

Bellingham Meeting 2nd hour
January 31, 2016

Quote from Arlene Kelly, Pastoral Care Newsletter. Humility, look at our own contribution, Simplicity, Rootedness, Patience, sense of humor

Query #1

“not yet shared”

a. joy important, felt sadness now over process of meeting house. During process felt joy. Expectation—did not expect an outcome. Quaker process is joyful even if a struggle, even if it takes years. Expectations now = we will meet together gives joy. No expectation of solution by certain date.

b. Felt alternately involved, alternately detached.

c. Felt uninvolved. Regret that now. (computer froze for several minutes)

d. speak truth and participate in business meeting. Approve, approve, then stand aside, then disapprove. Please speak up. Action item held in worshipful silence. Disapproving decision before hearing report from committee was disrespectful. Joy that we are here again and willing to listen.

e. special atmosphere, belief that what is presented will be heard with open hearts. Before November meeting had threshing sessions. Hovering between political/secular and worshipful sharing of hopes and fears. Returning theme = not to lose this community. November meeting – privilege to be on exploratory committee, not a forgone conclusion, felt open to all possibility, but difficult to share all information gathered. Work of the committee was powerful. Felt stunned at November meeting—people were not coming with open hearts, but spoke positions. Not an openness to hear. Difficult for speaker.

f. Move from listening to convincing of personalizing. Expected new spiritual home, now involved in major decision. Had to speak her concerns. Exploratory committee responded with facts. Promote purchase or provide information. Felt they were promoting. Not really hearing the concern about landlord roles, real estate economy. Spoke up but did not feel it was easy. Listening is important. Not afraid about current state of meeting. Encouraged. Consciously attend to how we do things as well as what we do. We're deepening that process.

g. Earlier meeting. Maybe we should consider holding off as this person requested. 4 people shook their heads at me. I don't belong in this meeting if we don't care about people's feelings. “Dwell in God, not in the fretful mind, that unity may be kept.

h. Did not participate in the discernment process, no strong feelings before. Now regret lack of participation. Still proud of meeting, because the community is

sitting with difficult feelings. Sorry for all hurts. Relieved if we find a new home, but glad we are willing to sit together.

i. exploratory committee member. Hard work. Grateful for visitors. Grateful for time off since last meeting. Hope to have its own home. Going forward—afraid also. Don't know what more committee can do to disown trying to have a position on the purchase. We did not try to promote. Feedback useful, we responded to it. Avoid mortgage. Raised \$ quickly. Fear is so much was in place, but no building will be perfect. We will work together. But afraid she doesn't know what else to do. Gather and hear each other. Parted from the process with hurt and exhaustion. New committee- find courage and energy to do this again. It was hard.

j. Heartened by the turnout today. Grateful for 2 months off and facilitators help in creating new atmosphere. Clarity junkie. Haven't felt clear about knotted threads about what happened and what was my part. Problems in structure: we asked for a discernment of feasibility of purchasing location. Practical feasibility. Not it's spiritual feasibility. Hammer and nail issue. Material feasibility of building, committee did amazing job. But questions raised about mortgage, room for children had nothing to do with practical feasibility, but there was not route to answer these questions. Didn't provide structure or sufficient opportunity to address those other questions. Threshing session on spiritual questions didn't reach unity. Very enthusiastic about Bell Tower. Tried hard to listen and let go. Opposite of love is fear. Fear got in our way – that groundswell will result in opposite outcome that we hoped for. Shifting tide created fear on both sides. Fear of “going the other way”, not being open. So much misunderstanding. Very sad, like a divorcing couple not hearing each other. The committee had their process questioned. If people have concerns, join the committee. Hope moving forward—hear each other and love each other today, and willing to move forward to discern our hopes for a spiritual home. Discern together our hopes and dreams.

k. Facilitator – encourage speakers.

l. Hate this room. Concern that a committee member was a representative of seller and buyer. High risk. Don't feel safe. Feel judged. Expressed concern to committee member who said—not a problem. Not an answer. But committee member not here.

m. Concern about not speaking too much. Difficult to come this morning. Can't let it go even after 2 months. Disappointment that the last meeting and earlier process felt like getting people to voice concerns was very difficult. Our role was to be informative. Felt skeptical about building, but committee checked out all her concerns. Along the way the committee developed enthusiasm for the bldg. Tried to stay open. At November meeting, disappointed for all people who had wanted that building so much. We were not allowed to finish our process of giving

information. Decision to lay down committee was made without complete information. There was skepticism within the committee, but we weren't completely heard. Reflective process did not happen. Felt blown away, not following Quaker process. Shaking of heads should be clarified. We worked so closely for 2 months, but there was nothing personal to be gained by any committee member if building was purchased. Disappointed, but even if we come with a perfect list, there is no perfect building. We all must be open to some compromise. Hurt that committees could not finish the process.

n. Time frame that is not a Quaker time frame makes this difficult. Contingency contract clause was added "that we have to really want this". It snowballed everything else. Contingency contract felt like pressure. Need more time to work things out. Felt hard to speak out. Did not feel spirit called to her in that meeting. Then saw meeting moving forward. November expected the purchase decision to be made, felt a stop, trust the process. Surprised at the decision of that meeting. Still trust process. Live with the pain. I don't know where we're going, but I trust that process.

o. Spoke negatively to issues in every meeting until started feeling brushed off. Did not like big debt, amount of time and amount of additional responsibility. Felt there was nothing to do to stop the train. But, if all else fails financially, we will still have each other, can meet in our homes. By October, spoke again. Was told deadline isn't until November. Then many people spoke against. Woolman said there is no love in being polite, must speak plainly as an opening. We have an opening for love. We must be real. We have logistics re what committees are, how concerns are heard and not brushed off.

p. Struggling with not being emotional. Apologize for previous disrespect. During process, spoke for committee. I spoke with passion. Was my mind open to any outcome? Yes. I was not convinced about bldg. but did not speak against, only to speak the facts. Greatest fear is that community will not be able to make a decision on important matters. Felt very dark after November. 3 thoughts: 1. We were never clear about our vision about what we wanted as spiritual home. No surprise things fell apart. 2. Not enough experience with committee on important issues. Committee was disrespected by second guessing. 3. Most importantly, we need to learn to listen and dialogue with each other. Quaker testimony and Peace: Israeli gave speech. Palestinian gave speech. Then went home and stayed the same. Did not go home and find a new way. Within committee this was done, but not in larger community.

o. Clarify earlier question. Glad to have member return to meeting for worship. Realtor will donate commission.

p. Huge issue for us. \$600,000 = is scary. We were not in enough control over the timing of the process. Consider fallibility. Committee members were enthusiastic. Forgive and move forward. Learning process.

Time limit 1:56 pm?

Fruitful time of sharing. Sense of new feelings and reflections.

q. Sorry for hurtful things said in November. Gratitude for Friends who shared with Ministry and Counsel. We all on M&C care about all contributions and participation.

r. Forgiveness—start with forgiving ourselves.

Facilitators --Honor time commitments. Never intended a final solution today. Hear a desire to continue dialogue. Acknowledge your increased clarity and look for new opportunities to communicate them. All is not lost, there will be more opportunity. Quakers are not afraid of uncomfortable feelings. Respect Quaker fortitude. Be kind to yourselves for the rest of the day. This can be a gentle process. Today is further validation of Quaker process.

s. M&C will revisit this. We have a process ahead of us. Exciting today.

Silent worship

s. How to consider facts and spiritual process at the same time?

t. 1st time to consider question of such magnitude. Collective spiritual growth in the Quaker process of decision making. Fear is diminished.