

Listening Spirituality Series Notes

We opened the first session of our Listening Spirituality series (August 10, 2008) with a brief overview of the Introduction to the book and a proposed schedule of Forums and interim sessions over the next year or so (see handouts that follow these notes).

The following comments (paraphrased) were made in response. Participants were:

Looking for diverse ways of going within.

Had “on the job training” so far, along with studying *Faith and Practice* and *Friends for 300 Years*. Mostly it has been learning by doing. I hit a plateau until becoming active in Alternatives to Violence as a practice. Beginning to go deeper into other Fox’s writing as well, now.

Encouraged by the opportunity to share and hear from others concerning their own spiritual practices. Looking for ways to be “transformed by relationship to God”, but no need to be overwhelmed by too many options. Just choose a practice and do it without too much “thinking” about it.

Looking forward to chance to share in small groups and learning from one another. That has been very rewarding in the past.

Seeking to explore query “How is God at work in your life?” and going deeper into how others experience this.

Appreciative of the open, inclusive language in the book and the openness to many ways of experiencing the energy, Spirit, Light, in one’s life.

Yearning for more “coming together” in small group connection. Misses the Bible Study group that had met for some years and Wednesday evening worship/Friendly Discussion group.

Also missing the Wednesday night group and ways to connect spiritually in other than meeting for worship once a week.

Non-practicing prior to coming to the meeting, but found something here. Seeking opportunities for a “joining” together.

Looking for some spiritual “leadership” and being “fed” by others in that experience.

Seeking a safe setting for exploration in small groups.

Feeling “spiritually starved”, looking for more “structure”. Loves the Bible and looking for more connection with it. Prayer is central aspect as well.

Seeking the balance between the personal and the spiritual.

Listening Spirituality Series

August 17, 2008

At our first “interim” meeting at 9:00 AM, we continued our conversation from the first Forum and explored what other interests, wishes, issues, or inspirations came from what we had initiated at the previous meeting.

Comments indicated that group members wanted to:

Learn how to “remember” God more throughout the day, to be more consistent in spiritual practices

Create a space physically as well as temporally to help in deepening their practice.

Experience the energy and insight of the group.

Find out more about others’ approaches to spiritual practices.

Explore different traditions—Centering prayer, meditation practices, etc.

Form small groups to examine specific topics in more depth as the interest develops.

Focus on ways to deepen practice both within the meeting time and outside.

Tune in more to the “gathered space” and the experience of “holding the meeting in worship” during challenging times.

Remember Ann Lamont’s (?) two prayers: “Help, help, help!” and “Thank you, thank you, thank you!” and the suggestion to create a prayer list to keep in your pocket as a way to stay aware of prayer during the day.

Make a “transition” from other traditions to the Quaker practices. Release old patterns and wounds and incorporate more inclusive perspective.

We decided to aim for meeting generally every two weeks, either during Forum time when scheduled or at 9:00 AM prior to meeting. We will meet next time on August 31st at 9:00 AM.