

Hull Unitarians

Meditation feedback, December 2017

Ten people have provided responses to the short survey on our meditation practice. Of these two people had come just one week when they responded (but may have been again since), three had been twice, three had been 4 times out of four and three did not answer this question.

The second question asked people to rate their experience of different forms of meditation. They were asked to use the following scale, which encouraged people to allocate 4 to just one option indicating their favourite. There are 14 responses of 'favourite' and, as one person chose not to express a favourite, it is evident that five people have two favourite forms of meditation. The results are summarised below. The average is the weighted sum of the responses divided by the number of responses (i.e. excluding the N/A category).

1 means not at all, 2 means OK; 3 means enjoy; & 4 means favourite. N/A means not experienced

Form	1	2	3	4	N/A	Av
Visualisation	2	2	3	3	1	3
Mindfulness	0	5	2	2	1	2.67
Sound	0	2	2	4	2	3.25
Loving Kindness	1	1	5	2	1	2.89
Breath Only	1	1	3	3	2	3

Responses to the two open Questions

Everyone had something to say about the first question, and eight responded to the second.

Q3. What do you get out of coming to meditation?
Calmness – togetherness Stillness Slows my mind right down, try and be present and continue this through my life. Connection to God. A sense of peace, calmness, vitality It gives myself a push to be more mindful in the rest of life and encourage myself to meditate at home. It is good to meet others. A time of quiet and reflection. To learn how to control my thoughts with techniques. A sense of peace; clear mind; peace of mind; good company Benefits all areas of life and maintain focus and well-being. Relaxing and good atmosphere. Opportunity to meet new folk. Meeting people and peace within Social event mostly but also peace within

Analysis

The responses are very helpful and confirm that various people find different forms of meditation helpful. Two people wrote in other forms of chanting or mantra, and one added walking meditation. The most popular option is sound meditation and the two people who wrote in suggesting chanting,

indicated a response of 2 and 3 respectively for sound, so 'sound meditation and chanting' taken together are very popular. The least popular form was mindfulness, however breath meditation, which we have only conducted once, is equal second most popular, despite one person rating it *not at all*. Opinion is very divided about visualisation, with two people rating it *not at all* and 3 rating it their favourite.

Several people mentioned the benefits of meeting up with others. I will therefore continue with a short attunement when we start, and to share in refreshments at the conclusion of each session.

The fourth question was very broad and 8 people responded.

Q4: What does being 'spiritual' mean to you? (If you were to use the word what would you mean by it?)

At one with my inner self

Open mindedness

Been in touch with the divine intelligence of the universe & god realization within.

It means getting in touch with a wider way of life beyond my own 'stuff'. Getting in touch with nature, flowers, the clouds the trees etc.

Spiritual is a divine way of thinking & set way of living, that is unique to me. A positive inspiration.

It's a way of life, a way of being. Doing the right god given thing for other people and myself.

How one lives life today. Practising principles and doing the right thing.

The following were the responses to the final question; **Do you have any other thoughts or comments which you would like to share on meditation?**

It helps me connect with the Good side of myself rather than the negative. I tap into the spiritual principles of loving / kindness / helping others; which I see as God's will.

I found the chanting session the most meaningful for me and have started chanting at home.

Always willing to support and assist in any capacity.

Further Analysis:

We have diverse ideas about spirituality, the notion of God, and the meaning of life, but many of us share an awareness of both the importance of a spiritual practice, and of the ambiguity of seeking within, in order to connect with the universe and a divine presence.

Conclusions:

There is support to continue our meditation sessions in 2018. I suggest that we replace mindfulness with breath meditation, and that we further explore chanting as a form of sound meditation.

Further Questions:

There are always further questions. I am wondering about the length of time we spend on meditation, and also whether the start time is right. Most people arrive between 2 and 2.30 pm, so should we bring the start time forward? If so, could we extend the length of the meditation time from 40 to 50 minutes, starting at 2.30 and ending at 3.20pm? The church is open from 2 pm.

Ralph Catts

Pastor, Hull Unitarians

13 December 2017