



Listening points

What do young people find hard?

If you haven't done the continuum activity (see Starting Points) then start this activity with a few of the questions to encourage the group to reflect on what they might find hard. When facilitating this activity remember to be sensitive to the variety of expressions of the peace testimony in the group. In this activity your role is to open conversation and explore experiences rather than set expectations about what the group should believe and do.

Being the “only Quaker” (that is the only Quaker in your school or young person your age in your meeting) can be especially challenging when your beliefs about war or the armed forces distinguishes you from the majority in your community. For example when a group of young people were asked if they would take action if the military was coming into their school they gave the following responses:

“Don't know how to campaign on this issue.”

“This is a sensitive issue, very personal and it can offend. For example my friends have family in the forces.”

“It's my right to object but it's not my right to stop others.”

“You can make your opinion well known but this needs to be done tactfully.”

Invite the group to write down on a post it note what they find most challenging about the Peace testimony and their local community. If the group is finding it hard to think about examples, you may want to remind them of the continuum activity (see Starting Points). Invite participants to share in pairs their responses to the following:

- How do they feel about the issue they wrote down.
- What do they think about the issue they wrote down.
- What makes an issue more challenging (for example is it harder to express your beliefs about peace to your friends than to a teacher?) Why is this?

Invite the group to share their thoughts and feelings, then discuss as a group what they might say or do in response to the things that they find challenging. If you wanted to you could extend this activity to interviewing people from the Quaker meeting about their thoughts, feelings and actions.