



## Silence and Expectant Waiting

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**Credits:** John Lampen. The Worship Kit: A Young Person's Guide to Quaker Worship. Quaker Books. Friends House. London (2010), pages 10-11.



## Unwrapping the Parcel

### Overview

*Similar to a guided meditation, this exercise offers a variety of ways to use the silence of worship. After trying these methods, participants will engage in worship sharing to explore how each worked and other ways and times they have been able to listen in the silence.*



30 min.



Elementary (ages 6-11)



Newcomer Friendly

### Aims & Objectives

During this exercise you will experience a variety of different ways to use the silence of worship.

### Instructions

Below are six ways you might use the silence of worship. Each time you are in worship, you might try one different method. Your spiritual deepening group might settle into worship to allow the group to practice, or it may consider assigning this exercise to be done by members before the group meets again. After group members have tried these methods, engage in worship sharing to explore how each method worked and share

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other ways and times that members have been able to listen in the silence.

1. Imagine there is something precious (but you don't know what it is) in a parcel, wrapped in several layers of paper in a box. It's all covered with brown paper tied up with string.

As you settle into the silence, you are going to imagine opening this parcel. I will describe things which come into our minds in worship and ask you to throw each away in turn like the layers of the package.

So first look around. See who's here. Smile at your friends. See where everyone's sitting. Look at the people you came with and see if they're smiling. That's fine. You've had a good look. Now take all those thoughts about people and put them to one side, like the string on the parcel which we don't need at the moment.

2. Let's go on to the outer layer of paper.

Think about the rest of the day. Do you know what's for dinner? What are you going to do this afternoon? Think of everything you've got to do - and what you're going to enjoy. Now put those thoughts behind you, too; we don't need them at the moment.

3. We're going further in.

The box stands for anything you're worried about: next week at school or work, things at home, trouble with friends, anything. Don't be afraid to think about them. Have a real good worry. And now let's dump all those sad and frightening things for the time being.

4. Throw the box away.

Listen to all the noises you can hear: birds, cars, people outside this room; breathing and gentle movement in the meeting. Listen. Listen. Then let all those noises go like an unwanted wrapping.

5. We've come to the last two layers.

Listen inside your own body, to those funny clicks and thumps inside it. Can you feel your heart beating and your breath coming and going, and the sound of your swallowing like a click? Concentrate on that. Then forget it, too.

6. Now take off the final wrapping by listening deep inside yourself, and find the treasure hidden inside the parcel.

I can't tell you what it will be, because it's different for each person. You may get a wonderful feeling of belonging. You may find the child your parents love there. You may find God. Just close your eyes and listen...deeper into yourself...deeper.