



www.justthisday.org

JUST THIS DAY

MEDITATION IN THE MEDIA JUNE 2007

STILLNESS & MEDITATION IN SCHOOLS

JUST THIS DAY's first newsletter was very well received and we had lots of feedback from readers.

challenges as they seek to find their place in an uncertain world and in a society in which their experience of insecurity and isolation is escalating.

Many asked how the idea started, so on the back page of this second newsletter, we have included an article from Elizabeth, the grand- mother who started it all!

The opportunity to find refuge and strength in a realm of stillness which transcends mental and emotional conflict, anxiety and pain is a regular feature of every day at St. James Schools."

This second issue focuses on how different schools across the world use periods of stillness throughout the school day. With motives ranging from personal well-being through to world peace, pausing for just a few moments delivers measurable benefits.

She continued "The schools care for pupils from all the major faiths, as well as for those with no particular faith. The approach is to emphasise the universality of this spirit, encouraging pupils to follow their family's religious tradition if they have one, or to pursue questions about their own true nature.

We asked Mrs. Laura Hyde, Headmistress at St. James Senior School for Girls for her comments.
"Young people are facing unprecedented

Children are taught through a variety of means to respect, honour and to care for every person."

Imagine.

For JUST ONE DAY, people everywhere would join together in stillness.

Take the time to join the rest of the world.

Every effort makes a difference.



If you could make the world peaceful, how would YOU do it?

Founded in 1975, with the aim of providing a complete education for boys and girls from the age of 4½ to 18, the St James Schools in London form the spearhead of an exciting and vigorous world-wide movement in education.

Arminster

By not shouting!

George

By speaking to God

Tom

Tell them about being quiet

Roman

Be generous to everybody and remember God

Luke

Be calm and cooperate and then they might copy you

Every activity during the day at St. James Independent Schools begins and ends with a short pause. The whole class becomes still in body and mind.

Class 2 boys (aged 5-6) were asked "if you could make the world more peaceful, how would you do it?"

Here are some of their replies.

<http://www.stjameschools.co.uk/>

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Our world is busy and in the turmoil we forget we all share the same space. Families, communities and countries live with conflict, poverty and disease. How can we make a difference?

Stop


JUST THIS DAY

Go beyond nationality, religion, belief and remember the still, silent presence where everything is united. That space is the same, up mountains, through the wind and the weather. In fact, wherever YOU are. It belongs to us all.

On Wednesday 28

November 2007 take the time to join the rest of the world. Every effort makes a difference.

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Interview with Pandora Winks Coordinator of Thinking Through Philosophy (TTP) Johannesburg, South Africa

In the current education system, thinking for oneself has become less important than learning to receive and regurgitate information. TTP however observed that rather than children understanding what they had said or written, information was lost as quickly as it was learnt because the mind had not engaged and instead became 'dumb' because there was no real comprehension or connection.

Thinking Through Philosophy (TTP) is a programme designed for children, but which includes adults. Its aim is to re-engage the use of the mind - an aspect of learning that has become dormant in the current education system.

"The effect on children who have taken part, has been to open their minds by gaining an internal faith and confidence in their own intelligence".

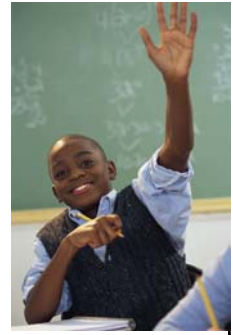
TTP trains teachers to facilitate real learning by allowing children to discover their own opinions, beliefs and understanding. Using a method of guided questioning leads the children's enquiry to their own understanding of the topic being discussed. For example "Why should we be good to other people?" or "Why should we respect our parents/teachers?" is begun by using a simple question to which there might be a conventional answer, and then asking why that answer arises and what it actually means.

In this way questions are heard and answered by allowing the conversation to lead to a point of understanding, thus a point of true knowledge is reached. The effect on children who have taken part, has been to open their minds by gaining an internal faith and confidence in their own intelligence. At this point there is real stillness because the enquiry has been brought to a point of rest.

TTP works with children as young as 4 and has evidence to show that the quiet mind is the most powerful, because its potential is active. When engaged in true thought the mind is not being exhausted by anything unnecessary but is able to select an answer that is precise and coherent. In thinking for themselves, the children find their own knowledge and realise both mental, spiritual and emotional intelligence.

The hope is that the programme will continue to be well received and expand to include many more schools, both in South Africa and other countries around the world.

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JOHN COLET SCHOOL
Traditional values • Imaginative Approach



Using periods of stillness throughout the school day. Gilbert Mane, Headmaster, John Colet School, Australia explains why

John Colet School was founded with a threefold aim. To give the children a systematic and methodical curriculum; to give them a clear moral and ethical framework; and, to introduce them to simple spiritual practices. This last aim is approached by punctuating the day with frequent periods of stillness where the teacher and class sit quietly for a few moments and connect with the present. They then move into the next lesson largely free of the accumulated activity of the previous subject.

At the age of ten the children are asked if they would like to take up a system of mantra meditation. Those who choose to (it is not compulsory) then meditate together every morning and afternoon for five minutes with their teacher.

The practical effect of stillness and meditation is that the school has a lively, wakeful atmosphere; and the children leave us, at the age of about twelve, with a sense of inner being which gives them poise, confidence and presence. <http://johncolet.nsw.edu.au/welcome.php>



Meditation lessons for pupils

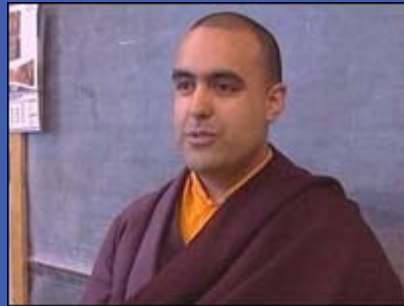
Meditation lessons for pupils
School children in Cardiff have been getting to grips with a new kind of lesson - in how to de-stress.

Pupils at three secondary schools in the city have been having lessons in meditation from a visiting monk.

It is part of a project by a new Buddhist charity - Ropka - which has set up in the city.

Cardiff High, Whitchurch and Fitzalan School pupils have all had a visit from a visiting Buddhist monk called Thubten.

He has been introducing a sense of calm in the classroom by getting the children to meditate. Thubten, a former actor, turned to meditation when he found himself suffering from health problems.



Buddhist monk Thubten
"Stress is the new illness"

"Everyone is stressed - stress is the new illness," he said.

"And so the work that we do through Ropka in Cardiff is to help people find the root of the stress and let people tame the mind."

Pupils at Fitzalan School who have taken part in the meditation lessons have been enthusiastic.

"It was really good, really relaxing," said one pupil.

"We're all stressed - sometimes you have to do something to stop the stress," said another.

Attentive Head of RE at the school Phil Williams said some of the Year 7 and 8 pupils who had taken part in the meditation sessions had tried out the techniques for themselves.

"We don't often get a Buddhist visitor to the school - especially not a Buddhist monk," he said. "The pupils were all very attentive during Thubten's two visits."

Ropka is a Tibetan world meaning help and the charity currently operates in 19 countries around the world. As well as schools, the charity is hoping to expand its meditation sessions into other areas - including hospitals, prisons and businesses.

©BBC Published : 30 June 2003 http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/wales/south_east/3032142.stm



Director aims to boost meditation

Film Director David Lynch wants to raise \$7bn (£3.98bn) to introduce meditation into US schools in a bid to bring about world peace



Twin Peaks director Lynch said he saw stress-relieving benefits of meditation in schools in Iowa and South Africa. He aims to ensure "every child in the US who wants to meditate can learn".

Lynch added: "People laugh at \$7bn but it would stay in a bank account and the interest would be enough to keep things going on a permanent basis." "This is a way to bring real peace to earth," said Lynch, whose films include Mulholland Drive and Wild at Heart.

Meaningful gesture

"I would like to find some very wealthy individuals who saw the truth of this and said 'I want to do something for the world which is meaningful'."

"Real peace isn't just the absence of war. It is the absence of negativity."

The 59-year-old film-maker said he had been practicing transcendental meditation himself for more than 30 years. "You can say I'm full of baloney, but you meet students who get this opportunity and they shine like you cannot believe," he said.

©BBC Published : 21 July 2005 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/film/4703495.stm>

JUST THIS DAY

In our first newsletter we included a profile of Laurence Freeman, a Benedictine monk of the Congregation of Monte Oliveto and Director of [The World Community for Christian Meditation](#).

When the Benedictine Priory of Montreal was founded in 1977, John Main started to introduce people to meditation and children formed part of the groups right from the beginning. This has remained a strong aspect of the Community's vocation and over the years many meditating parents, grand-parents and teachers have taught children to meditate. Laurence Freeman meets with and encourages many meditators all over the world who have started reintroducing this way of prayer to children and he joins the children for meditation.

Kim Nataraja, International Coordinator of Meditation with Children comments "In the last couple of years Christian meditation has been introduced into 31 primary and secondary schools in the Diocese of Townsville, Australia, as an integral part of their Religious Education Curriculum and this structured method is currently being explored in Belfast, NI. One interesting proven aspect is that the effect on children is greatest when meditation is taught in a spiritual context."

Kim also provides some useful resources for information on meditation with children. Sister Madeleine Simon's "Born Contemplative" (To be reprinted shortly by Medio Media), "My Happy Heart" CD and book by Greg Ryan and "Like A Child" by Barbara O'Halloran in 2004. Another useful resource with guidance and information for anyone interested in meditating with children is www.meditationwithchildren.com.



How it all started.....

As a mother, grandmother, teacher and student approaching her sixtieth year, Elizabeth found the divisions in families, societies, nations and even between religions and faiths, deeply sad. "Surely" she thought "this is not how we were designed to live?"

"If life has taught me anything, it is that fundamentally everybody is the same in wishing for happiness for themselves and those they love. If that circle is extended, the wish for happiness for others must expand with it."

The idea for **JUST THIS DAY** came to Elizabeth from two clear observations. First, that stillness exists. Second, when a person or a group of people are still, the power of that stillness has a tangible, palpable effect. If you visit a place which has been used for prayer or meditation, or even if you pass a room where people are silent, it is as powerful as any amount of noise.

To sit or be still knowing that the circle of well wishers of the world was your family, would, she believes be more powerful than



Elizabeth and some members of her family

any amount of political debate, more effective than any action. Imagine what the effect of being still on **JUST THIS DAY** when thousands of other people will be doing the same thing could have? It is something anybody, whatever nationality, race, religion, age or gender can do.

The idea of joining together as a worldwide family on November 28th has already received a clear and positive response. This is something we CAN all do. We can allow ourselves to believe that there is a real possibility that by joining humanity in stillness we can make a difference. Please make **JUST THIS DAY** your business.

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