: 11-18, "I am the good shepherd." His gentle guitar music added, for many of us, a different and attractive dimension to our reflections. He gave us this quote from Enzo Bianchi, Monastery of Bosse, "Let your reading become listening, and let

your listening become obeying. Slow down! It is necessary to relax with the readings because they are made to be listened to. Then the Word will make itself heard! In the beginning was the Word, not the Book. God speaks in Lectio. Our reading is our means of listening to God. 'Hear, O Israel!' – this is God's constant call. It resounds in the text and echoes from the text out towards you".

Angela Greenwood

Walking Meditation

I had the good fortune to spend the season of Lent this year walking in Spain on the *Via de la Plata*. It is a path of about a thousand kilometres starting in Seville in the south of the country. For much of the way it follows a Roman road which has been a major trade and transport route for centuries and has become the way for pilgrims to reach Santiago de Compostela from southern Spain. I started walking from Seville at the beginning of March with my wife Debbie, my son Charlie having agreed to stay at home and look after our farm until April.

There is beauty in the pace of travelling on foot, the country passes at a serene rate allowing one to appreciate what is before you. The journey cultivates a contemplative outlook and its length, in time and distance, reinforces this aspect. You are punished if your focus is drawn away from the present moment for example by worrying about the enormous distance still to walk. But by staying in the



present, undistracted, you are in bliss or at least see a glimpse of it.

People have asked, now we are back, our motivation for walking and how it has affected us. Personally, I think the walk has brought to the fore the spiritual dimension of life and the reality that our life is a journey that all must make between birth and death.

Father Laurence in his Lent reflections, which I followed in Spain on my phone, often quoted the wonderful Sufi poet Rumi. One line spoke clearly to me as a pilgrim on the path to Santiago following the yellow arrows and scallop shell signs that mark the

path: 'You are a symbol seeking a symbol; there is no greater symbol than a symbol seeking a symbol.'

On reaching the coast at Finisterre (thirty days later), two more days walk past Santiago, Debbie said: 'Life is about acceptance and forgiveness' – a thousand kilometres worth of wisdom!

Simon Andrews

Outreach

Meditation Course for Ordinands

An opportunity to run a meditation course for ordinands arose when Chris Whittington (former Chief of Operations, WCCM) spoke to contacts at Ripon College and the Church of England. WCCM Patron, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rt. Rev. Rowan Williams, supported Chris in this initiative. The College was considering that the spirituality module within the ordination training programme was weighted towards academic study and could be balanced by the opportunity to experience contemplative prayer. In essence, the course aimed at helping ordination students develop a discipline of daily meditation as a way of growing up into Christ, into greater maturity as people and as ministers of the gospel.

Each session lasted 1 hour, comprising a 20-minute talk on the theme for the week, a 20-minute period of meditation followed by a period of discussion. The course was based on the 6 week Introductory Course already available within our community and which is often used to share with new groups, with titles modified to reflect the strong Biblical and theological focus of the participants.

- WEEK 1 'Be Still and Know That I am God': the theology of meditation
- WEEK 2 'For we do not know how to pray': formless prayer and the many forms of prayer.
- WEEK 3 'Go into your inner room': the context of meditation in the Christian contemplative tradition.
- WEEK 4 'Rooted and grounded in love': love of self, neighbour and God.
- WEEK 5 'The truth shall set you free': self knowledge, self-acceptance and self-transcendence.
- WEEK 6 'The fruits of the Spirit': meditation as a way of being in life and ministry.

One or two of the following led the sessions each week: Chris Whittington, Beth Parfitt, Graeme Watson and Liz Watson.

As you are aware, we do not seek to evaluate how well we are doing in our meditation practice. However, as a commitment, students (who had self selected for the course) were asked to practise meditation twice daily for the duration of the course and to keep a journal including a log of meditation times and a record of insight and experience. Each student was given the bookmark and a copy of 'Christian Meditation: Your Daily Practice' (Laurence Freeman) on the first day. No other reading was recommended, which was a deliberate attempt to privilege experience in an otherwise largely

intellectual environment. At the end of the course a short questionnaire was given out.

Approximately 30 students elected to follow the course and the following information comes from the students' self-evaluation. As with any new group of meditators, some dropped out along the way; some took up the practice seriously at an early stage; others tried to develop a daily practice; others followed the course but did not meditate at other times and one or two were gladly re-connecting with a lapsed contemplative practice. The sessions worked well, there was good group discussion but also useful informal, more personal, conversation between course leaders and students after the end of the session.

This first offering of a meditation course to ordinands has given us insight into how best to approach this in the future. Who we approach and how we lead the course are important aspects of helping to ensure the course runs fruitfully. Also, the nature of the students presupposes a reasonable degree of theological knowledge from one of the course leaders. It was helpful, but not essential, for one of the leaders to be ordained in the C of E.

We think it would be very useful to have a local meditator (possibly, but not necessarily, one of the course leaders) to provide support to students after the course has finished. A bookstall and resource list could also be provided on the last day.

You may like to know that the College now wishes to run this course annually and we hope to extend it to other colleges.

Article adapted by Roz Stockley from a report by Liz Watson to the Action Group, April 2015.

Love

*Who has not dwelled on the past?
Who has not planned for the future?
But between past and future
there rests the present moment –
the timespan in which humanity is born.*

Margrit Dahm

Silence Behind Bars

For over three years a weekly meditation group has met at Wandsworth prison (over the last year this has increased to two groups). Men within the prison are drawn to meditation for many and varied reasons. Some have a history of drug or alcohol abuse; others find it difficult to sleep at night, others simply want to discover the silence and peace found in meditation. Some are seasoned meditators but most have never meditated before. Some are Christian, others come from different faith communities and some have no faith at all.

And yet perhaps the most surprising aspect of meditating within the prison is its utter normality. In the circle of up to 20 men there is a stillness and silence that is very powerful. The vast majority of those who attend are there because they want to be changed and therefore are fully committed to the meditation and their mantra Maranatha. The stillness and silence within the meditation is a real contrast to the incessant noise otherwise found in the prison.

The challenge in running a weekly meditation group at the prison is great. A list of men wishing to attend has to be gathered, compiled and refreshed each week. The men have to be collected and taken back to their cells.

Sometimes the meditation time is less than 25 minutes and with a 20 minute period set aside for the actual meditation little time is available for background information or guidance on how to meditate. So the learning is almost solely in the actual practice and perhaps that is not a bad thing. A WCCM book mark is given to each new meditator which is much appreciated and valued.

None of this could happen without the support of the Chaplaincy team at Wandsworth prison which has been immense.

Meditation at the prison has blossomed over these past years and the fact that there is a significant waiting list of prisoners wishing to attend the group is an indication of this. However numbers are always going to be fragile as there is regular movement of prisoners in and out of the prison, but we believe that meditation is making a positive impact on the lives of many of the prisoners

A small group of people within WCCM are looking to see how we might be able to introduce Christian Meditation to other prisons. If you are aware of any other meditation group regularly meeting in a prison or you have personal experience of prison meditation please email: ukprisons@wccm.org with details.

Geoff Waterhouse

Meditation Companions



**Do you have questions about your meditation practice?
Or about your spiritual life generally?**

Meditation Companions are experienced WCCM meditators who are there for you to talk to immediately.

**Contact Anne McDonnell
01603 810646
anne.mcdonnell@talk21.com**



Donations

If you would like to make a donation to support the work of WCCM in the UK please send cheques to:

**The Christian Meditation Trust (UK)
32 Hamilton Road, London W5 2EH**

Please include your name and address and make cheques payable to: CMT(UK)

Gift Aid

If you are a UK taxpayer you can Gift Aid your donation, which increases the amount we receive at no extra cost to you.



If you would like to Gift Aid your donation please include and sign the following declaration.

Declaration: I wish the Christian Meditation Trust (UK) to treat this gift and any donations made by me in the previous four years and any donations made by me in the future as Gift Aid donations. I am resident in the United Kingdom. I have paid/will pay basic rate income tax on the gross amount given.

If you have any queries or would like to set up a standing order or electronic transfer, please contact the UK Office Tel. 020 8280 0049 uk@wccm.org

Meditation Practice

Meditating with Homeless People

Meditation is a gift. It is a gift I choose to accept. But it should come with a health warning. Not everything we experience in meditation feels good, nor is it what we expect. In fact, it is often quite the opposite. I discovered my cowardice and a capacity for self-delusion. I discovered that the “fruits” of meditation are not fruits to take home and enjoy privately. The fruits are uncompromising and challenging. I was being called to live from a place of uncertainty, self-doubt and insecurity. It seemed to go against rational reasoning.

Before coming to stay at Meditatio House, I was living in Paris and while walking the streets I became increasingly aware of the vulnerability and desperate plight of those living on the streets. I began to realise I was being called to work with the homeless. It was a powerful beckoning but at that time I felt impotent and scared to act and could not think how I was to respond. While living in Meditatio House and sharing in the precious life of the community, the question of “how” was answered during my meditation. With the support of friends living within the House and the blessing of Fr. Laurence, I was encouraged to follow my intuition (I had no idea what I was doing). I offered myself for meditation group sessions for homeless people. I realised that I needed to offer a place of silence and stillness in their otherwise chaotic, frightening and pained worlds. The experience has been a profound gift. Since November, when the work began, my world has gradually been turning upside down and inside out.

As a result of these experiences and the people I have met and the stories I have been blessed to have been able to share, I am now in the middle of setting up a community environment week-long pilot project called **Soil, Silence and Service** where those with wealth, power and influence and the poorest and most vulnerable in society, will come together through the simple act of meditation. This is where love is, this is where we reconnect and discover that we are one with one another. We are rooted in the same soil. We need transformative, relational engagement between the poorest and richest. Our world is more divided and wounded than ever.

My experience of living in Meditatio House offered me the space to learn that each day we re-learn how to connect to our source and re-learn how to become simple like children. Each day we begin again and meditation is the great pilgrimage to the soul. Yet suffering of the soul and poverty of spirit are as common amongst the wealthy and powerful as they are

amongst the poor and destitute. In acknowledging our own suffering, we become more human and can reach out with love to those whose suffering is greater. This is the great message and teaching of Christian Meditation. Love is the bridge.

“Let us never lose our living conviction that it is not necessary to wait until we are splendid people before we can do splendid things - that would probably mean waiting a long time, too long in fact! We only need to understand one splendid thing and then try to base our whole life on it: and that is that the first person we must help in all things is the person who is suffering the most.”

Abbé Pierre

Benedict Bowmaker



Editor's Note

The Abbé Pierre quote is from *The Rule for the Companions of Emmaus*. Emmaus is a homelessness charity that provides more than a bed for the night; they offer a home, meaningful work and a sense of belonging to people who have experienced homelessness and social exclusion. The first Emmaus community was founded in Paris, in 1949, by Father Henri-Antoine Grouès, better known as Abbé Pierre, to build homes and provide social enterprise work for those who lived on the streets in the aftermath of the war. The work supported the community, funded the homes and provided value and self-worth to the members.

More than 300 Emmaus communities exist in 36 countries worldwide. Through the work of Cambridge businessman Selwyn Image, who had spent time at a social enterprise in Paris, the first community in the UK opened in 1992; there are now 24 spread across the country from Glasgow to Dover with over 600 Emmaus companions. Each community has at least one shop or social enterprise, with many running successful cafés, shops, gardening projects and removal companies.

You can find out more about Emmaus at www.emmaus.org.uk

Physical Distractions During Meditation

When we have been meditating for a while and start to go deeper, the process of purification, or unloading of the unconscious, as Thomas Keating (Centering Prayer Movement) calls it, begins. As well as this, physical distractions or side effects may appear, which are the result of the body and mind throwing off tension and beginning to quieten down. It is helpful to know what form these side effects might take.

During meditation sensations of intense heat, icy cold or burning feelings sometimes occur. Aches and pains and itching may come and go. Feelings of tingling, numbness or pulsation coursing through the body or over the top of the head may be experienced.

Sometimes they are pleasant, sometimes not. A feeling like an electric current may pass through the body or a sensation like a tight band around the head may be felt.

Meditators may tremble, shiver, perspire, even laugh or cry. They may think they can smell certain smells, taste or hear things, see things like lights, sparks, spirals or even pictures. Bodily sensations may occur, such as the feeling of floating, growing lighter or bigger, or being pushed over. Throats may become dry or full of saliva and hearts may pound or breathing become quicker or slower. On occasion sexual feelings may also occur.

John Main, as well as spiritual teachers of every religious tradition, taught that these distractions are to be ignored. Some even stress that pleasant ones can be traps if desired or deliberately prolonged. St. Theresa of Avila, who was prone to such things, taught this and St. John of the Cross was adamant that they did not mean you were turning into a saint, even if you had a vision of Christ himself. John Main once said that if you found yourself levitating then it was usually the result of taking too much soda with your whisky!

Do not be surprised if they appear or do not appear. Not everyone will experience them. They are normal occurrences as a result of tension release, and only if they are distinctly uncomfortable should it be necessary to cease meditating. They usually take care of themselves and stop after a while. If they do not stop, ignore them and keep on saying your mantra.

Helpful Books:-

- Invitation to Love by Thomas Keating (pub. Element)
- Open Mind, Open Heart by Thomas Keating (pub. Element)
- The Path to No-Self by Bernadette Roberts (pub. SUNY Press)

Sue Giuntoni – Joint Coordinator Yorkshire Region



World Community for Christian Meditation UK

Essential Teaching Weekend

With Janet Robbins

Llangasty, Brecon, Powys

Friday 23 - Sunday 25 October 2015

Have you been meditating for more than a year? Do you feel you would like to grow in your understanding of your meditation practice?

Essential Teaching Weekends explore the history of meditation and help you arrive at a deeper insight into what the experience of the practice means to you personally and to see ways in which this experience can be shared with others. Presentations by teachers in the community illustrate the place of meditation in the contemplative tradition, the essential aspects of our practice and the psychological aspects of the journey.

The style of the weekend is relaxed and informative and will be hosted by **Llangasty Retreat House**, a well known and popular Christian centre. The house is situated in the Brecon Beacons National Park, and boasts some beautiful views from the lounge windows. Accommodation is in single and twin rooms (not ensuite). Two twin ensuite ground floor rooms are available and reserved for disabled use.

Weekend cost per person: £175- £195

To apply email: jacrussell3@gmail.com or phone 01296 488450 (office hours only please)

Christian Meditation Trust (UK) reg charity no 1101900

The School of Meditation

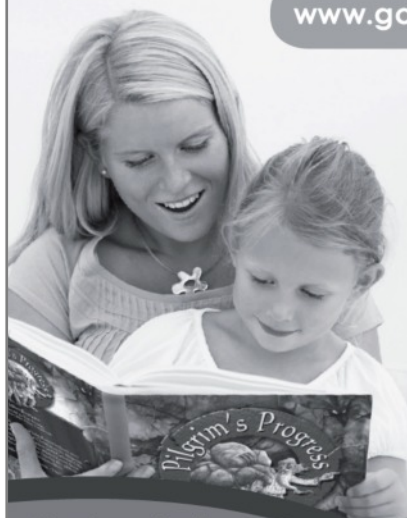


Christian
books

WCCM UK DISTRIBUTORS

See online the range of books, talks, and DVDs

www.goodnewsbooks.net



- Resources for schools & churches

- Sale or return book-packs for events

Opening times:

Office: 9 – 5 Mon – Fri
Shop: 10 – 4 Mon – Fri

Goodnews Books
St John's Church Complex
296 Sundon Park Road
Luton, Bedfordshire
LU3 3AL

01582 571011

orders@goodnewsbooks.net

Events

Please check the Christian Meditation UK website for changes or additional events: www.christianmeditation.org.uk/whats-on

National

Friday 25 September to Sunday 27 September: Christian Meditation as an

11th step practice: Retreat Venue: Kairos Centre, Mount Angelus Road, Roehampton, London, SW15 4JA www.thekairoscentre.co.uk

Saturday 24 October - Sunday 25 October: Annual UK Oblate Gathering

2015 with Fr Laurence Freeman. Venue: Monastery of Christ Our Saviour, Jacks Lane, Turvey, Bedfordshire MK43 8DH 01234 881211

Contact: Eileen Dutt eduttobl@christianmeditation.org.uk

School of Meditation Events: Contact: Jacqueline Russell

jacqrussell3@gmail.com

Friday 4 September to Friday 11 September: School of Meditation

Silent Retreat. Venue: Briery Retreat Centre, Ilkley, West Yorkshire. See page 2.

Friday 23 October to Sunday 25 October: Essential Teaching

Weekend. Venue: Llangasty Retreat House, Brecon Beacons, Powys. See page 9.

Southeast England

Monday 10 August: Oblate Day (Oxford Cell) All cells are open and visitors will be made very welcome. Contact: Julia Bee julia@life-encounter.com

Monday 5 October (supper) to Saturday 10 October (breakfast): Christian

Meditation Retreat: The Truth Will Set You Free. Leader: Liz Watson
Venue: The House of Prayer 35 Seymour Road, East Molesey, Surrey KT8 0PB
Contact: 020 8941 2313 or email info@christian-retreat.org
Cost: £280

Saturday 24 October: 10:30-16:00: Roots in the Desert. Leader: Liz Watson
Venue: Friends' Meeting House, Priory Road, Chichester PO19 1NX
Contact: Susan Cunningham 01243 775730

Saturday 31 October 10:00-16:00: Deepening Your Meditation. Leader:

Liz Watson
Venue: The House of Prayer 35 Seymour Road, East Molesey, Surrey KT8 0PB
Contact/Bookings: 020 8942 9069
mda_p@yahoo.co.uk Cost: £20 Please bring a packed lunch.

Northeast England

Saturday 11 July and Saturday 12 September: Christian Meditation and Tai Chi Workshops: Venue: St Antony's Priory, Durham
www.stantonymspriory.co.uk Contact: info@stantonymspriory.co.uk or 0191 3843747

Friday 11 September: Christian Meditation and Tai Chi Workshops Venue: Ampleforth Abbey
Contact: as above.

Friday 25 September (17:00) to Sunday 27 September (lunch): Yorkshire Region Silent Retreat :Discovering Peace in a Chaotic World. Leader: Julie Roberts, with Julie Darling leading a reflection with Celtic harp on Saturday afternoon. Venue: The Briery, 38 Victoria Avenue, Ilkley, Yorkshire LS29 9BW
Cost: £125 residential for the weekend or £30 day attendance on the Saturday only. Contact: Sue Purkis: suepurkis@hotmail.co.uk, 01535 632171 / 07702 692117 or Sue Giuntoni: giuntoni@btinternet.com, 0113 258 3780 / 07761 564089

Friday 9 October to Sunday 11 October: Christian Meditation Silent Retreat. Venue: Ampleforth Abbey
Contact: info@stantonymspriory.co.uk or 0191 3843747.

Northwest England

Tuesday 4 August 2015 10:00 for 10:30-15:30: Living with the Mystics
Theme: To be advised Leader: To be advised Venue: Friends Meeting House, Elliot Park, Keswick
Contact: Bob Morley 016974 72644
rgm1@live.co.uk Cost: £5.00 Drinks provided, please bring own lunch.

Saturday 29 August 2015 10:00 for 10:30-15:30: Quiet Day Theme: Be Still and Know
Leader: Alan Mitchell & Deirdre Hannah Venue: St Mary's Church Dalton LA15 8AZ
Contact: Alison MacMahon 01229 343621
ally-mac@hotmail.co.uk Cost: Free. Drinks provided, please bring your own lunch

Friday 2 October to Sunday 4 October: Lancashire Retreat: Arise My Love, My Fair One. The song of songs as a resource for contemplative prayer
Leaders: Graeme and Liz Watson, Terry Doyle
Venue: Briery Retreat Centre, Ilkley, West Yorkshire LS29 9BW.
Contact: Lesley Easterman 01204 811050
lesley.easterman@btinternet.com Cost: £156

Tuesday 3 November 2015 10:00 for 10:30 - 15:30: Living with the Mystics
Theme: Rilke Leader: Margaret Ives
Venue: Friends Meeting House, Elliot Park, Keswick
Contact: Bob Morley 016974 72644
rgm1@live.co.uk Cost: £5.00 Drinks provided, please bring own lunch.

Friday 6 November 17:00 to Sunday 8 November 14:00: Boarbank Retreat
Leader: Liz Watson
Venue: Boarbank Hall, Allithwaite, Grange over Sands, Cumbria LA11 7NH
Contact: Richard 01946 862990
cmcwccm@fastmail.fm Cost: £125 (residential).

East Midlands

Saturday 12 September 10:30-16:00: A day of silence and reflection with The Song of Songs. Leader: Graeme Watson
Venue: St Margaret Clitheroe Church, Hall Farm Road, Duffield, Derbyshire DE56 4FS
Contact: Peter Short 07748911175
Cost: Suggested donation: £10. Please bring a Bible and packed lunch (drinks provided).

West Midlands

Saturday 4 July 10:00 for 10:30-15:30: Pathways into Silence: the Desert Tradition. Leader: Br Nicholas from Glasshampton Monastery. Venue: Quaker Meeting House, Colmore Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham B14 7PE.
Contact: Joy Cheek. Tel: 0121 443 4625
joycheek@hotmail.co.uk
Cost: Suggested donation £20. Bring packed lunch, drinks provided.

Friday 16 October to Sunday 18 October: West Midlands Autumn Retreat: 'The Power of Simple Attention' Leader: Liz Watson and Chris Hurley
Venue: Noddfa Centre, Conway Old Road, Penmaemawr, Gwynedd LL34 6YF
Cost: full board £120.00
Contact: Margaret Jarvis 01743-240401
westmids@christianmeditation.org.uk

Southwest England

Friday evening 2 October - Sunday lunch on 4 October: South West Contemplation and Community Retreat: Silent Chorus: Wisdom of the Dawn - Thomas Merton's contemplative voice speaks to us today
Speaker: Bridget Hewitt
Venue: The Ammerdown Centre Radstock Somerset BA3 5SW
Contact: John Roberts 01458 832704
john.wilcott@gmail.com Cost: £185 per person

Saturday 10 October 10:00-16:00: "The Cloud of Unknowing" Leader: Graeme Watson, organised by Dorset Meditators. Venue: The Dorford Centre Dorchester Baptist Church, Bridport Road Dorchester DT1 1RR
Contact: Anita Finnigan 01305 259032
anitafinnigan@hotmail.co.uk
Cost: Suggested donation £12. Please bring own lunch. Tea and coffee provided.

Events

Southwest England continued:

Saturday 17 October 10:00-15:30: Quiet Day/Half Day for Meditators in Devon. Morning 10.00 - 12.30, Afternoon 1.30 - 3.30 Numbers are limited to a maximum of 7. Places are available on a first come first served basis. **Cost:** £3 to cover costs and to send a donation to the WCCM. Light refreshments provided. Please bring a packed lunch if you wish to stay for the whole day. **Contact:** Rosemary Allan-Willcox 01392 437074 r.allan-willcox@virginmedia.com

London

Meditatio House 32 Hamilton Road, London W5 2EH Tel: 020 8579 5911 meditationnews@wccm.org

Regular events:

Daily Meditation: at 7:00 (Saturday and Sunday 8:00); 12:00 and 18:30 (Wednesdays 19:00).

Mondays 18:30: Essential Teaching – open to all but especially useful for newcomers. Led by Fr Laurence Freeman or others.

Wednesdays 19:00: Meditation – Young adult meditators.

First Saturday of the Month 14:00–16:00: Quiet afternoon for those on the 12-Step Program.

Second Saturday of the Month 10:30–21:00: Stations of Contemplation: A retreat day with meditation, lectio divina, discussions and sharing meals. Led by and for the young adult meditators of the community.

Oblate Days: Saturday 25 July 11:30–16:30 Contact: gilly@withers.org 01334 761980. All welcome.

The Meditatio Centre St Marks, Myddelton Square, London EC1R 1XX Tel: 020 7278 2070 meditatio@wccm.org www.wccmmeditatio.org

Regular events:

Weekday 13.00–13.30: Meditation – All welcome

Mondays 19:00–19:30: Meditation

Mondays 19:30–21:00: Yoga. Cost: £14 drop in; £72 for block of 6 classes; £8 concessions **Contact:** Lucy 07904 166123 lucybarnes@btinternet.com

Wednesdays 11:00–12:30: Open House – a space to learn about meditation.

Second Wednesday of every month 18:15–19:15: Meditation in a time of loss Contact: lizwatson@blueyonder.co.uk Donation appreciated.

Thursdays 19:00–21:00 (monthly): Living with the Mystics Study Group. Cost: £10. Drinks will be provided.

Special events:

Saturday 11 July 10:30–16:30: My Only Me Is God. Leader: Martin Laird OSA **Cost:** £30 Concessions £20 Please bring a packed lunch. Coffee and tea provided.

Saturday 4 July 13:00–17:30: Movement and Meditation Workshops. Facilitator: Giovanni Felicioni **Cost:** £20 Concessions £15

Thursday 3 September 18:30–21:00: Milestones: Talk 3. Leader: Fr Laurence Freeman OSB **Cost:** £15 Concessions £10 Light refreshments will be served.

Saturday 5 September 13:00–17:30: Movement and Meditation Workshops. Facilitator: Rebecca Brewin **Cost:** £20 Concessions £15

Thursday 10 September 18:30–21:00: The Light Fantastic. Leader: Rev Don MacGregor **Cost:** £15 Concessions £10 Light refreshments included.

The Meditatio Centre special events continued:

Saturday 19 September 18:30–21:00: Open Mic Songwriter's Night. Leader Daniel Greenwood Acts signing up from 6.30 pm Music starts at 7.30 pm contact: contact@danielgreenwood.co.uk.

Thursday 24 September 18:30–21:00: Indigenous Spirituality in South Africa. Leader: Prof Chris Mann **Cost:** £15 Concessions £10 Light refreshments provided.

Saturday 26 September 10:30–16:30: Attuning the Soul to God. Leader: Robert Wright **Cost:** £30 Concessions £20 Please bring a packed lunch. Coffee and tea provided.

Saturday 3 October 11:00–16:00: Movement and Meditation Workshops. Facilitator: Lucy Barnes **Cost:** £20 Concessions £15

Thursday 8 October 18:30–21:00: Open Questions in Science. Leader: Rupert Sheldrake **Cost:** £15 Concessions £10 Light refreshments included.

Saturday 10 October 10:30–16:30: 'Touched with Ocean' Leader: The Reverend Canon Mark Oakley **Cost:** £30 Concessions £20 Please bring a packed lunch. Tea and coffee provided.

Wednesdays 14, 21, 28 October, 11, 18, 25 November 18:30–21:00: Finding the Way. Leader: Liz Watson **Contact:** lizwatson@blueyonder.co.uk **Cost:** £15 or £75 for whole course paid in advance Concessions £10 or £50 for whole course paid in advance Light refreshments included.

Saturday 17 October 11:00–16:00: Growing in Love. Suggested donation no more than £5 toward a simple lunch. **Contact:** 020 8280 0049 or uk@wccm.org

Thursday 22 October 18:30–21:00: Rudiments of Grace. Leader: Prof Chris Mann **Cost:** £15 Concessions £10 Light refreshments included.

Saturday 24 October 10:30–16:30: Revolutionary Communion Chasing Thomas Merton – 100 years on. **Leader:** Rev Gary Hall **Cost:** £30 Concessions £20 Please bring packed lunch. Tea and coffee provided.

Thursday 29 October 18:30-21:00: Zen Practice. Leader: Robert Kennedy SJ **Cost:** £15 Concessions £10 Light refreshments provided.

Tuesday 3 November 18:30–21:00: Milestones: Talk 4. Leader: Fr Laurence Freeman OSB **Cost:** £15 Concessions £10 Light refreshments will be served.

Westminster Cathedral

Daily Meditation: 12.30–13:00 Monday to Friday. In the chapel in St Paul's Bookshop. All welcome.

First Wednesday Quiet Days: 12:00–16:30: The first Wednesday of each month is a retreat day held in the Hinsley Room in Morpeth Terrace, next to Westminster Cathedral.

5 August: Put your lamp on a lampstand with John Woodhouse.

2 September: Anyone who wants to be great must be your servant with Eileen McDade.

7 October: My house will be called a house of prayer with Sr Agatha Collopy.

4 November: Act justly, love tenderly, walk humbly with your God with Jill Benet.

Silence in the City See www.silenceinthecity.org.uk for the programme, or contact info@silenceinthecity.org.uk. 020 7231 6278 or 020 7252 2453. Unless stated otherwise all talks are at: Westminster Cathedral Hall, London SW1P 1QH. Prebooking is necessary.

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Keeping In Touch

If you would like to ...

- Receive Meditation News by email or post
- Receive the monthly events bulletin by email
- Find out about meditation groups in your local area
- Find out about the Lone Meditator Network

Visit: www.christianmeditation.org.uk

Email: uk@wccm.org

Or contact:

WCCM UK Office

32 Hamilton Road, London W5 2EH

020 8280 0049