

# Christian Meditation

NEWSLETTER OF THE CANADIAN CHRISTIAN MEDITATION COMMUNITY



**SPRING 2025**

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# The Divine Therapy

John Main teaches us to “let go of the ego.” But there’s a problem. Some meditators have a wounded ego. They may have trouble letting go. Usually, someone with a wounded ego is holding on and in survival mode. This is a common issue. Many spiritual teachings say the ego is an obstacle on the path. Let me explain.

First, what is the ego? There are many definitions. It is who we think we are in this world. The ego is an amalgam of our thoughts, emotions, ideals, and what we have learned since birth. It is our “programming.” The ego is made of the many roles we play to relate to others. For example, the ego may include the roles of parent, child, sibling, worker, student, saint, and sinner.

The ego includes how we deal with life’s hardships. Its joys, its struggles, and its tragedies. The ego includes wounds we carry from our past and the strategies we develop to handle those wounds. In short, the ego is our central self-concept, as we understand it in any given situation. Of all the above, it is a balancing act.

What is a wounded ego? A wounded ego is an ego weighed down by past anxiety. Some emotional wounds are deeper than others. These deeper wounds may have long lasting psychological effects. In other words, these wounds can create unexplained anxiety later in life. In my case, growing up in an alcoholic home left me with stubborn psychological wounds. Psychotherapists try to help people with wounded egos. They try to help clients develop a “healthy ego.”

Questions I have pondered are: Can someone with a wounded ego be expected to let go of their ego? Is this even advisable? Maybe they should build a healthy ego first? Let’s explore these questions. But first, let’s define the healthy ego.

What is a healthy ego? A healthy ego is freed from its history. It is an ego with good self-esteem. It is an ego that functions well. It is balanced with healthy boundaries. It gets along with others and can relate to the world in positive ways. It is not in the survival mode of fight, flight, or freeze.

A person with a healthy ego is open-minded and connected. Their ego can cope with life’s anxieties by using healthy methods. Healthy methods can be seeking support from others, participating in recre-

ational activities, being creative, and adopting forms of positive spirituality. An unhealthy coping method would be abusing alcohol or drugs. Most importantly, a healthy ego is an ego that can trust. It can trust others and it can trust God.

A caveat to remember is no one has a perfectly healthy ego, and no one has an irredeemably wounded ego.

Back to the above question. Can someone with a wounded ego be expected to let it go? Perhaps they should be focussed on building a healthier ego, as psychotherapists suggest. Where does meditation fit? The question came to a head one day while I listened to a talk by John Main.

John Main warns that meditation does not always feel good. He said unexplained anxiety may come to the surface of consciousness. We may even feel psychological discomfort. When this happens, some think meditation is not working and they quit.

It is my experience that feeling any anxiety while meditating is a good thing. When anxiety surfaces, I don’t stop meditating. I treat emotional discomfort as a distraction. I remain sitting and say my mantra. If I’m meditating to feel good, then I have a goal. In other words, we don’t meditate to make ourselves feel good.

When I started to meditate, the idea of letting go of my ego clashed with my therapy. My past was wounded. I needed to heal. I needed a healthier ego. Surprisingly, meditation did not interfere with my therapy or keep me from developing a healthier ego. I learned that the divine energy of God’s loving Spirit will heal me in the sacred silence of meditation.

Furthermore, my ego did not have to be an obstacle if kept in order. The ego makes a lousy master, but it can be a great servant. A healthy ego is an ego that knows its place. We keep the ego in its proper place by letting it go when we meditate. Thus, the power of the mantra. If we experience anxiety during meditation, that’s a good thing. It means the meditation is working. Simply, we remain faithful to the practice and trust the process. We treat anxiety like any other distraction. We trust God. We trust John Main’s inspired teaching. Anxiety will eventually dissipate. Wounds will eventually heal. Meditation heals past wounds. It is the divine therapy.



**by Darrell Taylor**  
**Spiritual Care Counsellor –**  
**Meditation Facilitator**

**Continued on page C5**



# *“And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us”*



**By André Choquet**  
**WCCM-Canada National**  
**Coordinator**

Throughout our lives, we must have repeated a thousand times this line from the Lord's prayer. But I've discovered a missing piece I'd like to unpack.

A few weeks ago, I had an angry, self-directed outburst. I'd damaged my son's new bike. Without realizing, I'd inadvertently hit it when parking my car in the garage. When my son tried to use his bike, we discovered the front derailleur was shifted, cables were loose, and it had an overall appearance of having received a shock.

Immediately, on seeing the inflicted damage, I felt guilt, followed by anger at myself for my carelessness. Rage welled inside and I swore. With compassion, my son gently asked if I was alright. My outburst was out of character. Not in alignment with my usual temperament. My reaction caught me by surprise. After I cooled down, I reflected.

Too often, I thought, I hold within the closets of my mind past trespasses that I have not forgiven myself for: broken relationships, missed opportunities, career jobs ending abruptly or stupid things I've done when I rush and I am not careful. Other people's reactions to my trespasses often deepen my feelings of guilt or unforgiveness. I realized such feelings can linger and may show themselves later in other forms of anger or even resentment. I wondered if my outburst at damaging my son's bike was one such reaction. At an extreme, I believe guilt and unforgiveness can cause the violence and/or murder we often see in the world.

But in truth, God has forgiven us already by sending

his son, Jesus, who died for our sins. He has forgiven our sins, “original” and otherwise. If we are redeemed by the blood of Jesus, what's the point of beating ourselves up for our trespasses? It doesn't mean we go on hurting people, thinking that we've been forgiven and given a free pass, so anything goes. That would be tempting God and plain stupid, in my opinion. But if we genuinely admit and confess our sins, God forgives us.

If you allow, I would reword the above Lord's prayer verse as follows:

“God, teach me to love myself the way you love me and help me to forgive my

own trespasses that I confess to you, the way you have forgiven my trespasses when you sent your only son Jesus to die for my sins. Allow this self forgiveness to merge with your mysterious Love and lead me to forgive those who trespass against me.”

There is a three-way forgiveness going on here:

1. We admit and forgive our own trespasses first, but...
2. At the same time, we know that God forgives all that we confess through the blood of Jesus.
3. The above two lead to the third, which is to love and forgive those who trespass against us.

I am reminded of John Main when he spoke in one of his recordings, citing the two main commandments as proclaimed by Jesus in Matthew 22:37-39:

*Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with*



**Continued on page C5**

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## **Canadian Christian Meditation Community National Resource Centre**

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*échos du silence* and the French version of *Meditatio* are  
available from Méditation chrétienne du Québec,  
105 ch du Richelieu, bureau B, McMasterville, QC J3G 1T5,  
450-446-4649. [info@meditationchretienne.ca](mailto:info@meditationchretienne.ca).

Page design and layout: [www.katemcdco.com](http://www.katemcdco.com)



# The Long Journey Home

In two previous articles, I shared how meditation has become a vital practice for me amidst the realities of dementia and bladder cancer. While both conditions are currently in a “phase” of stability, their presence remains deeply embedded in my life. They demand ongoing personal and medical vigilance. These illnesses, though uninvited, have become companions on my journey. I recognize that calling them “companions” may feel jarring—it’s not how we typically understand companionship—but that is how they exist with me.

During my years in pastoral ministry, I was often privileged to be present at the bedside of the dying. In those final moments, for those still conscious, the most pressing need was often water. Some managed sips through a straw; others received ice chips gently placed on their lips or in their mouths. It remains a powerful image—this simple act of love at the edge of life. With their life force ebbing, even the smallest taste of water brought momentary relief and refreshment.

Jesus offered the Samaritan woman at the well living water. In scripture, water and spirit are intimately connected. There is a well within us—offering not only

physical refreshment, but eternal life. To see it only as a future promise misses its invitation for the present, for the here and now.



**Rev. Dr.  
G. Wayne Short  
(Oblate)**

Meditation, for me, has become that well. In stillness and silence, I find the refreshment I need today on this long journey home. The waters of meditation flow—sometimes freely, sometimes less so—but always offering ease along the way. At times, I struggle to reach the source within, which I know is already here. In the quiet moments of daily life—in a waiting room, before a procedure awaiting a test result—the repetition of a mantra draws me into that inner well. A foretaste of what is to come.

Wells are built to receive, hold, and release water. These three functions—receiving, holding, and releasing—are deeply interconnected and life-giving. In meditation, I am received into the well of prayer; accepted and held there for a while before being gently released. Nourished for the next step of the journey.

My companions—these conditions—walk with me. I would dearly love to bid farewell to at least one of them, but I do not have that power. In poverty of spirit, I simply ask for grace. Grace to come to the well and drink as deeply as I can.

## Ora et Labora - Prayer and Work

“Prayer and Work” is the name given this space as a regular feature devoted to sharing information and news about the **WCCM Benedictine Oblates** (<https://oblates.wccm.org/v2019/>). It comes from the balance between prayer and work (and reading) that St. Benedict stresses in his Rule and that Oblates strive to follow in everyday life. Enjoy!

If you would like more information about the Oblates,  
please contact Dorothy Wood at [dorogeo50@gmail.com](mailto:dorogeo50@gmail.com).

## COMMUNITY CORNER

# God At Work

In January, Barbara Chouinard and I presented on Christian Meditation to school chaplains at the Ottawa Catholic School Board (OCSB). When later Paul Kozak (Chaplain at All Saints School, Kanata) reached out, we knew a special connection was forged. He proposed a silent retreat for the staff. We accepted, and the retreat was delivered on April 15.

We joined Beth Smith, our new Ottawa-Area coordinator, and 15 school staff in focusing on deepening our relationship with God and letting go. The session

included an introduction to CM, 20 minutes of meditation followed by a meal and fellowship. We fielded many questions. The staff was interested in local meetings.

Discovering a fellow parishioner of my home church in the group, I encouraged him to start attending meditation. Coincidence? Or something else? The movement of the Holy Spirit or God at work?

No doubt seeds were planted in the OCSB with the hope of a bountiful future harvest..

– Theresa Ziebell

## Finding the Sanctuary Within *Vancouver Lenten Retreat*



Dubbed *Finding the Sanctuary Within*, a retreat was organized in March by the BC Christian Meditation community. At St. Mary's, Vancouver, forty-five meditators attended.

Maeve Slein, BC & NWT Regional WCCM Canada Coordinator, WCCM Canada challenged the group to consider why they were here today. With busy, messy lives, bombarded with information, what could be done to make space to listen to that “still small voice within,” to carve out quiet?

Leo Cullen, a member of Saint Anthony's parish, who leads a weekly meditation group, traced the history, practice and discipline of Christian Meditation. “Like life, a meditation practice is a journey. The more effort we put into something, the greater the rewards. Meditation is a simple practice, but it is not easy.” Meditation is the journey to finding the sanctuary within.

## *Forgive Us Our Trespasses*

*continued from C3*

*all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself.'*

I am paraphrasing John Main, but he said the order should be reversed:

1. Love yourself first – not in the egotistical, prideful sense of the word, but rather, through meditation love the God-nature in your heart.
2. Then love your neighbour – not necessarily his/her actions but, again, love the God-nature in him/her, which is the same as yours.

3. And at the same time, love God as the Ground of all Being, the Reality that encompasses all.

I hope this reflection helps you on your journey.

## *The Divine Therapy*

*continued from C2*

It is the therapy of letting go. Whether we have a healthy ego or a wounded ego, when we meditate, we put everything aside and focus on the mantra. We stick to the practice of daily meditation no matter what we feel. Maranatha.

*Darrell Taylor is a retired psychotherapist and facilitates a Christian Meditation group in Chilliwack, BC and an on-line group based in Yellowknife, NWT.*

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**WCCM Events:** Visit online: The World Community for Christian Meditation (<https://www.wccm.org>).



# Canadian Christian Meditation Community

*invites you to a*

## SUMMER RETREAT

# Renewed In Hope

Friday to Sunday, July 25-27

### Manresa Jesuit Spiritual Retreat Centre

2325 Liverpool Road, Pickering, ON L1X 1V4

**Cost: \$295**

includes two nights' stay with 6 meals

Details and registration: <https://bit.ly/Manresa2025>



**Manresa Jesuit Spiritual Renewal Centre,  
Pickering, Ontario**

The “Renewed in Hope” retreat will focus on staying positive in uncertain times. By journeying deeper into our call to remain grounded, we join in solidarity with Pope Francis in this year’s Jubilee theme, “Pilgrims of Hope.”

We will meditate six times over the weekend: some sessions will be in silence; some will be preceded by a talk.

We will also enjoy activities led by members of our community on the theme of **hope**, such as: Tai Chi and Qigong, a labyrinth walk, a Taizé singing session and more.

In compliance with our charitable status, the CCMC Board will host its annual hybrid meeting on Saturday afternoon. All are welcome to attend.

**The program can be viewed [here](#).**

Space is limited. Registrations will close on June 30.

We will also need volunteers to lead meditation sessions, organize a carpool and help prepare for the event.

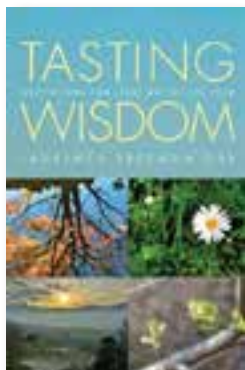
If you would like to volunteer or if you have any questions, please email: [andreat711@gmail.com](mailto:andreat711@gmail.com) or [achoquet@rogers.com](mailto:achoquet@rogers.com).

**We look forward to welcoming you at Manresa!**

# Canadian Christian Meditation Community Bookstore

SERVING NORTH AMERICA

## *A Focus on Daily Readings*



### **Tasting Wisdom**

Every day, members of the WCCM receive a brief reflection, Daily Wisdom, from Laurence Freeman.

In this collection, recipients have helped Fr Laurence select 366 reflections that have had particular resonance.

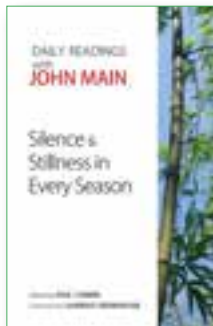
The result is book of daily meditations to last the whole year.

**\$32.00**

### **Short talks for Groups**

From 2005 to 2023, The Singapore Meditation Community distributed CDs of short talks to meditation groups around the world. These talks continue to be available for download at <https://meditationtalks.wccm.org/>.

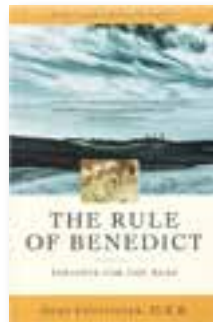
The Bookstore has many of these original CDs in stock for those who prefer physical CDs. These are available at \$10—postage included, or at \$8, plus postage, for multiple CDs. The list of titles is on the above noted website. Please send enquiries and orders to: [mediomedia@wccm-canada.ca](mailto:mediomedia@wccm-canada.ca)



### **Silence and Stillness in Every Season**

This collection of daily readings draws into one volume the essence of John Main's teaching in his many books and recordings. Edited by Paul T. Harris

**\$21.00**



### **The Rule of Benedict**

**Joan Chittister, O.S.B.**

Daily readings from 'The Rule' address issues facing us today – relationships, authority, community, balance, work, simplicity, prayer, and spiritual and psychological development.

**\$22.00**

[www.mediomedia.ca](http://www.mediomedia.ca) • [mediomedia@wccm-canada.ca](mailto:mediomedia@wccm-canada.ca) • 514-485-7928

Orders can be placed using the website, or via email, or by phone.

## TO REGISTER FOR THE CANADIAN CHRISTIAN MEDITATION COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER:

***I wish to receive the WCCM & CCMC Newsletters, aim of 4 issues per year:***

Electronic version ☐ (suggested annual donation \$25). • Print version ☐ (minimum annual donation \$30).

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I wish to make a donation to The Canadian Christian Meditation Community of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

A tax receipt will be issued for donations of over \$25.00

Please make cheques payable to The Canadian Christian Meditation Community. Mailing address on page C8.

Or by electronic transfer to [info@wccm-canada.ca](mailto:info@wccm-canada.ca). Or through [www.canadahelps.org](http://www.canadahelps.org) — search 'Christian Meditation Community'

Or visit [www.wccm-canada.ca](http://www.wccm-canada.ca) and click the donate button

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# The 2025 International WCCM Annual Appeal

## *Sowing Seeds of Contemplation in the World*

The Friends of the World Community for Christian Meditation (the Friends Program) provides vital annual support to the World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM) towards sharing the gift of meditation worldwide. This financial support is critical to WCCM activities and especially helps in teaching and nurturing the practice in both established and emerging communities, particularly those poor and marginalized.

For details about the program and where the money goes here is the link: <http://bit.ly/4kFmGCu>. Tax receipts will be issued for your donations. To meditate costs nothing, but to create materials, to travel, and to teach meditation in countries near and far costs money.

For the past year we were able to reach out to more people through our online platforms. The Friends Program enables Fr. Laurence and other WCCM leaders to offer retreats, talks and presentations in emerging countries, when financial sponsorship is unavailable from local sources.

The funding supports the WCCM School, which trains meditation teachers and provides the resources to support and nurture meditators globally.

Meditatio is the outreach of the community consisting of programs, publications and events that bring the fruits and benefits of meditation to the wider world. It seeks to bring universal spiritual wisdom and values to bear upon a world in crisis; from politics to medicine, church, science and the economy. Through seminars, media and the formation of young contemplatives in the world, it takes meditation to the worlds of business, mental health, addiction, education, environment, prisons and inter faith dialogue.

The Friends Program also funds distribution of regular resource materials including the quarterly WCCM newsletter to thousands of meditators in more than 120 countries worldwide. The Program supports translation of resource materials into many languages to support our local communities and reach out to the world community. It also funds publication of books and audio/video resources which may not be commercially viable but are necessary.

The fastest growing segment of meditators is children. In over 60 countries, more than 100,000 children now practice meditation. A whole generation of meditators is emerging who could potentially change the world!

### How can I become a Friend?

You can make a donation to the Friends Program and introduce the program to others in your meditation group.

No gift is too small. All gifts are appreciated and will have a direct impact on sustaining our community's work and mission.

Donations can be made by cheque or money order payable to:

**The Canadian Christian Meditation Community**

Attention: Ibolya Agoston

11411 98 St. Fort St John BC V1J 7B5

Or online, through CanadaHelps (choose the "Friends Program in support of WCCM International Office"). Or via e-transfer to [info@wccm-canada.ca](mailto:info@wccm-canada.ca). As Father Laurence has said, 'No monetary value can be linked to meditation. It is freely given and freely shared, like the gospel, and this is why the teaching of meditation is, for us, a form of evangelization. Because of this we are aware how precious the gift is. And that is precisely why we feel the urge to share it with others and be part of the communion of meditators across the globe'.

In peace, **Ibolya Agoston**, Coordinator, CCMC Friends Program

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Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

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[www.mediomedia.ca](http://www.mediomedia.ca)

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