



What are the characteristics of a Christian Meditation group?

The World Community for Christian Meditation has a mission statement:

“To communicate and nurture meditation as passed on through the teaching of John Main in the Christian tradition in the spirit of serving the unity of all.”

When is a meditation group a Christian Meditation group? The answer to that is in a nutshell: when the justification for the silent prayer, which is the most important part of a meeting, is founded on the teaching of John Main.

This teaching can be passed on in many different ways in the groups. As introduction to the silence, tapes of John Main or Laurence Freeman, especially the ‘Meditatio’ cd’s that are distributed from Singapore to groups all over the world, are very useful. In many parts of the world passages are used out of the translated books of John Main and Laurence Freeman or others from our Community. The Website offers resources, including these ‘Letters from the International School’ you have been subscribing to. Or meditators give reflections on the teaching from their own reading of the rich resources available.

The shape of the group follows a clear format:

1. A short introduction – not more than 10 – 15 minutes – including a reminder of the basic discipline.
2. Clear indication of the start and finish of meditation; perhaps some gentle music to help people to settle down.
3. 25-30 minutes of meditation
4. Opportunity for questions

Any one is welcome to join a group. Questions are never asked about their religious or spiritual affiliations. If people make it known that their roots are in another discipline they are encouraged to enter and maintain the silence in the way they were taught and are used to. But the focus of the group never wavers from John Main and Laurence Freeman’s teaching. Newcomers will soon find how universal this teaching is, an inspiration for anyone on the spiritual path.

Some people keen to start a meditation group may well start by attracting others by offering yoga and meditation or tai chi/chi kung and meditation. The physical preparation of these disciplines is excellent as a lead-in to meditation, but it is important to emphasize that the meditation we teach is a spiritual discipline, not just a way of relaxation and dealing with stress. It is perfectly possible to use meditation purely for its health benefits as a body and mind altering relaxation technique and stop there. But that would be a missed opportunity; there is much more to meditation than its physiological effects on the body. It is a discipline on the way to personal transformation, to clarity of vision and total awareness.