



Journeys in the Spirit

inward outward upward downward

Children's work edition January 2014 Issue 83



Quakers, work and business – an introduction.

Getting ready

This is the first in a short series about how Quakers think about the work and business they might be involved in. The series has three issues about some historic Quaker businesses and reflections on what children think about work. When these issues refer to work it isn't just about employment – it is about what people are doing in the world to live, to help, to create and to transform.

The story of Quakers, work and business has often been strongly affected by Quaker values and also by the rules and regulations of the church and state. Early Quakers were prevented from being in the legal and clerical professions because of the requirements of taking oaths. This barring led many into businesses – manufacturing, crafts, trading, science and banking for example.

It is also important to remember that sometimes there has been a failure amongst people declaring themselves as Quakers to apply Quaker values to what they do in their businesses – the ownership of slaves, trading in slave produced goods or commodities, factory conditions and attitudes to workers (the *Bryant and May* match girls in the 1880's, the *Jacobs* biscuit workers in Dublin in 1913 for example).

We all live in a culture which focusses on money as the point of working – we hope that this series helps children, and adults, consider and validate alternative and deeper values. The writer for this issue writes about what God has done or wants us to do. It is important to remember that when Quakers talk about God we are not talking about an external being but about the Love that exists within and amongst us and what it can lead us to do.

Gather

What is work all about?

Welcome each child into the circle, and ask them, and any adult, to say their names if there are people in the group who do not know each other. Ask each of them to say something about their week, something that made them happy or was exciting. Go on to say that you are all going to be talking and doing things about something called work.

Say something like, 'We are all here on one planet and there is lots of work that needs doing! People get hungry and thirsty every day and we all need clothes and houses as well. All the things we need to eat and drink, wear and use come from somewhere and they have to be made. Today we are going to be talking and doing things about the work that Quakers do or have done to help their families, where they live and the world.'

Journeys in the Spirit offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with children and young people.

This children's work edition comes out monthly. It offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with 5–12 year olds in a Quaker setting.

It provides opportunities for exploring, creating and learning in an atmosphere of worship in partnership on our shared journey in the spirit.

Underpinning references

Quaker faith and practice 23.55

An excerpt:

'.....We can be creative in our small way in God's image; we can work in partnership with God, combining natural and human resources; we can extract order from chaos.'

www.quaker.org.uk/qfp

Engage

What does good work look like?

Begin by saying something like, 'Grown ups have to do work for money to pay bills, buy food and other things they need. Sometimes the work they do can help them to feel happy; sometimes adults, and children, have to do work they don't like. Perhaps with God's help – listening, talking and thinking to ourselves and together - we will each be able to find good work. The world really needs people who work in ways that look after the earth we live on, and in ways that help other people. It is very important to know that the good things we can do don't always give us money.'

Talk a little bit about the Bible, a very old book, and how it says that God wants us to look out for how to help people and the earth: see what Jesus told his disciples, special friends, in Matthew's gospel, *Chapter 25 v 35*, or how it tells us how things could be when we care for the earth (*Psalms 65:9-13 and Psalm 104:10-14*). These quotations are all on *Additional Resource 83.A*. One or more of the quotes can be read out by children or by an adult; language might need to be adjusted. Now go on to initiate the conversation below.

Questions and conversation.

Say something like, 'Sometimes when you play you do things like grown ups do. Ask children what they do when their play is like things that grown ups do. Listen. Go on to say, 'When you play you sometimes concentrate really hard – reading or hearing a story, on a game, watching TV, drawing a picture, digging a hole. When we play and work together on things like cooking, gardening, cleaning and tidying these things can be a big part of the sorts of work that adults do.'

In pairs or in a small group – take it in turns to complete one or more of these sentences. They are all in a larger version on *Additional Resource 83.B* – these can be printed to cut out to show the children the questions as you speak.

- A job I like doing is . . .
- A job I don't like doing is . . .
- I am happy when I . . .
- I like to help by . . .

This conversation could be followed by this picture activity or the stories of three Quakers or both.



Choose a picture of someone working

Collect lots of pictures of people at work around the world from magazines or from the internet. Make sure there is a wide variety of work represented. Include pictures of people growing vegetables and field crops, looking after animals, looking after babies and small children. Also have pictures of people making things using their hands - spinning, weaving, pottery, transporting goods and using machines to make things. Have you got a variety of people working – men and women from several different ethnic groups? Try to show that people don't have to be young and physically able to work – can you show someone with a visible disability working? You could include pictures from businesses run by Quakers for example the early days of Cadbury's chocolate or Clark's Somerset shoe factories.

Lay the pictures you have chosen on a table or the floor for children to look at. Ask them to choose one they like and then say why they chose it to the group.

Stories of three Quakers and their work

After the picture activity tell the children about the furniture maker, the barber and the secretary from Quaker faith and practice – Qf&p references to their stories are in the sidebar. Ask children what they like about the stories. Prepare yourself for this by reading the stories yourself in advance.

References & other resources

Qf&p has examples of Friends in their working lives who did things for more than money:

23.58 - a furniture maker - Arthur Basil Reynolds



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brynmawr_Furniture

(The first order for furniture at this furniture factory was for 400 chairs for a Quaker school in York. Each chair cost £1 each - equivalent to £41.00 today).

23.59 – a barber - Percy Cleave – 'To have Percy cut your hair was a grace'.

23.60 – a secretary in Covent Garden market - Joan Frances Layton.

Additional Resources 83.A and 83.B can be found at: www.quaker.org.uk/resources-children

References & other resources

Qf&p13.01

‘Our service may be in the home, an unpaid job, a vocation or a lifetime's career.’

Quakers in the World:
www.quakersintheworld.org/quakers-in-action and use the ‘who, what, when, where’ search buttons.

See *QF&P 23.57* about the Scott Bader Commonwealth if you want to talk about today's Quaker businesses and need an example.

Go to -
www.quakersintheworld.org/quakers-in-action/179

Additional Resource on the next page 83.C can be found at:
www.quaker.org.uk/resources-children

Respond

Say, ‘We are all different and find different kinds of things easy or hard. We can help each other and each of us can help the world and people in different ways. We can find out what kind of person we are. Different kinds of work, doing different things, suits different people. If you know what kind of work makes you happy you might have work doing what makes you happy.’

Lining up

Say that you are all going to do something that is about finding out about and enjoying how we are all different from each other in what we like to do. This is great as it helps ensure all the different kinds of work in the world get done.

Say that you are going to read out some questions, and they can show their answers by lining up across the room. People form a line in which those who are most inclined one way are at one end, the people who are inclined the other way stand at the other end and others can stand anywhere in between.

As you read out the questions, point to one end and then the other to show the children which end of the line to go to. You could develop this further with older children by asking the people in the line to say something about why they stood where they chose to. Some example questions:

- Do you prefer (like) to do things on your own or with a group of people?
- Do you like working or doing things mostly indoors or outside?
- Do you prefer (like) to work or do things with people or with things?
- Do you like to know where to be at a specific time or do you just not care about where you have to be and when?

Family businesses and Quaker businesses – what would you do?

Is there someone in Meeting who is self-employed or runs a family business? Ask Friends what work they do – it doesn't have to be paid employment. Could you ask them to come to the children's meeting and show what they do and talk about how their Quakerism is part of what they do?

Say something like, ‘A long time ago, more than 100 years, some Quakers started factories that made chocolate. This was at a time when chocolate was very fashionable. People were asked to drink chocolate rather than beer! The factories were quite special because the things that made the chocolate, sugar and cocoa, were often grown by people who had escaped from slavery.’

The *Quakers in the World* website (see sidebar) has lots of information about different businesses and work. One example is the Scott Bader Commonwealth – but there are a lot more.

You could show some pictures of examples of Quaker businesses to the children and ask them what businesses people they know might be able to run today. What they see a need for and might like to make a business from in the future when they are adult? Ask the question – if you could start a factory small or large) what would it make? Have big sheets of paper and felt pens – ask children to draw a big picture or diagram of what it would look like. What about looking after the environment? For older children ask the questions, ‘if you could make one thing to help or to change the world, what would it be? What would it look like?’ Just for fun ask them to draw and talk about it.

Enquiry: how were people involved in making this?

Pick an object from around you – a piece of furniture, an item of clothing or something else in the room. You could talk about how it was made. How many people were involved? What kinds of skills do those people need? You could make a series of pictures showing all the stages. You could ask the children whether any of the stages particularly appeal to them. With older children, you might be able to help them think about how to make that thing in the future as there is less fossil fuel available and we have to work out how to get things done on a limited energy budget, in a ‘low carbon’ way.

Reflect

Reflective moment with music

'Simple Gifts' is a song from the Shaker tradition. They are another religious group that has some similarities with Quakers and their tradition produced some beautiful songs and also great furniture! After a time of stillness together you could listen together to a recording of this song – see *Additional Resource 83.C* for the words of the song, links to *youtube* films, downloadable music and a copy of the sheet music. You could also sing the song together before going into the main meeting.

Alternatively have a closing prayer

Invite the children to sit in a circle and have some moments of quiet worship.

Explain that you are going to pray together and that you will walk around the room and ask for blessings for each person. "There is an abundance of love and safety in God's presence, and when we know God's presence, we can find a way of truth and peace-making together through which healing comes, for us and for the whole of earth."

Then say to everybody, or have an older child read: "You are precious to God, who is love. May you know how very much loved you are, and come to know yourself well, and find good work to do in your own right place, for the healing of earth."



Review

The review can happen just after the session or later on. It may help to do this with another Friend,

What went well and why?

Did each child seem to engage with the material in their own way?

What were the challenges with this topic?

What would you do differently if you were doing a session with this topic another time?

This issue was written by Alice M. Yaxley and edited by Chris Nickolay and Howard Nurden. The Topical activity was written by Chris Nickolay with the help of Sunniva Taylor.

Issue 84 is about *Quaker nurserymen & botanists*. Available from 3 February 2014.

Issue 85 is about *George Cadbury and the production of chocolate*. Available from 3 March 2014.

Issue 86 is about the Tottenham who made the now famous Tottenham cake. Available from 1 April 2014.

Materials available online are:

Current issue additional Resources Sheets

An easy to use plan for a Children's Meeting

A simple plan for an all age Meeting for Worship

A topical activity – this time about a tar sands protest in London

Also a 'How to use *Journeys in the Spirit*' guide; a link to special issues; an archive of previous issues; a discussion forum and a link to the *Journeys in the Spirit* Youth edition.

Go to:

www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren and choose from the range of links in the sidebar.

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Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resource 83.A



Engage

What does good work look like?

New Testament of the Bible, Matthew Chapter 25 verse 25 onward:

Jesus said:

*'I was hungry and you fed me,
I was thirsty and you gave me a drink,
I was homeless and you gave me a room,
I was shivering and you gave me clothes,
I was sick and you stopped to visit,
I was in prison and you came to me.'*

*....and the people who were listening to him, his friends and disciples, said,
'Master, what are you talking about? When did we ever see you hungry and feed you, thirsty and give you a drink? And when did we ever see you sick or in prison and come to you?' Then Jesus said, 'I'm Whenever you did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me—you did it to me.'*



Psalm 65

Oh, visit the earth,
ask her to join the dance!
Deck her out in spring showers,
fill the God-River with living water.
Paint the wheat fields golden.
Creation was made for this!
Drench the ploughed fields,
soak the dirt clods
With rainfall as harrow and rake
bring her to blossom and fruit.
Snow-crown the peaks with splendour,
scatter rose petals down your paths,
All through the wild meadows, rose petals.
Set the hills to dancing,
Dress the canyon walls with live sheep,
a drape of flax across the valleys.
Let them shout, and shout, and shout!
Oh, oh, let them sing!



Psalm 104:

Oh yes, God brings grain from the land,
wine to make people happy,
Their faces glowing with health,
a people well-fed and hearty.
God's trees are well-watered—
the Lebanon cedars he planted.
Birds build their nests in those trees;
look—the stork at home in the treetop.
Mountain goats climb about the cliffs;
badgers burrow among the rocks.
The moon keeps track of the seasons,
the sun is in charge of each day.
When it's dark and night takes over,
all the forest creatures come out.
The young lions roar for their prey,
clamouring to God for their supper.
When the sun comes up, they vanish,
lazily stretched out in their dens.
Meanwhile, men and women go out to work,
busy at their jobs until evening.

Psalm 90:

'...and let the loveliness of God, rest on us, confirming the work that we do. Oh, yes. Affirm the work that we do!





Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resource 83.B

Engage

Questions and conversation



A job I like
doing is...

A job I don't
like doing is...

I am happy
when I...

I like to help
by...



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resource 83.C

Reflect

'Simple gift' song words



"Simple Gifts" was written by Elder Joseph while he was at the Shaker community in Alfred, Maine. These are the lyrics to his one-verse song:

'Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift to be free
'Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be,
And when we find ourselves in the place just right,
'Twill be in the valley of love and delight.
When true simplicity is gain'd,
To bow and to bend we shan't be asham'd,
To turn, turn will be our delight,
Till by turning, turning we come 'round right.

Here are two links to short films with the music of the song:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uOuGTIZiARE>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZwH6-QmvM5c>

They can also be used to learn the song. The music can also be downloaded (to buy) at:

<http://www.artistdirect.com/nad/window/media/page/0,,3138080-7419484,00.html>

Simple Gifts

Joseph Brackett, Jr., 1848

