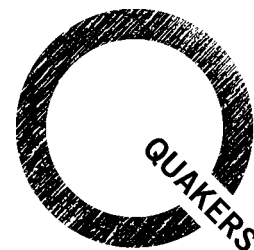


Minute of Junior Yearly Meeting



held at Frontier Centre, Northamptonshire.
1–4 April, 2023

JYM 2023 - Minute 1

How can we use truth to challenge power for inclusive change?

The answer to our theme, and subsequently this question, has changed constantly from the moment such ideas were proposed, but it seems to be that our truth is us. We know no other truth than our own, and we must allow it to change. This involves compassion and respect. Many of us have struggled with the definition of truth, spiritual truth, individual truth, and factual truth. Truth is not individual, the voice of the community should educate and challenge you. By hearing those around us, we create opportunities to improve ourselves. One truth is not more truthful than the other; in order to create individual integrity, we first must create inclusive change within ourselves.

It is important to remember truth is a testimony; it is fluid and ever-changing, not an absolute. Everything we do is influenced by our ideas of truth, and therefore by living our lives with integrity we are challenging power. As Quakers, we both literally and metaphorically sit in a circle, because we understand that none of us are more inherently powerful than another. As seen through discernment, our community strives for inclusivity. The more inclusive we can be, the less the power imbalance and the closer we can get to everyone 'sitting in a circle'. When trying to create inclusive change, it is all too easy to give hate as a reason to challenge others. We should strive to achieve compassion. Our integrity is dynamic in nature, but by speaking with love we ensure it is maintained.

To speak truth to power is as much about knowing when to use our voice as it is to use our silence. This balance is quintessential, if we only speak we have no chance to listen inclusively but if we only listen we cannot bring about change. This balance is the answer.