

# JUST THIS DAY: JULY NEWSLETTER

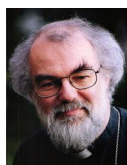
## November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2011



Since 2007, people across the world have taken part in *Just this Day*, a day for people to come together in stillness, to go beyond any difference and to find that space which is without division.

- In this Newsletter join in the debate on **Positive Silence in Schools**
- One of our speakers **Shanida Nataraja**, neuroscientist and author of *The Blissful Brain*, shares her insight on the proven scientific benefits of meditation
- **Headteacher Kevin Hogston** explains how he uses stillness in his primary school
- Find out about the full programme for the day and how to book tickets for the evening concert, **Music for Stillness**, featuring Emma Kirkby, the St Martin in the Fields Choral Scholars, the Cerrutti Quartet and Discantvs Choir

### What is POSITIVE SILENCE? Join in the debate @ohsostill



When asked by a child what God was, The Archbishop of Canterbury responded that it might be something experienced by a person: 'when they were very very quiet on their own and felt a sort of peace and love they hadn't expected'.

Mrs Laura Hyde feels that given regular opportunities to be silent, students can 'discover how to be inwardly free and deeply at ease within themselves'.



And dancer and choreographer Siobhan Davies notices that her dancers have to use stillness to move: 'Stillness to gain breath, Stillness with power, Gathering stillness, Preparing for movement, Distancing Movement, Stillness that draws or drains energy, Stillness to think and choose, Stillness to shift time, Stillness to be seen, Stillness to observe.'

What do you think? How does stillness affect your life? Take part in the conversation by coming to the debate at 11.30am, at St Martin in the Fields on November 23<sup>rd</sup>, or let us know on twitter [@ohsostill](https://twitter.com/ohsostill).

From her book, *The Blissful Brain*, Shanida Nataraja shares some of her insights into the role of meditation and stillness in terms of our wellbeing.

### 'Over recent decades, evidence has been accumulating that suggests that meditation may be the key to maintaining good health and well-being.

Many different ancient meditative practices have now been investigated in clinical studies, and the results show that these practices can have a profound effect on the physical and psychological well-being of the practitioner. In addition to improving anxiety and depression in patients suffering from these mental health conditions, meditation has also been shown to be an effective method of reducing stress in a wide range of different patients, including those with high blood pressure, chronic pain and even cancer. In the light of this evidence, many people now consider meditation to be an important addition to conventional healthcare treatments, and an intervention that hold the potential to alleviate some of the burden currently placed on our healthcare system.



Amongst children, meditation has also been shown to elicit important changes in attention, performance, emotional processing and social functioning. It is these effects

that have led numerous researchers and teachers to conclude that meditation is something that should be taught in our schools. **Studies have shown that children who are taught to meditate express less anger and hostility, interact with each other better, and are more attentive during classes.** `

Shanida Nataraja will be on the panel taking part in the debate on positive stillness.

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**Kevin Hogston, Headmaster of Sheringdale Primary School in Wandsworth**, sees meditation as a fantastic way to encourage creativity and good learning.

In a film that explores the role of Advance Skills teachers, which was made whilst Kevin was a Latchmere School in Kingston upon Thames, he shows how learning benefits from children connecting within.

### **[WATCH THE FILM](#)**

Kevin has continued to develop how children can benefit from stillness, looking at how to replicate the [Blue Room at Latchmere](#), as well as the simple practices of a morning handshake with each child to connect with them individually, and letting children place themselves along a 'feelings meter' on the wall each day.

From his own point of view he points out 'I wasn't a meditator, I am entirely non-religious, non-anything. My whole focus is simply on embracing the things that will give children the best possible chance of reaching their potential.'

Explaining more about why meditation, it's observed that some pupils are stressed in today's world, with the demands of the education system and society increasing these problems over the last few years. As a result children lack the skills to relax and de-stress. In order to be creative and reach your potential, you need to be calm and at ease with yourself. Meditation & relaxation helps pupils with their learning and thinking skills. It develops the imagination. Other benefits of meditation include: finding 'inner peace', reflection time, greater energy, more productive, more restful sleeps, a reduction in tension & stress, reduces headaches, reduces blood pressure, and less anxiety. It helps with relationships, especially by quietening the voice of self criticism so that it's easier to make decisions and get a feeling for who we are.

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**7pm: A Concert for Stillness**

**Emma Kirkby  
Cerrutti Quartet  
St Martin in the Fields Choral Scholars  
Discantvs**

Tickets available: £20, £15, £10

[From St Martin in the Fields Box Office](#)

+44 (0)20 7766 1100 Monday to Saturday, 10.00 to 17.00

All further information is available at [www.justthisday.org](http://www.justthisday.org)  
Email: [info@justthisday.org](mailto:info@justthisday.org)