

# The Workshop on the Essential Teaching

The Workshop focuses on the core teaching of Christian meditation, the practice, the history of the tradition and psychological aspects of the journey. There is a practical session on answering questions and everyone is asked to prepare a 10 minute introductory talk which they give in a small group. The programme is framed in meditation together and is very participative, drawing on our own experience as well as the teaching of John Main, Laurence Freeman and earlier teachers.

## Comments from the February 2009 Ilkley event:

I think the most exciting thing about a School Weekend is that a group of people get together and share their deeply felt interest in meditation and the teaching of John Main. Out of this come new ways of thinking and learning and this, in turn, enhances our ability to pass the teaching on. It deepens our own practice but also frees us to look at the teaching from different perspectives and this is best summarised by one of the participants at Ilkley:

*Hearing other peoples' contributions allowed me to value the different ways of offering the essential teaching, which allowed me to let go of "there's one good way of doing it".*

Sarah Kirkup

## Participants contributions

- Well, I thought there must be some certain way to run a group, rules, and there are guidelines but it's good to know I'm doing OK and I see the simplicity of it.
- Hearing other peoples' contributions allowed me to value the different ways of offering the essential teaching, which allowed me to let go of "there's one good way of doing it".
- A lot more confident now. I felt I was very much alone in this. Knowing I have support in people not just in tapes or over the net, but real people that I can put faces on. I loved it.
- Articulating the essentials. Integrating meditation with general Christian faith.
- Given a good grounding in the teaching. Meditation sessions were very special. It was daunting preparing the ten minute talk knowing that you would have to deliver it, but sense of achievement afterwards, and appreciated the feedback.
- It has made me realise how little I know and some of the resources that are available.
- Reinforced my passion!

## Comments from experienced meditators

If you have been meditating for many years and think the School is really for relative newcomers, read this:

“I have been meditating for a long time, over twenty years, and have led small groups in three different places, which just seem to have happened without any conscious intention on my part. Nevertheless, I decided this year to attend a Workshop on the Essential Teaching. I went on it, enjoyed it, and benefitted from it.”

Also, people are getting more out of the Workshops second time around.

The Workshop is particularly focussed on how to communicate to others this tradition of meditation we follow in WCCM. This made me focus on articulating my daily practice. We had exercises such as:

How would you sum up meditation if you were given 30 seconds to do so?

What would you say if you were giving a 10 minute talk?

In the School you are given the opportunity to do these very things in a small group – in front of a sympathetic audience, other participants!

We had some good instruction and advice, such as an amusing video on the pitfalls to be avoided in giving a talk!

It was a privilege and a pleasure to share the weekend with more than 20 others all trying to communicate this tradition of meditation. It was wonderful to realise how diverse and fascinating were the paths which brought us together on the journey.

The weekend brought the discipline of training to my personal practice and gave me help in the art of passing on this treasured way to others