

TITLE: Contemplative Practice for the Modern World

This is an untested draft module on meditation designed to be used with second-level students/ teenagers. The purpose of this document is to set out the draft programme as a sequence of lessons and to encourage teachers and others working with teenagers to test the materials in the classroom or other teenage setting and to share with one another, through me, their feedback on what works well, what does not and how the programme might be amended to make it more effective.

Duration: This draft outlines 26 lessons which cover approximately one school term at two lessons per week. Further lessons will be added if teachers volunteer to engage with Noel Keating in testing and developing the module. The teaching content reduces each week, as the time for meditation practice increases. By in large, as especially after Lesson 12, the pattern of each lesson follows the same format: input by way of video, audio or text followed by a 20 minute meditation and concluding with a short discussion (aided by prompts included in the lesson plan).

In this draft model, the content for first six lessons have been fully developed in order to guide the teacher into teaching on a topic where their personal experience of meditation may be limited. The hope is that the teacher will commit to develop their own meditation practice and that, over a period of time, they will develop a greater facility for putting into words that which is, ultimately, inexpressible. Whatever words we may use to describe the ineffable, they are merely stepping stones that point us towards a truth that cannot be expressed in words. This sense is captured beautifully in the saying from the East that ‘When the wise man points to the moon, the fool sees only the finger.’

In launching this draft, the intention is to work with a small group of teachers who will test in out in practice and to develop the content and teaching approaches in light of their experience of teaching the module.

Teachers who agree to adopt, teach and test this module, whether with Transition Year or any other group, will have access to all the necessary resources free of charge for their own personal use and for use with their class group(s). They will also receive additional text resources to help with their own personal meditation practice including a pdf copy of ‘**Radical Simplicity**’.

The intention is that each lesson will offer some video or audio teaching, a copy of that teaching as a pdf (for reading after watching the video or listening to the content) and prompts to promote some dialogue in the class. Every lesson will also have a practice meditation, beginning with 5 minutes and increasing to 20 minutes by the end of the module.

This document sets out the aims, teaching and learning strategies, the hoped for outcomes and the assessment methods for the module, as well as a summary of the content for each lesson. The lessons themselves are contained in a separate document. The first six lessons contain the essential teaching. The remaining lessons each explore an aspect of meditation but can be taken in any order. Teachers who agree to test this module are expected to complete a very

short feedback sheet on each lesson by the end of the week in which it has been tested and to note (i) any suggestions for improving the lesson or for alternative approaches or additional prompts and (ii) any suggested change in the order of the draft lessons, offering reasons for same.

Area of Study: Spiritual, Social & Personal Development

Aims

- ☐ To provide information about various forms of contemplative practice
- ☐ To explore the history of contemplative practice across a variety of wisdom traditions.
- ☐ To reflect on meditation and mindfulness in modern society
- ☐ To discover the benefits and fruits of contemplative practice for individuals, communities and society
- ☐ To provide students with an opportunity to experience the practice of meditation and enable them to explore its benefits and fruits in their lives.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

- ☐ Presentation and exploration of audio, audio-visual and written text
- ☐ Group and personal meditation practice
- ☐ Sharing and discussion about personal experience of meditation

Learning Outcomes

- ☐ Students will have practical experience of contemplative practice
- ☐ Students will have a knowledge of the role of meditation across the wisdom traditions
- ☐ Students will be able to speak about the personal benefits and fruits they have experienced through the practice

Assessment:

- ☐ Level of personal commitment to and engagement with the practice
- ☐ Level of participation in classroom discussion and group work
- ☐ Ongoing completion of a personal Meditation Journal
- ☐ Prepare a short presentation on any aspect of contemplative practice or on your experience of contemplation. This may be an essay (600-800 words), a poem, a song, a dance, a talk (with PowerPoint slides if you wish), a video, a piece of artwork or any other medium. You will make a brief 3-minute presentation to your class on your assignment.

Draft Content:

Proposed Lesson Titles

1. **Meditation: Both Very New and Very Old** (incl 5 min meditation)
2. **Meditation: Being versus Doing** (incl 8 min meditation)
3. **Meditation: A Prayer of the Heart** (incl 10 min meditation)
4. **Meditation: A Universal Practice with Diverse Pathways**(incl 12 min meditation)
5. **Meditation: Discovering Our True-Self**
6. **Meditation: Secular versus Spiritual Understandings** (incl 15 min meditation)
7. **Meditation: The John Main Prayer** (incl 15 min meditation)
8. **Meditation: Expanding our Levels of Understanding and Meaning**
9. **Meditation: Silence in a Busy World** (15-min med)
10. **Meditation: Just Being Yourself** (15-min med)
11. **Meditation & the Brain 1** (15-min med)
12. **Meditation & the Brain 2** (20-min med)
13. **Meditation: The Health Benefits** (20-min med)
14. **What is Distinctive about Christian Meditation?**
15. **Meditation Increases Awareness**
16. **Meditation – The Way of Silence**
17. **Meditation – The Way of Stillness**
18. **Meditation – The Way of Simplicity**
19. **Meditation: From the Head to the Heart**
20. **Meditation: Developing a Habit Loop**
21. **Meditation & Lectio Divina**
22. **Meditation and Metaphor 1**
23. **Meditation and Metaphor 2**
24. **Meditation and Metaphor 3**
25. **Meditation and Metaphor 4**
26. **Meditation and Metaphor 5**

Proposed Lesson Summaries:

1. Meditation: A Universal Practice – Very new, yet very old

- a. Meditation is a universal practice
- b. Meditation can be said to be very new (Mindfulness etc)
- c. 30 second silent sit
- d. Meditation can be said to be very old (All the wisdom and religious traditions)
- e. Meditation as silent, imageless prayer
- f. How to meditate
- g. 5-Minute Meditation
- h. Discussion in pairs/ Group discussion: What have you learned today that surprised you? What stays with you from today? What questions arise for you?
- i. Homework: Meditate each day for 2 minutes.

2. Meditation: Being versus Doing

- a. Reviewing key points from Lesson 1
- b. Trapped on the outer circumference of our lives (Doing)
- c. The inner richness of our lives (Being)
- d. Christian Meditation as silent, imageless prayer, a prayer of the heart
- e. How to Meditate
- f. 8-Minute Meditation
- g. Discussion in pairs/ Group discussion: What have you learned today that surprised you? What stays with you from today? What questions arise for you?
- h. Homework: Meditate each day for 2 minutes

3. Meditation: A Prayer of the Heart

- a. Reviewing key learnings from Lesson 1 and 2
- b. Mental prayer versus contemplative prayer
- c. How to Meditate
- d. 8-Minute meditation
- e. Discussion in pairs/ Group discussion: What have you learned today that surprised you? What stays with you from today? What questions arise for you?
- f. Homework: Meditate each day for 3 minutes

4. Meditation: A Universal Practice

- a. Buddhist and Hindu Traditions
- b. The Christian Tradition
- c. How to Meditate
- d. 10-Minute meditation
- e. Discussion in pairs/ Group discussion: What have you learned today that surprised you? What stays with you from today? What questions arise for you?

- f. Homework: Meditate each day for 3 minutes

5. Meditation: Secular versus Spiritual Understandings

- a. What distinguishes Christian Meditation from Mindfulness
- b. We learn meditation by doing it
- c. The John Main Prayer before meditation
- d. How to Meditate
- e. 10-Minute meditation
- f. Discussion in pairs/ Group discussion: What have you learned today that surprised you? What stays with you from today? What questions arise for you?
- g. Homework: Meditate each day for 4 minutes

6. Meditation: Its Spiritual Fruits

- a.

7. Meditation: The John Main Prayer

- a. Open Our Hearts
- b. The Silent Presence
- c. God Leads us into Mystery
- d. Open to All
- e. How to Meditate
- f. 10-Minute meditation
- g. Discussion in pairs/ Group discussion: What have you learned today that surprised you? What stays with you from today? What questions arise for you?
- h. Homework: Meditate each day for 4 minutes

8. Meditation: Expanding our Levels of Understanding & Meaning

9. Silence in a Busy World

- i. **Claire Morgan:** *Silence in the City (Young Meditators in Sydney)* (10 min video clip)
- j. **Kim Nataraja:** Health Benefits of Meditation (10 min audio)
- k. 15-minute meditation
- l. Sharing/Discussion
- m. Homework: (i) Meditate for 5 minutes each day (ii) Research Kim Nataraja

10. Meditation: Just Being Yourself

- a. John Kabat-Zinn Just Be Yourself (23 minute video clip)
- b. 15-minute Meditation
- c. Homework: (i) Meditate for 5 minutes each day (ii) Research John Kabat-Zinn

11. Meditation and the Brain 1

- a. **Noel Keating/Shanida Nataraja:** Meditation & the Brain (.PPT Slides)
- b. **Sarah Lazar:** *How Meditation Can Reshape the Brain*
- c. 15-minute Meditation
- d. Sharing/Discussion
- e. Homework: (i) Meditate for 5 minutes each day (ii) Research “The Blissful Brain” by Shanida Nataraja

12. Meditation and the Brain 2

- a. **Jill Bolte Taylor:** *My Stroke of Insight* (18-minute video clip)
- b. 20-minute Meditation
- c. Sharing/Discussion
- d. Homework: (i) Meditate for 10 minutes each day (ii) Research Jill Bolte Taylor

13. The Health Benefits of Meditation

- a. **Kim Nataraja:** *Health Benefits of Meditation* (10-minute Audio)
- b. **Noel Keating:** *Benefits of Meditation* (.PPT Slides)
- c. 20-minute Meditation
- d. Sharing/Discussion
- e. Homework: (i) Meditate for 12 minutes each day (ii) Research the health benefits of meditation & summarise in a table, PowerPoint slide or drawing

14. What is Distinctive about Christian Meditation?

- a. **Thomas Merton:** The True Self
- b. 20-Minute Meditation
- c. Sharing/Discussion
- d. Homework: (i) Meditate for 15 minutes each day (ii) Research Thomas Merton

15. Meditation Increases Awareness

- a. **Eckhart Tolle:** *On Being Yourself* (4-minute video clip)
- b. Tony de Mello: Awareness (audio clip or extract from book *Awareness*)
- c. 20-minute Meditation
- d. Sharing/Discussion
- e. Homework: (i) Meditate for 15 minutes each day (ii) Research Eckhart Tolle

16. Meditation: The Way of Silence

- a. **John Main:** The Way of Silence (13 minute audio)
- b. 20-minute Meditation
- c. Sharing/Discussion
- d. Homework: (i) Meditate for 15 minutes each day (ii) Research Zen

17. Meditation: The Way of Stillness

- a. **John Main:** The Way of Stillness (11 minute audio)
- b. 20-minute Meditation
- c. Sharing/Discussion
- d. Homework: (i) Meditate for 15 minutes each day (ii) Research ???

18. Meditation: The Way of Simplicity

- a. **John Main:** The Way of Simplicity (11 minute audio)
- b. 20-minute Meditation
- c. Sharing/Discussion
- d. Homework: (i) Meditate for 15 minutes each day (ii) Research ???

19. Meditation: From the Head to the Heart

- a. **Laurence Freeman:** From the Head to the Heart (15 minute audio)
- b. 20-minute Meditation
- c. Sharing/Discussion
- d. Homework: (i) Meditate for 15 minutes each day (ii) Research ???

20. Meditation: Developing a Habit Loop

21. Lectio Divina: A Different Route to Contemplation

- a. **Introduction to Lectio Divina:** *Lectio, Oratio, Meditatio, Contemplatio*
- b. **Text:** *Go into Your Private Room* (Matt 6:16)
- c. 20-minute Meditation
- d. Sharing/Discussion
- e. Homework: (i) Meditate for 15 minutes each day (ii) Research *Lectio Divina*

22. Meditation and Metaphor 1

23. Meditation and Metaphor 2

24. Meditation and Metaphor 3

25. Meditation and Metaphor 4

26. Meditation and Metaphor 5

Transition Year Meditation Talks ▶ 🔊

25 songs, 4 hours, 42 minutes

^	✓	Name	☁	Time	Artist	Album
1	✓	[20] 01 How to Meditate: John Main		2:32	John Main	TimePeace
2	✓	What Happens In Meditation?		2:49	Laurence Freeman OSB	Questions On Meditation
3	✓	Secular Meditation & Christian Meditation		8:29	Laurence Freeman OSB	The Essential Teaching
4	✓	All You Have to Do is Begin		17:18	John Main	Word Made Flesh (CD5)
5	✓	From The Head To The Heart		10:56	Laurence Freeman OSB	The Art Of Happiness [Disc 1]
6	✓	Who Is at the Centre		16:31	John Main	Word Made Flesh (CD1)
7	✓	Coming Home		9:25	Liz Watson	Images of Meditation
8	✓	What is Meditation 6 (Superman)		10:38	Eckhart Tolle	What is Meditation
9	✓	Being Present Now		17:12	John Main	The Door to Silence CD5
10	✓	Without Demands Or Expectations		7:13	John Main	Questions On Meditation
11	✓	The Teaching On The Mantra		12:16	Laurence Freeman OSB	The Tradition Of Meditation For A Time Of Crisis
12	✓	Health Benefits Of Meditation		9:35	Kim Nataraja	The Transformative Experience Of Meditation
13	✓	Still a Beginner		15:56	John Main	In The Beginning CD1
14	✓	Returning To Our Home		7:12	Jack Kornfield	After The [1]Ecstasy, The Laundry
15	✓	Learning to Expect Nothing		19:13	John Main	The Door to Silence CD5
16	✓	The Teaching Of Jesus On Contemplation (I)		13:47	Laurence Freeman OSB	A Sincere Form of Prayer_Meditatio Talks
17	✓	The Teaching OF Jesus ON Contemplation (II)		11:09	Laurence Freeman OSB	A Sincere Form of Prayer_Meditatio Talks
18	✓	I Am as I Am		13:40	John Main	Word Made Flesh (CD4)
19	✓	An Introduction to Christian Meditation 1		15:41	John Main	The Essential Teaching
20	✓	An Introduction to Christian Meditation 2		15:29	John Main	The Essential Teaching
21	✓	Saying The Mantra And Distraction		4:27	Laurence Freeman OSB	Questions On Meditation
22	✓	Chapter 1 - Silence and Stillness		9:38	Eckhart Tolle	Stillness Speaks (Disc 1)
23	✓	Chapter 2 - Beyond the Thinking Mind		17:51	Eckhart Tolle	Stillness Speaks (Disc 1)
24	✓	Conscious Breathing		4:43	Thich Nhat Hanh	Plum Village Meditations
25	✓	Conscious Breathing Meditation		8:04	Thich Nhat Hanh	Plum Village Meditations

These files are taken from different CDs and audio recordings I have purchased over time and the title of each album is shown in the column on the right. These files are not for public sharing and should only be used for the stated purpose of testing out this module in classroom situations at second level. For this purpose only I have added the audio files to Google Drive for the time being. Please let me know (mnkeating@gmail.com) which you found useful, which most engaged the teenagers and which you considered were wide of the mark. The temporary Google Drive link is:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1rM5GPGx_Izy_8cGO7cvC9oPTtY35vE0q?usp=sharing

The publicly available video files are listed below with the url in each case shown in the right column.

Claire Morgan: <i>Silence in the City (Young Meditators in Sydney)</i>	11 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twjU0Oq1Fuk
John Kabat-Zinn: <i>What Meditation Really Is</i>	04 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=shPI6A2Pq2E
John Kabat-Zinn: <i>Life is Right Now</i>	07 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EU7vKitN4Ro
Sarah Lazar: <i>How Meditation Can Reshape the Brain</i>	09 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8rRzTtP7Tc
John Kabat-Zinn: <i>Just Be Yourself - Talk on Meditation</i>	23 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vr2ATJkxzGA
Anthony de Mello: <i>Wake Up – How to Be Real</i>	10 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2GLzdueyfiM
Anthony de Mello: <i>Wake Up – How to Love</i>	30 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4yqhxlunLA
Eckhart Tolle: <i>On Being Yourself</i>	04 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p4W6wEKgzvo
Eckhart Tolle: <i>How to Escape the Prison of your own Mind</i>	11 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-gDJnbV6fas
Jill Bolte Taylor: <i>My Stroke of Insight</i>	18 min	http://www.ted.com/talks/jill_bolte_taylor_s_powerful_stroke_of_insight?language=en
Jack Kornfield: <i>Mindfulness and the Brain</i>	10 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ArVTv4CQduM
Laurence Freeman: <i>What is Meditation?</i>	10 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8NK1jQM-Gwk
Laurence Freeman: <i>The Meaning of Wholeness</i>	25 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ybx-emFYbtg
Pinky & The Brain: <i>Parts of the Brain</i>	02 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=snO68aJTOpM
The Return of the Prodigal Son (<i>Painting by Rembrandt</i>)	---	http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Return_of_the_Prodigal_Son_(Rembrandt)#/media/File:Rembrandt_Harmensz_van_Rijn_-_Return_of_the_Prodigal_Son_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg
The Return of the Prodigal Son (<i>Video on Rembrandt's Painting</i>)	05 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a4eA1PfdFTs
Jason Mraz: <i>93 Million Miles</i> (Video of song)	04 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=u5WiqJFq2-o
Jason Mraz: <i>Living in the Moment</i> (Video of song)	04 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=q7smZgWQ9_I
Katy Perry: <i>Fireworks</i>	04 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=s3P9fyJEu6E
Ella Henderson: <i>Glow</i>	04 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=ijzoxH1eWfU
Michael Jr.: <i>Delivery Room</i>	03 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TU0f8a3Cizo
Emeli Sande: <i>Next to Me</i> (NK ??)	04 min	https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=CtWUU53rt2Y