

Young Meditators



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(by Phillip Seal)

The aim of the Young Meditators programme is to encourage those of us taking early steps on the contemplative way into the ongoing journey of simplicity and depth.

One of the things we can celebrate as a community is that meditation practice can excite, inspire and transform young people, even in the midst of the intense questions and experiences that characterise late adolescence and early adulthood.

The stresses and obsessions that can come to dominate our progress-oriented minds are perhaps particularly present in the lives of young people. To nourish and challenge young seekers is thus a real and pressing challenge for the World Community. It strikes me as an Undergraduate student of twenty-one that there are two main ways in which we can invite younger people into a meaningful relationship with meditation.

The first is through the great spiritual riches that lie at the centre of the World Community. The universal relevance of the contemplative life across times and cultures does not stop short at the youth of the twenty-first century. John Main's vision of a contemplative church can help us to see this. The work of the World Community uncovers with fresh insights the already existing presence of Jesus' call to us to 'watch and pray' (Matt 26: 41, Mark 13: 33, Mark 14: 38).

Whether we are butterfly egos on the cusp of adulthood, or octogenarians with the stability of years and knowledge behind us, the inner way remains the same – a simple, liberating process of letting go and listening to God. As a young man growing up in a fast-paced cultural

climate, this tradition and stability have been a great support to my understanding of Christian life.

The second way we can invite young people into meditation is by re-imagining the styles and methods we use to talk about the universal. God is unchanging, but we are not. Young people like me need to hear voices that reach out with an understanding of what it means to be young and contemplative today. This isn't at all easy (young people are difficult to communicate with a lot of the time!), but one sure tool we can use is our ears. Only if we listen to what young people are saying about the challenges posed by culture and society can we start to wonder how their needs fit into the great breadth and depth of the contemplative way.

The Young Meditators programme is one part of the body of our World Community. The message doesn't need to change. But giving young people a voice, and thinking about how we can speak meaningfully to young adults, are ways in which we can foster the future of the Community's work.

Watch the "Silence in the City" video about Young Meditators on our YouTube Channel!

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