



Pastoral Excellence Network

at Christian Theological Seminary

PASTORAL EXCELLENCE NETWORK RESOURCE

Some queries for clergy groups and clergy group facilitators

Quakers often use “queries,” or a series of questions for reflection, spiritual discernment, and engaged practice. The following queries have been adapted from various sources and are provided here as a resource for periodic review by clergy groups and/or clergy group facilitators. You may choose to offer a question from this list of queries occasionally so that your group can reflect upon how it is doing and on what shifts it might want to make in how it approaches its work together. You may want to use this as a reflection tool for your own clergy group facilitation.

- Are we making space for our colleague to explore this issue or theme that they have presented?
- Are we clearly allocating sufficient time for this exploration?
- Are we filling up the space with our own ideas, reassurances and brilliant suggestions?
- Are we using up the space and the time instead of graciously allowing for the person to be the focus of our conversation?
- Do we use a structure for our group that covers up our anxious feelings?
- Do we allow ourselves to have risky and challenging conversations?
- In what ways do we cultivate trust as a tangible quality in our gathering?
- What is discussable in our group? What is not discussable?
- What practices would enhance our capacities for the soul to be present?
- Are we open to the unexpected and what wants to emerge?
- Do we allow for a silence that can teach us?
- What room is there for the Spirit in our interactions? How do we attend to this in our time together?
- What question, if we were to ask it, would make the most difference in our conversations with one another?

What “queries” would you add to this list?

These questions include those that have been adapted by Lawrence Peers, Director of Learning, Pastoral Excellence Network, from his various teachers: Parker Palmer, Peter Block, and from Naomi Raab (in her article, “Becoming an Expert in Not Knowing: Reframing Teacher as Consultant,” Management Learning 28, no. 2 (June 1997): 161-175.)

For more information go to: pastoralexcellencenetwork.org