

Getting Started: Outreach Is...

This activity is designed to get Friends in your meeting thinking broadly about outreach and ways that we, as individuals and as meetings, can spread the word about the Quaker Way and grow our presence in our communities.

Plan for this discussion to take 30-45 minutes

Materials: 6-8 post-it notes per participant, pens, flipchart paper

Silent Brainstorm: Give each participant a stack of 6-8 post-it notes and after a time in worship, encourage them to use the notes to respond to the following prompt:

Outreach is....

Encourage participants to be creative, to think about what the word “outreach” means and all of the different ways that individuals and meetings can put outreach into action in their lives and communities. They can write one idea on each note.

If participants need additional prompts, suggest *“Outreach is when I...”* *“Outreach is when my meeting...”* *“We engage in outreach when we...”* *“Outreach sends the message that...”*

Allow for about 5-10 minutes for participants to finish writing, and then invite them to come to the front of the room and stick their notes to the wall or flip chart paper, while also reading what others have written.

After notes have been hung, **ask** participants what they notice about the notes and what they learned while writing their own responses and reading those of others.

Reflect on the fact that outreach is bigger than advertising, publicity, and hosting public events, although these things are important and powerful. Effective outreach is about learning to speak about the Quaker Way and our own experiences as Quakers, as well as living as “patterns and examples” in our daily lives in the wider community.

In this way, folks in our communities can come to know that **Quakers exist, Quakers do good work, Quaker process works, and Quaker spirituality offers a powerful gift for the world today.**

Link inreach to outreach by asking, When our meeting does outreach, what are we inviting people into? What will visitors find? Deep worship? Long announcements? Quaker “code language”? Opportunities for connection and friendship? Vibrant opportunities for children and adults? A sense of welcome across diversity?

Ask: What would we *like* to invite them in to? This can lead to a conversation about creating a plan for inreach as well as outreach.