



# The Humanist Contemplatives Club

A focus group of the *Humanists of Houston*  
[www.dtstrain.com/contemplatives](http://www.dtstrain.com/contemplatives)

## Humanist Contemplatives in 79 words:

Humanist Contemplatives focus on self improvement, introspection, and achieving *eudaimonia*. They gather to meditate or contemplate in a serene setting, offer mutual moral support in meeting personal challenges, experience the profound in the arts, and share new ideas and traditional inspirations on spirituality in a naturalistic context. The tone of a Contemplative gathering is compassionate, patient, and listening rather than academic, boisterous, or debating. Social issues, politics, and religious criticism are avoided to concentrate on personal enlightenment and development.

*The Humanist Contemplative Club is founded around five basic concepts:*

### 1) Commitment to the principles of Humanism

The Humanist Contemplative is committed to the values of modern Humanism. This means a naturalistic worldview, an epistemology consistent with the scientific method, a healthy skepticism, a concern for the well-being of our neighbors and humanity as a whole, and the promotion of rational ethical principles based on benefit to people rather than obedience to alleged deities or authorities. See "Humanism" for more information.

### 2) Focus on perfecting personal 'life practice'

The Contemplative Club is inward looking. Rather than merely telling others how they are to live, Humanist Contemplatives start with the person in the mirror. They gather for the purpose of exploring together better ways of living and growing. In this endeavor, they will look to historic and current philosophies and traditions, but with a focus on philosophy as a way of daily spiritual life rather than mere academic study or venue for debate. Contemplatives seek to share their daily personal challenges and support one another in self improvement; intellectually, emotionally, physically, and materially.

### 3) Reclaiming the Spiritual

The Contemplatives are fully comfortable reclaiming spiritual language in a naturalistic context. They may or may not consider Humanism a 'religion', but have no problem with those who do or those who seek to practice it in a religious structural format. The Humanist Contemplative is concerned with bringing the spiritual back into natural life without dualism, including the actualization of character development. The Contemplative notion of 'religion' is expansive and open to change toward a rationality-based natural foundation.

### 4) Rejection of religious conflict and evangelism

The Humanist Contemplative rejects undue focus on attacking the beliefs of others and prefers instead to speak of Humanist beliefs. While individuals should work to protect assaults on human rights and freedom of thought and expression, the Humanist Contemplative Club has a different focus. Contemplatives seek those things which bring human beings together, and encourage mutual respect and understanding when possible. Rather than overt acts of criticism or conversion, the Contemplative Club seeks to show by living example the fruitfulness and appeal of the Humanist life.

### 5) Behavior

Humanist Contemplatives are expected to be compassionate in character, deliberative in intellect, and upstanding in ethics. The demeanor of the Humanist Contemplative is one of self control, patience, mindfulness, civility, diplomacy, friendliness, and dignity without snobbery. The Contemplative remains collected and is not easily angered or offended, but instead cultivates his or her rationality and objectivity. Humanist Contemplatives seek to build reputations of integrity and respect, even among those with different or opposed beliefs.

Please see our website at [www.dtstrain.com/contemplatives](http://www.dtstrain.com/contemplatives) for more information, including our take on "spirituality", inspirational sources, and these questions in our FAQ...

- *What are Contemplative gatherings like?*
- *What are the differences between Contemplative Club gatherings and other Humanist, Freethought, and nontheistic meetings?*
- *Is this some sort of religion?*
- *What does your emblem mean?*

...and more.

We are currently thinking of holding our gatherings at the Rothko Chapel, 1409 Sul Ross St., Houston, TX 77006 (Rothko Chapel website: [www.rothkochapel.org](http://www.rothkochapel.org)). The day and time are being considered.

Anyone, regardless of membership in HoH, is welcome to join us. If you'd like to contact us, please call 832-778-7382 or email [dtstrain@yahoo.com](mailto:dtstrain@yahoo.com).

