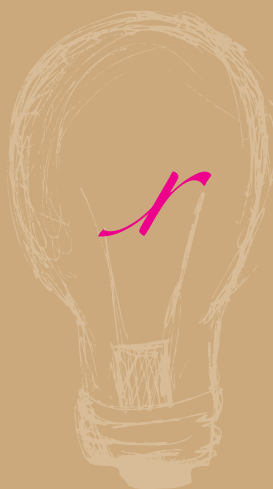
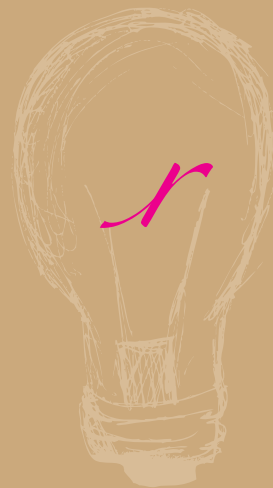
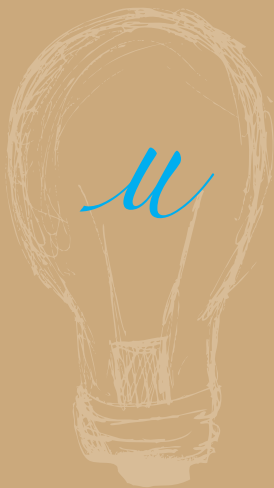


A day with Friends

Running events for enquirers and new attenders



A guide for Quaker meetings



A day with Friends

This resource is for Quaker meetings interested in running events for enquirers and new attenders. It offers a simple framework for what the day might include, ideas for sessions and guidance on how to use the space you have.

We hope *A day with Friends* will help meetings run open and creative enquirers' events where everyone can share their stories and insights and explore the riches of the Quaker way together.

Contents:

1. Introduction and templates: planning an event and deciding who might be involved
2. Getting ready: ways of working together and creating a safe, supportive and trusting space
3. Leading the day: sharing stories and exploring questions
4. Next steps: looking ahead to what meetings and participants might take forward from the day; further help and resources
5. Appendices: suggestions and template for sharing our stories.

Alistair Fuller
Head of Outreach Development
Quaker Life

Feedback

We welcome feedback from Friends who have used this resource. Email outreach@quaker.org.uk or write to Outreach, Friends House, 173–177 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ. Please tell us:

1. which Quaker meeting you belong to
2. what prompted you as a meeting to use this resource
3. whether you found this resource helpful and why/why not
4. what next steps, if any, you have considered taking
5. any other comments you would like to share with us.

Thank you.

Alistair Fuller,

Head of Outreach Development, Quaker Life

1. Introduction and templates

Introduction

Much of what we think of as outreach is concerned with making the Quaker way – who we are and the spiritual values by which we live – more visible and available to those looking for a spiritual home. We want to help people to find us, and we do this in many ways, both individually and collectively.

When someone first begins worshipping with us and becoming part of our lives, there is a lot they need to learn about our processes, our way of worship and how we shape and order our communities. We need to give a good deal of thought to how we support and encourage them in this and help them to find their way in. We also need to think about how we encourage them to share their own stories and experiences with us. This isn't a one-sided process and we need to find ways to hear and value the light and insights they bring.

The first step is always about warmth, openness and welcome. We need to offer encouragement and support so that seekers and enquirers can begin to find a place to settle; a safe space in which to explore. They need to sense that with us they might find a spiritual home. But there is more to it than simply making people feel welcome. So much of our worship and our life together can seem difficult to understand. New attenders need help to navigate this, to gain a better sense of what is going on and what their place in it might be.

This might happen gradually, through questions and conversations; everyone makes this journey at different speeds and in different ways. However, experience shows that it can be enormously helpful and deeply affirming when meetings deliberately create the space for questions to be asked and explored. It is easy to assume that new attenders gradually absorb our traditions and practices, but this is not always the case.

Often, given the opportunity to ask, the questions can be surprising. They might be questions about Quaker history and tradition; they might be about our structures, roles and responsibilities; often they are questions about our worship and spiritual practice. But just as often they can be about the words and phrases we use, where to sit, when to stand and speak, whether Quakers pray, the financial cost of belonging, and how it all relates to the way we lead our lives.

Over recent years, a number of meetings have begun holding special days and events to offer enquirers, new attenders and others the opportunity to search out these questions, to understand the breadth of responses, and to explore how the meeting might help and hold them on their journeys.

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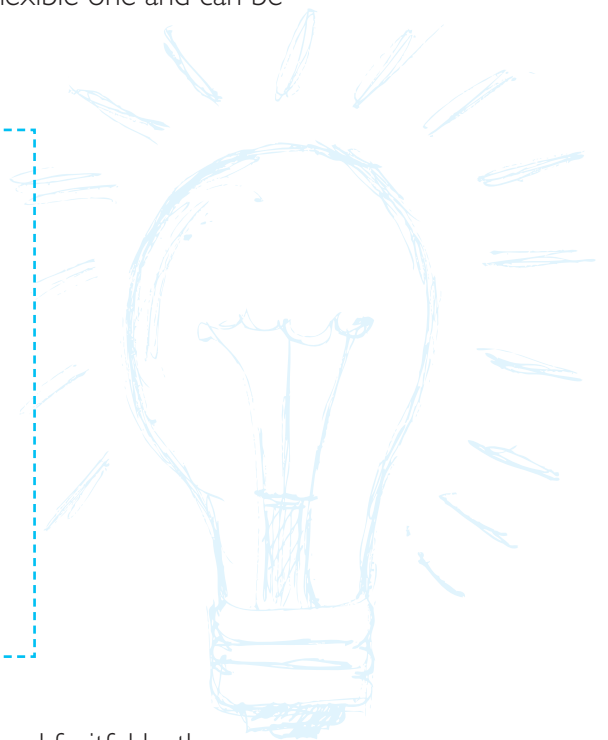
The first step is always about warmth, openness and welcome. We need to offer encouragement and support so that seekers and enquirers can begin to find a place to settle; a safe space in which to explore. They need to sense that with us they might find a spiritual home.

This resource aims to provide guidance, ideas and advice on how such days and events might be run. This advice is the fruit of experience and experiment by a range of meetings and draws too on the wealth of insight and experience gained from the work of Quaker Quest and from weekend enquirers' events run at Charney Manor and Swarthmoor Hall. It seeks to offer a process that is open and collaborative; one that allows us to hear and value the stories of those who have found us; and that asks how the meeting can continue to support, cherish and challenge those who want to go further.

We offer here a suggested template for an enquirers' day. It has been tried and tested in a variety of settings and includes a number of suggestions for activities along with some thoughts on how to prepare for the day. The template is a flexible one and can be adapted to suit the meeting and the needs of those who attend.

A day with Friends centres around the following key questions:

- How do we support enquirers on their journey?
- How do we create a safe space in which difficult questions can be asked?
- How do we do this in a way that doesn't suggest an 'us and them' approach?
- How can we be equal and open in our exploring together?



We hope that meetings will find this resource helpful, challenging and fruitful both for themselves and for their enquirers and new attenders. The Quaker Life Outreach Development team also offers direct support and guidance. Our contact details and a list of further resources can be found in section 4: *Next steps*.

Alistair Fuller
Head of Outreach Development
Quaker Life

Meeting Quakers

An event for enquirers – a simple template

Time	Activity	Leader/facilitator
10:00	Gathering – welcome, introductions	
10:30	Opening worship	
10:40	Ways of working together	
11:00	Sharing our stories	
11:45	Break	
12:00	Everything you ever wanted to know about Quakers – question time	
12:30	Lunch	
1:15	Exploring the questions	
2:45	Break	
3:00	Going further/next steps	
3:45	Closing worship	

Running events for enquirers and new attenders

– a simple template for planning

Preparing a safe space – who will be involved; hospitality; eldership and pastoral care

Notes / ideas / inspiration



Gathering – setting the scene; creating an atmosphere of openness, welcome and trust; establishing ways of working safely and helpfully together

Worship and welcome

Notes / ideas / inspiration



Hopes and expectations for the day; ways of working and introductions

Notes / ideas / inspiration



Sharing our stories – an opportunity to get to know those who have come along; valuing the experience and insights people bring

Notes / ideas / inspiration



Asking the questions

Notes / ideas / inspiration



Lunch – bring-and-share; during lunch, look at the questions people have asked and see how they might be gathered into groups or under headings

Responding to questions – an opportunity to respond to and explore the questions

Notes / ideas / inspiration



Short break

Next steps – exploring next steps for participants and for the meeting

Notes / ideas / inspiration



Closing worship and farewells

Notes / ideas / inspiration



Further thoughts and ideas



Preparing a safe space

Introduction

When planning and running an event for enquirers and new attenders, one of the most important things to remember is that it needs to be a 'safe space', a space in which everyone will feel held, heard and valued. Those coming for the first time not only bring questions, they bring their whole selves, with all their anxieties, experiences – sometimes bruising ones – hopes and fears. As they share and move forward on their spiritual journeys, they need to be – and feel – carefully held.

This means that a good deal of thought needs to be given to the whole environment in which the event will take place. This includes the physical space, the people involved, the words used, the time given to simply listening, and the way we respond to questions.

As well as wanting to impart information, we should remember that we are fellow travellers and to treat one another with "a tender hand".

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Getting ready

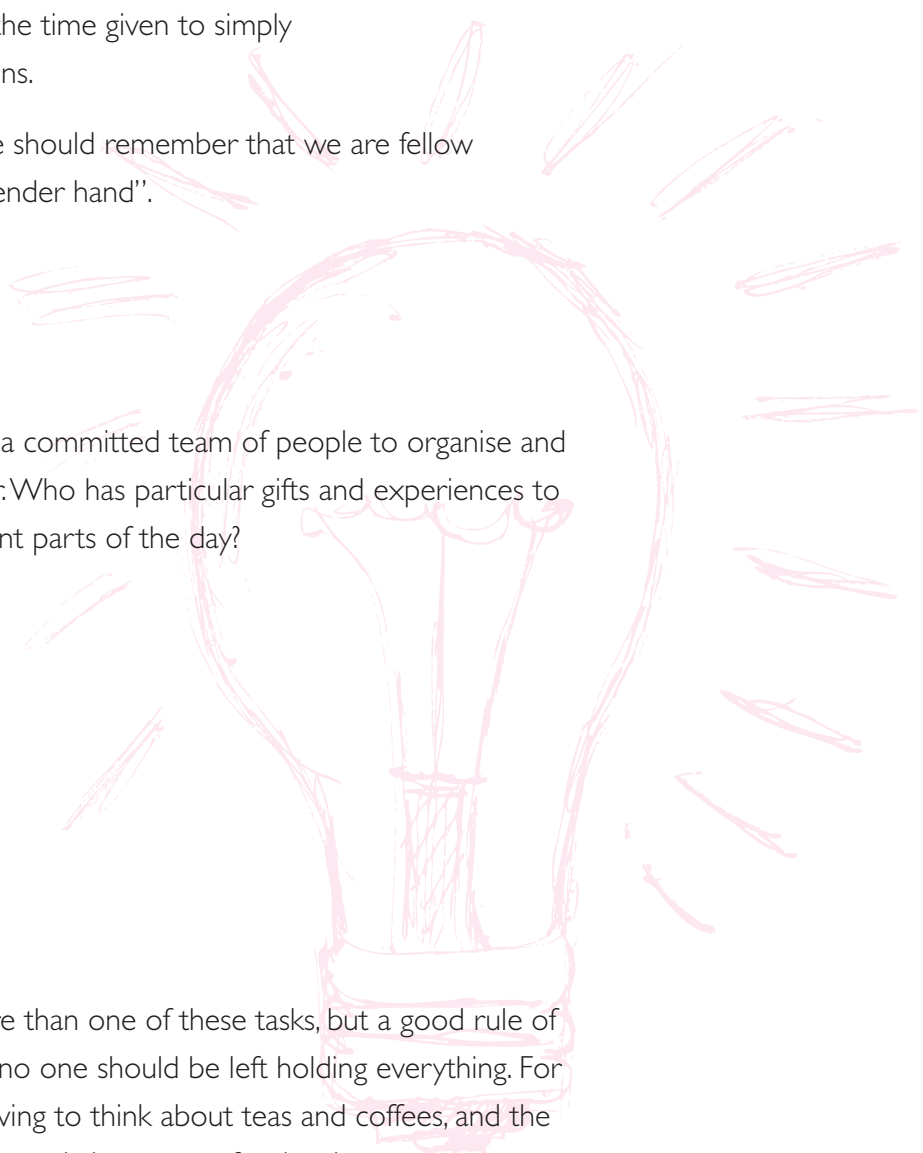
Who will be involved?

Since a successful event for enquirers needs a committed team of people to organise and deliver it, this is the first question to consider. Who has particular gifts and experiences to bring? Who will take responsibility for different parts of the day?

You will need to think about:

- who will organise the hospitality
- who will prepare the space
- who will serve refreshments
- who will welcome enquirers
- who will lead particular sessions
- who will elder the gathering.

It may be that one person is involved in more than one of these tasks, but a good rule of thumb is that all tasks should be shared and no one should be left holding everything. For example, those eldering shouldn't also be having to think about teas and coffees, and the people leading sessions ought not to wash up and clear away after lunch.



This is an opportunity to involve a wide range of people from your meeting. Think about those with a natural gift for welcome or anyone experienced in group work or facilitation. Newer members and attenders, who might welcome the opportunity to become more involved, are likely to have some fresh and helpful insights into what enquirers might be wanting to explore since they are much closer to that experience.

It is important to give some thought to the session immediately after lunch, in which we respond to the questions people have brought. We do this by clustering the questions under four or five headings and having separate tables or spaces where people can gather to respond to the questions (see section 3: *Leading the day*). We recommend two Friends for each table or area, not to *answer* the questions but to *facilitate* the conversations exploring them.

Pastoral care, eldership and oversight

Pastoral care and oversight of a gathering for enquirers is something that should be a high priority in all the planning and the delivery of the day. Experienced elders should be appointed at an early stage to hold the day pastorally and prayerfully, and they should be supported by those who can take responsibility for pastoral care.

An important part of the day involves sharing our journeys and the things that have brought us here. This has the potential to touch on some sensitive and difficult areas. While the delivery of the day should be gentle and unthreatening, it is essential to be prepared for anything that might arise.

Publicity and invitations

The best form of publicity for a day like this is word of mouth and personal invitation. Whether it is a local or area meeting event, it is good – at an early stage of the planning – to give careful thought to who should be invited. There may be a number of newer attenders who spring to mind, but there might also be others ‘further out on the fringe’ who would welcome the opportunity to attend an open, unthreatening day of discussion and exploration.

Remember, too, that there will be others who have been attending for much longer – who may even be members – who have things they would like to know more about and questions they would like to ask. The invitation should be as open and generous as possible.



An important part of the day involves sharing our journeys and the things that have brought us here. This has the potential to touch on some sensitive and difficult areas. While the delivery of the day should be gentle and unthreatening, it is essential to be prepared for anything that might arise.

It is always helpful to have a range of Friends present. This encourages a sharing of a variety of views and voices and helps new enquirers get a sense of the balance between the shared and the personal – between saying “Quakers do/are/have always...” and “My own experience is...”.

If you create posters or send out invitations, use plain language, keep it clear, simple and not too wordy, and emphasise that it is an open, unthreatening day of exploration. Make sure the date, time and venue are clearly visible.

Welcome and hospitality

Physical environment

Whilst as Quakers we have no ‘sacred spaces’ as such, the setting of an enquirers’ event is very important.

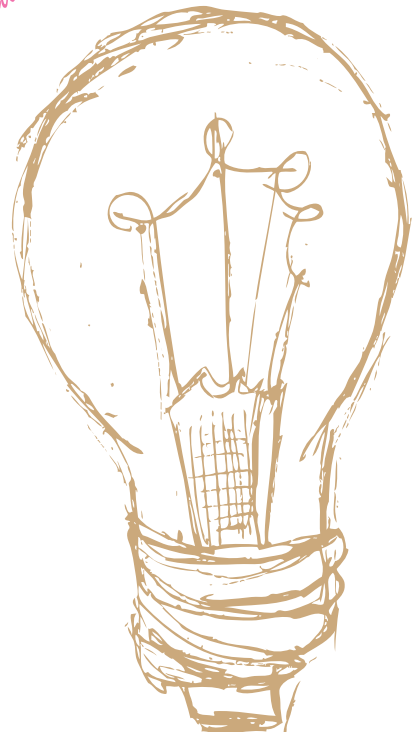
Experience suggests that the following are helpful to remember:

- An open door
- Good signage with good use of colour
- A clean and tidy venue with a pleasant smell
- Comfortable seating arranged in a circle with no reserved seats
- Leaflets that are visible and available, but not ‘pushed’
- Notice boards that are well managed, informative and uncluttered
- People on hand to offer a personal welcome
- Tea, coffee and biscuits

What has been felt to be less helpful includes:

- A long, dark or unlit hall
- Inadequate disabled access
- Closed doors
- A lack of warmth in greeting
- No one around to do the greeting
- Assuming people know their way around
- A drab, colourless building with poor lighting
- Too many leaflets and too much information
- Uncomfortable or inadequate seating

*comfortable seating arranged
in a circle with no reserved
seats tea, coffee, biscuits ...*



In terms of the welcome we offer, it is important to try to get the balance right between being warm and being overwhelming. It takes courage to step through the door of a meeting house and it requires grace and sensitivity to greet people well. Remember that welcome isn't just a word; it's about a culture and environment and is something that involves everyone.

Equipment

This probably isn't the day for electronic wizardry, however beautifully it might be done. It can feel too much like lecturing rather than exploring and sharing.

It is useful to have:

- a flipchart with plenty of paper and pens
- large post-it notes
- art equipment such as coloured paper, glue, paint and wool if you are going to do something more creative.

Hospitality

Think carefully about hospitality. Food and fellowship are probably the single best way for people to get to know one another. This could simply be tea, coffee and biscuits on arrival or a good, convivial lunch.

For occasions like this, packed lunches aren't ideal; a bring-and-share lunch or a soup-bread-and-cheese lunch work much better. Shared food is more encouraging and inviting and speaks strongly of welcome and community.

Hospitality can take quite a bit of organising and shouldn't become an overwhelming task for just one or two people. Encourage as many people as possible to contribute and get involved.

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Remember that welcome isn't just a word; it's about a culture and environment and is something that involves everyone.



Gathering and introductions

Setting the tone for the event is vital. It is important to create an atmosphere that is gentle, open and trusting.

Two Friends should hold this session and should use it as an opportunity to introduce themselves and the day and to give everyone the opportunity to introduce themselves. They should:

- explain the purpose of the day
- give any important notices such as fire safety procedures and where the toilets are
- outline the timings and explain the arrangements for lunch
- explain how the day will be led
- assure everyone that we are all exploring and hoping to discover more – about Quakers and about one another; that questions are always welcome
- stress that no one will be pressured into doing anything; that no one will be expected to make any further commitments beyond simply being there for the day; that no one needs to feel pressured or obliged to answer anything or share anything they would rather not
- point out any leaflets or literature that might be helpful.

Getting to know people's names is important and you might want to think about whether to use simple name labels. These can be a mixed blessing – some people find them childish and intrusive – but they can be a great aid to being able to address each other by name.

You might begin with a simple go-round. Elaborate ice-breakers can be very off-putting and can actively disadvantage anyone new, especially if they are shy or reticent. Ensure the inclusion of those with physical or sensory needs.

Avoid doing anything that visitors might feel awkward about. First-time visitors will not want to feel uncomfortable or exposed and some may well find lots of ice-breakers anything but fun.

Simply asking their name and an unthreatening question such as “How did you get here today?” or “How did you hear about today's gathering?” is as effective as anything.

Another way to use this time is to do a go-round asking what people's hopes are for the day.

If others are leading or facilitating any other part of the day, take this opportunity to introduce them.

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Opening worship

Lead into this with care. Newcomers will have no idea what is going to happen.

Think about the language you use to describe it. Perhaps explain – briefly and simply – what Quakers understand worship to be and its central importance; but encourage everyone to use this first time of stillness in the way that is most helpful for them.

Avoid any jargon such as ‘gathered stillness’ as it may well not mean anything to newcomers.

The opening worship should be brief – around five or ten minutes; any longer can be intimidating as a starting point.



Ways of working

Introduction

Some people refer to these as 'ground rules' or 'working agreements'.

In essence, it is about establishing some safe, shared parameters that will underpin the day. They are intended to create a sense of confidence and reassurance and can, on occasion, be a useful point to refer back to if there are difficulties or unexpected frictions or disagreements later.

These shouldn't be introduced as hard and fast rules. Rather, they can frame the kind of positive, open and trusting sharing that we hope will happen and with which newcomers especially will feel at ease.

Often, group leaders and facilitators will arrive at a working agreement by consensus, but in this circumstance, particularly given the time restrictions, we recommend that you have something already framed that is offered to the group. It may be amended slightly but should have a shape and purpose with which you are confident.



Stress the importance of being kind to oneself and to others; it sets a good tone and actually covers most things.

The ways of working you arrive at are yours to decide, but the following dos and don'ts might be helpful:

- Avoid saying lots about confidentiality; it can be alarming and can suggest that you are going to be delving into everyone's deepest secrets. It can be more helpful to talk about trust and not judging.
- Stress the importance of being kind to oneself and to others; it sets a good tone and actually covers most things.
- Underline the importance of listening to one another in silence and without judgement; in group sessions it is especially helpful to encourage spaces of silence between contributions.
- It is helpful to mention time-keeping.
- Keep the list short and simple.

You might find it helpful to write or type out the list and to keep it in a place where everyone can see it.

3. Leading the day

Sharing our stories

Why share stories?

It is easy to see an enquirers' event as an opportunity to impart knowledge and experience. Partly it is just that, but it is equally important for it to be an opportunity to listen to the stories and insights of those who come along, and to value what they have learned on their journey. It helps to make this process more equal and it suggests a community that is truly "open to new light".

As Quaker meetings, we know that one of the things that helps to deepen and enrich our shared life is the sharing of our stories. These are the things that have been precious and important to us – some of the lights that have lit our way. Part of the purpose of the day, besides finding out about Quakers, is to invite a sense of belonging and community.

At this point, though, it's good to bear in mind that some of those taking part will be new to all of this and won't know anyone. They mustn't be made to feel that this session is about prying or asking them to share their deepest secrets.

It's good to explain not just what will happen in the session but why.

Individual reflection

It can be helpful to begin this session with a time of personal reflection. Invite everyone present to think about their journey and what has brought them here today. Some simple, encouraging questions can help. You could choose from the following or create your own:

- What made you decide to come along today?
- What have been the people, places and experiences in your life that you are most grateful for?
- How did you first hear about Quakers?

Ask the questions gently and stress that they are just prompts and that no one *has* to answer them.

Give people time to reflect and perhaps to make some notes. We have included a template that has been used on a number of occasions and has often been found helpful.

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Part of the purpose of the day, besides finding out about Quakers, is to invite a sense of belonging and community.

In small groups

You may decide to do this in small groups, especially if it is a fairly large gathering. Try to get people into groups of three or four and encourage them to share something from their own personal reflections. Again, stress that no one need feel obliged to share anything.

Afterwards, in a large group, invite participants to share any thoughts or feelings they may have about the session.

In a large group

If you decide to do this session in a large group, pose a broad, unthreatening question such as “What do you most hope to get out of today?” or “What prompted you to come along?”.

Remind everyone to leave space and stillness between contributions.

Asking the questions

This section of the day is, in many ways, the most important. It is about creating a space in which everyone present – enquirers, new attenders, longer-term attenders and established Friends – is enabled and encouraged to ask questions about Quakers and Quakerism.

Even in this setting, it can be difficult for people to ask things that might appear awkward or challenging, so it needs to be made clear that anyone can ask anything. It is worthwhile stressing that not every question can be answered fully, but that they will be explored. It is also important to remind everyone that for some questions there will not be a fixed or single answer, especially when it comes to questions of belief or spiritual practice.

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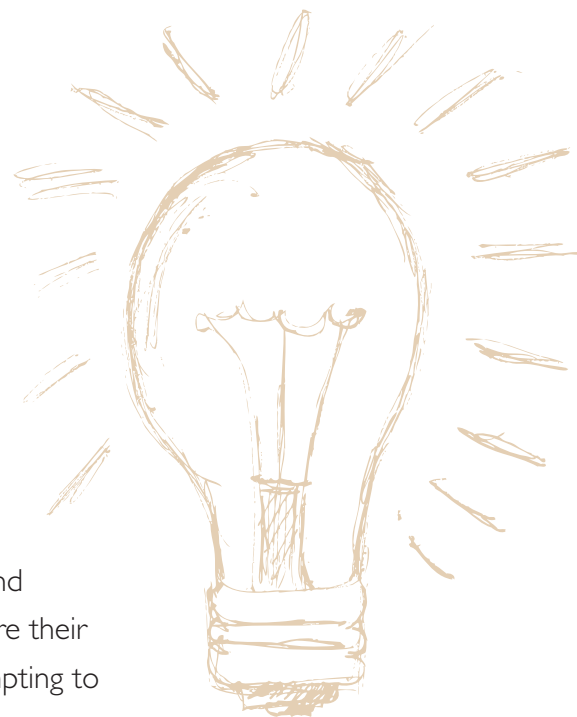
Gathering the questions

For the first part of this exercise you will need large Post-it style sticky notes and marker pens. You will also need to affix some large, blank sheets of flipchart paper to the walls or notice board.

Introduce the purpose of the session before holding a few minutes of silent reflection, during which everyone can reflect on the particular questions they have brought or have been pondering. Give some of the sticky notes and a pen to everyone present and invite them, individually and silently, to write down their questions – one question per note. They may wish to do this where they are sitting or to go and find a quiet space. After about ten minutes, invite them to find someone else – preferably someone they do not know well – and share their questions with them. Remind them that, at this point, we are not attempting to respond to the questions, but simply to share them.

When they have done this, invite everyone, when they are ready, to stick their questions up on the blank sheets. They can put them all together or spread them out. This should be done silently and without comment.

Once all the questions are on the sheets, we begin the process of clustering them. One of the facilitators should read out the questions so that everyone knows what is being asked. Then we begin to cluster the questions under headings or headlines. There may be a number of questions about worship and spiritual practice; some about religious language



and belief. Some might be about structures and practices or roles and responsibilities; and there may be some about history and tradition. It is also likely that there will be some questions about witness and testimony, which could be quite general or very personal.

Try to gather the questions under about four headings (this is usually enough), but allow for an extra one, which could be called 'others', for those that don't fit particularly well.

This isn't a scientific exercise, and some questions will fit equally well under a number of headings, but try to cluster them as best you can. This will better enable participants to respond to them later. The headings don't need to be too precise: titles like 'Culture and language', 'The life of the Quaker meeting', 'Costs and challenges of belonging', 'Living as a Quaker' and 'Roles and responsibilities' can be broad and helpful.

Once the questions have been grouped into their clusters, explain what will happen in the next section (after lunch).

Tell participants that in the afternoon there will be four or five tables in different areas of the meeting house, where each of the clusters of questions will be responded to and explored. In the planning for the day, you will have identified a number of more experienced Friends who will each take responsibility for one of the tables. It is good to have two Friends per table. Try to involve elders and overseers in this.

Invite participants to go to whichever table(s) is exploring the questions they are most curious about. Encourage them to visit as many tables as possible, spending about ten or fifteen minutes at each one.

Before you break for lunch, encourage everyone to take some time to look at the questions and to think where they might want to begin.

Now ask everyone to be still and end the morning with a short time of stillness and worship.

Responding to the questions

Introduction

In responding to the questions people bring, it is essential to strike a balance between the openness that is part of our tradition and that honours our own personal experience, and offering some clear and helpful responses.

This will depend, of course, on the questions that are asked. Questions such as “When did Quakerism begin?” and “What is an area meeting?” are relatively straightforward. But questions such as “What is the peace testimony?” or “Do Quakers pray?” are likely to call for greater exploration and openness.

It is important that facilitators keep the discussion on track but don't dominate it, or allow it to be dominated by one particular response.

In all that we share, the most helpful and worthwhile thing we can do is to share our own stories. It is far more enriching and encouraging to enquirers and new attenders to hear what it is like to *be* a Quaker rather than finding out about Quakerism.

Using the space

During lunch, decide who will take responsibility for each cluster of questions.

Set out four or five tables in the meeting room and other adjacent rooms if available, with chairs arranged around them. Place on each table the heading or headline and the notes with the questions on them.

Explain which table is responding to which questions and invite people to go to the table that interests them most. Explain that after ten to fifteen minutes you will ring a bell or give a signal to suggest that people move on to another table. Make clear that this is optional but do encourage participants to spend time at more than one table. Reassure everyone that this isn't about expert knowledge but about helping enquirers and newer attenders to understand more clearly some of our practices and processes and to get a sense of our story as a community. At the same time it is an opportunity for more established Friends and attenders to explore and express their own insights and experiences.



In all that we share, the most helpful and worthwhile thing we can do is to share our own stories. It is far more enriching and encouraging to enquirers and new attenders to hear what it is like to be a Quaker rather than finding out about Quakerism.



Smaller groups

If you are working with a small group, it may not be necessary to divide participants into these areas of interest. Instead, look at the clusters of questions under their headlines. Find two or three that are broadly about the same thing; read them out and then leave a time of silence. Then invite anyone to respond to each question, encouraging them to share their own experience rather than to say "This is what Quakers think".

There may not be time to work through all of the questions, so it can be helpful to look first at the ones that occur most frequently and concentrate on them. Give everyone time to reflect on both the question and each response before moving on. Remind them that it is not a debate and to listen openly to the responses given.

During the session, check occasionally that everyone is able to both hear and understand what is being said.

At the end of the session

Close the session with a period of worship and perhaps a reading from *Advices & queries* or *Quaker faith & practice*.

After the session make time for a 'comfort' break and some relaxation.

Alternative response – circles exercise

Depending on the group's size and make-up, you might want to use a 'circles' exercise as a way of responding.

Arrange the questions under broad headings and agree about six or seven 'key' questions. These could be "What do Quakers believe about God?", "What does testimony mean?", "What is a leading?", or "How does this meeting link to other meetings?".

Arrange the chairs into two facing circles – the inner circle facing outward, the outer circle facing inward. Ask members and more experienced attenders to sit in the inner circle and new attenders and enquirers to sit in the outer circle.

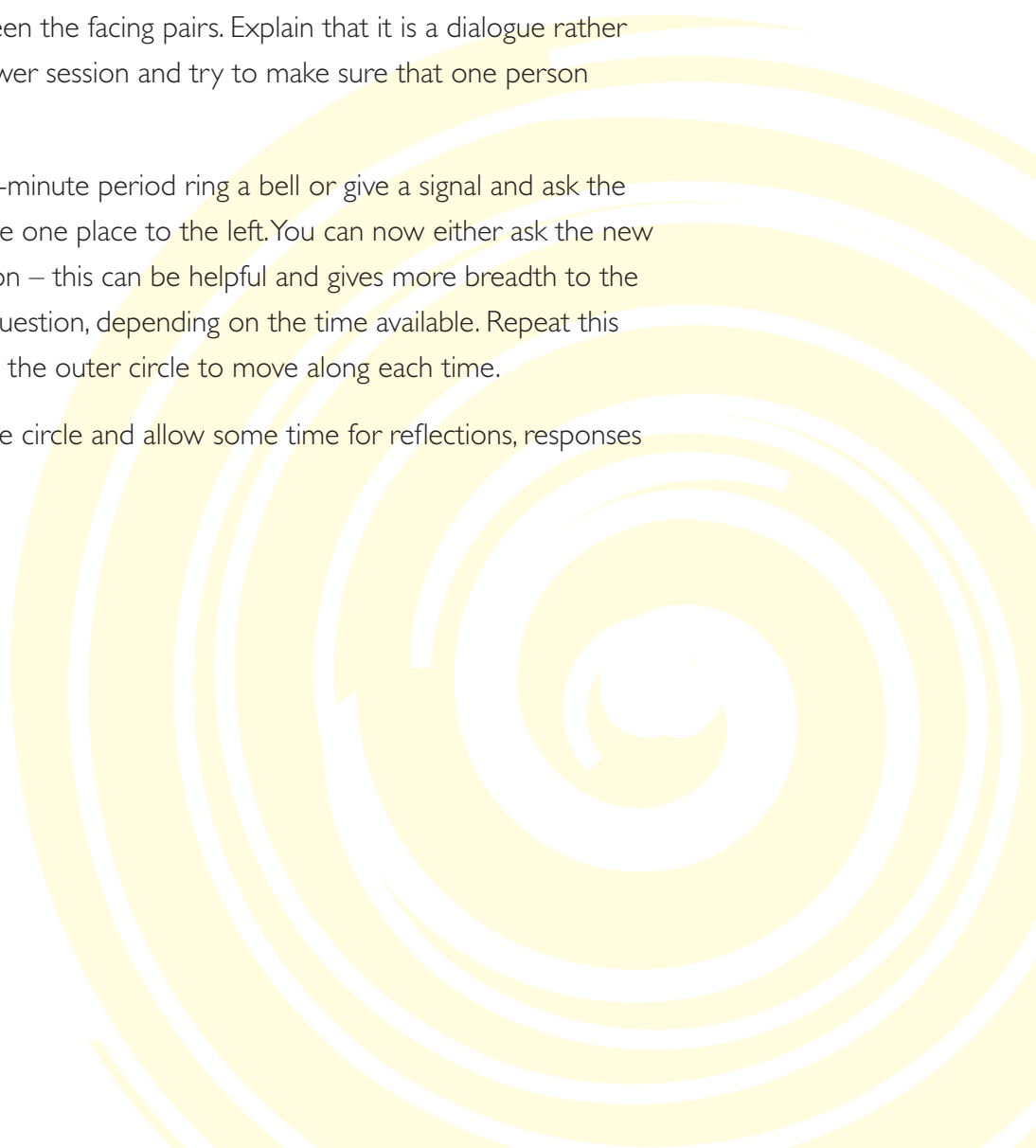
Begin by reading out the first of your key questions and then allow about five to seven minutes for a conversation between the facing pairs. Explain that it is a dialogue rather than an expert question-and-answer session and try to make sure that one person doesn't do all the talking!

At the end of each five- to seven-minute period ring a bell or give a signal and ask the people in the outer circle to move one place to the left. You can now either ask the new pairs to explore the same question – this can be helpful and gives more breadth to the response – or give them a new question, depending on the time available. Repeat this with each of the questions, asking the outer circle to move along each time.

After the session, gather in a single circle and allow some time for reflections, responses and unanswered questions.



What do Quakers believe about God? What does testimony mean? What is a leading? How does this meeting link to other meetings?



Next steps

Other than the closing worship, this is the final session. Its purpose is to explore what the next steps might be for the meeting and for those who have come to the day.

Divide the group into smaller groups of four to six and give each group the same three questions to explore:

1. What else might the meeting do in the future to help new attenders and enquirers to explore further and feel more deeply involved? (This might include social events such as discussion evenings, a bring-and-share supper, or a walk-and-talk day.)
2. What could the meeting do on an ongoing basis to help new attenders feel welcome? (This could be to do with how people are welcomed or how the space is set out.)
3. What might be the next step (if any) for those who are there – both enquirers and more established attenders and members? (This should be just one thing – perhaps a personal commitment or a simple acknowledgement that more time is needed to think about it.)

Before the discussion, each group should agree who will feed back to the larger group. Give the groups about 15 minutes to explore the questions, then gather back into the larger group.

Ask each group to respond to the questions with three or four headlines or suggestions and capture these on a flipchart. Alternatively, you could give each group some pieces of A4 paper to write on, using one piece for each suggestion, and ask the spokesperson to read them out and pin them up.

Try to identify a few (no more than three or four) things that the meeting will take forward from the day and agree who will do this and how. (For example, elders and overseers might take it to their next meeting, or it could be added to the agenda for the next business meeting).

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What could the meeting do on an ongoing basis to help new attenders feel welcome?

Closing

The most important thing to do is to close with worship. An elder should introduce this, again making suggestions for how the time might best be used. They should reassure those worshipping with you for the first time that they needn't feel either lost or daunted or fear they may be doing something wrong. Invite them to offer ministry about the day, if they feel prompted. Remind them that the worship will finish when two of the elders shake hands.

“

The most important thing to do is to close with worship.

Help, ideas and resources

Outreach cluster

The cluster is coordinated by the Outreach Development Officer and is part of the Quaker Life Network. It comprises a group of Friends who are experienced and enthusiastic in outreach and who can work directly with meetings in setting up events for enquirers and new attenders. Please contact outreach@quaker.org.uk if you would like to join the cluster or find out more.



Outreach handbook: *Reaching in, reaching out*

This is a free resource for all Quaker meetings and consists of practical advice, exercises, insights and tested approaches to strengthening the life of meetings through outreach activities. Please contact outreach@quaker.org.uk for a free copy.



Quaker Quest

Quaker Quest events aim to help enquirers find out about the Quaker way. Most events happen in the evening and consist of three speakers and an 'organiser', who share their own experiences of Quaker worship and what Quaker values and concerns mean to them. Their events incorporate breakout groups and question-and-answer sessions in an informal and relaxed way. Quaker Quest evenings are open to anyone and are free of charge. The Quaker Quest Network has grown since its inception as a leading of North West London Area Meeting in 2003. Visit www.quakerquest.org to find out more.



Outreach leaflets and resources

Quaker Life distributes a range of free outreach leaflets, posters and resources to meetings across the country. These are reviewed in time for each Britain Yearly Meeting and new resources are created for Quaker Week (the first week of October). Please contact outreach@quaker.org.uk for the latest information.



Book boxes

Quaker Life offers book boxes – to the value of £500 – on a sale-or-return basis to meetings. These can be sold at outreach events to enquirers wanting to find out more about Quaker spirituality and values, our history or contemporary Quaker concerns. Please contact outreach@quaker.org.uk for more information.



Becoming Friends: Living and Learning with Quakers

This innovative learning project from Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre and Quaker Life aims to nurture and support those who are new to Friends. It provides a flexible, interactive course and a range of ways for Quaker meetings to support newcomers as they learn about Quakerism.

Becoming Friends is now available online and in paper format. A two-year subscription to the online course costs £20 and the printed pack costs £10.

Visit www.woodbrooke.org.uk/pages/becoming-friends.html for more information.



Being Friends Together

Developed by Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre and Quaker Life, Being Friends Together is an online library of resources to help Friends and meetings to:

- develop spiritually, both as individuals and meetings
- learn about aspects of the Quaker and Christian traditions
- develop and express their sense of Quaker identity
- grow as communities
- feel supported to live out Quaker testimony in their lives and communities
- integrate all generations into the life of meetings.

Being Friends Together offers Quaker meetings a fresh way of approaching their ongoing development as living communities of faithful people. It contains activities and ideas from previous Quaker learning projects, newly written and recorded material, and suggestions for useful websites, courses and actions that meetings can engage with. Visit <http://together.woodbrooke.org.uk/welcome.php> for more information.



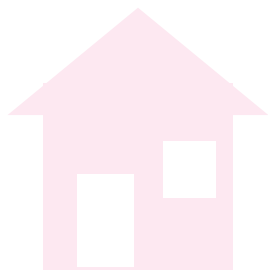
Appendix 1

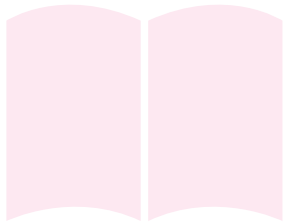
Suggestions for sharing our stories

Think about...	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who has supported and encouraged me in the past?• Who has inspired me in the past?• Who inspires and encourages me now?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Which places or landscapes have been inspiring and important in my story?• Which places or landscapes are important to me now?• Where have I felt most at home or at peace?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Which ideas have I found most exciting and inspiring?• Which ideas continue to excite and inspire me now?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Which stories, writing or traditions have been most significant in my story?• Which stories or traditions are important to me now?

Appendix 2

Sharing our stories template





How can we offer encouragement and support to enquirers and new attenders who want to find out more about Quakers? How do we create a safe, welcoming space in which questions can be asked and answers explored?

At its heart, outreach is about making the Quaker way better known; being visible and connected in our communities; creating opportunities for seekers and enquirers to find out about our worship and our witness. It is also about welcoming and supporting those who find us and want to discover more about Quakers and Quaker community.

When someone first encounters Quakers and visits a Quaker meeting, they bring with them all kinds of questions about what it means to live as a Quaker. The stillness and silence that are part of our worship – together with the absence of the hierarchy and structures found in many other groups and organisations – mean that the answers can be hard to find. It may not even be clear who to ask.

This resource aims to provide guidance, ideas and advice to meetings on how to plan for and organise days and events for enquirers and new attenders. It offers templates and suggestions for events that are open and collaborative, creating opportunities for the sharing of stories, the asking of questions and the exploring of answers.

We hope that meetings will find this resource helpful, challenging and fruitful both for themselves and for their enquirers and new attenders.

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