

1.2

Introductory session from *Hearts & Minds Prepared*

In this first session there are some practical, housekeeping and policy details to be dealt with. Make a record of what is agreed and have it typed up for distribution next time, including large print copies as required.

1. Welcome and opening worship

10 minutes

- Open the session by welcoming participants, and suggest a quick go-round for everyone to say their name.
- Then move into worship.

2. Introduction

Give an outline of your planned learning together

10 minutes

3. Agreeing ways of working

10 minutes

Method: DISCUSSION

Purpose

To clarify essential details about working together as a group.

Activity notes

- Discuss and agree a policy on starting and finishing on time. This might include e.g.
 - Latecomers slip in without disturbing the activity in progress.
 - A possible over-run is agreed, or not, *before* the end of the session.
- Discuss and agree levels of confidentiality – the main issue is how agreeing exceptions will work in practice. Guide:
 - Everything shared in pairs/small groups is confidential to those present *except for* agreed things which may be reported to the main group and discussed during the session.
 - Everything shared in the whole group stays in the group and is not discussed outside the session *except for* agreed things which may be discussed outside the session between course members only.

N.B. If you are unsure whether something you have heard is confidential, ask the person concerned.

4. Getting to know one another

a) In pairs:

15 minutes

Method: ONE-TO-ONE

Purpose

- To break the ice and gain confidence before sharing in the main group.
- To practice the listening skills we'll need throughout our learning together.

Activity notes

- Friends move into pairs choosing partners they know least well. Include yourself. Indicate how much time is available and explain the process of one-to-one:
 - Speak from your own experience – using 'I' language.
 - Listen attentively without interrupting. In your turn avoid responding to anything your partner(s) said.
 - Share time equally, listener keeps time.
 - Remember our agreement on confidentiality.
- Include both or either:
 - Your name and how you came to be called it
 - Something about yourself, or what has been happening in your life recently, that you would like others to know.
- Reconvene as a whole group and move on to:

b) In the group

25 (15) minutes

Method: CREATIVE LISTENING

Purpose

- To open up the subject of our Quaker experience.
- To practice speaking into and listening in the whole group.

Resources

- Focus questions written large – twice each on separate A4 or larger sheets.
- A smooth stone or shell to use as a talking stick if Friends find it helpful. N.B. Some Friends may know this by other names such as a token or a conch. For full information on the use of a talking stick see *Ways of Working*.



**Activity notes**

- Display the duplicate question sheets in opposite directions in the circle so everyone can see. Ask Friends to introduce themselves by name and then say something briefly in response to the *FOCUS QUESTIONS:
 - What first brought you to Quaker meeting?
 - What are you hoping for from this course?
(*Omit this second question for a 90-minute session)
- Indicate how much time is available for each person and agree whether to speak in turn (with the option to pass) or when each feels ready, with or without a talking stick. Key points:
 - Listen attentively, keeping an open mind about what you hear.
 - No comments or questions about another's contribution.
 - Wait until everyone has spoken before speaking for a second time.
 - Remember our agreement on confidentiality.
- Start the exercise yourself, after asking one of the Friends next to you to follow on so that it continues round the circle. Model the kind of content and length of time you are expecting. Thank everyone at the end and move on to:

5. Mapping our learning

35 (20) minutes

Methods: BROWSING THROUGH LEARNING MATERIALS
INFORMATION, QUESTIONS and DISCUSSION

Purpose

- To make sure we are all comfortable with the structure of our planned learning and the level of trust and sharing it entails.
- To introduce any learning materials and think about how we might want to use them.
- To make practical arrangements about meetings and social time afterwards.

Resources

- Any learning materials already selected for your learning together

Activity notes

- Distribute any learning materials already for your learning together, introducing them briefly.
- Give time for people to look through everything and comment or ask questions. Encourage discussion. Points to raise:
 - Suggest keeping a folder of materials – the sessions build on one another and there will be times when it will help to look back.
 - Participants might like to keep a journal during your learning together in which to make notes, draw or chart experiences of learning and reflection.
- Discuss and agree the practical arrangements for running the course.
 - Fix dates and venue(s) - some sessions may need two rooms.
 - Ensure you have access to any technology needed for your sessions, tables to work round and so forth.
 - Check on particular needs e.g. large print handouts, accommodating hearing difficulties, furniture requirements for bad backs or to avoid bending, etc.
 - Agree a system for making resources readily accessible for course members between sessions.
 - Social time after a session is helpful.

6. Closure:

10 (5) minutes

Bring things to an end and close with a period of worship.

7. Notices:

5 minutes

Resources to borrow

Invite Friends to borrow resources from the meeting library to enrich their learning.

Next session

Remind Friends about any preparation needed for the next session.

Note to facilitators

Check if you will need to photocopy any handouts for the next session