

## *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 practiced on the chapel patio, in a group, before most meditations.

### **MEDITATION SERVICE**

A leader guides the group through periods of silent meditation and prayer (about 40 min.), and periods of devotional chanting. During the last portion of the service, the group prays for those who are in need of healing, and for world peace. The leader then directs the group in practicing a healing technique.

### **DEVOTIONAL CHANTING**

Chanting with deep concentration and devotion draws the devotee inward to the altar of God's presence. Paramahansa Yogananda's Cosmic Chants is an excellent introduction to chanting and gives the words and music for the chants used in the services.

### **LEARNING MORE ABOUT MEDITATION**

The techniques of meditation taught by Paramahansa Yogananda may be learned through the SRF lessons which are sent by mail for personal study from the Mother Center in L.A. For more information, go to [www.yogananda-srf.org](http://www.yogananda-srf.org) or call 323.225.2471.

## *Preparing for Meditation*

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

- ◆ **CORRECT POSTURE:** Sit with the spine straight, feet flat on the floor, shoulders slightly back, chest out, abdomen in, and hands with palms upward resting at the juncture of thighs and abdomen. The goal is to keep the body relaxed and motionless.
- ◆ **FOCUS EYES GENTLY UPWARD:** With eyes closed, or half open, focus the gaze gently at the Christ Consciousness Center (the point between the eyebrows).
- ◆ **KEEP THOUGHTS FOCUSED ON GOD:** If no techniques are known, silently talk to God in the language of your heart, such as repeating, "Reveal Thyself, I love Thee Lord."

### **MEDITATION IN A GROUP**

Devotees come together in silent fellowship to reinforce each other's efforts toward Self-realization. You can do your part by asking "What can I do to keep from distracting others?" Effective group meditation is possible if each person shares responsibility for creating an atmosphere of stillness.

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## *Meditation Guidelines*

### **BEFORE MEDITATION**

- Wear clothing that is made of soft fabrics (that don't make noise).
- Please don't come if you have a cough or cold or a condition that creates restlessness; please meditate at home.
- Arrive early so you can find a seat and also practice the Energization Exercises.
- Turn off electronic devices before entering.
- If arriving during the exercises, please start with the first one of the series (double-breathing with tension) and then do the next exercise that the group is practicing.
- If you know you will have to leave early, be sure to take a seat in the back of the chapel.

### **DURING MEDITATION**

- Stay quietly seated during silent periods.
- Please use the restrooms, or take a drink of water, stand or do gentle stretches during the chanting periods only.
- Practice the meditation techniques so that they are inaudible to others.
- Whenever possible, try to attend the entire service. **If arriving late:** please take a seat in front of the altar downstairs and enter the chapel **during the chanting period.** Before entering, pause to calm the mind and body.
- If leaving early: please exit at the beginning of a chant.