

Being Friends Together

Ways of Working > Ways of Working with Groups

Guidance for a Quaker Quest style session

What your Quaker Quest style session might look like

Welcome and introduction by the facilitator	10 minutes
First presentations: three speakers – six minutes each	20
Small group discussions	20
Second presentations: three speakers – six minutes each	20
Question time or small group discussions	15
Meeting for Worship	30
Notices	5
	Total: 120 minutes

Speaker input

The Friends organising your session will need to find three speakers, providing a range of views and experience. Two can seem contradictory; four is just too many. It is helpful to try and get together a balanced team, with a range of gender, age and Quaker experience.

One of the three speakers could be the key speaker, who will open the presentations by exploring the central spiritual concerns of the topic, and, at the end of the second group of presentations, will pull together the session, adding any points that have been neglected or forgotten.

It is important that the presentations are well prepared and that the contributions are carefully planned as a team. It will be helpful for the speakers for a session to have a preliminary meeting to explore the topic together and to plan in outline what each one will contribute. They could meet again before the session itself for a rehearsal and a time of worship together. This process will help the presentations to become ministry rather than just speeches. The key speaker will introduce the topic, explaining any points that need to be covered in understanding the Quaker spiritual aspects of it. S/he may then pose a question to the other two speakers, about how their current understanding has been reached, to which they speak from their own experience eg. 'What does peace/Jesus/worship mean to you?', 'How do you put your faith/spirituality into action?' or 'What is your experience of worship/leadership?'. Each will speak for no longer than **six or seven minutes**.

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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: 112763).



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After the discussion period, there will be a second set of presentations, usually focusing more on how the speakers' understanding of the topic has affected the way they live. It helps the presenters to prepare their presentations, but they will probably fall into the general categories of FAITH (what you believe and how you have reached that position) in the first part, and PRACTICE (how it has affected your life) in the second. The first and second parts will overlap and may be quite similar for those listening. The use of two presentations is for the purpose of breaking up the spoken input and involving participants early on through the discussion groups, not to make a theological point.

Remember that speakers are giving ministry, not an academic exposition. Speaking sincerely and from the heart is always effective, even if it is halting. The listeners will be looking at and listening to what you are as a person as much as the words you are speaking.

adapted with permission from *Quaker Quest: The how to do it manual*, Quaker Quest Network, 2008.

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