

Response to the 2nd Query: *Meeting for Business*

Committee of Clerks

February 3, 2013

How is our experience of Meeting for Business in London Grove Meeting? In the January Committee of Clerks meeting we shared that Friends may be gifted with some of our most profound spiritual experiences while seated in our Meetings for Business. Meeting for Business is where we have opportunities to practice our PRACTICE of mutual spiritual discernment.

We encourage Friends and attenders to come to Meeting for Business. Meeting for Business is the place where change happens, especially corporate changes for us as a Meeting.

Meeting for Business is where we are challenged most profoundly to work on spiritual discernment with each other. Generally, it seems we do conduct Meetings for Business in the divine Spirit, seeking to ensure all voices are heard, and seeking for the sense of the meeting, in the Spirit. But sometimes it is hard. Sometimes we speak out of personal desire or need. We are called upon to pause and consider whether we are a conduit through which the Divine spirit may speak, or simply expressing our individual human desires. It is difficult to give up our human desire for power and to have our own way. But in the mystery of the Divine it is possible for us to submit ourselves to a greater truth if we are consciously willing to forego our personal desires and agendas in the interest of true corporate spiritual discernment.

We seek that state in which some of our most powerful spiritual experiences may occur in Meeting for Worship for Business and in our Committee Meetings. It has been said that Meeting for Worship for Business works best when all are fully present in Friendly worship, each person seeking to discern the will of the divine and being open to the possibility of a changed heart; for, after all, of what good is continuing revelation if we never change our minds?

It is a big gift and affirmation, to be carrying this task with us on our individual spiritual journeys. It brings us closer to our questions and closer to our dear Friends here at Meeting, including our clerk. There is an affirmation here about the true integrity and inspiration that may be with us if we are open to it, and how we bring our light to each other. It is well to consider that sort of affirmation. It is part of our wholeness and an affirmation about London Grove Friends who seek the light.

We asked questions of each other in the Committee of Clerks as we considered this Query. And some questions have the power to take us deeper into exploring how we are doing in our practice, such as:

- Are we aware that we speak through our inaction as well as by our action? Are we offering ways for newer members to learn what discernment is, while

reviewing for each of us, the practices and gifts contained in discernment?

- For a thorny issue, do we supply abundant patience? If an issue requires weeks or months, do we allow the issue to be held among us rather than dropped or neglected? And generally, do we supply a full measure of time to hear all voices?
- What do we do with dissention that appears to come from mysterious places? Are we able and willing to hear difficult truths even though we wish not to hear them?
- Let us recognize that Divine mystery is indeed present when two opposing points of view show up and each seems to hold some truth. In our Meetings for Business do we create a safe place and offer love and respect for each voice?

While we believe that we do quite well as a Meeting, let us go deeper into these queries and continue to develop a loving space for all. For example, let us consider business meetings occurring in our committees. Are these conducted in the light of spiritual guidance?

May each Friend continue to hold and nurture the Meeting for Business as a container for the Divine. Let us continue to ask if in our business in committees and in the Monthly Meeting, we create full, safe places and offer love and respect for each voice. This is one path toward whole spiritual openness as we nurture the blessed Meeting community that we are.

Respectfully submitted,

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London Grove Monthly Meeting