



Syllabus

SPD 105 Meditation Practices

Course Overview

Course Instructor

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Course Description

Extensive research on meditation practices has revealed that regular meditation has many mental and physical benefits. This course explores the practice and the experience of various forms of meditation. Benefits of the various forms of meditation will be explored as well as methods to deal with resistance to it. There will also be helpful tips for developing a regular meditation practice. Practicing the Silence, Unity's meditation practice, is fundamental and foundational to Unity teachings.

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of the course learners will be able to:

- Define meditation, Practicing the Silence, and the Silence
- Describe the benefits of meditation.
- Develop a daily practice of the Silence and report on their progress
- Identify and describe any blocks or resistance to daily meditation as well as strategies to overcome them.
- Compare and contrast different types of meditation.

Required Books

- Bodian, Stephan. *Meditation for Dummies, 4th Edition*. Hoboken, New Jersey, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2016
- Hasselbeck, Paul. *Heart-Centered Metaphysics*, Unity Village: Unity House, 2010
- Bring a Journal or something to write in during and after class.

Class Sessions

June 3-7, 2024 from 10am – 12pm Eastern Time

Academic Performance: Progress Evaluation

- **S: Satisfactory** = 75 - 100%
- **NC: No Credit** = 0 - 74%

Other possibilities:

- **AU: Audit** – student is not seeking credentialing (no assignments required).
- **I: Incomplete** – waiting for completion of one or more assignments. Given by approval of the Rev. Edith due to an urgent and unusual circumstance in the life of the participant.

Assignments and Expectations:

1. **Be open to and participate in the experience of different types of meditation.**
2. **Create a journal for the examination of your meditation practice even though you will not turn in your journal.**
3. **Complete all assignments by the due date in the syllabus.**
4. **FOR SEE CREDIT: Design a meditation program to last for one month, include at least 3 hours individual meditation retreat (or participate in a formal group meditation retreat) in your plan. Practice your plan for one month and maintain your journaling. At the end of the month, write a one-page paper on the experience of practicing your personally designed meditation program. Include any resistance that came up and how you dealt with it; any insights that came out of your journaling; the impact the program had on your life and how you see meditation as a part of your ongoing spiritual practice.**

Assignments

It is important to complete your assignments on or before the due dates.

NOTE: If you experience an emergency and are unable to complete your assignments on time, Contact Rev. Edith.

Course Procedures

You are expected to read the entire Syllabus and all materials listed under the Required & Recommended Readings, Homework and Assignments for each day. Complete all assignments by the specified due date.

Preferred Methods for Delivering Assignments

All assignments are due by the date and time listed in the syllabus. All are due using the Eastern Time zone. Email the assignments to Rev Edith: minister@unityofgaithersburg.org

Course Outline

Class 1: “Meditation and Its Benefits”

Monday June 3, 2024

Monday’s Theme

We will explore the question, Why Meditate?

Learning Objectives

By the end of this class, learners will be able to:

- Define meditation.
- Describe the personal benefits of meditation.

Class 1: Learning Assignments		Due Dates
Reading(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bodian, <i>Meditation for Dummies</i>:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Chapter 1: Embarking on Your Meditation Journey○ Chapter 2: Why Meditate○ Chapter 3: Zen & Now: Where Meditation Comes From• Hasselbeck, <i>Heart-Centered Metaphysics</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Chapters 6 & 7 (scan of chapters included)	Read before first class	
Class 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction• Syllabus• Define meditation.• Benefits of meditation.• History of Meditation• Fruit Meditation<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Mindfulness exercise “eating a piece of fruit.”○ Journal about your experience	Bring a piece of fruit to class, preferably an orange.	

Journal Reflection – No need to turn in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of your journal experience answer this question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do I personally want to gain from this course of study and what is my intended outcome? 	
Homework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write in your journal by responding to the following prompt: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go online and find at least 5 different meditation types that are available either through the Internet or YouTube. Experience at least 1 of these meditations each day during this course to practice different meditations. Briefly journal about your experience. 	

Class 1: Assignments	Due Dates
Homework Assignment: Meditation Practice Essay Referring to today’s reading, answer the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is Meditation? What are the top two benefits of meditation for you and why? <i>Answer in 2 to 4 paragraphs (A paragraph contains at least 3 sentences.)</i> 	Tuesday June 4, 2024 By 9am eastern time

Class 2: “Silence and Meditation in the Context of Unity”

Tuesday June 4, 2024

Tuesday’s Theme

We will explore Silence and Meditation in a Unity context. We will look at more types of meditation and blocks to meditation.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the class, learners will be able to:

- Practice Unity’s Five Step Prayer Process.
- Define and practice the Silence.
- Recognize blocks to meditation and how to overcome them.
- Understand why people avoid meditation.

Class 2: Learning Assignments	Due Dates
Readings(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bodian, <i>Meditation For Dummies</i>, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Chapter 12: Meditating with Challenging Emotions and Habitual Patterns 	Read before 2nd class

<p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meditation, A Drill in the Silence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reading the following by May Rowland: www.truthunity.net/people/may-rowland ○ Write a brief reflection or bullet points of what stood out for you to discuss during class. 	<p>Read before 2nd class</p>
<p>Class 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review May Rowland assignment • Five Step Prayer Process • Define and practice the Silence • Blocks to meditation • Why people avoid meditation 	

Class 2: Assignments	Due Dates
<p>Homework Assignment: Meditation Practice Essay:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to use Unity’s Five Step prayer process for at least 5 minutes once a day. If you are just beginning to meditate, go slowly by beginning with 5 minutes, then set the timer for 7 minutes and gradually increase your time. If you have meditated in the past increase your meditation time by 5 minutes. • Write a short essay, 2 to 4 paragraphs (A paragraph contains at least 3 sentences), regarding the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Summarize your experience of Unity’s Five Step Prayer process. ○ Define the Silence and what you experienced in silence. ○ Did you experience any challenges during meditation? If so, what did you learn? ○ What blocks did you encounter during your meditation practice? 	<p>Friday June 7, 2024 By 9am eastern time</p>
<p>Assignment: Meditation Practice Essay</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is a list of all the meditation practices presented in the book, <i>Meditation for Dummies</i>. Please choose those that you are drawn to try, but I encourage you to include meditation choices that focus on one of the five senses. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. You may find one or more that become the foundation for your daily meditation practice. b. Also notice any challenging emotions, habitual patterns and blockages that interfere with your mediation time. By recognizing them and using the tools to overcome them will be beneficial as you move through this Course. 	<p>Friday June 7, 2024 By 9am eastern time</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">c. Pick one which resonates with you in the book or online to present in class 2-5 minutes on Friday June 7th.</p> <p>2. Write a short essay, 3 to 5 paragraphs (<i>A paragraph contains at least 3 sentences</i>), regarding the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Describe the “meditation practice(s)” you experienced. b. What area(s) seem to block you the most to meditating. 	
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Class 3: “Enjoying the Side Effects”
Wednesday June 5, 2024

Wednesday’s Theme

Today we will focus on experiencing another meditation practice. The side effects of meditation and grounding.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the class, learners will be able to:

- Be aware of the side effects of meditation.
- Return from a side trip and bring yourself back to the Silence.
- Understand why grounding is important.

Class 3: Learning Assignments	Due Dates
Reading(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bodian, <i>Meditation for Dummies</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chapter 13, Troubleshooting Common Roadblocks and <i>Side Effects</i> 	Wednesday June 5, 2024 By 9am eastern time
Class 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side effects of meditation • Bringing yourself back to the Silence • Grounding • Practice meditation 	

Class 3: Assignments	Due Dates
Homework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go to meditations by Rev. Paulette Pipe on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=paulette+pipe • Experience one of her beautiful meditations. • Which meditation did you choose? • How was the experience for you? 	Thursday June 6, 2024 By 9am eastern time

<p>Assignment: Meditation Practice Essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose a meditation that focuses on one of the 5 senses. • Continue with the Five Step Prayer Process. • Recognize “side trips’ that are taken during your meditation and that can inhibit the meditation process. Sometimes we choose to enjoy these side trips. Your end goal is to reach the Silence – a state of total non-awareness. If you find yourself detouring on a side trip, gently return to your mantra. • Watch this video on how to ground yourself: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMpwxl83zKU • Write a short essay, 2 to 4 paragraphs (A paragraph contains at least 3 sentences), regarding the following topics: about the “meditation practice” you experimented choosing one in which you use one of your 5 senses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What practice did you choose, why you chose it, your experience with it, and whether you would practice it again. ○ Describe in your essay, any side effects or side trips you experienced during your meditation? 	<p>Thursday June 6, 2024 By 9am eastern time</p>
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Class 4: “Creating Your Personal Meditation Practice”

Thursday June 6, 2024

Thursday’s Theme

Today we will continue to explore various meditation types in order to assist you in developing a meditation practice that works for you.

Module Learning Objectives

By the end of the class, learners will be able to:

- Develop a practice of meditation.
- Recognize the benefits of meditating in a group.

Class 4: Learning Assignments	Due Date
<p>Reading(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bodian, <i>Meditation for Dummies</i>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chapter 14: Developing a Practice That Works for You 	<p>Thursday June 6, 2024 By 9am eastern time</p>
<p>Journal Reflection – No need to turn in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answer the following questions in your journal: 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ You have now experienced several different meditation practices. Which one do you most resonate with so far and why? ○ What do you notice about your own practice? ○ Has anything changed about your practice since you started the course? 	
Class 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developing a practice of Meditation ● Practice meditation 	

Class 4: Assignments	Due Dates
Homework Answer the following questions in your journal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● So many people say that they do not have time to meditation. ● Watch the following YouTube video on 1 Moment Meditation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6eFFCi12v8 ● What did you learn about meditation by watching this video? ● Can there ever be a reason to not meditate? 	Friday June 7, 2024 By 9am eastern time
Assignment: Meditation Practice Essay: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Write a short essay, 2 to 4 paragraphs (A paragraph contains at least 3 sentences), about the meditation practice(s) you experimented with so far this week. ● What was it, why did you choose it, your experience with it and would you practice it again? 	Friday June 7, 2024 By 9am eastern time

Class 5: “Meditation: A Spiritual Experience?”

Friday June 7, 2024

Friday’s Theme

Today we will continue to explore looking into the nature of mind and cultivating Spirituality.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the class, learners will be able to:

- Discover characteristics of a spiritual experience
- Move our identification with body to being
- Gain deeper insights into our spiritual reality

Class 5: Learning Assignments	Due Dates
Reading(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bodian, <i>Meditation for Dummies</i>. 	Friday June 7, 2024 By 9am eastern time

○ Chapter 15: Cultivating Spirituality	
Class 5: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a practice of Meditation • Students lead a 2-5 minute meditation 	

Class 5: Assignments	Due Dates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of Unity’s favorite writers Eric Butterworth has a brief YouTube video called “The Silence.” Take a moment to watch the video: https://youtu.be/edxXwFKzv9M • What new insights did you get about Unity’s way to meditate? 	Monday June 10, 2024 By 9am eastern time
Assignment: Meditation Practice Essay <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a short essay, 2 to 5 paragraphs (<i>A paragraph contains at least 3 sentences</i>), about what you learned about your mind as a result of investing time into the meditation practices outlined in the readings this week. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has this Course been helpful in establishing a greater understanding of meditation, the effect it has on your life and continuing a personal meditation practice? ○ What have you personally discovered about yourself during this Course? 	

Graded Assignment Notes

Class participation = 25% of your grade

Assignments = 50% of your grade

Paper on designed meditation program, plan and implementation = 25% of your grade