

Informational Meetings on Quaker-Focusing Project – Chapel Hill

A Quaker-Focusing Supportive Community group is forming at Chapel Hill Meeting. It is envisioned to include participants from Durham Friends Meeting, Carolina Friends School, and other nearby Quaker institutions as well as meetings in Piedmont Friends Yearly Meeting which are further away. There will be a 12 hour training in August, 2016, for a group of 30 and then, a **4X monthly** Quaker-Focusing supportive Community group will start. Those 4 times of meeting monthly will be organized in two rounds (1.5+ hours each) on two first days/month (possibly 2nd and 4th First Days). This would allow participants from meetings further away to travel once and do two rounds. It also avoids conflicts with meeting committees that a weekly group would pose. Participants in the 12 hour training need to commit to coming to that weekly group for 9 times in the following 9 months (1X/month)

Robert Lee can lead informational/experiential sessions at meetings in the Piedmont Friends Yearly Meetings. Friend Robert is a long time international focusing teacher.

In 1989 Lee started a Quaker-Focusing Supportive Community group at Cambridge Friends Meeting, suggesting that Quaker process and focusing process had a great deal in common, and much to offer each other. That group met weekly for 3 years and was well regarded by the meeting.

At Cambridge Meeting, many members of the group reported a deepening in their Quaker process coming from the study of focusing and of the felt sense (body sense, whole of a situation, felt meaning, experiencing—all broad synonyms for felt sense.) The eventual weekly Quaker-focusing groups will start with an initial worship sharing, a tune-up lesson about focusing exchange and then divide into dyads and triads for focusing and listening exchange. We think the whole process will strengthen community and build bonds.

In 2001, Rex Ambler, a Quaker Scholar, gave the Cary Lecture at German Yearly Meeting and later turned that into the book Light to Live By. In that book Ambler notes the remarkable similarities between Gendlin's Focusing and early Friend process, hypothesizing that Gendlin had rediscovered early Friends' process. Ambler did not know of Lee's project in Massachusetts but his book is a confirmation of Lee's initial discernment, and, of the experience of that Quaker-Focusing group from 1989-1992.

Quaker Focusing is intended to strengthen:

- *1:1 bonds in and between meetings
- *Quaker process
- *wellness and creativity and grace in meeting the dilemmas of life
- *mental health in meetings
- *empathic listening skill in participants
- *community within and between Quaker institutions
- *social responsibility
- *query-making, listening to and following a leading, minuting

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Light to Live By (Ambler)	Domain Focusing
<p>1. Mind the Light What is important (out of conscience and Holding the light) Choosing an issue</p> <p>2. Open your heart to the light</p> <p>3. Standing Still in the Light</p> <p>4. Submit to what it tells you</p> <p><u>Experiment with Light Process:</u> Meditation in silence in Group→ Breakout into 4somes→ Each sharing once deeply in 4somes</p>	<p>1. Generative Spaceclearing What is important (self in consideration of life) Choosing an Issue</p> <p>2. Getting a felt sense of the issue (something close to the light forming tangibly inside)</p> <p>3. Entering the Felt sense, working with self empathy, working with issue/situation/theme. Crossing logics of thinking, experiencing, being (loving) Shifting, inviting a shift, recognizing shift.</p> <p>4. Receiving insight and new possibilities for action. Acting into the situation out of the new possibilities</p> <p><u>Quaker-Domain Focusing Process:</u> Quaker-Focusing Worship Sharing (25 min) Domain Focusing Partnership Tip (10 min) Divide into dyads and triads (10 min) Focusing and Listening partnership exchange 20 min each. 45 min Total time: 90 min</p>

Quaker-Focusing Project Essential Path:

1. Informational Sessions at CHF, DFM, Carolina Friends School and PFYF institutions toward establishing a large group (30) for a 12 hour training.
2. 12 hour Quaker-focusing supportive community training. Target Date: August, 2016. .
3. 4Xmonthly Quaker-Focusing supportive community sessions. Proposed Timing Organization: Two rounds (1.5hrs each on two regular first days at rise of meeting (12:30). (e.g. 2nd and 4th first days) [Two rounds on two first days monthly allows those who are driving to Chapel Hill from further away to come to two rounds in one trip. It lessens conflict with committee activities at CHF and other participating meetings. It is fine to only attend one of the meeting rounds and either one.
4. Participants in 12 hour training commit to attend at least 9 rounds in subsequent 10 months, an average of 1 round (1.5+ hours)/month.

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