

Ministry and Oversight Committee

The M & O Committee serves the Yearly Meeting by fostering the spiritual life and good order of the Meeting.

The M & O Committee is composed of six members selected by NPYM Nominating Committee to represent all Quarterly Meetings and community meetings of various sizes. It meets by conference call monthly and at least once a year in person at Annual Session. It provides support on request to Monthly Meetings, Worship Groups and Quarterly Meetings mainly through contact with their Clerks of Ministry and Oversight, Ministry and Counsel or Oversight Committees. It offers opportunities of sharing at Annual Session at the Forum for M & O Clerks and Interest Groups. During the year, it offers consultations by free conference call.

Consultations are one-hour conference calls offered around topics of concern to one or more of our community meetings. Participation is by invitation to clerks of M & O Committees or their designated representatives. A consultation is clerked in either a worship sharing or worship discussion format around queries generated by the committee concerning the topic. The queries could be used as a focus for discussion in a Monthly Meeting or Worship Group.

The NPYM Ministry and Oversight Committee has held Consultations since 2012. See the Consultations List for topics. A page of queries on each topic is provided, with accompanying resources, as available.

Consultations List

Consultations are one-hour conference calls offered around topics of concern to one or more of our monthly meetings. Participation is by invitation to clerks of M & O Committees or their designated representatives.

- Sept. 30, 2012 Topic: **Memorials**
Clerk of Consultation: Sea Gabriel, South Seattle Friends Meeting
- Jan. 6, 2013 Topic: **“Burnout” in Meetings**
Clerk of Consultation: Sea Gabriel, SSFM
- Apr. 21, 2013 Topic: **Dying and Loss**
Clerk of Consultation: Georgia Foster, Sheridan Community of Wyoming Friends Meeting
- June 30, 2013 Topic: **Membering**
Clerk of Consultation: Lucretia Humphrey, Great Falls Worship Group
Discussion led by Ann Stever & Dorsey Green, UFM
- Jan. 12, 2014 Topic: **Dealing with Disruptive Behavior in Our Meeting Communities**
Clerk of Consultation: Dorsey Green, University Friends Meeting
- May 4, 2014 Topic: **Integrating New People into Our Meetings**
Clerk of Consultation: Warren Ostrom, UFM
- Jan. 12, 2015 Topic: **Quaker Process**
Clerk of Consultation: Warren Ostrom, UFM

North Pacific Yearly Meeting, Ministry & Oversight Committee

Memorials

Conference call held September 30, 2012

Clerk of Consultation – Sea Gabriel, South Seattle Friends Meeting

Queries

1. What are the highest purposes served by our Meetings for Memorial?
How might we best serve those purposes?
2. How do we bring forward that which is eternal from one who has departed? How do we protect that flame and add it to our communal light?
3. What role does witnessing play in our meetings? How do we best witness a life that has passed and those who have been affected?

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“Burn Out” in Meetings

Consultation was held on September 30, 2012

Clerk of Consultation – Sea Gabriel, South Seattle Friends Meeting

Queries

1. When do we feel fulfilled through service to our meetings? How do we support others to discover ‘what love can do’?
2. When are we in touch with the light in our meetings? How do we support our meetings and their participants to reconnect with the light?
3. How do we care for ourselves and each other as we form relationships with and in our meeting?
4. How do we give and receive within the context of our meetings? How do we encourage others to accept our gifts and share their own?

Dying and Loss

Conference call held on April 21, 2013.

Clerk of consultation: Georgia Foster, Sheridan Community of Wyoming Friends Meeting

Queries

1. How do we, in our meetings, support one another in facing our losses?
2. Are there ways we can engage Spirit to help us relate to loss?
3. Those suffering from long-term illness, serious injury, dementia, as well as aging must deal with many losses along the way. The same is true of their family members/friends: Aspects of their relationship with the dying person change well before the actual death. There is anticipatory grieving, too. If needed, are there ways your meeting has provided them spiritual or emotional support in a respectful way?
4. How do we find spiritual strength as a community to recover from the loss of a beloved Friend? Besides holding a memorial meeting, are there other ways we can honor the memory of those we miss? Have you experienced in your meeting Spirit transforming sorrow?

Resources: Dying and Loss

Capossela, Cappy and Warnock, Sheila. *Share the Care: How to Organize a Group to Care for Someone Who is Seriously Ill, Revised*. New York: Fireside, 2004. This is a well thought out manual for setting up support to meet practical needs. It offers a system for sustaining support while avoiding burnout. Seems particularly appropriate to support someone without family near.

McIver, Lucy. *Song of Death, Our Spiritual Birth, A Quaker Way of Dying*. Pendle Hill Pamphlet. Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications. Lucy McIver of Eugene, OR

has provided consultation and workshops to Quakers around this topic for years.

Ostaseski, Frank. *Being a Compassionate Companion*, CD set, 2003. Director of Zen Hospice Center of San Francisco presents Buddhist principles to - 1. Being with a dying person, 2. Being a caregiver of someone dying, 3. Grieving after the death. Excellent training tool.

Quaker Aging Resources <<http://www.quakeragingresources.org/>> New York Yearly Meeting and Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting collaborated to develop spirit-centered resources and information.

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Membering

Consultation was held on June 30, 2013

Clerk of Consultation - Lucretia Humphrey, Great Falls Worship Group
Discussion leaders - Ann Stever and Dorsey Green, University Friends Meeting

Queries

1. What helps you center and enter the Godstream/the Divine/the Spirit/God in business meeting?
2. In business meeting, what is your role as a member of the body?

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"Dealing with Disruptive Behavior in Our Meeting Communities"

Conference call was held on Sunday, January 12, 2014.

Clerk of Consultation – Dorsey Green, University Friends Meeting

Queries

1. What experience have you had with disruptive behavior in your Meeting? What was your Meeting's response?
2. Is there a time when it is helpful to identify a person struggling with disruptive behavior? How might it be beneficial for someone to engage with the individual to see what might be helpful to him/her?
3. What resources has your Meeting found helpful to address this situation?

Integrating New People into Our Meetings

Conference call was held on Sunday, May 4th.

Clerk of consultation: Warren Ostrom, University Friends Meeting

Queries*

1. Do we actually want new people to become part of our group?
2. How do we spread the word that we exist, what we are about, where and when we meet, and that newcomers are welcome?
3. Are there some types of people we deliberately turn away? Are there some needs, such as provision of translation or childcare, which we aren't prepared to provide?
4. What guidance do we provide so that a newcomer will know what to expect in Quaker worship, and how to enter into Quaker worship??
5. What makes it easy for someone to feel at home with us? What makes it hard? What do we do intentionally to help newcomers feel that they belong?
6. Would a newcomer notice God/the Spirit/love present among us?
7. How ready are we to spend time listening to a newcomer's struggles, and to offer our presence, concern and help?
8. How ready are we to tell what Quakers are about, and our own personal stories about becoming or remaining Friends?
9. What follow-up, if any, do we do with new people who have attended our meeting once? Who have attended several times and then stopped coming?
10. What opportunities do we provide to newcomers for helping with the

work of the meeting, and for working along side other members of the group?

11. What do we do to sustain our vitality, both as a place of worship and as a human community, for both established attenders and newcomers?

* Underlined queries were discussed in conference call. Others were not.

Quaker Practice

Conference was held on Thursday, February 12th*

Consultation Clerk – Warren Ostrom, University Friends Meeting

Queries

The committee recommends reading the first 13 pages of our new chapter on Quaker Practice available on the North Pacific Yearly Meeting website.

1. The NPYM draft *Faith and Practice* states:

Friends conduct business together in the faith that there is one Divine Spirit which is accessible to all persons, and that when Friends wait upon, heed, and follow the Light of Truth within them, that Spirit will lead to unity. No matter the size of the group, this faith is the foundation for any decision.

[Revised chapters on Practice - July 2014]

- What does this quote bring up for you?
2. Quaker decision-making.
 - How do we describe the differences among consensus, unity, and sense of the Meeting?
 - How do we know when there is a sense of the meeting?

3. Nurturing meeting harmony.

Different ways of understanding the divine life may occur among us. These differences should not be ignored for the sake of a superficial agreement. They should be recognized and understood, so that a deeper and more vital unity can be reached. Convictions which might divide or disrupt a Meeting can, through God's grace, help to make it creative and strong. Friends should keep faith and fellowship with each other, waiting in the Light for

*that unity which draws them together in the love and power of God. (From section on UNITY in **Faith and Practice**)*

- How can we prepare ourselves to let go of our individual desires and let the Holy Spirit lead us to unity?
 - How do meetings support Friends, experienced or not, who do not follow Quaker practices?
 - How do we use our diversity for the spiritual growth of our Meeting?
4. When common misunderstandings emerge during Meeting for Worship for Business:
- What is the role of the Clerk?
 - How do we speak to the Clerk?
 - Do we understand the concept of speaking once?
 - Do we refrain from repeating responses already made?
 - Do we understand the importance of minuting decisions?
5. Newcomers look for indications of who is in charge, and turn to the people they see actively involved.
- Is there an "unofficial" hierarchy or clique within the meeting?
 - When does sharing concerns about each other turn into gossip?
6. Nominating Committee
- How do we support Nominating Committee in discerning gifts and talents?
 - How do we nurture Quaker process on Nominating Committees?
 - Do we have an intentional process for discerning gifts and talents?
 - How do we discern who among us is ready for which position?