

“Group meditation is a castle that protects the new spiritual aspirants as well as the veteran meditators. Meditating together increases the degree of Self-realisation of each member of the group by the law of invisible vibratory exchange of group magnetism” - Paramahansa Yogananda

Group Meditation Guidelines

Meditation Service Format

Energization Exercises

The Energization Exercises are a series of standing exercises developed by Paramahansa Yogananda to help prepare one for meditation. They are practised outdoors in a group before meditation.

Meditation Service

A meditation leader guides the group through periods of silent meditation and prayer, and periods of devotional chanting.

Chanting

Chanting with deep concentration and devotion draws the devotee inward to the altar of God’s presence.

Prayer

During the last portion of the meditation, time is spent praying for those who are in need of healing and for world peace.

Learning more about meditation

The techniques of meditation as taught by Paramahansa Yogananda may be learned through the SRF Lessons, which are sent by mail for personal study from the Mother Center in Los Angeles. Applications for the lessons can be obtained from the Edinburgh or Selkirk members, by calling Mother Center on 001 323 225 2471, or online at www.yogananda-SRF.org

Preparing for Meditation

Paramahansa Yogananda said, “Meditation is the ability to take the mind away from every object of distraction and put it on God alone.” A few key points to achieve this state:

Correct posture: sit relaxed with spine straight, feet flat on the floor, shoulders back, chest out, abdomen in and hands with palms turned upwards at the juncture of the thighs and abdomen. It is important that there be no tension.

Focus eyes gently upwards: With eyes closed, focus the gaze gently at the Christ Consciousness centre (the point between the eyebrows).

Focus thoughts on God: If no techniques are known, silently call on God in the language of your heart. Make constant efforts to stay focused in your meditation.

Meditating in a Group

In group meditation devotees come together in silent fellowship to reinforce each other's efforts towards Self-realization. You can do your part by asking, ***“What can I do to keep from distracting others.”*** Effective group meditation is possible only if each person shares responsibility for creating an atmosphere of peaceful stillness. The following guidelines list some positive actions you can take to help create a peaceful environment for group meditation.

Meditation Guidelines

Arrival:

Arrive on time. The doors will be open about half an hour before meditation. There will be no admittance after the meditation begins.

Before Meditation:

- Turn off all electronic devices.
- If you have a frequent cough, cold or any condition that creates noise or restlessness that may affect others, please meditate at home. If you begin coughing during the meditation and it persists, please leave the room to recover. You may return to the meditation during a period of chanting.
- Wear clothes that are made of soft fabrics that don't make noise.
- Leave all food and drink in your vehicle. You may bring water to drink **only during chanting periods.**

During Meditation:

- Please use the bathroom only during chanting periods.
- There is no talking during meditation.
- Practise the meditation techniques so that they are inaudible to others in the group.

- Stay quietly seated during periods of silence.
- If needed, you may stand and do gentle stretching during chanting periods.

Departure:

Please work toward the goal of staying for the entire meditation. Otherwise, leave at the beginning of chanting, keeping silent until well away from the building.

Thank you for being considerate.

“Through the gateway of meditation I will enter God’s temple of peace everlasting. There I will worship him at the altar of new contentment. I will kindle the fire of happiness to illuminate his temple within!” - Paramahansa Yogananda