

Journeys in the Spirit

inward outward upward downward

Issue 15 May 2008

Children



Introduction

This children's work edition of "Journeys in the Spirit" comes out monthly. It offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with children aged 4 –12 years in a Quaker setting. It is offered with the intention of providing an opportunity for exploring, creating and learning in an atmosphere of partnership on our shared journey in the spirit.

Included are sections on: **getting ready**, for those co-ordinating the programme; **gather**, meeting, centering, focusing; **engage**, beginning to think about the theme; **respond**, activities linked to the theme; **reflect**, ending appropriately; and **review**, evaluating what has happened. To offer a balanced session you should aim to do something from each section. Some of the activities are included on additional sheets. Timings or ages are not stated, as this will depend on the group and how the guidance and activities are used.

Underpinning each issue is the idea that there are four directions to our spiritual journey. **Inwards** to ourselves; **outwards** to others; **upwards** towards God, the deeper mystery; **downwards** to the world we live in.



Seventh in the series exploring Quakers: a people of God: being and doing

Quaker workers in South Africa - 'I can help build peace' – Phaphama.

Getting ready in heart and mind

My name is Sarah and I have been working in Johannesburg, South Africa for the Quaker Peace and Social Witness Programme since September 2007. I volunteer with 'Phaphama Initiatives' - in Zulu, one of the local languages, Phaphama means 'wake up to the world around us'. Some of the activities in this issue are ones that we use in South Africa.

When people in other countries think of South Africa, many think about guns because there is a lot of violent crime in the country. Many people have big electric fences or walls around their homes to keep thieves out. The schools can also be very violent, with children hurting their teachers and each other. Another thing that many people link with South Africa is racism. Until 1994, people were treated well or badly based on the colour of their skin. If you were white, you would probably have a good education, house and job. If you were black or coloured you would be unlikely to have the same. Black and white people were not allowed to mix or be friends, not even to get on the same bus or walk through the same doors in public places. They lived in different areas and were not allowed to cross over. This was 'Apartheid'. It doesn't exist now but many people still remember what it was like and do not trust or like people of other colours. There are still big differences between rich and poor. White people generally still have a better life than people with other skin colours. There is a lot of anger and fear. Phaphama is trying to get people to talk to and learn about each other - to see everyone as valuable. There is a long way to go in South Africa but with time, things are improving!

Some questions for getting ready include: Is the room prepared? Do my colleagues and I feel supported and comfortable with our plans and ourselves? Have we been able to find a moment of quiet to hold the coming session in the light? Are there particular needs and situations to be aware of in this session? Am I confident about health and safety arrangements? Have I reflected on the theme? Do we have enough resources for everybody?

Underpinning references

Quaker Faith and Practice; 23.33

Guided by the light of God within us and recognising that of God in others, we can all learn to value our differences in age, sex, physique, race and culture. This enables mutual respect and self-respect to develop, and it becomes possible for everyone to love one another as God loves us... We have a responsibility to protect each other's self-respect. ...It is unreasonable to expect assimilation or to ignore difference, claiming to treat everyone the same. This denies the value of variety, which presents not a problem, but a creative challenge to live adventurously. Personality, sex, race, culture and experience are God's gifts. We need one another and differences shared become enrichments, not reasons to be afraid, dominate or condemn...

Gather

Welcome the children and adult helpers. Light a candle. Lay out pictures of several people, all with different coloured skin – postcards, newspaper pages, magazines, and storybooks. Ask everybody to think about how we all look different – what would it be like if someone treated them differently just because of the colour of their skin. Ask everyone to also think about ‘how are we the same as each other’. Ask an elder to hold silence for a while. Ask, ‘what did you think?’ after the quiet.

Engage

Say the word – **Phaphama!** (it is pronounced with hard 'p's i.e. paparma). Then say this means ‘**awake to the world around us**’ in a language called Zulu in a country called South Africa. (*Cut out the rectangle with the words in from Sheet 15.A and fold it so that it stands up*). Put the folded card or paper where everyone can see it – repeat the words. Show the pictures on *Sheet 15.A* of the world, of Africa, where South Africa is and where our country is – if you have a spinning globe that is even better. (*The pictures could be cut out and mounted on card – you could print one for each person in children’s meeting*). In South Africa some people work together and call themselves ‘Phaphama’ - Quakers are helping them; one of the Quakers is called Sarah.

Phaphama tries to help people get on better with each other in South Africa. They do this in three ways:

- **Helping people talk with each other:**

In South Africa there are ELEVEN official languages so people often don’t understand each other. This can lead to arguments and fights. Phaphama helps children and adults in schools and where they live and work to learn about each other’s languages and ways of living.

One thing might be polite to one person but rude to another. Imagine going to a country where it is polite to stand on one leg and touch your nose to say hello - if you didn’t know that, you’d think the people very funny - imagine what they might think of you! Everybody stand up and try this. See *Sheet 15.B Engage and then look at Respond ‘Talking with each other’*.

- **Helping people stop hurting each other:**

Alternatives to Violence Programme (AVP) exists in lots of countries around the world and helps people to think about violence and conflict. In South Africa Phaphama works in correctional centres, schools and communities to try and keep people from turning to violence and crime. AVP also helps people be more confident in themselves and can bring people closer to others.

An activity: Have a big sheet of paper – flipchart, wall lining paper. Everybody stands around it holding an edge. Say that when you count 1,2,3 everybody has to try and get as much of the paper for themselves as they can. Let this go on for a short while – less than a minute. Stop. Look at what people have and what has happened to the paper. Now have another sheet on the floor. Say that after 1,2,3 everybody has to pick the paper up together and moved across the room safely. When it has been moved everybody draws his or her face on it.

- **Helping people on holiday help others:**

How can we help people who go to South Africa on holiday think about giving something back to the country and people - not just coming and eating, drinking and taking photos on the beach? They can do some volunteer work, stay with a local family, and see parts of Johannesburg life that they might not normally see. To develop the idea of helping Phaphama make simple biscuits or fairy cakes and decorate them with a ‘P’ for Phaphama, the whole word or the word ‘awake’. These can be sold, or shared and donations given, at a ‘going on holiday tea’ – plan it for July – or after Meeting for Worship. See *Reflect for where to send donations*.

References

“Before I used to get involved with the wrong people, started stealing and didn’t care. I reacted and didn’t think about things. [AVP] is like new snow, it shows where you walk and I have seen a change in my behaviour.”

AVP School Participant

“I came to...prison about 3 years ago and I am serving a 25 year sentence for robbery. Violence is a big part of our lives that includes everyone, because it has touched the lives of every single person in the world in one way or another. It has brought me to prison. I have been involved with AVP for one year and the proof of the difference can only be done over time, it is easy for someone to change his behaviour for a short period of time, a month, maybe two, if he hasn’t changed his heart. But for as long as I have been involved with AVP I have not been involved in a single fight because I don’t believe that any one chooses to be a violent person so if the desire is there to change it will happen. AVP has shown me the possibilities and the way, and made it almost impossible not to follow it. Who wouldn’t? Being a good person isn’t a hard thing to do when you know how. AVP has shown me how and for that I am forever grateful.”

Inmate at Leeuwkop Medium C Correctional Facility, June 2006

References

Words are Windows or they are walls, Ruth Bebermeyer

(in 'Nonviolent Communication: A language of Compassion', M.I B Rosenberg PhD) An extract:

'Words are windows, or they're walls, They sentence us or set us free. When I speak and when I hear, Let the lovelight shine through me. There are things I need to say, Things that mean so much to me, If my words don't make me clear, Will you help me to be free? If I seemed to put you down, If you felt I didn't care, Try to listen to my words, To the feelings that we share.'

'Fighting with other people does not leave us feeling good about ourselves. And even though we often think the other person started the fight or the argument, we often also helped to start it. There are things we can do to help stop it. Two simple things we can learn to do are to listen, and to answer the other person in a calm manner. If we can practice these two things, we will have helped to build peace' – **Phaphama**.

Respond

- **Helping people talk with each other:** See *Sheet 15.C* for two Phaphama based activities about ways to talk together about ourselves and each other that can help build a peaceful world.

- **Helping people stop hurting each other:** See *Sheet 15.D* for a short story and some pictures and words to help with related activities. The activities are drawn from a programme used by Phaphama. They can be done separately or as a sequence.

Read the little story to your group or have some people act out the events. If you are reading the story, cut out and lay down the pictures of the children on *Sheet 15.D*. Ask everybody in the group what they think or feel happened in the story. Then ask the question: 'I wonder. Who do you think made Thabo's little sister cry?'. (People only respond if they want to).

Next, there is a list of words on *Sheet 15.D*, which describe some of the feelings of the characters in the story. Have pictures of the people in the story in four different places in the room. Read the words out loud or hold up some that you have cut out or written bigger. Say where the pictures of the different people, **Lindiwe, Thabo, the classmates and Thabo's little sister**, are placed. Invite people to go and stand with the picture of people or the person having the different feelings – they could also pick up the words and put them with the appropriate picture. Older people help younger people with this.

Invite everybody to draw a picture or cartoon of how they think 'their' person might look. Have an array of drawing, colouring and modelling materials (plasticine etc) – if you can have some paints or crayons or drawing paper that enable the colouring or representation of different skin colours.

Ask everybody to think about an argument or fight they have had recently with friends at school or in his or her family. Ask for someone to tell her or his story – if it gets a bit stuck tell a simple story of your own and then say, 'Who else would like to tell us their story?'

Next ask the questions, 'What went wrong with your friends or family in your story?' How did both sides make it happen? After a little while ask, 'what could you do differently to try to build peace?'

Alternatively, everybody could have a little note or drawing book in which could be written or drawn something about their own story. The cover could be decorated – maybe with the words, 'Phaphama – wake up?'. Have coloured felt pens and other writing and drawing materials available.

Give everybody a copy of the flower on *Sheet 15.E* to fill in the empty petals with their own words or pictures about what is important when they are in fights or arguments and wish to resolve them e.g. respect, care, love.... Stick all of the pictures on a big piece of paper for display and sharing. Talk about the space for a word at the centre of the flower.

Here are some phrases that Phaphama offer children and young people as ways to change situations and reduce conflict. They could be put on card or big sheets and talked about with older children in your group:

- Can I check if I heard your right?
- I heard you say that...
- Is there anything else you would like to say about this?
- Can I explain what happened?

Simplify these for younger children. Everybody could practice saying them to each other.

Reflect

Sitting in a circle around a candle, take a moment to look at the artwork or say some of the things that have been learned about Phaphama and South Africa. Then say, 'I wonder what we have learned about how to get on with people and not be violent?' 'I wonder if there is anything we can do to help Phaphama?' 'What can we tell main meeting – do we want their help with helping Phaphama?'

'It is so important to Phaphama's work that we fundraise because the schools and correctional centres we work with are very rarely able to pay Phaphama's staff for their work, even though they know it is very important. As Friends, we can help spread the word about the importance of the Alternatives to Violence in a place like South Africa. If anyone has any good ideas about raising money to help – do it with your Friends in children's meeting or ask main meeting for help.' To support the Quaker Peace and Social Witness work send cheques payable to Britain Yearly Meeting to QPSW at the Friends House address below; for links to Phaphama see the web address below.

Ongoing activity

The Ongoing Activity is focussing on Britain Yearly Meeting, the annual gathering of Quakers from Scotland, Wales and England. One session is about what is called the 'Long Term Framework'. This issue we offer a simple activity to help explore this - what Quakers want to do and can try to do in the coming years. Many of the children in your meeting will be teenagers or adults as the plans for the future unfold. What do they want to be doing? What do they want Quakers to do? There are six themes here - peace, speaking out about being Quaker, looking after the Earth, being friendly and welcoming in our meetings, crime and criminals and growing that of God in each of us. Start an activity by laying out pictures from *Sheet 15.F*. Say what you think each one means. Encourage everybody to say if there is one they are most interested in. Ask what they would like to do about it and if there is help that Quakers or their meeting could give them. Have paper, card, paints and drawing and writing materials available for people's thoughts and feelings and ideas to be put down for sharing with meeting or sending to the children and young people's team in Friends House at the address below. Their chosen picture could be stuck on their sheets.

Review

The review can happen at the time or later – it maybe by yourself or with others. Some useful questions for the use of volunteers to look back over and learn from the session include:

Have children been able to participate in their own way? What went well and why?
Has each child been able to reflect, even a little, on something about her or his thoughts and feelings on being non-violent, about Quaker work in South Africa? What is there for you to learn from this session? What might you do differently another time?

Links to other organisations and resources

www.quaker.org.uk/cyp - for lots of links to all sorts of information
www.quaker.org.uk/qpsw - for more information about Quaker work in South Africa.
<http://www.elite.net/~runner/jennifers/hello.htm#Z> - say hello in lots of languages.
www.phaphama.org.za - the Phaphama website.

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References and ideas

Quaker Faith and Practice; 23.36

'At the centre of Friends' religious experience is the repeatedly and consistently expressed belief in the fundamental equality of all members of the human race.'

Quaker Faith and Practice; 24.10

'Together let us reject the clamour of fear and listen to the whisperings of hope'

Yearly Meeting 2008

'When future generations look back upon our age, what will be said of how our small religious community made the world better?'

Linking with the wider meeting:

Use the 'Helping people to stop hurting each other' activity with the whole meeting as a day of multi-generational learning and sharing.

The next children's work issue of

'Journeys in the spirit', number 16, June 2008, will be on 'Prayer'; Issue number 17, July 2008, will be on Britain Yearly Meeting work in Israel/Palestine; Issue number 18, August 2008 will be on 'Listen, hear, act - decision making, clearness and the business method.'

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Children

Sheet 15.A Engage Where in the world is Phaphama?



United Kingdom



Phaphama
Awake

Journeys in the Spirit

Children



Sheet 15.B Engage Talking with each other

- Here are 12 different words for hello in four of the languages spoken in South Africa. Print or copy the words – they could be made into simple badges using card, safety pins and masking tape to hold the pins on the back of the badges.
- Give one to each person in your group – if you have young children who cannot read or are not confident readers, pair them with an older child or an adult. Don't tell any body what the words mean.
- Stand everybody in two lines facing each other or in a circle facing inwards.
- On your instruction ask each person or pair to say their word and keep saying it lots of times without stopping or asking the other person what is being said. This is serious and for this first time of doing it there is to be no laughing or giggling.
- Stop the talking and ask everybody what that was like. Listen to the answers and then explain that it was done to show how hard Phaphama has to work to get people to understand each other – even with simple words.
- Say their word means 'hello' in the language written on their paper, card or badge.
- Give the instruction to start again but this time there can be smiling and giggling.
- Their paper, card or badge can be taken into main meeting to share with others.



Venda (said by man) Ndaa	Venda –(said by woman) Aah
Zulu Sawubona	Zulu Sanibonani
Tsonga (morning) Abusheni	Tsonga (afternoon) Inhelekani
Tsonga (evening) Riperile	Sesotho Lumela
Sesotho (to several people) Lumelang	Sesotho (to an elder woman) Lumela 'me

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Sheet 15.C Respond Helping people talk with each other

These are based on Phaphama activities and they could be used in one children's meeting or two.

I am a special person.

In the whole group ask everybody to think of:

'One thing I like about myself is' Read or say your sentence in the group.

Then say:

- 'We are all special in our own way. We are all unique human beings; not only are we special on the outside because we all have our very own unique appearance; we are also special on the inside because we have our own special talents which we can share with the people around us'. Then, in the whole group, ask everybody to:
 - Think of a time when someone told you something good about yourself. What did this person say to you? How did you feel?
 - Now draw 1,2 or 3 pictures of your own, which show what you can do well. Write one sentence under each picture.
 - Using your pictures, tell the group what you are good at.
 - Imagine you are looking into a mirror at yourself. Now draw and cut out a flower and in the flower write down one thing you like about the way you look. Use the shapes on this page.

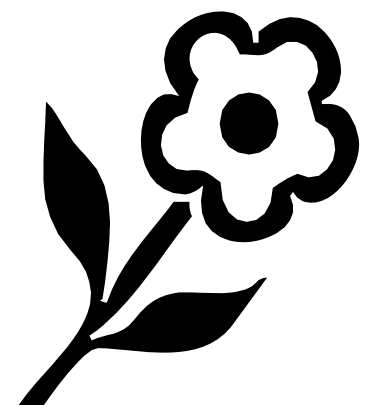
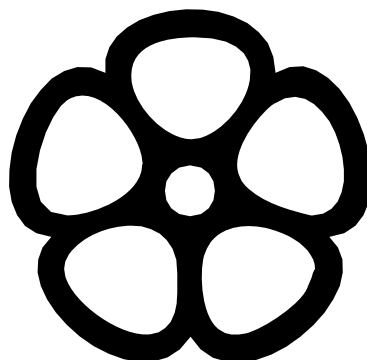
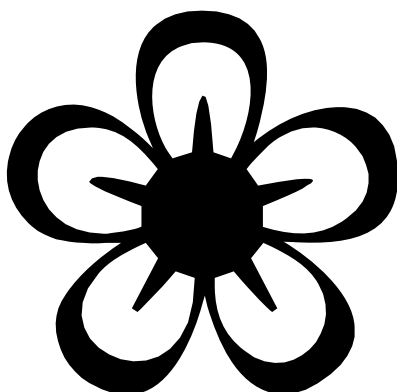
You are a special person.

In the whole group say:

'Everybody has special gifts and talents. It is good if we can tell people about the special things we see in them, because this will make them want to use their talents even more. But sometimes we forget to tell the people we see every day – our friends and family – how much we admire and respect them.'

Now ask each person to:

- Write down or say one thing they like about each person in your group. Write these down.
- Now ask each person in your group to give each person a gift by telling him or her what they like about him or her.



Journeys in the Spirit

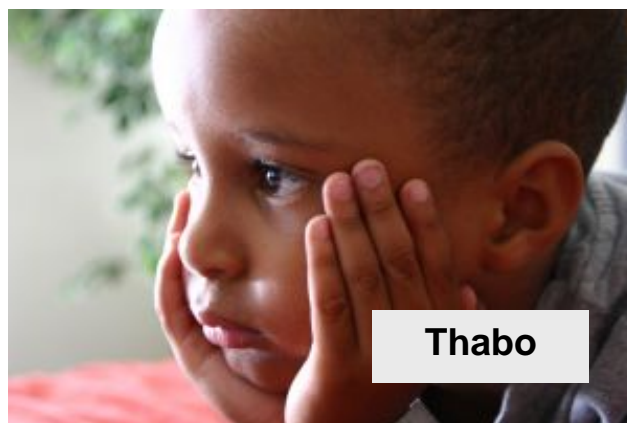
Children



Sheet 15.D Respond Helping people stop hurting each other

Let us try and think about our own attitudes to conflict by reflecting on the following story. Perhaps this could be acted in small groups or in front of your group:

- **Lindiwe** opens her lunch box at school and finding some of it gone; she asks angrily, "Who took my lunch without asking?"
- In anger, **Lindiwe** shouts at an alarmed **Thabo**, "I know, it's you! You always take my things without asking."
- That afternoon at **Thabo's** house: **Thabo's** sister comes to talk to him 'Thabo, can you help me with my reading please?'
- **Thabo** responds crossly, "Go away and leave me alone – I had a bad day at school today."
- **Thabo's** sister stands forlornly in the garden, crying pulling the flowers off the bush, saying "I just wanted help with my reading."

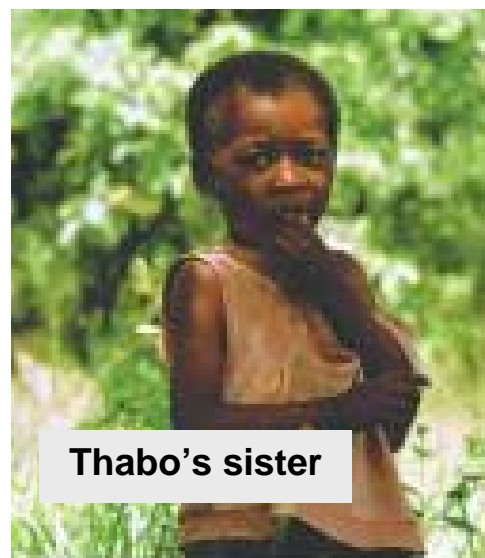


Surprised

Hurt

Pushed away

Angry



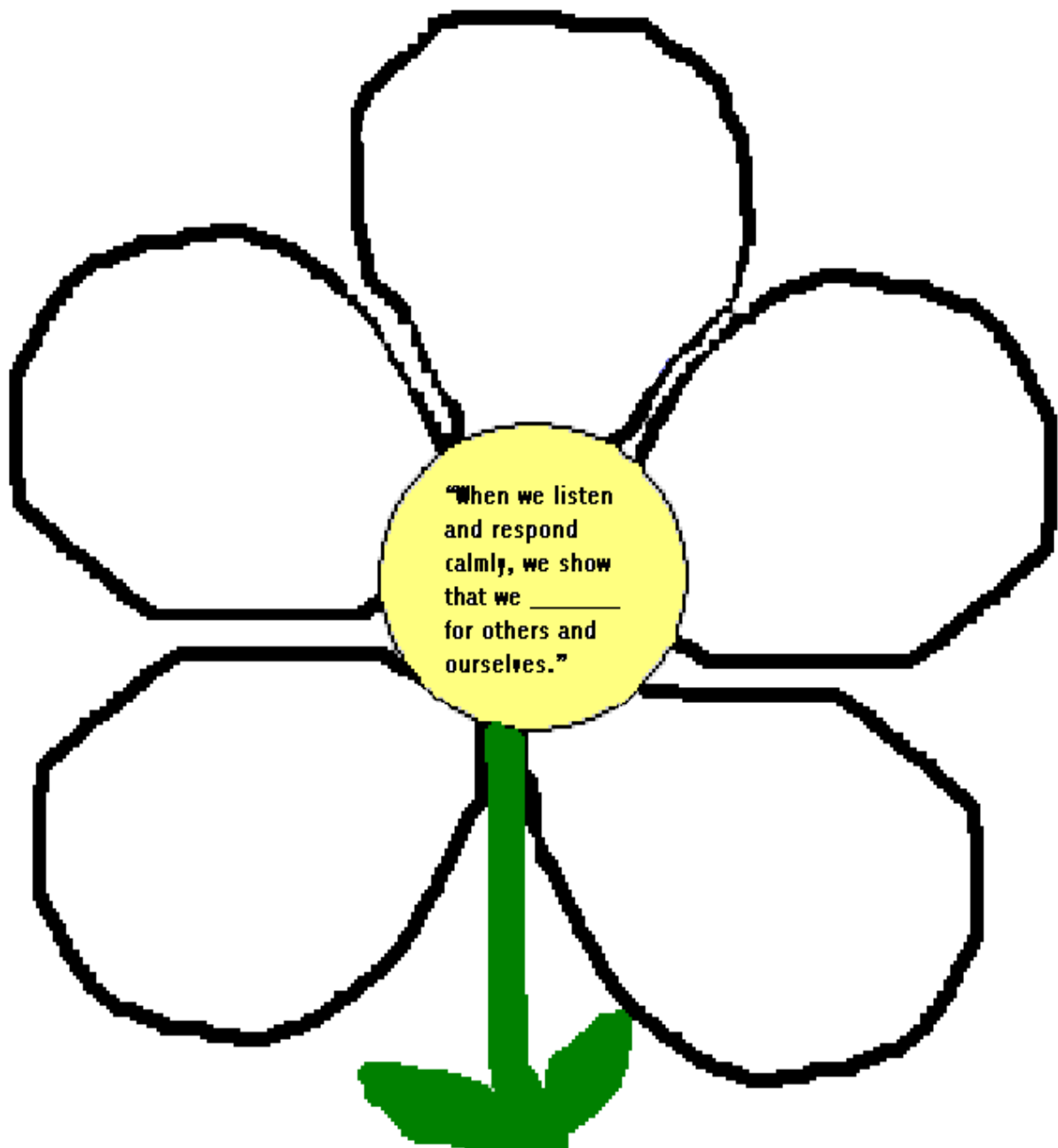
Journeys in the Spirit

Children



Sheet 15 .E Respond Helping people stop hurting each other

Print or copy enough flowers for everybody.

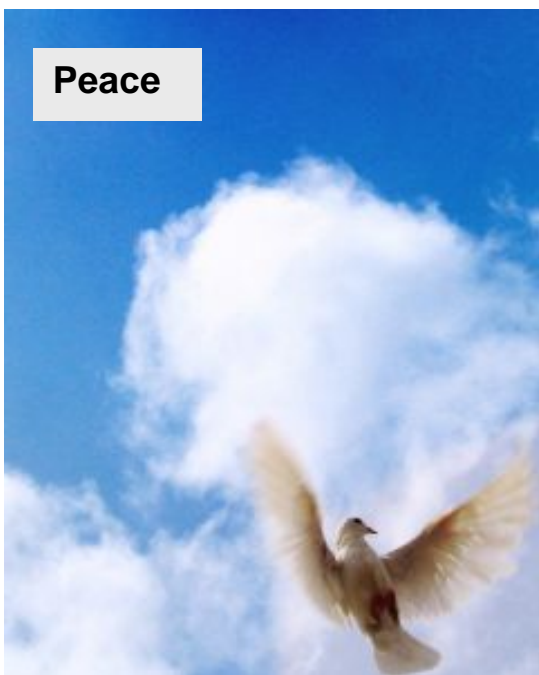


Journeys in the Spirit

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Sheet 15.F Ongoing activity Yearly Meeting What can we do?



Peace



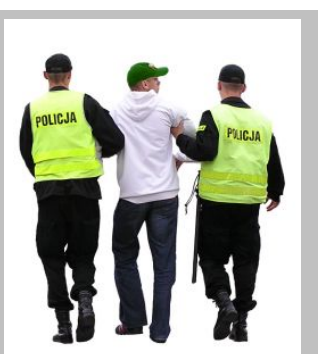
Speaking out



The earth



Being friendly



Crime



God in each of us

I wonder:

- Which of these is most important to you?
- Which of these could you help with?
- Which of these do you want Quakers to do most about?
- Which of these do you want your meeting to do things about?