

Journeys in the Spirit



inward outward upward downward

Connecting as a Community

This special issue of Journeys in the Spirit provides a range of ideas to use with those aged 12 and over in a Quaker context. It offers activities for one-off sessions or activities as a community.

Journeys in the Spirit is offered with the intention of providing an opportunity for exploring, creating and learning in an atmosphere of worship in partnership on our shared journey in the spirit.

There are four directions to our spiritual journey: inwards to ourselves; outwards to others; upwards (or is it further inwards?) towards the deeper mystery; downwards to the world we live in.

the world we live in.		
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The theme for this special issue

Have you ever found yourself in a group where you felt that what you were saying wasn't heard, or understood? How did it make you feel? How did it leave you feeling about the group?

Young Friends have commented that "Large age gaps in some local meetings create a negative effect on young people's participation. Some people have found that all age activities are beneficial for this." Similar experiences can also be true for other people in meetings.

This special issue looks at young people's participation. Participation means that "young people should be fully integrated within the Yearly Meeting and have a real impact on all aspects of our life and work so that the whole meeting can grow from this involvement". (Meeting for Sufferings Minute 4 May 7th 2005)

Using the material

This material is to be used to facilitate activities that link the meeting's provision for young people aged between 12 and 18 with the wider meeting. This material is written to be used by the meeting as a set of community activities (for all ages from 12 onwards).

There are two parts to this resource. Firstly for older and younger generations to share where they are coming from and for them then to work together on activities that will enable a shared journey as a community.

In your planning for this you should think about involving young people and members of the meeting in the planning. You should think carefully about the timing of the planning and implementation of this, so that all groups are able to be involved. For some considerations to be aware of go to Go to:

www.quaker.org.uk/journeysyouth/ select 'special issues'; click 'Connecting as a community'.



Spider Web

The aim of this activity is to understand the value of a community and to illustrate commonalities within the meeting.

You will need a ball of coloured wool and should allow time for the activity as well as some exploration afterwards.

The group should stand in a circle with the facilitator holding the ball of wool (keeping one end in their hands). They should ask for someone who shares a characteristic with them giving an example: e.g. born in November, likes swimming, has seen Avatar in 3D. They should keep hold of a bit of the wool, and should then throw the ball of wool to the person of their choice who shares this characteristic, and doesn't have a piece of wool yet. As each person gets the ball of wool they should think of a characteristic and then continue as above. The activity can conclude when everyone has hold of a bit of wool, and a web of connections between the group has been created.

Then explore the following questions:

Could you have done this with only 2 people? Or 3 people? How would this have been different? What messages are there in this activity for us as a meeting?

Based on Data Match activity in Intergenerational Activities Sourcebook by Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences

Bingo Match

For the bingo sheets go to http://www.quaker.org.uk/special-issues-youth click on Connecting as a Community, then additional resources and choose "Bingo Match question sheet". You may also want to have a small prize for the person who met the most new people.

The aim of this activity is for individuals to meet and make connections with new people.

Provide everyone with a bingo sheet and ask them to fill out their answers to the questions under the **your answer** column so that one side will be filled in.

Once everyone has completed and answered the questions about them, they should move around the room and look for people who share the same responses. For example, participants should find people born in the same month as them, someone who uses the same energy saving device as them or who have attended the same Quaker event etc. As the aim of this activity is to meet new people, there is a column headed new faces, for each new person that they meet for that question they should put a tick in the face column.

Once everyone is done, the group should sit down again and share some of the things that they learned about each other. You might pose the following questions:

What was the most unusual thing that you discovered? What surprised you? What were your feelings during this activity? What did you find out about the group? What do you want to take forward from this experience?

You might want to conclude this activity by asking the group to raise their hands if they met 2 new people, keep them raised if they met 5 new people, and so on until you only one hand is raised. Then award the small prize to the person who met the most new faces.

Based on Data Match activity in Intergenerational Activities Sourcebook by Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences



Respect

For cards with the words on go to http://www.quaker.org.uk/special-issues-youth click on Connecting as a Community, then additional resources and choose "Respect cards".

The aim of this activity is for participants to agree a common and equal way of journeying together. Using the acronym RESPECT participants should contribute definitions for each word below, that would help the group work together (examples of what might be written are included in brackets).

Respect (each other's boundaries, confidentiality)

Equality (space for all contributions)

Sharing (learn from each other)

Participate (all to contribute and share experiences)

Enjoy (getting to know each other better)

Communicate (being aware of how my communication affects others)

Timing (be prompt after breaks).

It is very easy to say that there will be equal space for contributions but what does this actually mean in practice? How will you respond as a group when the agreement has been broken? Being clear from the start ensures that everyone understands and is agreeing to the same thing.

Concentric Circles

For some suggested questions go to http://www.quaker.org.uk/special-issues-youth click on Connecting as a Community, then additional resources and choose "Concentric Circle questions"

The aim of this activity is for participants to develop a recognition and appreciation of each other's experiences. As well as building a connection between the two age groups through conversation.

Arrange the chairs in two concentric circles. The inner circle faces the outer one. Ask the older half of the participants to sit in the inner circle and the younger half to sit in the outer circle facing the inner circle. Everyone should have a person sitting opposite them. Ask a question for each pair to discuss. When they've had just enough time for each partner to speak (usually about 3–4 minutes), ask the younger participants to move one seat to the right now everyone has a new partner. Allow time for participants to introduce themselves or reconnect. Ask a new question. Continue this for at least four rounds.

The M&M Game

For the questions that go with each colour go to http://www.quaker.org.uk/special-issues-youth click on Connecting as a Community, then additional resources and choose "The M&M game question cards". You will need a bag of M&Ms or similar colour tokens for each group (of 3-6 people).

The aim of this activity is for participants to express their views about their shared community.

Break into mixed-age-groups of three to six people. See page 11 for methods to get participants into groups. Give a bag or bowl of multicoloured M&Ms (or similar tokens) to each group. Ask participants to take turns selecting M&Ms from the bag or bowl (without looking). For each colour they choose, ask them to say something about how they feel about their neighbourhood or meeting, based on the question related to the colour they choose (additional resources sheet).



Back to the Future

For the questions go to http://www.quaker.org.uk/special-issues-youth click on Connecting as a Community, then additional resources and select "Back to the Future reflection questions".

The aim of this activity is for participants to reflect on their life experiences, and what might be different for people in a different age group. It should be done in mixed age pairs or small groups. (see page 11 for methods to get participants into pairs). Work through the questions taking it in turns to answer them.

Community Quotes

For the quotations on community go to http://www.quaker.org.uk/special-issues-youth click on Connecting as a Community, then additional resources and select "Community Quotes".

The aim of this activity is for the meeting to start to explore their understanding of community, spread the questions around the space. Participants should circulate in silence whilst reading the quotes. Following this they will have the opportunity to share their thinking. Draw the group back together, and invite them to stand by the:

- The quote which surprised them
- The quote which challenged them
- A quote that they didn't agree with

For each of the above questions, in turn invite participants to stand beside the respective quote and share their thinking with the group.

Community

For a copy of Journeys in the Spirit: Community and Connection go to http://www.quaker.org.uk/archive-youth then select Issue 7: Community and connection, click on Journeys in the Spirit issue 7 Youth PDF

Go to page 2. Find the activities "Where do you find community?" and "Pseudo Community versus authentic community". Use these activities to encourage thinking about the meetings life as a community. Conclude with the reflect questions on the last page of this issue.

Believe, Belong, Behave

For the cards for this activity go to http://www.quaker.org.uk/special-issues-youth click on Connecting as a Community, then additional resources and select "Believe, Belong, Behave cards".

The aim of this activity is for the group to start to understand the different ways that they engage with Quakerism, as well as beginning to understand how this might be different for other groups. Believe – Belong – Behave is a model for understanding how people connect to and become a part of a faith group.

Layout the cards with the words Believe, Belong, Behave at the three points of a triangle. Ask the group to think about the words Believe, Belong, Behave. Which of these words is most important to them in their Quaker life, is it what they believe? Whether they belong? Or is it about how they behave? Invite the group to stand next to the words that reflect their sense (having the words in a triangle means that if they felt all the words were important they could stand in the middle). Invite feedback from the group. Encourage the group to reflect on how older and younger Quakers might experience their faith in different ways. Encourage discussion about this and the issues that might arise.



Lost Generation Poem

For a copy of the Lost Generation Poem go to http://www.quaker.org.uk/special-issues-youth click on Connecting as a Community, then additional resources and select "Poem: Lost Generation". A power point presentation of the poem can be found at http://www.slideshare.net/ReThink/lost-generation-slideshow-with-a-twist-click-through-until-the-end

The aim of this activity is for participants in the group to begin to think about some of the assumptions they might make about people.

This poem at first glance appears gloomy; the beauty of it is once you reach the end you read it backwards and this gives a completely different view. The poem is a good illustration that there are a variety of different perspectives, it also serves to illustrate the assumptions that people make.

Ask the group to consider the following questions:

- Have you ever had a first impression of someone from a different age group that was wrong?
- Has someone from a different age group had a first impression of you that was wrong?

Ask participants to share and discuss their examples in the large group or in small groups. After a few minutes prompt the group to go deeper and think specifically of such occasions within Quakerism. As a community what can we learn from this?

Conclude by reading one of the following quotes:

Don't let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity.

1 Timothy 4:12 (New Living Translation)

Be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come, that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them; then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one.

George Fox 1656 (Quaker Faith and Practice 19:32)

Our life is love, and peace, and tenderness; and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another, and not laying accusations one against another; but praying one for another, and helping one another up with a tender hand.

Isaac Penington, 1667 (Quaker Faith and Practice 10:01)

Stand by me

Play the track Stand by me, you can find an online version of this at http://www.playingforchange.com/episodes/2/Stand_By_Me "This track features over 35 musicians collaborating from all over the world; they may have never met in person, but in this case, the music does the talking".

Then discuss as a group, how this song speaks to you as a part of this meeting?



Films

Below are four films which the group may wish to watch, you could choose one, or perhaps have a selection showing in different rooms so that people can choose. Remember to select a film that everyone is old enough to watch.

Freedom Writers (12)

This is the story of teacher Erin Gruwell and her class who were labelled the "unteachables". As she earns their trust, they start to share their lives through the writing of diaries. This is the story of a class learning to hear the experience and perspective of the "other".

The Hurricane (15)

This is a true story of boxer Rubin "The Hurricane" Carter, who was wrongfully convicted of murder in 1966. It follows the story of his life concluding with a small group dedicating their lives to freeing him.

The Kings Speech (15)

After the death of his father, King George V and the abdication of King Edward VIII, Prince Albert (Bertie) who has suffered from a debilitating speech impediment all his life, is suddenly crowned King George VI. With his country on the brink of war and in desperate need of a leader, his wife arranges for him to see an eccentric speech therapist, Lionel Logue.

My Left Foot (15)

The story of Christy Brown, who was born with cerebral palsy, those around him with the exception of his mother assumed that he was brain damaged. The film tells of this time as well as his journey to overcome these assumptions, becoming known as an exceptional artist and writer.

Questions:

After you have watched one of the films discuss the following questions as a group:

- Why is having a means of expressing ourselves so important?
- What comments does the film make about an individual's right to be heard?
- What is the impact on community of individuals / groups not having a voice?
- What assumptions are made about the characters ability to communicate?
- What assumptions are made about young Friends ability to communicate in Quaker settings?

First two questions taken from http://www.damaris.org/content/culturewatchguides/493



Chat Rooms

For copies of the topic sheets go to http://www.quaker.org.uk/special-issues-youth click on Connecting as a Community, then additional resources and select "Chat Rooms topics sheets"

The aim of this activity is for the groups to explore and learn together and through this gain an insight, understanding and respect for each other.

Chat rooms are conversations that take place in groups of between 8 and 15 participants. The ideas, findings and issues are recorded on large sheets of paper. Participants can circulate around the rooms as they wish – however it is helpful to provide a reminder and opportunity to do this every 20 minutes. The conversations are recorded on a large sheet of paper. As new people join the Chat Room they can see on this sheet how the conversation has been progressing. Each table should have one individual who is willing to remain at the table. They host the ongoing conversations building links between the different strands of conversation.

You could approach this activity by having a focus on a theme, or by looking at a range of topics. Each table should have a person prepared to act as the link and facilitate the conversations. The intention of this is to get people thinking and looking at another perspective on a topic or theme.

Queries

For copies of the Friends General Conference Queries and Community Queries go to http://www.quaker.org.uk/special-issues-youth click on Connecting as a Community, then additional resources and choose "Queries".

The aim of this activity is for the meeting to begin to reflect on the place of young Friends in their meeting and what it means to be a community.

For this activity either use the queries on the additional resources pages or create your own queries as a meeting.

Create your own queries: Work in small groups to create Queries for your meeting on the subject of young Friends, and on what it means to be a community. The groups should either be mixed age or people of the same age working together.

With the whole group sitting in a circle, provide time for the groups to read their Queries or find willing participants to read through the Queries from additional resource pages. As the Queries are read space should be given between them for the group to contemplate what they have heard.

After reading through the Queries ask the group:

- How might these Queries speak to this meeting?
- What is my response as an individual?
- What might our response as a meeting be?



Working together

The aim of this activity is for meetings to work together on shared projects as an all age community. When thinking about who your meeting involves remember to plan to include a range of ages from older Friends, to young adult Friends as well as young Friends. Aim to continue to build on the relationships that you have been developing through working through this resource with the meeting. As a community you might use, the Quaker Business Method (see page 9) or Worship Sharing to identify an issue that needs action, or perhaps a meeting project. The following activities are some ideas of things you might want to work on together:

Sustainability Working together is central to building a sustainable world. There are lots of things you can do as a meeting to become more sustainable and to work with others in your local community on this issue go to http://www.quaker.org.uk/special-issues-youth click on Connecting as a Community, then additional resources and choose "Action Points Sustainability" for ideas of activities you could do ranging from making a pledge tree to greening your meeting house and meeting.

Quaker week This happens each October, for more information see www.quaker.org.uk/category/tags/quaker-week

Fundraising Activities: Why not put on a fundraising activity? Ideas might include a Céilidh and a meal. The Community Fundraising Officer, at Friends House is available to help you with tips and ideas for successful fundraising for Quaker work - give them a call on 020 7866 9508.

Themed meals This could include a fair-trade / organic / money saving focus. You should think carefully about how to integrate the community so that people mix rather than sit with their usual friends. Chat rooms (see page 7) would enable participants to sit themselves at a table with a topic that interests them. Alternatively use the methods to get people into groups which you can find on page 11.

Quiz Night: You will need to decide on the round's that you want to include in your quiz e.g. General Knowledge, Quaker Knowledge, Entertainment, Sports, Music, True or False, Picture, Puzzles, Who am I? Why not include a baby picture contest? You may also want to think about ways to add interest to the overall quiz – for example creating an anagram using answers from each round, using Jokers to increase the scores for teams or a bonus questions with clues each round.

Or perhaps...

- Design and plant a Butterfly/ Bumble Bee Garden
- Have a Talent Night where members of the community can showcase their talents

Working together

Once the group has agreed a focus for the project or action as a community you need to think about how you will plan this together. As a planning group you need to be SMART about your project or action. This means that it should be:

S pecific define exactly what it is you are planning to do.

M easurable when will you do this by? What are you aiming to achieve with this activity?

A greed have you gained the agreement/ consent of all?

R esourced who will do what?
T imed when will they do it?



Reflections

For copies of the quotations sheets go to http://www.quaker.org.uk/special-issues-youth click on Connecting as a Community then additional resources and select "Reflection Sheets" these are taken from some of the Junior Yearly Meeting anthologies. Before this part of the session starts stick the quotations up around the room.

The aim of this activity is for the participants to begin to reflect on being a community. Introduce the reflection with the following:

There is a Japanese word, "kizuna," which originally meant a rope that binds animals like dogs; it came to mean the inseparable bond between humans. In present usage, it means a network of people connected by mutual understanding and norms of interdependence. Intergenerational communication can be harmonious as well as challenging. We are all familiar with phrases such as "generation gap," that describe how communicating with people of different generations is difficult. However, there also is a positive side to intergenerational communication. This is conveyed in the use of metaphors such as the "Yangtze River" to describe intergenerational relations; the first waves make an impact, later waves build on the successes of the first waves and push forward even more. Here, the notion is one of intergenerational interdependence and harmony, rather than conflict.

Around the room are some quotations, take some time to reflect on these. Close by drawing the group into a circle; ensure there is space for participants to share their thoughts, learning and reflection, concluding with silence.

Intergeneration Activities Proverbs Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences

Facilitation by young Friends:

Participation is about more than completing these activities together, it is about starting a process where young Friends in the meeting have the opportunity to contribute and develop by being involved in the life of the meeting and through taking on responsibilities. Your meeting might consider young Friends having the opportunity to work alongside Clerks and Elders. Learning about these roles through active contribution and involvement. For more support and guidance on how you might do this have a look at Journeys in the Spirit Issue 6: Making Quakerly Decisions. For a copy of Journeys in the Spirit: Making Quakerly Decisions go to http://www.quaker.org.uk/archive-youth then select Issue 6: Making Quakerly Decisions.

Use the activities on page 2 of this resource ("How do you sort out problems?" And "Making Decisions" as preparation for any young people who are not familiar with the Business Method. Use the activity on page 3 of this resource "Young People's Business Meeting" as a basis for the participants working with this resource to make a decision about a shared activity or project to work on.

It is important that this is not the only opportunity for the young people to contribute to decision making, Issue 6 is a useful starting point to begin the process of engagement with the Area Meeting. The concluding activity Reflect is an important part of this process as it will enable you as facilitators to understand the experiences and learning of all the participants in the group.



Wonderful Circle

The aim of this activity is to get the group appreciating each other and what they have shared together. Ask the group to stand in a big circle holding hands; ask the group to find out the names of the people that they are holding hands with. Ask the group to take a moment of silence and to think about the following:

- a time that it felt good being with the other members of this group.
- something that happened that made you feel good about yourself.
- a positive interaction you had with another person.

The only guideline is that you think about people not the tasks.

As a group start taking baby steps to the left, and keep going to the left until someone says "Stop!" Then that person will share something they reflected on in the moment of silence. When they've finished their brief sharing, they say "Go!", and the group continues to take baby steps in the other direction until someone else says "Stop!" they then share with the group. When you have a sense that everyone who wants to take a turn has taken a turn (not everyone has to go) then say "Stop!" and ask, the group "Are we done yet?" If someone in the circle still has something more to share with the group then that person can say "No - Go!" and the group will continue moving around in the circle, until all who wish have contributed. If the question "Are we done yet?" is followed by ten seconds of silence, you will know that the activity is over and the group can send a silent handshake round the circle.

From Frontier Youth Trust: Module 8 Games, Connect Spiritual Development Project

Methods: to get people into groups or pairs

Pairs (pairs)

For copies of pairs cards go to http://www.quaker.org.uk/special-issues-youth click on Connecting as a Community then additional resources and select "Pairs cards".

Cards with one half of a well-known duo are either given out or laid on the floor face down for participants to select e.g. 'Laurel' and 'Hardy'. Participants have to find someone with the corresponding half to their card.

Cards (pairs or groups)

Cut up some old cards (post cards, picture cards or birthday cards remembering that they need to be different). Cut them either in half or into the numbers you'd like in a group. Participants have to find the matching half or parts of their card.

Clusters (groups)

All participants move about the room as they do this call out a number. The group must then make clusters of participants to match that number. Variations can be clusters made of participants with the same shoe size, the same sock color or the same eye color, etc.

Fruit bowl (groups)

Go round the group and depending on how many people you want in each group (three or four) give each person a fruit (cherry, pear, plum, mango). Ask all the cherries to work together. Alternatives could be fish in the sea, vegetables in a garden. If you wanted to allocate participants to groups on arrival you could have the words cut out on bits of paper that they can draw from a hat. If you do this don't forget to stat clearly where the different fruit's should sit!

Review

These suggestions should be used with those who participated in the activities; they can also be used for the facilitation team to reflect on what they've done.

Facts, Feelings, Findings, Futures:

- What was most memorable / different / interesting?
- What has most influenced your attitude / behaviour?
- What were your personal highs / lows?
- At what points did you feel most / least involved?
- What have you found out about yourself / the group / the topic?
- What did you appreciate about others?
- What do you want to take forwards from this experience? Why? How? When?
- What will you stop / start / continue?

Questions taken from http://reviewing.co.uk/learning-cycle/questions.htm

Pie:

On a flip chart draw a circle, divide into three. In one part write

'One thing I learned from these activities' in another

'One thing I will do as a result of these activities' and finally

'One thing I want to know more about'.

Participants write their thoughts on a post it note and stick it in the correct segment.

Web of learning:

Using a ball of wool, each person shares something significant that they have learned and that they will do as a result of this learning. When they have the ball of wool in their possession they share this, hold on to the wool and throw the ball to another person so that they can answer the two questions. The group will eventually create a web. To conclude you can describe how the web is analogus to community, in that we all play a part in creating the web, and that if one person was gone it would look different. It is also important that we all take a part to make community unique and special. TSA & Camelot Foundation, 2006. Sharing the Journey. TSA & Camelot Foundation

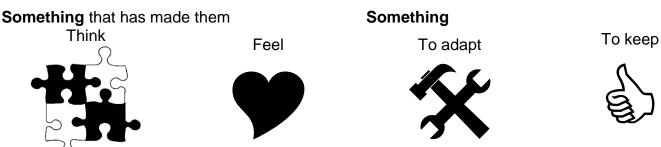
Key word

Ask participants to think about what was the most important word from the session and say why.

Produce a quote

Ask participants to come up with a one line quote that could sum up the session.

Somethings...



Additional resources & links

YFGM Quaker Business Method Workshops:

Seek to give participants an experience of the Business Method through an active demonstration of a Meeting where procedures are disregarded. Those participating then have an opportunity to reflect on what has happened and the affect this has had on the meeting. For more information see

http://yfgm.guaker.org.uk/pages/Quaker Busine ss Method Workshops

The Quaker Life Young People's Network is a way of linking young people and the insights, passions and skills that they have as members of the Quaker Community, with the work of Britain Yearly Meeting and beyond.

Recent opportunities have included:

- Invitation to young environmental campaigners to submit their stories to QPSW.
- Places at an international residential with the charity Encompass.
- Information on funding for young people involved in community activities.

If you work with any young people and would be interested in receiving updates on opportunities please send an email to the Youth Participation Officer, Cat at catw@quaker.org.uk

Living as a Quaker is a six session programme providing facilitators with all they need to support participants exploration of their Quaker identity, beliefs, values and interactions with others. Although aimed at young people, you might consider using parts of this resource as a whole meeting. This resource is available in hard copy format – please contact Bevelie Shember on 020 7663 1013 or bevelies@quaker.org.uk or you can download individual sessions at http://www.quaker.org.uk/cyp click on the link to

resources and select Living as a Quaker.

Links to other organisations

Young Friends General Meeting: YFGM is the national organisation for Young Quakers in Britain aged between 18 and 30. http://yfgm.guaker.org.uk

Leaveners:

Quaker performing arts project www.leaveners.org

Build It! A Toolkit For Nurturing Intergenerational Spiritual Community

By FGC Youth Ministries Programme

Working on a concern about a separation of youth and young adults from our meetings and the Religious Society of Friends, a collection of best practices for nurturing intergenerational spiritual community was produced. The Build It! Toolkit presents: information, activities and games. It also includes 12 "How-Tos" with helpful tips. Described as practical and accessible, fun and useful for nurturing spiritual community., it's available as a downloadable pdf for \$5 http://www.quakerbooks.org/build_it.php

This issue

This special issue of Journeys in the Spirit Youth Edition was written by Catherine Waithaka. The editor was Howard Nurden. With thanks to all Friends House staff who contributed to this resource by providing suggested activities and the additional chat rooms sheets.

Journeys in the Spirit for use with young people in a Quaker setting comes out on the second Monday of February, June and October each year. Subscription is free for details go to

http://www.quaker.org.uk/journeysyouth



Available free by subscription.

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Published by Children & Young People's Staff Team, Quaker Life

