

Going Deeper

Some Backhouse 2021-Inspired Questions for Conversation or Personal Spiritual Searching

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Feel free to use, adapt and circulate

FIRST HALF

1. What feeds me now that wasn't familiar to me when I came to Friends?
2. Friends say 'This I know experimentally' or 'through my own direct experience.' What are my experiments in 'living experientially' through the Spirit?
3. What approaches do I take to deepen my interaction with country and people?
4. If the opposite of one truth may be another, how do I cope with my own incomplete revelation?
5. Do I embrace complexity, mystery and ambiguity in today's truths?
6. How do I live as a finder and/or a seeker?
7. Do I see myself having a role in co-creation?
8. How do I feel my authentic edge growing over time?
9. Are stardust and fungi threads in my story? Where does my story begin?
10. How does my life reflect my truth? How might it?
11. What truth do I hear Friends proclaiming? Which ones are we too quiet about?
12. Early Friends spoke of being 'opened' by the Spirit. How do I relate to this image?
13. What hinders my greater opening to the Spirit?
14. Is my faith consistent with that of early Friends? What might I learn from them?
15. Am I a hyphenated Friend? What aspects of Quakerism do I share with Friends who are:
 - i) christocentric?
 - ii) universalist?
 - iii) agnostic seekers?

16. Do I find Friends open to talking about difficult subjects? What subjects feel inhibited?
17. What areas of difference are embraced by Friends? Which are least spoken?
18. Where might I/we better practice creative peacemaking among Friends?
19. Do I/does my Meeting share openly and positively about mental and physical health, illness, and how we live with changes including ageing?
20. Am I able to speak what I feel and believe? Is this done lovingly among Friends? Where do I encounter fear in our midst?
21. Do I/we make assumptions of uniformity that suppress our exploration of difference?
22. What topics or areas of life might I/we better bring into the loving Light of Friends?
23. Am I able to sit lovingly with my/others' discomforts?
24. Parker Palmer talks about the 'tragic gap' between what is and what could be. What are the victims of that tragic gap in my experience?
25. Does being well grounded in my own truth increase my embrace of difference/change?
26. Do I find myself becoming a better listener over time? What contributes to this?
27. How does my life with Friends challenge me to step into new waters?

SECOND HALF (46:00 minutes)

28. What does the 'Quaker Way' mean to me? Do Friends have our own 'methodology'?
29. How might my meeting better practice the 'super-testimony' of love?
30. How do I respond to poet Emily Dickinson's advice: 'Tell the truth but tell it slant or everyone be blind'?
31. Does my meeting actively practice non-judgemental listening?
32. Am I in danger of losing courage or losing heart?
33. Do I cope well with endings and uncertainties? Do love and compassion ease my fears?
34. Do I incorporate mortality and death in my celebration of life? What is my witness around healthy death? Do I distinguish it from extinction?
35. Some use 'love' to replace 'truth'. How does this speak to me?

36. We don't know of any place beyond Earth that radiates love. Does this impact my thinking and feeling around climate change?
37. Do I express love so as to allow others to hear and feel it? Do or could I model unconditional love?
38. If God is love, is love God? Gandhi said there is no person who does not believe in love.
39. What does love require of me in facing the sharp edges and pointy bits?
40. What heightens my sense of being alive?
41. What does the phrase 'being in right relationship' mean to me?
42. How do Friends hold ourselves accountable and invite each of us to be our best self?
43. Am I practiced at waiting for the Spirit's movement before I act or decide?
44. Do I give myself and others time to sift through fears and become my/their best selves?
45. What do I see lying in Friends' 'too hard basket'?
46. How has love helped me to be more fully myself?
47. Where do I hang my hope? Do love and compassion sustain it or can they threaten?
48. Is my love big enough? What might feed it and make it flourish?