

4 November 2008

Dear friends,

I would like to take a brief moment to address the issue of the teaching of the Transcendental Meditation Technique (TM) in the public schools.

Many years ago I learned TM while in high school and during that time I had opportunity to attend several weekend TM residence courses led by Dr. John Hagelin, who is currently the National Leader of the TM Movement in the U.S. Also, I was fortunate to spend my sophomore year of college in residence at Maharishi International University in Fairfield, Iowa. After graduating from Boston University and seminary, I then served for twelve years as full-time pastor in charge of various United Methodist churches throughout Iowa.

The relationship between meditation and religion is an interesting and complex question. During my years in parish ministry my exploration of this question was detailed and included dialogue on this topic with Bishop Rueben P. Job, who ordained me twice. Overall, I have come to the conclusion that the practice of TM really does not conflict with any religion; at least, whatever perceived "rubbing points" there might be in the opinion of some, are greatly outweighed by the benefits of TM, many of which have been documented by years of scientific research.

Please note that I do not make this claim lightly. For more than three decades I have asked tough questions on these matters to TM officials, and their responses were quite satisfactory. Also, in recent years, I have made it a point to communicate in some depth with a number of prominent critics of TM. As far as I am concerned, TM resoundingly passes the test.

Perhaps the best watchword on these considerations is "diversity." My own alma mater, Boston University School of Theology, has produced graduates as diverse as Norman Vincent Peale and Martin Luther King, Jr. So it is in their spirit of prophetic positivity that I would encourage you to check out TM both for yourself and your public school. Personally I can't imagine continuing to grow without it.

Yours sincerely,



Jonathan Chadwick