

Trika Kula Community Meditation Practice

When: Wednesday @ 5:45 am to 7:00 am

Where: Soma Studio (back room of Yoga Mandala, 2807 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley)

Set Up: Volunteers arrive at 5:30 for set up. Anyone may volunteer.

General Instructions/Protocols

So that all who participate in the community meditation class may derive the optimal experience from each practice session, please follow these simple rules:

- 1. BE ON TIME OR EARLY.** The group needs to be seated, settled (finished with adjusting the seat, posture etc.) and ready to begin by 6:00 am. Arrive no later than 5:45 am to stretch, settle into your seat, let your heart rate and breathing slow down from your trip to the studio, scratch itches, blow nose, etc.
- 2. DO NOT MOVE.** Once seated and the opening chants begin you are required to remain still. Movement will disturb the environment of meditation practice. Each participant is required to find the position that will allow comfortable sitting for one hour without adjusting the posture. This means that you don't stretch the neck to relieve tension, stretch out your legs, adjust the cushion, blow the nose, etc. The reason for this is that any movement after you begin the period of meditation will activate your nervous, cardiac and respiratory systems again. If you are new to the practice of sitting, when you arrive please ask one of the senior students for help in finding the best sitting position for you.
- 3.** No food or drink, mobile phones, or watches are allowed in the meditation hall. Avoid wearing perfumes or essential oils. Shower/deodorant recommended.
- 4.** The door to the hall will be locked at 5:50 am to prevent late-comers from disturbing your meditation, so if you arrive late one day, please do not knock on the door but join in next week.
- 5.** The room temperature will be set at a cool 66 deg. F to keep everyone from getting groggy or uncomfortable with heat, so please be sure to bring a dhoti or other such wrap to ensure your comfort. There is a limited amount of cushions, blocks and blankets available for those who do not have their own meditation cushion. Arrive early if you need one.
- 6.** You may participate in the community meditation if you are sick as long as you do not need to blow your nose, snuffle, cough, etc.
- 7.** If sitting on the floor is difficult for you due to a medical condition or lack of flexibility, please use the chairs set out for you in the back of the hall.
- 8. THE VALUE OF MEDITATION IS INDEPENDENT OF WHETHER THE TEACHER IS PRESENT.** Community meditation makes available a rich environment of various capacities and energies contributing to our own practice, thus assisting us in going deeper into our own realization. It is not a transmission-based class. Nothing special is coming from the teacher. Not attending when the teacher is away reveals the obstacle of "savior mind".

Meditation Instructions

The Correct Sitting Posture

As for all meditation, sit erect with legs comfortably placed (any yogasana for meditation is fine, including the use of a chair). Shoulders relaxing away from the ears, not round shouldered, nor chest thrust out. Head floating lightly like a balloon (gently pulling up the whole spine), in line with the torso, not goose necking forward. Eyes slightly closed, your gaze toward an area on the floor 3-6 feet in front of you. You are neither focusing on an external point, nor are you lost in inner vision no longer aware of your surroundings. The tongue can lightly rest against the upper palate, lips and jaw relaxed. The 5 “gates” (senses) are open. The hands may assume the classic meditation “mudra” wherein the right hand is in the lap palm up with the left hand on top also palm up, thumbs lightly touching forming an oval, with elbows held slightly away from the sides of the ribs. Other positions such as hands resting on the thighs or knees, palms up, palms down, index finger and thumb connected, fingers relaxed and slightly splayed are all fine.

Meditation #1 “Sakthi Dhyana” (unbroken awareness of breath flow and quality)

Use the slightest of efforts to maintain unbroken awareness of the ingoing and outgoing breath. Let breathing be natural, do not control it, simply observe. Enrich this awareness by connecting to the qualities of the breath such as warm/cool, heavy/light, wet/dry. Maintain awareness of the breath process and it’s qualities while keeping the 5 senses open and when you notice that your awareness has left the practice simply bring it back to the practice. You are not controlling the breath, nor creating or analyzing the qualities, you are simply being completely present with them. (if you are new to meditation as a daily practice it is suggested to perform med. #1 for at least one month before exploring #'s 2 &3)

Meditation #2 “Vikalpa Krama Dhyana” (Base Awareness and arising thought chains)

Simply notice, without analysis, the arising-abiding-dissolving process each thought goes through. Notice the space between them. In their absence be with the Base Awareness until another thought arises. When you come back from being distracted from unbroken contemplation of the Base and the arising thoughts, attempt to catch the last thought you were lost in and follow it back to the one before it, and so on until you find the place where you first left Awareness. Then resume the practice of residing in the Base and noticing thoughts and spaces.

Meditation #3 Take 2 full breaths and exhale all tensions of body, speech and mind. Do not control the breath in any way at all. Keep the chest cavity open. Abide in absolute effortless, choiceless, non-analytical awareness, not sleep. There is no mental effort at all, only pure instant Presence that you are.

Prostrations Practice follows at 7 am in the Surya room (front yoga studio & Shiva temple) and runs until 7:50 am. All are welcome. Instructions are on a sheet available in the front entrance area. Meditation & prostrations are the foundation of Tantrik practice.

Want to learn more?

You can learn more about the Tantrik path and Tantrik meditation techniques by attending Trika Kula courses called the “Way of Meditation”. Course schedules and descriptions can be found on-line at www.trikakula.org and www.yogamandalastudio.com or in catalogue form in the reception area of Yoga Mandala.