

What is a Quaker? An exploration facilitated by Deb Whiting

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To start our discussion, adults and children interviewed one another using the following questions; some of the responses are noted below:

What do you like about being a Quaker?

- Being part of a community that has the same values
- Believing what you want
- Implied respect: each person can find his/her own way on their spiritual journey
- Not as judgmental
- All my personal beliefs fit under one umbrella
- Peaceful/therapeutic; having a peaceful place to go after having a turbulent month
- Food and people
- Quaker process – makes me more thoughtful and less impulsive in my responses; improves me as a person

What does “the light” or “inner light” mean to you?

- Your better thoughts
- Best part of a person
- God/Good/the divine is not separate from people but is in everyone
- That which is divine about humanity
- Place you go inside for clarity; to see yourself
- It’s a stream you can experience by dipping your toes or by diving in
- Finding the sunshine within yourself; on a grey day you can be dressed in your inner color
- Bringer of better thoughts
- Enables you to see the good in people even if they have very different beliefs than you
- A place inside yourself where you are free to be you

How do you worship?

- With a clear mind and listening to sounds outside
- Eyes wide open
- Gardening; creating; participation in the creation
- Expressing gratitude
- Stop trying
- Music
- Sit and take off shoes
- Appreciating nature
- Try to attend church/meeting on Sundays

Can you think of an example when your beliefs as a Quaker influenced your actions?

- When I became a C.O.
- Sometimes kill bugs sometimes let them go
- Less judgmental; more honest with myself and others
- Not going to Chick-fil-A
- Gotten to know more people; more committed
- Hold people with right wing, anti-gay viewpoints in the light, surrounded in warmth
- When you don’t judge people; don’t judge a book by its cover.