

Heartfulness Contemplative Training Circle

Welcome! The Heartfulness Circle follows this schedule each week:

7:00 to 7:10 PM Silence

7:10 to 7:50 PM Conversation

7:50 to 8:10 PM Silence (depart in silence when you are ready)

All are welcome to be part of the Circle, including all levels of experience. Conversation time is intended to provide mutual support and learning for contemplative practice and contemplative life. We are overjoyed to have you join by Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83105680256>.

A few tips on practicing Centering Prayer during the silence:

1. Choose a sacred word to repeat when necessary during the prayer. It could be a word like God or Christ, or Love or Peace. Once you choose it, do not consider changing it until that prayer period is over. Do not think about what it means, just use it as described below.
2. Make yourself comfortable sitting with your back straight. Close your eyes. Settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within you. The word is not a mantra, it is a tool to use only when needed. Let the word go whenever you are able to allow your thoughts, feelings, images and sensations to flow past without engaging with them.
3. When you find that you have engaged with your thoughts, return ever so gently to the sacred word, until you again can let your thoughts and feelings do what they will without engaging. It is not a "bad" session of Centering Prayer if you have to return to the word ten thousand times. You are strengthening your practice each time and doing plenty of praying in the brief gaps between engaging with thoughts. A session with nothing but deep opening to God is not bad, either!

It may help you to memorize this to remind yourself as you start to pray: Resist no thought; Retain no thought; React to no thought; Return ever so gently to the sacred word.

4. At the end of the prayer period you will hear three chimes. Remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.