

Text only of a PowerPoint presentation, which includes a creative activity described in slides 18, 21 and 22. The activity is done in small groups (between 3 and 6). Resources:

- Stiff paper in several colours, not too dark – they will be written on. A4 is fine.
- A3 colour paper backing sheets, 1 per person plus 2 per group: one for the sticky note activity in slide 18 and one for Part 2 of the boulder activity.
- Scissors, glue sticks, pens, coloured felt tips (chunky is best)

Ask Friends to clear their table of anything not needed for the activities, which need space.

1. **CORKS & BOULDERS.** A metaphor, a way of looking at how we anchor our worshipping communities, presented in October 2023 at Quaker Life Representative Council by Zélie Gross, author of '*With a tender hand*'.

2. **Image of a collection of corks**, some labelled with abbreviated E&O duties, plus the cover of '*With a tender hand*'.

The metaphor of corks and boulders grew out of writing '*With a tender hand*' - commissioned to make guidance in *Qf&p* on eldership & oversight more accessible. The lists of responsibilities in 12.12 & 12.13 are not easy to recall or focus on. An image that came to mind was of corks in choppy water – constantly in motion. I needed to look at them differently...

3. **The same image of corks.**

The approach I took was to question each responsibility, issue or task in both the eldership and oversight lists:

So – what's underpinning that?

What's essential here?

Where's the life in this?

What am I failing to see?

4. **The image of corks**, and below the text an **image of boulders in the dark**.

As though looking down from the choppy surface to the sea floor, I visualized the answers to those questions as boulders – which didn't shift around with tides, waves and currents. The corks might change (and they do) but we can stay anchored.

5. **Photograph of several large boulders** seen from the shoreline with a wide expanse of sea beyond, stretching to the horizon.

These are the boulders I had in mind. Substantial and enduring, they cover the Baltic seabed from here in Estonia all the way to Finland beyond the horizon...

6. **Cover image of '*With a tender hand*'.**

Through writing '*With a tender hand*', I identified six boulders underpinning the lists of responsibilities – and everything else in *Qf&p* Chapter 12 – and more, because things change and evolve. The boulders became the book's 6 'Themes' (as in the next slide), and the modules of Woodbrooke Eldership and Oversight courses, more recently retitled: Spiritual Nurture & Pastoral Care

**Image of a group of 6 boulders: Anchoring eldership & pastoral care**

7. **Six boulders titled:**

- Pastoral care
- Worship
- Community
- Caring
- Communication
- Leadership

8. The metaphor of corks & boulders has many uses beyond where it started. It invites us to see what underpins, or anchors, the occupying busyness of jobs to do, duties to fulfill, action to take, connections to make – everything we do and want to do to in our meeting communities...

The questions I asked of *Qf&p* Chapter 12 apply equally to all of this:

What's underpinning that?

What's essential here?

Where's the life in this?

What am I failing to see?

**Image of a group of 6 boulders: Who we are.**

In 2015, Meeting for Sufferings approved an important piece of work which helps us focus on what really matters to Friends, to who we are...

9. **Six images of paintings by Judith Bromley in the leaflet: Our faith in the future**

10. **The 6 themes of *Our faith in the future* abbreviated and represented as boulders:**

- Meeting for worship is our bedrock.
- Our communities are loving, inclusive & all-age.
- We understand & live by Quaker discipline.
- Our values are active in the world.
- We work collaboratively.
- We are well-known & widely understood.

11. **Image of a group of 6 boulders: Our values**

Many Friends see Quaker values as fundamental to who we are and what we do. These values are encapsulated in another set of underlying 'boulders'

Just as Baltic boulders moved with the ice sheet and are moulded by their environment, our values endure but how we describe them changes with the times...

12. **Six boulders titled:**

- Our testimony (*sometimes 4, sometimes 5 or 6*)
- Equality & Justice
- Simplicity & Sustainability
- Truth & Integrity
- Peace
- What canst thou say?

13. **Image of a group of 6 boulders: Our witness**

Friends also tend to agree that being Quaker isn't about what we say but what we do – how we witness to our faith. And for some Friends this is the most important expression of their Quakerism.

There are many more focuses of Quaker witness than the few in the next slide...

14. **Six boulders titled:**

- Climate Justice
- Sanctuary Everywhere
- Building a fairer economy
- Peace education
- Peace building
- Ecumenical Accompaniment

15. **Image of a group of 6 boulders: Our spiritual practice**

British Friends share a central spiritual practice of silent worship, which ***Our faith in the future*** describes as our bedrock.

Many Friends have other spiritual practices too, which are important to them. Is spiritual practice a significant, or the most significant, anchor for you? The next slide names just a handful...

16. **Six boulders titled:**

- Body prayer
- Mindfulness
- Meditation
- Spiritual accompaniment
- Journaling
- Experiment with Light

17. **A different photograph of the same Baltic shoreline** with a collection of boulders of various sizes, from huge to quite small. Caption: **Why do we need boulders?**

18. **Image of a collection of corks each labelled ‘?’**

**Activity: Sticky-note silent brainstorm.** In your group (*no more than 5 or 6*):

- quickly jot down the ‘corks’ in your life as a Friend, e.g., Your own tasks, busyness, jobs, preoccupations, needs and wants, Quaker & other... and in the life of your meeting, e.g., All the work of your meeting: the organization, activities, responsibilities, needs, commitments, plans, issues, hopes...
- Stick all the notes on a backing sheet (one per group). We're gathering material that might show our need and our meeting's need to be anchored.

19. In case this leaves you feeling there's just too much to do and too few people to take on roles... we can contribute in many smaller ways, which make a big difference.

### Random collection of sticky notes with suggestions:

- showing up,
- willing to learn,
- sharing a role,
- helping out,
- staying anchored,
- mentoring,
- just one task,
- getting involved,
- being present,
- offering,
- being alongside,
- self-care,
- thanking,
- staying in touch...

### 20. **Photo of an anchor lodged in boulders on a shoreline** with 2 captions:

The boulders anchoring you?  
The boulders anchoring your meeting?

### 21. **Image of a group of boulders: Your boulders?**

#### **Activity part 1: Working individually.**

1. Think of the fundamental things that anchor you, *personally*, as a Friend. These may be very different from other Friends' boulders.
2. Using stiff paper in different colours (not too dark) cut out at least two boulder shapes large enough to write on and arrange them on a contrasting backing sheet. Each person has their own backing sheet.
3. Name your boulders and add whatever detail and words you feel are significant. Add further boulders if they occur to you.

### 22. **Image of a group of boulders: Your meeting's boulders?**

#### **Activity part 2: Working as a group** (*no more than 5 or 6*).

1. Now discuss in your group the fundamental things, which you think anchor your meeting community. You might not agree on them all.
2. Cut out at least 4 boulders and name/describe them. You may want to consider the relative size of your boulders – and maybe the shape.
3. Arrange your meeting's boulders, as many as you like, on a large sheet of paper (one per group) and stick things down when you're ready.

### 23. **Closing photograph of the boulders against the shoreline** – same as slide 5 but **without the caption.**

This can be an opportunity for whole group sharing.