Program Hour Responses, Feb. 23, 2020

“Health of our Committees – Are we on Overload?”

Responses to the queries:

How do you react to joining and participating in Meeting committees? Resist? Avoid? Energized/love to participate? Don’t participate?

* I love serving on functional committees – I feel more connected to the community
* As a newer Quaker, it took 4-5 months to feel comfortable
* As a new Quaker, being asked to join a committee can be the key to involvement
* After 15 years on committees, I am burned out.
  + Tired of carrying the committee
  + Looking for a big project for the meeting as a whole
* As a newer Quaker, I was astonished at the number of committees
* I enjoy committees, but I step back when necessary
* Some committees require more time
* Choosing a committee can depend on one’s life situation
* Other places to serve: IMYM or Colorado Regional
* Why does the slate always include the usual suspects?
  + Those who serve have a passion to be useful

How does participating in committees affect your spiritual life?

* I love the community. I want to be useful. After years of serving, there is no burnout.
* I found a niche in the community, but growing older is becoming an issue.
* I found meaning with Grief and Bereavement. It aligns with my personal feelings
* I serve to make sure the meeting is available as a spiritual home. Outreach starts with my spiritual health.
* Serving increases ties to the community
* Committees can have too much work and too little time
* Will this committee bring me joy?
* Joy in seeing coworkers in worship enriches the silence.
* Unsolved issues can cause tension in worship
* Committees are essential to our community life

How does/doesn’t our committee structure reflect our values, energy, and resources?

* Are we too complicated? Should we pull back and re-focus to keep the joy and love alive?
* Committees touch our spirit.
* Committees reflect our values – not enough energy to support them all. Maybe collapse or combine committees (lots of agreement on this point)
* Conflict can cause us to step away from committee work
* We may be too scattered – need to simplify

Are there ways we could simplify our committees and/or structure to better match our values and resources?

* Yes. Why haven’t we? Fear of conflict.
* We need some background work to inquire how to do it.
* Are committees in too much of a hurry to complete agendas?
* Being on a committee is part of the spiritual journey – can perhaps help prevent burnout
* Combining committees doesn’t necessarily reduce the agendas
* Can we help develop leadership/process skills for conveners?
* Fewer face to face meetings – more electronic meetings
* Scaling back! Catabolic process – getting rid of waste generates energy
* We seem to be more inward looking

Are there committees that could be laid down or combined?

* Are committees doing the work of the meeting?
* Ageing – metaphor for moving forward – use the same process
* Individual committees should cull items
* Two types of committees: in-house and outreach – what comes first?
* Smaller size committees – would mean more community input
* Reconcile smaller size of meeting with committee size