

## Diversity & Inclusion Workshop

### Lewes Local Meeting

9<sup>th</sup> February 2020

#### Notes

#### **Background material:**

Minutes of Yearly Meeting 2017

Epistle from Britain Yearly Meeting 2019

Blog post by Edwina Peart, Diversity & Inclusion Project Coordinator, re: survey of British Quakers 2018 – 2019: “Embracing Diversity” (May 2019)

Minute 24 of Minutes of Yearly Meeting 2019 [Minute from Junior Yearly Meeting]

“Toolkit for Action: Owning Power & Privilege”

- *All items listed are available on the Quakers in Britain website.*

#### **Small group exercises:**

Offered in order from least challenging (1) to most challenging (7). Exercises adapted from and inspired by the “*Toolkit for Action: Owning Power & Privilege*” – link below:

<https://quaker-prod.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/store/6d94d334d4cdd158fbc8e21906be4cccb83bdf74cb2fbdaf97c523a98f45>

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#### **Allyship (1)**

In silence, everyone writes down on a post-it note, the answer to this question: “What does allyship mean?” [2 minutes]

Share your definitions (if you choose to).

Then, as a group respond to these 2 quotations:

“An ally isn’t just something you become – it’s something you do. You’re an ally when you intervene when someone behaves in a discriminatory way. You’re also an ally when you use your particular privileges in a way that the person you are in allyship with finds helpful.”

*And*

“Good allyship ... includes giving space for people to share their experiences, if they wish to. Listen without offering your experiences as validation or counter-evidence. Notice your implicit biases and take care to correct them. Do your own research into the history of the injustice you seek to address. If someone who has been marginalised wishes to speak or lead, support and amplify their work. Consider how you contribute to or benefit from the injustice they have experienced. Reflect how you can use your privileges to challenge injustice.”

Group discussion. Please capture some of the group’s thoughts on the flipchart paper.



### **Emotional Labour (2)**

In silence, everyone writes down on a post-it note, the answer to this question: “What does ‘emotional labour’ mean?” [2 minutes]

Then, as a group respond to this quotation:

“Emotional labour is the often invisible work of caring. Many people don’t notice when others are feeling unhappy, ... excluded, or ignored. Noticing these things can be painful, and encouraging a group to respond effectively to exclusion and suffering can be difficult. Creating an inclusive atmosphere will require emotional labour from you and [others]. It takes energy to be alert and responsive to how others feel, and while anyone can practise emotional labour, there is a social expectation that women will take care of it in most group scenarios. [In] any type of social change work, you will encounter resentment, criticism and avoidance from those who do not feel that change is needed (yet). When this happens it’s important to take care of your own needs in order to keep going. Burnout is a real risk if you feel unable to put your own feelings first when you are ‘off-duty’. It may be necessary to sit with the situation in meeting for worship.”

Group discussion. Capture some of the group’s thoughts on the flipchart paper.



### **What does privilege mean? (3)**

In silence, everyone writes on a post-it note, the answer to this question: “What does privilege mean?” [2 minutes]

Then, one person reads out the following statement to the group:

“Privilege refers to the advantages a person can inherit from birth and/ or accumulate over time. These advantages aren’t innate – they’re constructed by society, and can be seen where there are unexamined power relations. Everyone is privileged in different ways – your own privilege may lie within your genetics, upbringing, circumstances, or luck. Some are within our control, some are not. Privilege is ... related to context. You can enjoy advantages in one culture or social setting that can easily become disadvantages in another. Equally, we become immune to our privileges. ... It is natural to feel guilty or defensive when thinking about the experiences of those who don’t have ... freedom, wealth or physical wellbeing .... The challenge is to accept and move on from those feelings, and find out what actions they may ask of you.”

Respond to this quotation as a group.

Discussion. Capture some of the group’s thoughts on the flipchart paper.

For the last 5 minutes of the small group session, sit in silence, each with a post-it note. Write down what it felt like to take part in this small group discussion. Write down **only the emotions you are feeling** – no thoughts, opinions or statements.



*Notes from the workshop:*

We recognise this picture of privilege.

It’s easy to spot people who have ore privilege than us.

Privilege is a gift.

Need to move from guilt into action and avoid helplessness.



### **Privilege and Power (4)**

One person reads out:

“I don’t feel particularly powerful, but I have never been on the receiving end of .... systems for [control] .... the marks of privilege hang around me .... I have power. People listen to me. I am a typical Quaker: white, middle class, educated, affluent. I have never had to worry seriously about affording any reasonable enjoyment. I assume my right to excellent health care and my ability to confront the system if it falls short of my reasonable expectations. My four children are healthy, educated in excellent schools .... I have always assumed that these

marks of privilege came to me without any detriment to others ... that this was the nature of things, and that our grandchildren will, in due course, have the same opportunities.”

- A Quaker in Wandsworth & Kingston Area Meeting

Group discussion to follow, based around the following questions:

- 1 What does it feel like to hear this? What is your emotional reaction?
- 2 Is there such a thing as a “typical Quaker”? Are there “untypical Quakers”?
- 3 “People listen to me.” Do people listen to you? Why or why not?
- 4 Are there ways in which the culture of Quaker meetings (local, area, regional, yearly) excludes others?

Capture some of the group’s thoughts on the flipchart paper.



*Notes from the workshop:*

Way the world is going, our children / grandchildren may not have the same privileges.

Systems control many of us.

Uncomfortable feeling as we make assumptions of “typical Quaker”.

Should we all be helping others more to battle systems, not only our own family and friends?

Non-typical Quakers few and far between.

We are a diverse bunch.

Emphasis on different Quaker ways. Different directions coming into meetings, *eg.* refugee / cars. Similar in UK / Europe, different to Kenyan Quakers.

Do people listen to me? If confident and have language.

Lack confidence but speak with authority.

Have faith – will help us.

“Am I worth listening to?”

Are there ways in which Quaker meetings exclude some people? Many times through ignorance.

Important to share our vulnerabilities.



## **Hate Crime (5)**

One person reads this scenario out to the group:

*You are on a train. In the same carriage with you is a group of people harassing a young woman in a hijab (veil). She is attempting to ignore the harassment, but you can see the situation is escalating. What, if anything, do you do?*

Group discussion. Capture some of the group's thoughts on the flipchart.

Then read the following, extracted from "Five Ways to Disrupt Racism":

- Don't be a bystander : Victims of verbal hate crimes often recall people around them ignoring what is happening. Support the victim instead. Stand or sit beside them, talk to them about something unrelated to whatever the attacker is saying until it is safe for you both to move away.
- Film it and report it : If it feels safe to do so, film what is going on and report it to the police or [www.stophateuk.org](http://www.stophateuk.org). It is difficult to secure justice if the harassment is not reported or is reported without evidence to back it up. If it feels too risky to record the incident, call the police.
- Stick around for the victim : Shock and adrenaline mean the effects of the incident won't kick in until after the perpetrator has left the scene. Assisting the victim where possible – asking if they need help to ring a friend, waiting with them for assistance, staying with them while they get composure – can go a long way.

For the last 5 minutes of the session, sit in silence, and ask the following questions of yourself:

- Was there any point in this session when I felt uncomfortable and / or emotional?
- If so, at which point? What emotions did you feel?

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*Notes from the workshop:*

We want to be supportive.

We want to be sure she's okay with our action.

We show respect and care.

We want to avoid conflict.

We will try to get help.

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**Micro-aggressions (6)**

*A micro-aggression is a statement, action, or incident that subtly or unintentionally reflects bigotry towards a member of a marginalised group. For example, a jokey comment that puts a woman 'in her place'.*

One person reads the statement above, to the group who listen in silence.

Everyone writes down on a post-it note, in silence and separately, how this statement makes them feel.

Share the contents of your post-it notes (if you choose to) in the group, and discuss.

Share examples of micro-aggressions you have experienced or witnessed.

Do you think some people are on the receiving end of micro-aggressions more often than others? Who?

Capture some of the group's thoughts on the flipchart paper.

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*Notes from the workshop:*

We think micro aggressions are not always intended.

The perpetrator may not realise how it sounds.

But still have a very significant effect.

It is not always easy to challenge them.

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**Power & privilege amongst Quakers (7)**

It is particularly important, if you are working in this group, not to write down any names on the flipchart. Please record only general points on the flipchart.

As a group, discuss the following:

- 1 Who ministers in meeting for worship? Who seldom ministers, or never ministers? Why do you think this is?
- 2 Have you ever been moved by the spirit to minister in meeting for worship, but did not do so? Why or why not?
- 3 Who holds power in the local meeting? How do you know?
- 4 Do you hold power in the local meeting? How do you know?
- 5 Is power shared in your local meeting? How do you know?

Then consider these questions next:

- 6 Why did you give the answers you did?
- 7 Did anything in this discussion surprise you?
- 8 Is it important to consider these questions? (Why or why not?)

Capture some of the group's thoughts on the flipchart paper.

For the last 5 minutes of this session, sit in silence, each with a post-it note. Write down what it felt like to take part in this small group discussion. **Write down only the emotions you feel – no thoughts, opinions or statements.**



*Notes from the workshop:*

Who ministers? Some minister a lot, some seldom, some never.

Ever moved to minister and not done so? Yes, sometimes feels too revealing. Is it my ego speaking? Only minister when physically prompted. Aware I minister too often. Sometimes feel it doesn't add to what's been said.

Who holds power? Clerks and EORG members. We don't feel there is a gendered aspect to power. Older / long-standing members.

Do you hold power in local meeting? EORG members hold Quaker ethos. We feel responsibility rather than power. Personally, feel people will listen when I speak and that gives me power. I know people personally now and that feels powerful, vs not knowing anyone. See power as effective influence.

Is power shared in the local meeting? Yes.