



Journeys in the Spirit

inward outward upward downward

Children's work edition September 2014 Issue 91



How differently Quakers live

Getting ready

New attenders entering a Quaker community cannot help but be struck by the differences between the principled and proactive way Friends strive to live and the typical lifestyles of the general population. This may be more obvious to outsiders than to Friends themselves.

Children and young Friends attending Meeting may have diverse feelings about their own identity as a Quaker and varying experiences of growing up according to Quaker principles. Many may be unaware of any difference between their faith status and anyone else's. But as time passes, especially for those who may be the only Quaker in their school or social group, it may present challenges for them if a conflict in lifestyle and values becomes apparent. Peer pressure and "fitting in" are important to most children, and young Friends might find themselves confused or torn between their Quaker conscience and the challenges to conform to a less principled way.

A positive concept of what it means to be a Quaker, some of the issues that make Quakers different from the general population, and how Quakers have managed their "differentness" historically will help children to navigate their own journeys. A wider understanding of diversity as a thing to explore and celebrate in all areas of life will also help to provide context for this subject. This issue of *Journeys in the Spirit* aims to introduce the matter of difference in lifestyle and values, and explore how children may recognise, understand and stay true to their values while at the same time respecting and interacting with others who may not share these, and may challenge their choice to stick by them.

Gather

After welcoming everyone, ask them to gather in a circle. You might choose to have some gentle music playing in the background for this exercise, or to do it in silence. Invite the children to close their eyes for a few moments, and to think quietly about their lives. Ask them to think about their home and family, then about their friends, and their friends' homes and families.

Ask the children to think about the things they love doing, and the things that are most important to them, then to choose one of these things, and hold it in their minds. Ask the children to take a moment more to notice the silence (or music), feel the stillness, and be aware of everyone else in the circle, all thinking about the different things they value.

After opening their eyes, and still in the circle, invite each person to say their name, and the thing they have chosen that is valuable to them. Ask them to talk about the things they value, and to notice how different they might be, and also any similarities. Thank the children for sharing this rich diversity of valued things.

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:

Advices and Queries
22 and 38

Engage

Say to the children that Quakers have always lived rather differently from people around them. Say that you are going to tell a story about a bull who was also different – different from the other bulls. Have copies of the pictures on *Additional Resource 91.A* to lay down or pin up. Tell the story.

The Story of Ferdinand (adapted from the original by Munro Leaf)

Once upon a time in Spain there was a little bull called Ferdinand. The other little bulls would run and jump and butt their heads together, but Ferdinand liked to sit quietly under a tree and smell the flowers. This made him very happy.

Ferdinand grew big and strong. The other bulls liked to fight. What they wanted most was to fight at the bull fights. But Ferdinand still liked to sit quietly under the tree and smell the flowers.

One day some men came to pick the biggest, roughest bull for the bull fights. The other bulls ran around snorting and butting so the men would think they were strong and fierce and pick them. Ferdinand knew that they wouldn't pick him and he was happy to stay and smell the flowers.

He went to his favourite tree to sit down. But instead of sitting on the cool grass he sat on a bumble bee! The bee stung him and it hurt! Ferdinand jumped up with a snort. He ran around puffing and snorting, butting and pawing the ground as if he were crazy.

The men thought he was the fiercest bull of all, so they took him away for the bullfight in a cart.

What a day it was! Flags flying, bands playing...and the ladies had flowers in their hair. The matador came into the ring and bowed to the ladies. He had a bright cape and a sword to fight the bull. Then came Ferdinand!

They called him Ferdinand the Fierce and the Matador was terrified. Ferdinand ran to the middle of the ring and everyone shouted and clapped because they thought he was going to fight. But not Ferdinand. When he saw the flowers in the ladies' hair he just sat down quietly and smelled.

He wouldn't fight and be fierce no matter what they did. The Matador was cross because he couldn't use his cape and sword. The people were disappointed because they wanted to see a fight.

Ferdinand did not mean to upset anyone, but he was not a fighter. So they took him home.

And for all I know he is sitting there still, under his favourite tree, smelling the flowers quietly.

He is very happy.

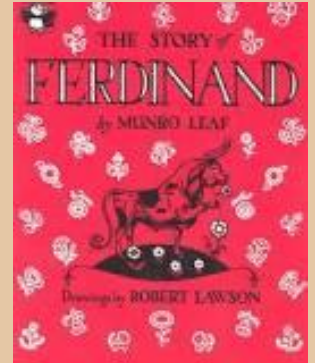
Pause for a few moments

Ask the children all or some of the following questions. Adjust them for age as necessary.

- What would it have been like too be Ferdinand?
- I wonder what the other bulls thought about him?
- Ferdinand didn't like fighting, but how might he have been friends with the other bulls?
- How is the story of Ferdinand similar to the story of Quakers, in history and today?
- Have you ever felt like Ferdinand, or like the other bulls?

Listen carefully and encourage thoughts and questions.

References & other resources



This book is available online and from the Quaker Bookshop on 020 7663 1030 and at

www.quaker.org.uk/quaker-centre-bookshop

Additional Resource 91.A can be found at:

www.quaker.org.uk/resources-children

References & other resources

Information about Quaker

Testimonies:

www.quaker.org.uk/testimonies

Activities for exploring values with children:

www.livingvalues.net/books/pdf-downloads/lvac3-7i.pdf

www.livingvalues.net/books/pdf-downloads/lvac8-14i.pdf



See the *Journeys in the Spirit* special edition about the 1st World War at:

www.quaker.org.uk/sites/default/files/WW1%20main.pdf

www.quaker.org.uk/white-feather-stories-resources

Additional Resource 91.B and 91.C can be found at:

www.quaker.org.uk/resources-children

Respond

Values (for younger children)

Resources for this session: copies of the pictures on Additional Resource 91.B available to lay down or pin up when talking about values. Have cards or paper with 'Testimonies' and other 'value' words written on for display when you talk about them; plain card or paper; coloured and plain pens and pencils for hand activity.

Talk and chat more about values using all or some of the following prompts:

- Just like we talked about earlier, when you value something, it is important to you. We all have people that are important to us. We all have possessions, things that we value. We also have beliefs and ways of living, ways we do things, which are very important to us.
- Quakers have things called Testimonies that say some things that are important to us - that Quakers live by: peace, simplicity, truth, integrity and equality.
- Here are some values that are important to many people: respect, love, responsibility, friendship, happiness, tolerance, co-operation, honesty, humility, unity.....Can the children think of any more? *Lay down photo of hands from Additional Resource 91.B*

Talk about what some of these different words might mean – what do the children think? Ask which are the most important to them. Explain that it is fine for people to have differing values. Ask which values do they think are most important in living a Quaker life? Ask children to draw around their hand on a piece of card and create a picture like shown on *Additional Resource 91.B*. Ask children to think about a value they like and make a picture on their 'hand' to represent it.

Conscience (for older children)

Ask if the children know what a conscience is. (If necessary, explain with something like "It is like a quiet voice inside that tells us what is right for us, for others and for the world. You could say your conscience is where your values live."). There is an activity in the special issue of *Journeys in the Spirit* about the 1st World War to help explore the meaning of conscience – see sidebar.

Here are some questions that you could ask: how do you feel when you listen to your conscience and follow its guidance? How might you feel if you do not listen to your conscience, and do something that is against your values? When might it be hard to stand by your values? Has this ever happened to you? Quakers throughout history have followed their consciences and lived differently from other people. Go to www.quaker.org.uk/childrens-work-edition-series-4 for stories of Quakers. Also, Quakers were early campaigners against the slave trade, and Conscientious Objectors in times of war. *Lay down anti-slavery and Friends Ambulance Unit images from Additional Resource 91.C*. Talk about what Friends did.

Making a Conscience Box. Resources: magazines, scissors, glue, a variety of boxes – plain or covered with plain paper, paper, colouring pens and pencils.

Children choose a box and some magazines and cut out pictures that remind them of their values, or just make them feel good. They stick the pictures on the box to decorate it. Alternatively, they could write or draw on the box. Each child takes up to five pieces of paper big enough to write and draw on and fit in their box. Ask children to think up to five favourite values, and then write one on each piece of paper, with a small drawing to illustrate each. Smaller children can be helped to think of simple values such as kindness, sharing and love, and draw related pictures. Point out that they did not all choose the same values. Ask children to put their values in their conscience box. Can children think of more Quakers in history who have behaved differently from other people? What values did they represent? Who do you know about? What about people in their meeting now? Discuss!

Reflect

Questions to think about and discuss as a group:

How did thinking about Quakers being different from others make us feel?

It is important to realise that all human beings are different from each other in some ways, as we are all unique. All human beings also have things in common.

What could we do to have a party and celebrate our differentness and learn from each other?

How can we value other people's ways as well as our own?

What might we need help with when being a Quaker in the world gets hard?

Have some time to be quiet and give thanks for the diversity that makes the world such a fascinating place, and for the Quaker community that we are a part of.



Review

How did the children (and adults) respond to this subject?

If there was a wide age-range, did this subject successfully engage all ages?

Did the children feel comfortable to explore and express their feelings within the group?

Did any issues arise that the children might like to revisit at a later date?

Did any issues arise that should be raised with parents or carers?

Did any issues arise that should be taken to the children's committee or the meeting as a whole?

This issue was written by Tam Martin-Fowles and edited by Chris Nickolay and Howard Nurden. Ailse Phin gave us the Topical activity.

Issue 92 is the third in the series about *Living as a Quaker*. It has the title '*Looking after each other and making links*'. Available from 2 October 2014.

Issue 93 is the fourth in the series about *Living as a Quaker*. It has the title '*Equipping children for ministry*'. Available from 3 November 2014.

Issue 94 is the fifth in the series about *Living as a Quaker*. It has the title '*The Quaker business method*'. Available from 1 December 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 from a book about fun science experiments

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.

Published by Children & Young People's Staff Team, Quaker Life

Available free by subscription.

Contact:
CYP Staff Team,
Friends House,
173 Euston Road,
London NW1 2BJ

Phone: 020 7663 1013

Email:
cypadmin@quaker.org.uk

Website:
www.quaker.org.uk/cyp



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 91.A



Engage

Pictures of bulls and a bullfighter



F.J.Pablo



Vladimir Teran Altamerano





Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 91.B

Respond

Values





Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 91.C

Respond

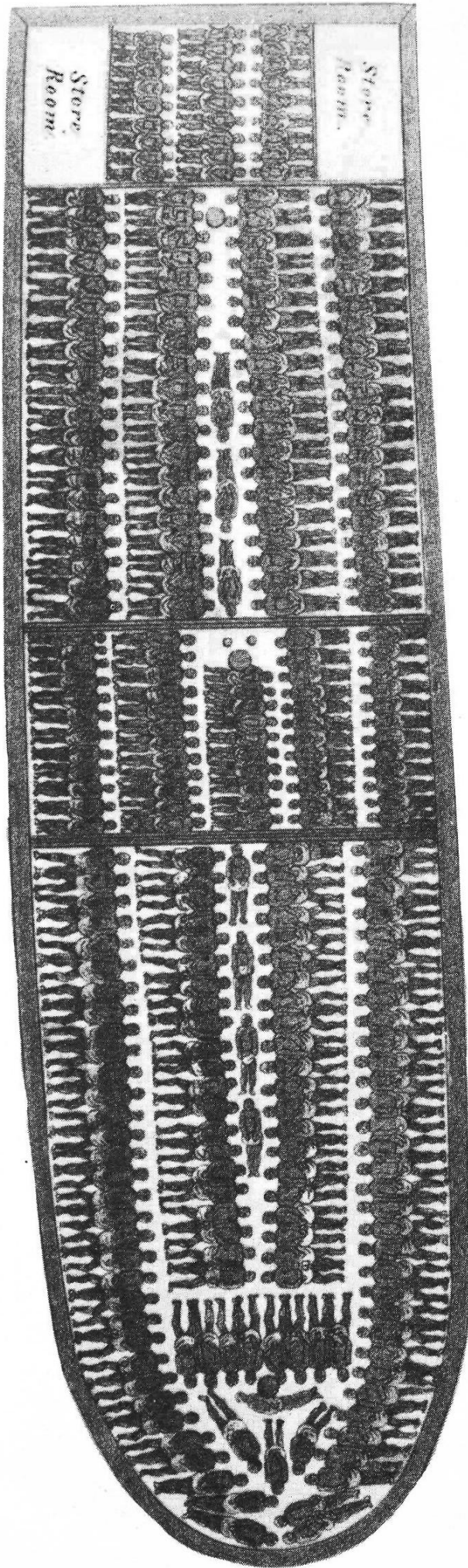
Conscience



Friends Ambulance Unit pictures



Civilian Hospital Evacuation,
drawing from Friends Ambulance Unit
volunteer Ernest Procter



Picture used in anti-slavery campaign