

**What do you do in meeting
for worship?**



Worship is at the heart of Quaker experience

“In worship we have our neighbours to right and left, before and behind, yet the Eternal Presence is over all and beneath all. Worship does not consist in achieving a mental state of concentrated isolation from our fellows. But in the depth of common worship it is as if we found our separate lives were all one life, within which we live, move and have our being.”

Thomas Kelly, 1938 (*Quaker faith & practice* 2.36)

Quaker Life Central Committee knows experientially that sharing our religious experience is a powerful way of nourishing our spiritual lives and building a deep sense of community grounded in “the things that are eternal”. We want to share with other Friends a process that has helped us individually and as a group. We hope that it will help Friends to talk about worship, which is the theme for this year’s Quaker Week during which Friends will be encouraged to experiment with bringing a friend to meeting and sharing with them our understanding of worship.

What do you do in meeting for worship?

If we are asked this question how shall we answer it? This is a gentle exploration in four stages:

1. First take a little time to think about what you do in meeting for worship. (5 minutes)

Now, in pairs, take it in turns to describe to each other something that you do at the beginning of worship.

2. Then consider something you do during worship (perhaps when you give or receive spoken ministry).

Is there anything you want to say about what you experience towards the end of worship? (15 minutes)

3. How does your partner's experience of worship resonate with yours?

What do you recognise about each other's description and what do you share? In what ways do you differ? What new insights have you given each other? (10 minutes)

4. What can you say together that seems in some way more significant than anything either of you has said individually?

Is there anything you have just said in this last stage that you both feel might helpfully be shared with others? (10 minutes)

Total time: 40 minutes

If you make this exploration as part of a group there could be a plenary session for more general sharing and discussion where you may speak of your own experience and anything that you and your partner have agreed can be shared. The rest should be kept confidential to the pair.

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