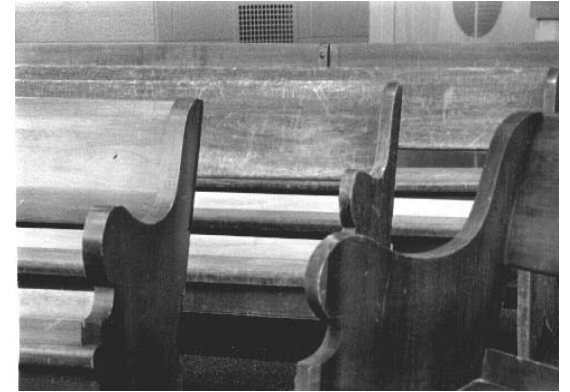




What is Meeting for Worship?

Every week at Delaware Valley Friends School the whole school gets together for meeting for worship. This is a period of about half an hour in which we sit in silence as a group. Meeting for worship is a time where a Quaker or any other person can relax in peace to think about the good that is within you, and to think about the world. It is a time to come together and to feel welcome. It pulls the community itself together.

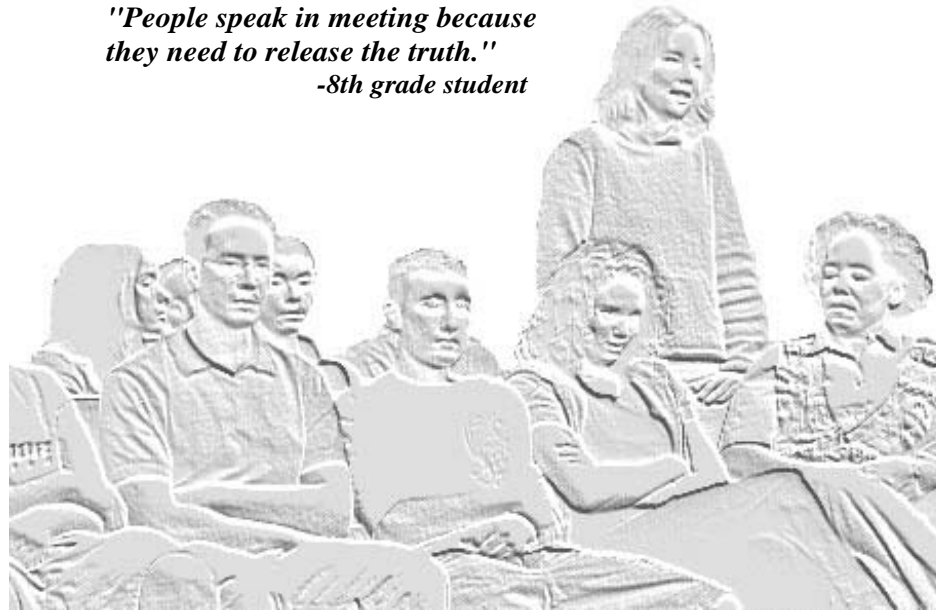
For the first few minutes of meeting we "center" ourselves, find ways to calm down and focus in the silence. After we are calm, people can use the time to meditate on important issues in their lives. It can be a time that is extremely good for your body: it gives you time to relax and let go of worries. Sometimes people speak, if they have thought of something important to say, or to give other people something to think about.



MEETING FOR WORSHIP

Written for Students
by Students
at Delaware Valley
Friends School

*"People speak in meeting because they need to release the truth."
-8th grade student*



Delaware Valley Friends School
19 East Central Avenue
Paoli, PA 19301
610.640.4150

Reproduced and Redesigned by:

Friends Council on Education

1507 Cherry Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102
215-241-7245 fax: 215-241-7299
e-mail: QuakerEd@aol.com web: www.friendscouncil.org

At DVFS, meeting for worship holds importance because we are a close and tight community. Meeting for worship has a special place and meaning in people's minds. The silence in meeting is important. Meeting for worship is something special to have, because you know there is always a friend there to help you.

Photography by Jim Talone. To avoid disturbing the silence, all photographs were taken after worship.

Frequently Asked Questions

- ♦ *What does it mean to be "moved to speak" in meeting? How do people know if they should speak in meeting?*

If a person has had a revelation or a new idea about something he or she has been thinking about, that person might choose to stand up and share it with the whole group.

People know to speak if they believe that what they have to say will help someone else, or if they want community response to an issue. People speak when they have something important on their minds, or if something major is happening in their lives.

- ♦ *What is the "inner light"?*

The "inner light" is the Quaker belief that there is that of God within everyone. It is the goodness within your heart and soul.

- ♦ *What does it mean to "hold people in the light"?*

Sometimes a person might tell the group in meeting about someone who is suffering, and ask the group to hold him or her in the light. This means to, in your thoughts, hold that person in all that is good. As a group, we think good thoughts for that person or meditate on something we hope for their health and well being, especially after something bad has happened.

Our class decided to write this brochure because we had a lot of questions about Quakerism and wanted to share what we have learned. It's intended to answer any questions that students or visitors might have about meeting, and to help people know what they can do during meeting.

We answered our questions through reading books, watching videos, and having discussions about Quakerism. We also gathered information through taking a survey of students and adults about what they do during meeting for worship. We have synthesized the information we found most helpful here.



Originally written, designed, and produced by:
Alex Holtzin, Solie Richards, Nick Flaherty,
Joe Marro, Bridget McKee, and
teacher Sarah Sweeney-Denham.

Delaware Valley Friends School,
Language Arts, Spring 2000

Meeting for Worship: Strategies for Focused Meditation

*What can I do to help "center" myself in meeting?
How can I calm down and focus for meeting?*

- ♦ Sit away from those who distract you.
- ♦ Think of your friends and people you care about.
- ♦ Focus on your breathing.
- ♦ Think of a song you like, to let your mind go.
- ♦ Think about your "inner light" (all that is good within you) to feel safe.
- ♦ Think of your day.
- ♦ You can even not think at all and just be at peace.
- ♦ Let go of worries.
- ♦ Keep your mind empty.
- ♦ Take a deep breath and relax.
- ♦ Concentrate on feeling still and good.
- ♦ Think about the quiet things in life.
- ♦ Think of a peaceful place.
- ♦ Think about something smooth.
- ♦ Say a prayer.
- ♦ Close your eyes and sit quietly.
- ♦ Focus on things you enjoy.
- ♦ Count anything in the room.
- ♦ Breathe evenly and try not think of things that stress you out.
- ♦ Think of a soft sound.

After I'm focused and calm, what kinds of things can I think about, or meditate on?

- ♦ Think about the importance of the relationships in your life.
- ♦ Try to think about things that are bothering you and ways you can solve them.
- ♦ Think of people you are in love with.
- ♦ Think of music.
- ♦ Pray.
- ♦ Think about what makes you who you are.
- ♦ Think about your family.
- ♦ Think about your life.
- ♦ Think about others and important issues in their lives.
- ♦ Think about whatever is touching you.
- ♦ Think about things you do that you would like to change.
- ♦ Think about your future.
- ♦ Think of the past.
- ♦ Think about nature.
- ♦ Think of things that happened that day.
- ♦ Think of friends and people in your life who are struggling.

"It's a time when we can focus on issues individually, and also as a community."

-8th grade student

