

## **The Development Circle**

By Rev. K. Saunders

Development Circles are the backbone of the Spiritualist Church. Though the conduct and details of operations of such a circle may vary from church to church, the basic format and intent will remain the same, namely that of helping the individual to open out their own psychic and spiritual consciousness – this is, or should be, the aim and goal of the circle leader.

Heightening the psychic and spiritual consciousness enables circle members to develop a greater and closer link with ‘angelic’ friends whom are often referred to as ‘guides’; this link then enables healing thoughts or prayers to be sent to others, often far away and over great distances; also helping the individual to give or receive messages that demonstrate proof of survival, identify existing conditions, or suggest beneficial directions or pathways to follow.

In our intellectual and emotional selves, though we all seem to be alike, we are yet extraordinarily different; unique – as is shown by the nature of our fingerprints – all distinct.

And so, too, is it the case with our psychic consciousness levels – all similar but yet still intensely individual; we all operate on different levels of physical, spiritual and psychic awareness.

The physical level of consciousness is simpler for us to understand because it’s an everyday part of our life. When we hear a sound or a noise, through our life experiences we’re able to ‘interpret’ its meaning into words. For instance, it took time for us to understand the meaning of a ringing telephone.

The spirit or psychic consciousness being latent in most of us, mainly due to the nature of our life cycles, can be awakened into greater activity through a development circle designed for such a purpose.

Acceptance and awareness of an active live spirit world can help the ‘guides’ or ‘angels’ draw nearer to us in the quiet fellowship of a circle where all present are learning to tune into spirit – while learning to tune out the intrusive, often troubling mundane thoughts of everyday conscious life and activity. At the Gateway Centre, our circles begin with the leader, or one of the circle members, leading everyone into a quiet meditation. This allows everyone to achieve mental relaxation and freedom from the stresses of our everyday life. It’s not achieved at once and varies with the individual as touched upon above. Psychic gifts vary in nature and content with each individual. All that matters is that each circle member is encouraged and enabled to develop to the Nth degree their own level of spiritual and psychic ability. There is not, nor should there be, the climate of competition.

Gradually, along a path of spirit communication special to our own personality and needs, we learn to move into a state of mental relaxation, akin almost to an ‘abandonment of thought’ – a state of quiet stillness. Obviously, it would be a lot simpler and easier if there were set rules which caused this procedure to take full effect, but as mentioned earlier, though superficially alike, we are yet strikingly different from each other; as is also the case with our spirit friends drawing near to us. Our spiritual and psychic progress is heightened and facilitated the more we begin to accept and understand these factors – it helps our ‘guides’ or ‘angels’ enormously as we learn to let go of the physical consciousness and its influence on us.

Progressively, as we learn to let go of the physical consciousness, we start to more and more ‘psychically and consciously’ tune in and become one with the ‘guides’. With practice and perseverance the growing attunement becomes almost a second nature to us. Then it is, as the ‘guide’ draws nearer, we start reaching out with our psychic arm and in touching the other members of the circle find how wonderfully we have also embarked upon the pathway for our own psychic growth... Good Luck!