



CHRISTIAN MEDITATION GROUPS

Four ecumenical Christian meditation groups meet each week at St James' Church at the top of King Street in the city. The groups are part of a worldwide network of over 1500 groups meeting in about 110 countries.

The ancient Christian tradition of meditating on a simple sacred phrase was revived by the English Benedictine monk John Main (1926-1982). Meditation involves coming to a stillness of spirit and a stillness of body. It is the aim given by the Psalmist ("Be still and know that I am God"). Despite all the distractions of our busy lives, this silence is possible. It requires commitment and practice. Joining a meditation group is a very good start.

Anyone who already meditates or who is interested in starting to meditate is welcome. You may quietly join the group and slip away afterwards or stay around to talk or ask questions.

When Tuesday: 12.10pm – 12.50pm
Wednesday: 7.45am – 8.30am
Friday: 1.10pm – 1.50pm
Sunday: 3.00pm – 3.30pm

Where Crypt of St James' Church
176 King Street, Sydney
(enter under the spire)
The Friday group meets in the church,
over in the side chapel

Website www.christianmeditationaustralia.org
www.wccm.org

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Women at the Bar: one alternative perspective

Dear Sir,

I take issue with Professor Ross Buckley's opinions concerning women at the Bar (Summer 2007/2008). Professor Buckley argues that the Bar must take steps to increase the proportion of women barristers to something in the order of 50 per cent, reflecting the proportion of law graduates who are women. Any person deciding whether to come to the Bar considers carefully whether the demands of practice as a barrister are compatible with the needs of their family, or perhaps a planned future family. Generally speaking, this consideration tends to weigh more heavily with women than with men because women are more likely to take the role of primary carer for children. This aspect of the decision whether to come to the Bar is a highly personal one. In my opinion, the Bar offers many benefits for women – satisfying work, independence and flexibility. However, those benefits do have a price, including outsourcing many aspects of motherhood. Whilst the Bar should ensure that there are no artificial barriers to women, it should not berate women into becoming barristers just for the sake of making up the numbers.

Whilst the demands of practice may be a barrier for some women who might otherwise pursue a career at the Bar, they are not an artificial barrier. Clients involved in litigation are engaged in a stressful, high risk and high cost exercise. They are entitled to expect nothing less than the highest standards of preparation and performance from their barristers and this will often involve long hours of work. The Bar cannot change this.

Professor Buckley labels the Bar as a 'blokey place that prefers blokes'. He claims to have a unique perspective about this because he is an 'outsider'. However, as an 'insider', I experienced first hand in my early years at the Bar the support of many of my male colleagues in introducing me to solicitors and recommending me for briefs. I also benefited from the New South Wales Bar Association's mentoring scheme for women barristers of 2-3 years' seniority. (There is no equivalent scheme for men.) My floor has supported me by allowing me to licence my chambers during two periods of maternity leave. In short, I do not feel myself to be the victim that Professor Buckley would cast me as. Of course, I can only speak about my own experience. I simply question Professor Buckley's authority to speak with no experience, either as a woman or as a barrister.

Kate Williams
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