

# *Sharing our Spiritual Stories*

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This exercise is designed to give Friends practice articulating their faith, and it can inspire us all as well. Each participant will prepare and share a story from his or her spiritual journey within a small group. Many meetings find this exercise so eye-opening and meaningful that they continue to invite each other to share spiritual stories over time.

To watch an example of this type of storytelling in order to better imagine the end product, visit [http://youtu.be/cMA-aPS\\_2tI](http://youtu.be/cMA-aPS_2tI) (Quaker Quest Presentations: Eau Claire Friends Meeting)

## **Facilitation Guide**

Arrange the room in groups of THREE CHAIRS facing inwards. Leave as much space between groups of chairs as possible.

Have on hand: Notepaper, pens, stopwatch and bell.

Post a list of possible topics at the front of the room. Some examples are: *Quakers and Simplicity*, *Quakers and God*, *Quakers and Worship*, *Quakers and Integrity*

Read each topic and have folks raise their hand for the one they prefer. Ask participants to sit in groups of three with others planning to speak on the same topics.

This activity takes about 45 minutes and can be repeated again on the same day or at different times throughout the year. We all have stories to share!

Some participants may be reluctant to share. Remind them that they will only be speaking to two other people and that when we speak from the heart, we build relationships and learn from each other.

**Presentations:** Use a bell or flash the lights to indicate when each task switches.

In threes, each group prepares presentations on the topic they chose. For each of the steps below, tell the group their task and how much time they will be given.

1. In conversation, each person in turn gives initial thoughts on the topic (6 minutes)
2. As a group, they reflect on what they have heard and what they might now want to say (3 minutes)
3. In silence, everyone prepares a 5-minute oral presentation in note form. Suggest that 3-5 points will be plenty (5 minutes). Remind Friends to speak from the heart and use personal stories.

4. In turn, each participant shares their 5-minute presentation within their triad, the others listening. Ring the bell or flash the lights every 5 minutes to switch speakers. (20 minutes)
5. Within the triads, invite each individual to reflect on the experience, then debrief together. (10 minutes). Questions to consider: What was that experience like? What did it feel like to share? What did it feel like to listen? What did you learn? What would you do differently next time?

**Going Deeper:** Consider switching groups, choosing a new topic together, and repeating the process.

**Closing:** Return to one large circle. Invite everyone to share a word or phrase answering the questions, “How are you feeling?” (Folks can opt out.)