



ECK Letter of Light Workshop:

Exploring the Gift of Your Spiritual Experiences

FACILITATORS: _____

TIME: 60-90 minutes

WHERE:

WHO WILL ATTEND:

Appropriate for ECK youth ages 8-17
(Adjust wording to suit ages of youth)

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

- ☐ Past issue(s) of *Letter of Light* / if available (Note: RESA may request copies from Youth & Family Services at ESC)
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ Lined paper
- ☐ Spiritual Experiences checklist
- ☐ *The Spiritual Laws of Life* book
- ☐ *Youth Ask A Modern Prophet* book
- ☐ Yellow index cards/paper for Questions for the Master
- ☐ Youth Contribution Permission Form

Optional art supplies:

- ☐ Examples of past *Letter of Light* Word Searches
- ☐ Word search grid template
- ☐ Examples of comic strips from past *Letter of Light* issues
- ☐ Comic strip template
- ☐ Sketch paper
- ☐ Pencils
- ☐ Quality fine-tip colored felt markers or colored pencils

Spiritual purpose of event:

- To shine a light on the spiritual experiences ECK youth are having and help them recognize or become more aware of the MAHANTA's presence in their lives.
- To give youth an opportunity to exercise their creativity and share their experiences through submissions to *Letter of Light*.

Spiritual benefits:

- Youth get to document their spiritual experiences with the MAHANTA and the Light and Sound of God, to remember them in the future.
- Youth will have fun using their divine creativity.
- Their contributions to *Letter of Light* help ECKANKAR create a dynamic, fun publication that inspires ECK youth around the world!

NOTE: As youth are dropped off for the workshop, request that parents complete a *Letter of Light* Youth Contribution Permission Form.

Step-by-step action plan:

Facilitator Name	Description	Time
	Welcome & Introductions	(5 min)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Welcome</u> attendees. • <u>Introduce</u> facilitators and workshop theme. • <u>Ask</u> who has read <i>Letter of Light</i> and invite a youth to share what it is. • <u>Build on what they say to cover</u> the following basics: <p><i>Letter of Light</i> is a publication created by, for, and about the youth in ECKANKAR. It's a place for you to share your divine creativity and your spiritual experiences with the ECK teachings, the MAHANTA, and the Light and Sound of God. (<i>Hold up and/or pass around a past issue for youth to see</i>).</p> <p>You can create and submit articles, poems, artwork, word puzzles, comic strips, and even ECK book reviews. Something <i>you</i> share could touch and inspire other ECK youth on the other side of the world!</p> <p>There is also special column by Sri Harold, where he answers questions from youth around the world.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Give a brief overview of the workshop:</u> <p>First you'll get a chance to explore some of the special spiritual experiences you've had in ECK, then you can decide what you might like to share and go through the steps to create a great article to submit to the <i>Letter of Light</i>.</p> <p>Next, you'll move to another table/station to create something that can accompany your story or which highlights a spiritual principle or aspect of the ECK teachings. Creations might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an art piece to go with your article • a poem • a comic strip • a word search puzzle <p>(NOTE: Have a separate table set up with all of the art supplies and another table for the creation of word puzzles, comic strips, and poems).</p> <p>Finally, you'll have an opportunity to write a question to the Master to submit to the <i>Letter of Light</i>. This is a special gift from the Master to the youth of ECK.</p>	<p>2 min</p> <p>3 min</p>

	<p>Has the HU helped you in your life? You can share how!</p> <p>Have you experienced the MAHANTA’s protection? If so, that could be an exciting story.</p> <p>Has the ECK helped you overcome a fear? You could write about what happened.</p> <p>Have you had an experience of learning a Spiritual Law?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Law of Karma• Law of Gratitude• Law of Love• Or any other Spiritual Law? <p>Has the MAHANTA given you an experience that helped you find spiritual balance in your life? Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Balancing school work and time to do your spiritual exercises.• For teens: Balance in use of social media. <p>If you haven’t had any of the experiences listed, you could write a poem or a short book review about your favorite ECK book (sharing the book’s title, a favorite quote, what you loved about it, and how it helped you).</p> <p>Also, if there is a particular type of experience you’d like to have, during your daily spiritual exercises you can ask the Master to help you have that type of experience.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">* * *</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• With those questions and the golden contract in mind, let’s sing <i>HU</i> and ask the MAHANTA to light up one of the experiences you’ve had, that you might want to write about.• <u>Lead HU Song.</u>• <u>Share with neighbor:</u> Invite youth to turn to the person next to them and briefly share any spiritual experience they’d like to, what spiritual lesson they learned from it, and how it helped them. <p>The story you just shared with your friend is a perfect starting place and can be the story you write.</p>	<p>2 min</p> <p>6 min</p>
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	Writing Your Story	(25 min)
	<p><u>Ten Minute Writing Exercise:</u> In the next ten minutes, write down the story of your experience. Remember, a good story has a beginning, middle, and end.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write without stopping. • Tell what happened, when, with whom, and how. • Don't worry about spelling or punctuation right now. • Just share your story as if you were telling a friend, as you just did, or as if you are sharing it with the MAHANTA. <p>Congratulations! Your first draft is done!</p> <p>Now let's explore a few points that can help you make your story shine even more. We're going to highlight the spiritual principle of your article and look for the ECK features in your story.</p> <p>1. <u>ECK Feature:</u> This is what makes your story an <i>ECK</i> story. What part of the ECK teachings helped you in your experience? (<i>Let youth call out ideas</i>). Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing a spiritual exercise • Asking the Master for help • Working with your dreams • Singing <i>HU</i> • Working with an ECK Master • Seeing the Light or hearing the Sound • Working with a past life memory • Soul Travel experience • Reading an ECK book that helped you <p>Take a moment to go back and add those features into your story if they are not already there. (<i>Help youth do this, if needed</i>).</p> <p>2. <u>Spiritual Principle:</u> What spiritual principle did you learn about in your experience? What was the spiritual lesson you learned? Share examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing your attitude about something (Law of Attitudes) • Learning more about gratitude (Law of Gratitude) • Experiencing the power of <i>HU</i> (Law of <i>HU</i>) • Dealing well with change (Law of Change) • Learning balance in your life (Law of Balance) • Experiencing the MAHANTA's protection (Law of Protection) • Bringing more harmony and love into a friendship or into your family (Law of Love) 	<p>10 min</p> <p>5 min</p> <p>5 min</p>

	<p>Each of these principles reflects a spiritual principle or one of the Spiritual Laws of Life.</p> <p>Help the youth identify the spiritual principle behind their experiences and build it into their stories if it's not already there. (<i>Youth can refer to the book, The Spiritual Laws of Life by Sri Harold Klemp, as needed.</i>)</p> <p>3. <u>Benefit:</u> What did you learn from the experience? How did learning the spiritual principle or law help you? What change did it bring into your life? Look over and make sure you have included this benefit in your story (usually at the end, though sometimes it can work at the beginning).</p> <p>As attendees complete their stories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure their full name, age, and state/province/country is legible. • Then have them choose which table they'd like to explore next (see below). 	5 min
	Creativity Tables (OPTIONAL SECTION – You can omit or adapt as needed)	(35 min)
	<p>Invite youth to the tables. Have a facilitator at each table who can encourage the youth's creativity and assist them in visually demonstrating their spiritual principle.</p> <p>Table 1: Art Youth can make a drawing or painting that goes with their story and reflects the spiritual principle in their story.</p> <p>Table 2: Word puzzles, Poems and Comic Strips.</p> <p><i>Poems:</i> Have pen and paper available for anyone who would like to write a poem about the spiritual principle they identified in their story. (<i>They can also go to Table # 1 to create an art piece to accompany their poem.</i>)</p> <p><i>Word Puzzles:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show youth examples of Word Searches from past <i>Letter of Light</i> issues. • Youth can either use the grid template provided to create a Word Search puzzle or create a different template shape for their puzzle. • Remind them to list all of the words to be found, below their puzzle. • Also have them write a short introduction about the spiritual principle or theme of their word search. • Let them know that they can also go online at home and create ECK crossword puzzles to submit to <i>Letter of Light</i>. 	30 min

	<p>Let's sing <i>HU</i> a few times and contemplate on what question you'd like to ask. Then, when you know your question, you can write it down on your yellow card. As youth write down their questions, share the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your question will always be answered, whether it is answered inwardly or in written form, in a dream, or in some other way. So stay alert for the answer the Master gives you. <p><i>{Make sure youth write their full name, age, and state/province/country on their question.}</i></p> <p>Release forms: If Releases were not already signed by parents, have everyone fill out a release form which their parents can complete.</p>	
6.	Share and Clean Up	(3 min)
	<p>Whenever you'd like to, you can always submit your experiences and your art to the <i>Letter of Light</i>.</p> <p>So, when you go home, we invite you to start looking for the ECK in your daily experiences, at school, with your friends, and at home with your family.</p> <p>The MAHANTA's love and help is always available and, with a little practice through the Spiritual Exercises of ECK, you can discover how God is speaking to you every day!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thank everyone for participating! Collect all articles, art, poems, comic strips, and word puzzles, to be put with appropriate Release forms. <i>Make sure youth's names are legible.</i> Final clean-up. 	<p>1 min</p> <p>2 min</p>
TOTAL TIME:		90 mins

After the workshop, please pair each submission with the corresponding release form signed by the parent and send all submissions to:

Letter of Light
 PO Box 2000
 Chanhassen, MN 55317-2000
 U.S.A.

Thank you!