

# Being Friends Together

Reading *Quaker faith & practice* > Autumn/Winter 2015/16 > Chapter 2:  
Approaches to God – worship and prayer > Q141 Group session

## Session 4      Approaches to God – worship and prayer Chapter 2, *Quaker faith & practice*

**Group session**

**90/120 minutes**

**90-minute\* session: do Activity 1, then choose one activity from 2A, B, C and D**

**120 minute\* session: do Activity 1, then choose two activities from 2A, B, C and D**

*\*note: some activities are longer than others, leading to a slightly longer overall session*

Before the session it may be helpful to remind yourself of the guidance on working with groups available in the Ways of Working area of *Being Friends Together*. Check that anyone with particular needs in your group is able to access any handouts, or has a version that is accessible for them.

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### Resources:

- Copies of *Quaker faith & practice* (5<sup>th</sup> Edition) for reference - also available online at <http://qfp.quaker.org.uk/chapter/2>
- Guidance from Activity Sheet 1 x one each      Activity 2A
- Slips with Chapter 2 words and phrases (see Activity Sheet 2) – enough for plenty of choice for the group      Activity 2A
- Activity guidance slip (see Activity Sheet 3) x four      Activity 2B
- Activity Sheet 4 x one per pair/three      Activity 2C
- *Quaker faith & practice* – at least one copy per pair/three      Activity 2C
- Large pieces of paper, marker pens, felt tips, coloured pencils      Activity 2C
- Query slips (see Activity Sheet 5) x one slip each      Activity 2D
- Paper and pens      Activity 2D

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**Welcome and worship**

**5 minutes**

**Session introduction**

**5 minutes**

*Focus for this session:* Chapter 2 of *Quaker faith & practice*, which explores our experience and understanding of worship and prayer, including: silent waiting, vocal ministry, children in our meetings, enriching our worship, meetings for church affairs and our personal discipline of faithfulness.

<http://together.woodbrooke.org.uk>



Being Friends Together is a joint project of Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre (Registered Charity Number: 313816) and Britain Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) (Registered charity number: 1127633).



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## Activity 1: It spoke to my condition

30 minutes

### Group sharing go-round using creative listening

In creative listening mode, take it in turns in a go-round of the group to:

- read aloud an extract from Chapter 2 that spoke to your condition or resonated with you in some way when you read this chapter in preparation for the session – it could just be part of one of the longer extracts
- share for no more than two minutes about why it spoke to you

Allow a brief pause between each contribution. A facilitator may need to indicate to participants when they have had two minutes so that everyone gets a chance to speak.

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## Activity 2A: Prayer and spiritual practice

35 minutes

### Reading/listening + spiritual practice + pairs sharing

*Beforehand, place copies of words and phrases from Activity Sheet 2 on tables or other surfaces around the room, with space to walk around and view them. Give each person a copy of the guidance from Activity Sheet 1.*

Read aloud *Qf&p* 2.18, 2.22 and 2.23. Either the facilitator(s) could read them out, or they could be read by one or more volunteers. 5

In silence, walk around the room reading the words or phrases. Then each choose one that resonates with you in some way. 10

Spend some time as individuals sitting with your word or phrase in silence, letting the word(s) sink deep into your awareness, perhaps repeating the word(s) silently, inwardly, prayerfully to yourself, as one does in Sacred Reading\* practice. If you feel drawn into simply sitting in contemplation, just let the word(s) go, and wait in the Light. 10

In pairs, share your responses to the practice of contemplating words: 10

- What spoke to you?
- How does it relate to your own experience or practice of prayer?

\*For more about this practice, do a keyword search for 'sacred reading' on the **Being Friends Together** website.

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## Activity 2B: Speaking and silence in worship

30 minutes

### Reading/listening + whole group worship sharing\*

*Place copies of the activity guidance around the group so everyone can see a copy (see Activity Sheet 3).*

Read aloud *Qf&p* 2.12, 2.16, 2.17, 2.60, 2.61, 2.66, 2.68 and 2.73. 5  
Either the facilitator(s) could read them out, or they could be read by one or more volunteers.

Individuals then have the opportunity, in worship sharing mode, to share for no more than two minutes about an experience of giving or receiving vocal ministry, or of silence in worship. You could reflect on: 25

- what the experience was like – physically, emotionally, mentally or spiritually
- how the words or silence spoke to you or your condition

Allow a brief pause between each contribution. A facilitator may need to indicate to participants when they have had two minutes so that everyone gets a chance to speak.

*\*If your group is larger than 8-10 people, you may wish to split into two groups for this activity.*

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## Activity 2C: What's important for us about worship?

40-45  
minutes

Ideas mapping in pairs/threes + walk and talk plenary

*Give each pair/three a copy of Activity Sheet 4 and 'Quaker faith & practice'. Provide large sheets of paper, marker pens, felt tips, coloured pencils.*

In pairs/threes, consider what, in your experience or understanding, is important to you about Quaker worship (including meeting for worship for business). You may like to use some of the ideas and phrases from Chapter 2 on Activity Sheet 4 as a starting point. Map your ideas onto large sheets of paper in a visual way, using an approach such as:

- mind mapping
- a simple plan of a meeting room, with ideas noted on the benches
- a line drawing of a tree with ideas noted on roots/trunk/leaves
- a colourful list of important ideas or phrases from Chapter 2
- something from your own imagination

Place/stick your piece of paper somewhere where others can see it.

Then all spend time walking quietly around the room, looking at the various ideas maps and talking with those nearby about your responses to them.

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## **Activity 2D: Our personal discipline of faithfulness** **30 minutes**

**Reading/listening + personal reflection + sharing in threes**

*Give each participant a copy of the query slip (see Activity Sheet 5).*

Read aloud *Qf&p* 2.45, 2.47, 2.48, 2.50, 2.76 and 2.82. Either the facilitator(s) could read them out, or they could be read by one or more volunteers. 5

Spend some time as individuals considering one or more of the following reflective questions: 10

- How do I prepare my mind and heart for worship?
- How do I respond to other people (including children), sounds, distractions and thoughts during worship?
- What, in my experience, enriches our Quaker worship?

You may like to note down some of your reflections.

Then get into groups of three and share something of your reflections. 15

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## **Whole group plenary** **10 minutes**

A brief opportunity to reflect in the whole group on your responses to any of the activities. Use worship sharing or creative listening mode, depending on your group dynamic and preference.

**Notices about next session/practicalities, etc.** **5 minutes**

**Concluding worship** **5 minutes**

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